

at a lower rate than obtains at present. This would mean more business for the coal mines, more freight for the railways, and would be of advantage all round. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.5 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 7th September, 1932.*

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

### QUESTION—MINING, WILUNA ARSENIC PLANT.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Health: 1, Is he aware that although the advice and recommendations of the Commissioner of Public Health are being enforced on the arsenic plant at Wiluna, the em-

ployees are still contracting arsenical poisoning and dermatitis, and suffering acutely therefrom? 2, Bearing this in mind, will the Government have further investigations made to see if anything else can be done to prevent the employees from contracting those afflictions? 3, If nothing further can be done, and the Government consider that everything that could have been done has been done, will they give consideration to the advisability of introducing legislation to prevent the operation of this plant?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Yes. 2, The Commissioner of Public Health is in close touch with the management in endeavouring to reduce the risk of arsenical poisoning and dermatitis to a minimum. 3, This cannot be done.

### QUESTION—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY.

#### *Pensions and Overseas Interest.*

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to endeavour to convene another meeting of State Premiers (a) to deal with the reduction or cessation of overseas interest until such time as our own people are properly fed and clothed; (b) to demand the abolition of Federal control in departmental spheres where the various States could act on behalf of the Federal Government, thus economising and making it possible for the Federal Government to pay more instead of less to old age and invalid pensioners of the Commonwealth?

The PREMIER replied: (a) The question of a reduction in the interest rate has been discussed and is now receiving attention at the hands of the Federal Government; (b) the elimination of overlapping has been considered by both Federal and State Governments and is now being dealt with. The State Government exercises no control over the payment of old age and invalid pensions.

### QUESTION—NORTH-WEST PORTS, CARGO COSTS.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Lands: For the year ended 30th June, 1932, what was the average cost per ton for handling cargo at the following

wharves or jetties respectively, calculating casual labour only:—Carnarvon, Onslow, Cossack, Broome, Derby?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Carnarvon, 1s. 6½d. per ton; Onslow, 1s. 7¼d. per ton; Cossack, lighterage port, cost not available; Broome, 2s. 5⅓d. per ton; Derby, 1s. 11d. per ton.

### QUESTION—ESPERANCE, WHEAT-HANDLING.

Mr. NULSEN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is he aware that the British ship-owner is not prepared to go to Esperance for the rate of freight set out in the Austral Charter Party as one of any two ports at which the vessel is to be loaded in Western Australia, owing to its being declared unsafe; the minimum extra charge will be 2s. 6d. per ton, and the maximum amount of produce that can be removed is about 15,500 tons in the one season? 2, Will he give an assurance that the farmers of the mallee will not be penalised the extra 2s. 6d. or more per ton, and also that they will not have to pay the extra that will be incurred if the tonnage is too high to be removed in the one season by the British ship owners in accordance with their warning?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The Harbour and Light Department is not aware that British ship owners have declared the port of Esperance to be unsafe, nor has the Marine Underwriters' Association any knowledge of the matter. 2, Answered by 1.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

*Mr. Withers and the Railway Department.*

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [4.34]: I wish to make a personal explanation. When speaking to the Address-in-reply I made a statement connected with railway management which I find was not quite true. It was in regard to the transport of a concert party to Bunbury for the purpose of assisting the unemployed. I made the statement in all good faith, for I thought my information was correct, but I see that the chairman of the relief committee at Bunbury has written to the Bunbury newspaper, stating that the

Railway Department was in no way to blame. So I wish to retract and apologise to the department.

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £2,250,000.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Ninth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [4.37]: Last evening the Minister for Railways defended the rights and privileges of members in regard to the Address-in-reply. He very properly pointed out that it was quite wrong to allege that the Address-in-reply debate was a waste of time, or that members indulged in speeches for the purpose of wasting time. He remarked that it was virtually the only opportunity afforded to members to ventilate matters which they felt required ventilating, matters of public policy generally and Government policy in particular. The Address-in-reply debate gives members an opportunity to deal with all matters, and if members do not avail themselves of that opportunity they are then limited to questions brought down by the Government and subjects which they themselves bring forward by direct motion. So once a year it is the recognised right of members to deal with all matters affecting the general welfare of the State. It is significant that none of the authorities on constitutional matters, the privileges of members and the general Parliamentary practice, attempts to define the extent of the Address-in-reply debate. The reason is, there is no limit, that the Address-in-reply is a general review, not limited either as to time or as to subject matter. So when we read and hear so much from the critics of Parliament, it is just as well to make it clear that this is the one occasion when members have so wide an opportunity in debate. There is one matter I wish to have put right in "Hansard." To leave it where it is at present would be distinctly unfair to Prof. Fox of the W.A. University. The professor delivered an address to an organisation associated with the Methodist Church. Evidently the member for North Perth (Mr. J. MacCallum Smith) took exception to the sub-

ject matter of the address, for yesterday he asked the Premier certain questions as to the published report of the professor's address. I regret to say that the Premier in reply referred to "violent views." He said, "It is undesirable that persons holding violent views should direct the education of our University students." If we were to take the question submitted by the member for North Perth and the reply by the Premier, without recording in "Hansard" the views actually expressed by the professor, we would, in the minds of readers of "Hansard" in time to come, create quite a wrong impression. So in justice to Prof. Fox I propose to read what he said, in order that we shall have recorded exactly what the question and the answer related to. The newspaper heading is, in my opinion, misleading. I do not know whether it was written by the professor himself or by someone in the newspaper office, but when we read the address, we see that the headline is not in keeping with the contents of the address. Here is the newspaper report of that address—

#### A Challenge of Communism.

##### Professor Fox's Analysis.

"Christ and Communism" was the subject of an address delivered by Professor A. C. Fox, of the University of Western Australia, at the Methodist Church Probationers' and Home Missioners' seventh annual convention at Wesley Church, Fremantle, on Tuesday. After intimating that he was going to interpret "Communism" rather widely, Professor Fox said that Communism received its driving force mainly in reacting strongly against the present inequitable distribution of property, and of consequent control over and benefit from industry. It believed this was not, as the Conservatives affirmed, a reflection of the relative merits of the owners, but rather of their degree of power and ruthlessness. More specifically it said that the present distribution was due to the operation of competition, and that competition was open to severe criticism. Communism would abolish competition for the capital which controlled industry, by placing it in the hands of the community. Monopolistic enterprises already showed some degree of abolition of competition, and these could be taken over by the community, and other monopolies created. Private monopolies, however, were defective because they were private; they represented power divorced from public responsibility. A communistic monopoly was power modified by responsibility, or directed for the general good.

"It must be admitted," pursued Professor Fox, "that there is much validity in this communistic indictment and proposal. Individualism stands condemned for breeding much that

is unlovely and antihuman. It gives a standing invitation to the methods of 'push' and 'grab.' Because the main factor in industry is Man, its justification is its contribution to his general well-being, and its efficiency depends upon the evocation of his loyalty to it."

Professor Fox quoted from the 1915 census figures which, he said, showed that 90 per cent. of the income earners who furnished returns in Australia received less than £200 a year and that 77 per cent. of assets were held by 9 per cent. of all the holders. "These figures," he continued, "can be matched by those obtainable from other countries. How can it be said that a system which distributes its products in this uneven way is to call forth loyal support from the great mass of those engaged in it—of the 90 per cent. of Australians? There are other grounds upon which capitalism, far from evoking loyalty, arouses suspicion and even contempt, to wit, the methods of armament firms and of some newspapers and banks." Having demonstrated how the Marxian interpretations were misleading, Professor Fox said that communism need not mean absolute equality of status and rewards. This was perhaps the commonest of all misunderstandings. The present discontent with class distinction was not so much because some persons had high status and rewards, but because the many had a degrading status and reward, and because of a conviction that the differences did not correspond to differences in human capacity. There was plenty of evidence that high pay need not command the highest capacity. A communistic order must not be confused with anarchism. It was commonly supposed that, with the removal of private employers, a premium would be set on idleness and insolence. Communism did not propose to remove masters in the sense of overseers and controllers of work any more than a civil service proposed to remove them. For the recalcitrant there would still be discipline, since it was not proposed to abolish law and regulation. Under the present system there was no guarantee that work would give more than a bare sufficiency, while under communism there was a legitimate prospect that it would yield an ample sufficiency. As compared with present conditions there would be a surplus of both time and money, and this double surplus might be spent in obtaining the means of living well and of giving time to their enjoyment. Communism did not mean the abolition of personal property either in time or material.

The only objection I have to the professor's lecture is that he is generous towards Communism as we know it to-day. He was dealing with the matter as it is represented by the University and University text-books, not as it is represented by the newspapers, which interpret Communism so that they can utilise so-called communistic utterances in a special way in special circumstances. Communism is closely associated with socialism. It is

difficult to distinguish between true Communism and socialism. I have studied both. I have been associated with the socialistic movement all my life. The only difference I can see between the two is that communism aims at the control of property, as mentioned by the professor, by the whole community, whereas socialism may in special circumstances direct that it be controlled by sections of the community in their interests. Since I saw the headlines of this lecture, I have looked up various dictionaries and authorities to see if there be a great difference between the two things, but so far as I can learn there is little difference between the two "isms." The communism with which people are trying to associate Professor Fox's lecture is the communism we read of to-day. Socialism and communism are Christian doctrines. The communism we read of and understand to-day is not, however, altogether a Christian doctrine. The communism preached, featured and used by the Press to-day is more akin to anarchism than socialism and true communism. It is wrong for the Premier to interpret Professor Fox's lecture as being associated with violent views on communistic ambitions. He was dealing with the question in such a way that students could understand it. The Premier would convey the idea that the Professor was doing something that would injure the students. I have children at the University, and would be sorry if their education in this regard were neglected. All children should understand the rights of the community in regard to community production. They should understand that the world is being exploited by false prophets, and that the whole community is not getting that just share of distribution that was originally intended, and was practised in the early days of Christianity. The whole thing has got out of joint. As the professor points out, the control is in the hands of 9 per cent., and 91 per cent. are subservient to the 9 per cent. The difficulties of the world are due to the fact that private ownership and capitalism have, with the assistance of propaganda and the help of unfair laws and other privileges, secured control, and are using that control to the detriment of mankind. I congratulate the professor upon his lecture and the realisation of the necessity for inculcating that kind of education. I am pleased to know he went to the churches to deliver his address. The churches to-day need a lot of education upon the subject. They should

take more notice of the fact that the world and the people of the world are being exploited by a section which possesses undue power, and that all those who love humanity and the rights of humanity should be encouraged and helped by the churches to bring about the necessary reform. The member for North Perth is associated with banks. Possibly he understands more about banking than I do, but possibly he does not study the people's welfare as much as I do. He has not the same opportunity to do it as I have, because his time is occupied in other directions. When a professor was loaned by the University to protect and assist in getting out the propaganda of the banks, in order that their position might be strengthened, no protest was made by the member for North Perth. It is quite right that protection should be given to the 9 per cent. of the community, but it is not right that any help should be afforded the remainder of the community, which is being exploited to the detriment of humanity. It was quite right that Professor Fox should have gone to a church organisation to explain the injustice of it all. Good service has been rendered by the professor. It is reasonable that he should be applauded by those who share his views, and it is also right that our schools should devote some time to this kind of thing and less to propagating capitalistic ideas. My own children are authorities on all matters relative to capitalism. They are thoroughly educated along those lines from the moment they attend the primary schools, and they know all about the rights and privileges of property. They understand the rights of banking institutions to control currency. They are given lessons on these subjects. Very seldom, however, do they receive any education concerning the rights of the people. I hope no limit will be put upon our professors in the matter of educating University students in the cause of humanity. During the debate frequent references have been made to the depression, the financial situation and the economic outlook generally. I have been unable to gather what the views of members are upon the effect of the economic situation and the depression upon the Parliaments of Australia. Recently we have heard quite a lot regarding the need for review of the constitution of Parliaments. We have heard something as to payment of members of Parliament, and so

forth. But the question is not one that can be wholly reviewed by one Parliament of one State. The great question occupying the mind of every thoughtful Australian elector to-day is whether Australia can continue to maintain seven Parliaments, equivalent to about 13 Houses of Parliament; whether it is economically possible for 6,500,000 people to maintain all these parliamentary organisations. And the further question arises whether the time is not opportune for a general review of that most uneconomical burden, the financial load associated with the maintenance of all these Parliaments; whether it is not time to take a serious view of the economic effect of the Australian parliamentary system. Undoubtedly, reform is being forced upon us. That reform should be studied carefully by hon. members. We have to ensure that any reform which takes place as a result of the economic pressure being experienced shall be a kind that will give the people greater control, instead of less control. The tendency of the Press to-day is to strengthen vested interests, to strengthen the control exercised by the 9 per cent. to whom I have already referred—neglecting, or reducing, or minimising the power of the mass of the community. For example, the resolution fathered by the Bunbury Municipal Council was enthusiastically distributed among, and in some cases enthusiastically received by, various local governing bodies. Some local governing bodies, realising that the matter was beyond their scope, appreciating that their organisation represented only a section of the community, the rate-paying section, decided—and in my opinion very wisely—to take no action; but the fact remains that numerous local governing bodies agreed that some curtailment in the number of members of Parliament, or some reduction of parliamentary salaries, or some re-organisation or reform of our own State Parliament, must take place. I wish to point out that the Parliaments of Australia are really the only people's organisations that we have. Let us deal with our own Parliament in particular. This Assembly is the people's organisation. It is created on a basis of absolute equality of opportunity; everybody votes in the same way, and everybody is brought down or raised to the same level. After every third year the citizens of adult age are called upon to mark ballot papers and thus decide the constitution of

the next Assembly. Parliament is essentially a people's organisation. If we reduce the power and the representation of the people's organisation, we automatically increase the power of those who exploit the people. For instance, there are no public organisations which are not anxious to influence Parliament in one way or another. The Labour Party are anxious to increase their representation and to use Parliament for the furtherance of their policy. The National Party work in the same direction. Country members are anxious for the political welfare of their party.

The Minister for Lands: You believe in non-party government, then?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Take a football club, even. In some measure sporting bodies are at times anxious to use Parliament for the furtherance of their particular welfare. A football club may want a Class A reserve made available to it, to have the exclusive right of playing on it and using it for the particular advantage of its members. Agricultural societies are anxious to influence Parliament so that railway freight for stock travelling to shows may be reduced. And so on; one could multiply similar illustrations. Organisations formed for all kinds of purposes are still all anxious more or less to use Parliament for the benefit of those associated with the organisations. Therefore, just as Parliament is weakened, the strength of those who try to use Parliament is increased. The more representative a Parliament is, the more it can give representation to the body of people within a given area, and can take into consideration the physical possibility of a given area being represented by one member, the more we do towards distributing representation so as to make Parliament a true reflex of the opinions of the people, the more do we strengthen that Parliament, the more do we at the same time weaken the organisations that try to use Parliament. But if we do the reverse, we weaken Parliament, and arrive at a position even more vicious than that existing to-day, as outlined in the lecture of Professor Fox. I declare emphatically that I am not prepared to reduce in any way the efficiency of Parliament and the representation of the people as existing to-day. Those things have been reviewed on various occasions, and the conclusion has been reached that in view of the enormous areas members have to represent, in view of the gigantic extent of the State and the widely-scattered

nature of its population, it is not possible to have a truly representative Assembly with a smaller number of members than the present. Again, there is the question of reducing the payment to members. My own view is that the payment now obtaining is altogether too small. If we reduce a member's income below the capacity to maintain himself and his family decently, we again limit the number of persons available as parliamentary representatives. In that way we might exclude some of the most capable members. It is possible that some members are experiencing difficulties to-day. I can quite appreciate that, having regard to the expenses associated with parliamentary duties, there may even now be difficulty in maintaining the position of a member of Parliament in such a way as to command respect from his constituents, in conducting oneself in such a way as to gain the respect of those who look to Parliament for a lead in most matters. Therefore I am not one of those who subscribe to any attack of that description. My view is that the only reform which could be made in this Parliament as now constituted, from a State point of view, is to reduce, as I have already emphasised, the rights and privileges of the 9 per cent. who have a special Chamber of their own in the Legislative Council. On this matter I have been voicing my opinion for the last 30 years, and I do not wish to take up time with it this afternoon. However, members who bear in mind the rights of the people must appreciate that it is wrong to give a section of the community a special Chamber, with the special privilege of interfering with the rights of the people. No Parliament should be constituted so as to be otherwise than truly representative of the people. Where there is a second Chamber representing vested interests, gross injustice is being done to the people, and it is not to be expected that the people will be satisfied, will discontinue expressing their opposition and discontent, while they are represented in one House only, the other House being representative merely of vested interests. While we have been speaking of what we should do from a State point of view, the Federal Government have been most active in intensifying their centralised control. I think it can fairly be said that the present Federal Government have become aggressive, and especially so during recent months. Details

of this have been placed on record by various members, but I want to draw attention to the State's submission to the inroads gradually being made on State powers by the Federal Government. I know perfectly well that members are influenced by party considerations; one can never get away from that position.

The Minister for Lands: You except yourself, of course.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If Mr. Scullin had done what Mr. Lyons has been doing of recent times in connection with State Constitutions and State rights, the hon. member interjecting would be loud in his protests; but because it is done by Mr. Lyons, of course it has a different aspect. The Minister might not like it, but his protest would not be of that vigour which carries conviction. I know perfectly well that we are all more or less tarred with the same brush; that the political complexion of the Government doing certain things does influence us to a certain extent. But, allowing for all this, I am still disappointed in regard to the attitude of this State on what I describe as an aggression upon State rights by the present Federal Government. In my opinion, members have been most inefficient in exposing previous extensions of centralised authority. The silence of an allegedly fearless secession movement is most significant. That movement is supposed to be active in protecting the rights of the State, and in extending the powers of the State. That movement is supposed to be ultimately desirous of bringing Western Australia outside the centralised control altogether, leaving to this State the full power of government within the State. When the Lyons Government assailed the rights of the New South Wales Parliament, assailed the very Constitution of New South Wales, I heard nothing from secessionists on the subject of that encroachment. In that instance we see a definite move by the Government of the day for the purpose of preventing the State functioning as its Government desired. It is true that the Premier of this State voiced a kind of objection, but he took no active part in assisting New South Wales against the encroachment of the Federal Government. It is on record that Tasmania did take up the cudgels on behalf of New South Wales to prevent the injustice being done, but here in Western Australia, the only State in the Commonwealth that possesses an organisation we were led to believe was ready to pro-

test against Federal encroachments and had spent time and money in endeavouring to educate the people regarding the advantages of extending State rights, it is significant that nothing was heard from the Dominion League, an organisation supposed to be fearless and militant in its activities. Not a word was heard from that organisation in condemnation of the drastic action taken by the Federal authorities against the Government of New South Wales. Then quite recently control was taken by the Federal Government with regard to the expenditure of money within Western Australia. I do not remember the representatives of the secession movement protesting against that further encroachment. I read many letters regarding secession, but in not one of them was either of these two instances of Federal encroachment upon the Constitution and the rights of the States, ever mentioned. I ask, in all seriousness, whether the secession movement in this State—we must remember that that organisation posed as one functioning to protect the State, leading people to believe that all was well, and that the league represented a body capable of regularly and consistently attending to matters affecting the welfare of the State—is content to allow activities of that description to go unchallenged? Yet all the time there has been this gradual encroachment upon our constitutional rights, to which reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you not know that the object of the League is to bring about secession?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If the secessionists are prepared to allow the present policy to continue, with its gradual but sure absorption of the rights of the State, it is not secession that they will get, but rather unification.

The Minister for Agriculture: Would not all these matters constitute good arguments in favour of secession at the right time?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am inclined to think it will be too late to make use of these arguments in view of the gradual absorption of our rights with the consent—I say that advisedly—of the secession movement. It is useless closing the stable door after the horse has gone. The secession movement should fight vigorously against the extension of Federal powers.

Mr. Griffiths: Have not protests been made by the score, and no notice taken of them?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member may have written and spoken on the subject but, as far as I know, there has never been any public discussion or organised attempt by the so-called Dominion League on a scale likely to impress the public. I do not know of any special effort being made with regard to the attack upon New South Wales nor yet the encroachment upon the control of expenditure in Western Australia by the movement that the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) is so anxious to defend.

Mr. Sampson: A public meeting was held at His Majesty's Theatre at which 2,000 people attended, and resolutions were carried affirming the desirability of secession.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so, but while people carry resolutions affirming the desirability of secession, unification is gradually becoming an accomplished fact. Instead of emphasising Federal encroachments upon our Constitutional rights, the Dominion League discusses impracticable matters, when practical services could be rendered in the direction I have indicated.

Mr. Sampson: Then let us pass a Bill giving the people the right to vote on secession. You can help us.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member will see what I am driving at directly. The Federal Government are gradually picking the State's pockets, and extracting our revenue. As a kind of sop they are returning some of the money they take, as compensation in regard to the impossible task the State is endeavouring to accomplish in balancing the Budget. While Western Australia secured an increased disabilities grant, we still cannot balance the Budget. Despite the increased amount returned to the State, we cannot make both ends meet. We are still in the financial difficulty that has confronted the Government ever since they took office. All the encroachments of the Federal Government are in the direction of depressing State finances, curtailing the income of the State, and, at the same time, leaving us with all the burden of expenditure. I suggest the time has arrived when we should review the Constitution. I believe some organisation is necessary to review

unification from the State point of view. Unification is gradually being forced upon us. Speaking on that subject some time ago, I said that I objected to piecemeal unification because it was an unfair way of approaching the subject. It is wrong for the Federal authority to perpetually extend their powers of control. I became alarmed when they made their attack upon New South Wales. If it is right, constitutional and desirable that the Federal Government should attack a State, as New South Wales was attacked, there can be no limit to what the Federal authority can do. We should take official notice of this gradual absorption of State powers. Instead of allowing the Federal Government to take piecemeal control of our revenue, which makes it more difficult for us to carry out our work of development and of straightening out the finances, we should appoint a special commission to review the situation from the State point of view, and to issue a declaration indicating, if our rights are to be gradually encroached upon in the future as in the past with unification as the ultimate result, just what kind of unification the State desires. I do not say I am in favour of unification, but I am not blind to the fact that it is being forced upon us. I do not desire to wake up one morning and find that the Federal authority has been extended so much that we must go cap in hand to make terms, at a time when our position is weakened. On the contrary, we should go into the matter and declare what the State desires at this juncture, rather than wait until our powers have been whittled away from us. We should not be silent on that matter. The Press is spreading a kind of fear amongst public men indicating that if they say anything regarding unification, they are not loyal to the State. I want to be loyal to my State, but I do not want outsiders to encroach upon my rights as a citizen of the State, without tabulating those encroachments and ascertaining to what extent they prevent the possibility of the State continuing to function. If we find we cannot continue to function as a State, then let us state definitely along our own lines what unified system we suggest must be introduced. I emphasise the economic impossibility of maintaining all the Parliaments we are endeavouring to retain in Australia to-day. The economic situation will compel us to review the position. It is impossible, with 6,500,000

people, to attempt to continue as we are doing to-day. There are increasing deficits in each State, with variations here and there, but year in, year out, they continue to increase enormously. The financial situation must be steadied. I cannot see how it can be limited or the financial difficulties reduced with State Parliaments constituted as they are to-day. I want Western Australia to assume the initiative, review the position and ascertain what can be put in shape ready for submission to the Federal authorities, who will then be forced by pressure to refrain from further encroaching upon State activities. Following up the economic situation, we were led to believe that we would secure some appreciable results from the Ottawa Conference.

The Minister for Lands: We have not yet had time to benefit.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: In anticipation of practical results, we sent an excessively expensive delegation. In my opinion, too many delegates and officials were sent to Ottawa, and I suppose we shall ultimately be presented with the bill for expenses, which will cover an amount more than Australia can afford to pay and much more than was necessary. I question whether the results from Ottawa will justify the expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: What about the 2d. per bushel on wheat?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I will come to that. It is difficult to judge what the results, if any, will be. Mr. Bruce is constantly making speeches that are broadcast or cabled to Australia telling us that we can expect something, but it is significant that the optimistic references to Ottawa achievements come from the delegates themselves. Outside the delegates and the organisation that sent them, no opinion has emphasised that any actual results will ensue.

The Minister for Lands: There has not been time to learn what was done at Ottawa.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We ought to know something.

The Minister for Lands: We shall know in a week's time.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am speaking of what I can judge from the reports published to date. I have been watching for some indication that Australia will benefit, but so far I have not been able to discover anything.

Mr. Kenneally: The Prime Minister's statement in Parliament yesterday was sufficient.



Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There has been an improvement in the prices of Australia's two main staple commodities. Wheat is gradually but surely firming.

The Minister for Lands: And so are our stocks.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Ottawa has had no effect on the firming of wheat. Let us hope that the upward tendency will be maintained. Wool, fortunately, has also firmed. As to those two commodities, we shall not benefit from the Ottawa conference. The increase is due purely to inflation. America has made enormous sums of money available for circulation in that country. Because money has been made cheaper and distributed more liberally, commodity prices have increased. People are buying more because there is more money with which to buy it. In to-day's paper references are made by the Stabilisation Board that owing to the amount of money available, they are able to do certain things regarding the stored wheat and cotton. The Bank of England has adopted a similar policy of making money cheaper and freer. During the last few weeks Mr. Montague Norman, head of the Bank of England, has been to America, and coinciding with his visit we find money becoming easier and credits being extended. Consequently the prices of those two commodities have firmed. What has happened is exactly what Mr. Theodore suggested to the Attorney General at the conference he attended. Mr. Theodore suggested that money should be made a little easier in Australia as a result of inflation.

The Attorney General: Why pick me?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I understood the Attorney General was present when Mr. Theodore outlined his policy originally for the extension of credit by £18,000,000.

The Minister for Lands: He also said he did not believe in inflation.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: He did not believe in the kind of inflation that the Minister construed his remarks to imply. Everyone appreciates that inflation must be controlled. Otherwise, it would get out of hand, as it did in European countries. What Mr. Theodore spoke of and what is now being practised in America and England was controlled inflation as advocated by the Scullin Government.

The Attorney General: And being practised in Australia to-day.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes.

The Attorney General: It was being practised at the time of which you are speaking.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: To a limited extent only. Had it been speeded up a little, the position to-day would have been better. I wish to convince the Minister for Lands that my pessimism regarding the results of the Ottawa conference is justified. We get a concession on frozen meat, but chilled meat is left free. In other words, Britain grants a concession on frozen meat, but no restriction is to be placed upon chilled meat. That is easily explained. We cannot send frozen meat to England.

The Minister for Lands: We send all frozen meat to England.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We send frozen mutton and frozen lambs.

The Minister for Lands: And frozen beef.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: A very small quantity of frozen beef. Britain gets all her meat chilled from the Argentine. Argentine can send chilled meat to Britain: we cannot because the distance is too great. Consequently we may get a minimum result from this concession, but the advantage held by the Argentine to-day will continue. Argentine is financed mainly by British capital, and the existing control will be continued by England's importing chilled meat in competition with our less favoured frozen meat.

The Minister for Lands interjected.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know that chilled beef is quite a different proposition from frozen. Australia exports butter under what is known as the Paterson scheme, and the question arises whether any advantage to be derived from the preference will necessitate a review of the Paterson scheme. It may be impossible for us to maintain the Paterson scheme, and comply with preference conditions. Then the question will arise whether we will get any advantage. I do not say that the Paterson scheme is economically sound, but we have organised the butter export business on that basis, and we may interfere with the established practice and do more harm than good under the new arrangement. Already the Federal Government have anticipated the advantage accruing to wine export by reducing the bounty on Australian wine.

The Minister for Lands: That is charged against the wine people.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is really difficult to size up the position and arrive at a conclusion as to the advantages to be

derived by Australia from the conference. We may get an advantage in one way and lose it in another way. Certain it is that we shall be disorganising established customs and markets by the alteration. I wish to emphasise that all the efforts towards improved marketing will be of no avail until we realise the importance of marketing from a producer's point of view. We want some better organisation for the marketing of our exportable surplus. Whether it be fruit, wine or any other commodity, the export business must be organised in such a way as to command the attention of the public. To do this the article must be presented in the most attractive form, but we are not doing that because too many people are tinkering with the business. We are not able to concentrate and say to one organisation, "This has to be put on the world's market in the most attractive way." In Western Australia a number of organisations are competing, but none of them is concentrating on the question of presenting the article in the most attractive way. We need an organisation that can ensure uniform packing and labelling and a proper standardisation of weight and quality. Other countries that are not surpassing us for the quality of their produce are defeating us by presenting an inferior article in a more attractive form. So long as we tinker with marketing as we are doing, so long shall we be in difficulties. We have heard of too many cooks spoiling the broth. The trouble is that too many exporters are spoiling the market. The outstanding need in the marketing of our produce is organisation, and organisation without legislation has proved impossible. Where a portion of our production has to be marketed locally, and the surplus exported, legislative control of the whole of the commodity is necessary to handle it economically and market it in the best form. Eighty per cent. of our dried fruits are exported. For years we tried to control the local market and the export market by voluntary organisation. Numerous voluntary organisations were formed. I took part in quite a number of them and we tried to regulate matters by attending to the export of the surplus, and at the same time the marketing of our local needs. But we failed time and again until afterwards Parliament passed an Act giving the grape growers control of their commodities. They are not functioning as they should do, and are not

getting the results that should be obtained because of the attitude of the Legislative Council in limiting the operations of the measure from year to year. The board that is controlling the marketing of the commodity cannot interfere with a member of the existing marketing organisation, because there is no guarantee that the Act will be extended beyond the limit placed upon it by the Legislative Council. What we want is an extension of the period for a number of years, so as to give the board—not the same board, because it is subject to election every year—power of control over the commodity, and in that way give the organisation some degree of stability.

The Minister for Lands: When does the Act expire?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Its operations were limited to three years, and what we want cannot be done in that period. Hon. members will appreciate that what is required is security, so that the organisation may get the maximum results for the producers. I should like to tell the House what has happened in connection with the export of butter. Last year the co-operative butter factories of this State exported about 25,000 cases of butter; in other words the producers, through their own organisation, attended to the export of their surplus butter. In order to meet the requirements of the British market, the moisture content of the butter here had to be reduced, roughly speaking, to about 16 per cent. That was the limit that could pass the test for export. But while the co-operative-owned factories were thus limiting the moisture content, the proprietary concerns were coming along and marketing butter with a moisture content of up to 20 per cent. The proprietary companies were thus exploiting the co-operative concerns. They were getting their returns from butter that had 20 per cent. of water as compared with the butter that had to be exported and also sold locally containing 16 per cent. The proprietary concerns then gave the producers a slight increase, and succeeded in encouraging some producers to leave the co-operative concerns and supply the privately-owned factories. The latter were able to pay a little more for the butter fat, because the product they were turning out contained more water. Hon. members will thus see how the co-operatively controlled factories were penalised during the last export season. The proprietary fac-

tories made the most of the opportunity, and in some cases made a real welter of it. I know that the Minister and his officers woke up to the injustice and declared that they were going to put a stop to it. Many years ago Parliament wisely passed a Dairy Act, a very fine piece of legislation indeed. The Act gives the Minister absolute control over dairy factories of every description, and he has power to see that they are conducted on a uniform basis, producing the best type of butter with a uniform moisture content. The Minister for Agriculture has promised to do quite a lot, and I appeal to him to go even a little further. He may be surprised to know that during the last few weeks butter has been coming down with a 19 per cent. moisture content, and it has been sold under the eyes of the officers of the department.

The Minister for Agriculture: There was a flaw in the regulations, but now that is being put right.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad to hear that, because grave injustice was being inflicted on other butter producers. It is satisfactory to know that the weakness in the regulation that permitted that kind of thing to take place has been discovered, and that it is to be remedied. I hope now that the officers of the department will vigorously enforce the provisions of the Act. I want the Minister also to realise that just as control is required with regard to dairying, so is it needed in respect of dried fruits. I realise that there is no need to control commodities that are marketed locally, but if we produce commodities of an export quality in excess of local requirements, then you cannot possibly regulate the marketing of that commodity other than by legislation. Look at the mess we are making with the lamb trade to-day. It is wonderful what we in this State are able to produce, but we are not marketing our products as they should be marketed, and neither are we exercising that control which is necessary. We have not authority to say that the export quality of lambs shall be of a certain standard, and that anyone who has fat lambs shall take his share of the export responsibility, leaving sufficient for the State's needs. To-day there is nobody with authority. Anyone can go to a saleyard and buy what he considers suitable for export. Nobody has any right to say, "That is an exportable sheep or lamb, and can be sent direct to the central killing and freezing place," and

in that way avoid double or perhaps treble handling. I have pointed out over and over again in the House that we are losing an enormous amount of money because of our inefficiency regarding the marketing of our products. We are likewise suffering because of our want of control. I urge upon the Minister, at the earliest possible date, to introduce legislation on the lines of that enforced in New South Wales and Queensland so that we may organise in the direction of assisting the producers. We would not in any way interfere with the local consumers, but we should get rid of our surplus products on the world's markets and obtain better prices. Before I conclude, let me give one illustration. I shall take the export of eggs. One of the biggest distributors in London is a man named Munro. He is buying from two or three organisations in Western Australia. One man sends eggs to Munro in London, another man is doing the same, and very likely so is a third man, the result being that Munro has three competitors supplying Western Australian eggs. We know what human nature is. If there were only one seller, as there should be in a State like ours, there would not be competition in selling, and the one buyer in London would have to make his purchases from the one seller. To-day in regard to all our commodities we have a multiplicity of sellers, and a limited number of buyers. It should be the other way about. That is done in Queensland and New South Wales to a great extent. We could do it better in Western Australia, because generally speaking we have better commodities, and it only requires the appreciation of Parliament as to what is taking place to give the producers an organisation for marketing similar to that which exists for the marketing of wheat. I have already placed on record what has been done by the wheat pool. For many years there was no direct control, but after the establishment of the pool, the position was revolutionised. We have for the producers a seat on the Baltic Exchange where the advantages and the superiority of Western Australian wheat are constantly brought under the notice of the greatest organisation in the world. That could never have been done without some kind of compulsory organisation. The wheat pool, all the same, is not organised as one would wish. It is 60 per cent. efficient, and if we

had 100 per cent. efficiency we can imagine what the result would be, especially when we remember the success that has followed the 60 per cent. efficiency. We believe we are suffering from world economic difficulties. It is agreed that we cannot adjust economics in Western Australia unless something be done throughout the world. But we can do a good deal in regard to our export commodities if we tackle the problem in the right way. I believe that while a little consideration was given to credit and currency at Ottawa, that consideration was limited to the percentage of toll put upon production by invested capital. I was pleased to see that the economists that attended the Ottawa Conference impressed on the delegation that the toll of invested capital upon the value of production was getting altogether out of proportion, and that that toll was largely contributing to the present difficulty. As far as I can see, the consideration given to credit and to currency at the Ottawa Conference was really to gather detailed knowledge in regard to the toll upon production by invested capital, so that the information would be available at the great Economic Conference to be held in London. Those of us who have been studying this question have been waiting patiently for the London conference. We did expect that the League of Nations would be able to accomplish something, but owing to the fact that America is not associated with the League, the League's operations have been limited. The League has done a considerable amount of educational work, but apart from that its actual accomplishment is limited because the League is not truly representative. The forthcoming London conference will be truly international. All the nations of the world are expected to send delegates for the purpose of trying to arrive at economic reconstruction. In my opinion, if we could but overcome three outstanding needs, we would make considerable progress towards re-establishment. I refer to the complete suspension or cancellation of war debts, a review of reparations, and the creation of an international bank of reserve. I believe the war debts must ultimately go, and the sooner the better for all the nations of the world. Again, we can see that we shall always have discontent and possibly revolution while the injustice of the reparation payments ex-

ists. And the control of gold is a great disturbing factor, possibly the greatest after the war debts. If the control of gold were in the hands of one strong representative international bank of reserve, the gold could be used to stabilise the various countries of the world, helping those in distress and gradually stabilising commodity prices. But the sad side of it is that just at the time when we are all getting optimistic, the information comes that America is going to limit the consideration of economic matters at the London conference, that she is going to bar all discussion of war debts. Should that happen, I do not know that much result from the conference can be looked for. It is very sad that, just when there is opportunity to do something for the suffering humanity of the world, one nation, the one that could contribute most to the re-establishment of economic conditions, is taking up a hostile attitude. I want to differ from the statement made last night by the Minister for Unemployment Relief that the present system of part-time and partial employment is the best method of overcoming the existing unemployment difficulty. In the discussion on the Supply Bill I said, and I want to repeat it now, that what is necessary is to re-establish men in industry on the full purchasing power of the wages earned. In other words, we require to increase the number of consumers. To-day the great mass of the working population are really on a bread-and-jam basis. They are not buying the needs of their families and their homes; they are not able to get their clothing. This has been emphasised over and over again. So what is the use of perpetuating that, of the Government saying, "We have a little money and we are going to expend it on part time so far as it will go"? If the Minister or the Government would reverse that policy and say, "We are going to put as many men on full-time work on the basic wage as the money will permit," the Government would then be making the workers consumers in the full sense, the money would start to flow, and we should have rehabilitated industry to the extent of the expenditure of the money available. But to-day we are not doing that. The workers are not consumers in the full sense of the word, but are on a bread-and-jam basis, instead of being able to buy all the commodities required for their homes and their families. In my own electorate recently 70 or 80 men were re-em-

ployed at the Midland Junction Workshops on full time. A fair proportion of those men live in Midland Junction. Some of the business men of the town have told me that they could see a definite improvement in business in consequence of the employment of those men on full time, and that there was a better tone discernible throughout the Midland district. The point of it was that the re-employed men, being on full time, were consumers once more, and as a result business became more buoyant. I believe that is the way in which we shall have to overcome our difficulties. I am no believer in this part-time employment. It is not to the advantage of the State, nor do I think it is of much use to the unemployed. Of course we must maintain sustenance payments, but I want the Minister to try to get an expert investigation into this matter, for I think it would ultimately be found that by giving full-time employment we would reach stability much faster than we are likely to do under existing conditions. Frequently has the Premier said that work begets work. That is quite right. The more men we put on at full time, the greater will be the cumulative result, for those men in turn will influence the employment of other men, and so the good work will extend. But while we have partial employment we shall never get very far. If we review those industries and businesses and activities that have not taken any notice of the depression, but have gone ahead as usual, it will be seen that they have taken every advantage of the Financial Emergency Act in point of wages, but have maintained their prices and charges just as before the depression. Those are the concerns that are flourishing and paying big dividends, while those that got scared and started to cut rates and prices and services have been losing ground. An outstanding illustration will be found in the banks. The emergency legislation has not interfered with the banks, for they were definitely excluded from it.

The Minister for Lands: Their profits have been considerably reduced.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That may be so, but still their profits are greater than the profits of those other concerns that cut down everything from the beginning. Certainly the banks have not been penalised to the extent that other firms and companies have. Because the banks maintained their business as usual, they have not suffered anything

like those other organisations that became a bit windy and started to curtail. Another outstanding illustration is the West Australian Newspapers Ltd. There is an organisation that has maintained the price of 2d. for its daily newspaper. When first the price of that paper was raised from 1d. to 2d., the newsprint was costing the company about £80 per ton. To-day the price of newsprint is £30 per ton, notwithstanding which that company refuses to restore the original price of the newspaper, namely, one penny. Certainly that company is not on part time.

The Minister for Lands: You know that their prices for advertisements have been considerably reduced.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I know that the service rendered by the newspaper to the public has been reduced.

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

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I wish to stress the fact that the "West Australian" Newspapers Ltd. have maintained the price of their product, although the raw material is costing to-day roughly £30 instead of £80. I have seen no announcement of a proposal to reduce the advertising rates. This organisation has maintained its price, but has taken advantage of the reduction in wages provided by the Financial Emergency Act. Under the present economic situation the company have been able to earn for their shareholders a very substantial profit. It is impossible from the published figures to say what the profits have been, but we know that the capital is £477,000, and that in a short space of time a reserve amounting to about £130,000 has been built up. The profit made this year was £61,000 compared with £57,000 last year. A dividend on the share capital has been declared at the rate of about 13 per cent. This is an indication that when one maintains one's activity at the price set down previous to the depression, one gets better results than would be the case if a cheeseparing policy was adopted, and there was a general reduction in wages. I would apply that principle to my contention that we should give the worker an opportunity to re-establish himself, get back to his original price, and once more be put upon a paying basis. This newspaper, which makes a substantial profit for its shareholders, is to-day supporting one of the most cruel cuts that has ever been made. A certain saving is to be effected by the Federal Government by

taking from old age pensioners a matter of £1,000,000, as their contribution towards the economic situation. The "West Australian" believes that is just. I appeal to the paper to think a little deeper, and ask if it is reasonable that the company should be paying dividends to the extent they are doing, and yet claim that it is impossible to maintain a payment of 17s. 6d. a week to old age pensioners. I take strong exception to the action of the Federal Government in penalising the pensioner beyond what he has already been penalised. I used all my influence against the previous cut, and joined with others in the effort to have the amount reinstated at the earliest possible moment. I also took part in the last Federal election campaign. All the candidates I listened to endorsed the proposal that one of the first payments that should be reinstated to the original figure was the £1 a week to old age pensioners. There were no indications by the supporters of the Lyons Government that they proposed to endorse further cuts in these pensions. Had they made the slightest announcement to that effect, it is questionable whether the Lyons party would have been returned. The party which either endorsed or condoned the cut of 2s. 6d. a week certainly suffered. The supporters of the Lyons party received a certain amount of support because it was assumed they were opposed to that cut. Had they strongly supported it on the hustings, and conveyed the idea that they would agree to a further reduction, I do not think there would have been any Lyons Government in Australia. It is wrong to place such a burden upon those least able to bear it. There should be a public outcry against this imposition. We should be afforded an opportunity to discuss the matter in this Chamber, and make representations for the protection of aged persons within our own borders. I believe the Returned Soldiers' League, many of whose members enjoy pensions, would take an active part in preventing the singling-out of aged persons for a penalty of this description. I trust the people of the State will endorse the protest already made, and that the community will raise one voice unanimously in support of that protest.

Mr. Marshall: One section of the community has been reduced 22½ per cent., but it is now proposed to take 25 per cent. off the old age pensioners.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: When the Budget is brought down I shall want an explanation of what it is proposed to do with the land that is to be cleared at Frankland River by the unemployed. When the Minister for Lands proposed to clear land at Nornalup, the Chamber limited his activities in a certain direction.

The Minister for Lands: The Chamber did not do so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We influenced his action.

The Minister for Lands: You did not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: He did not go to the extent originally suggested. If he has gone as far as that, he has not indicated it to the House.

The Minister for Lands: I said we were limiting the scheme to 100 persons, and we have done so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At the outset more than that number was talked of. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of high-class land, as good as, if not better than, anything else in the South-West, lying close to existing railways, and held in an unimproved condition.

The Minister for Lands: Where?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There are tens of thousands of acres between Bunbury and Bridgetown. One can travel for miles through beautiful country, some of it ring-barked and a good deal of it in its virgin state, but all of it is privately owned.

The Minister for Lands: It is available, but at a price we could not afford to pay.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No individual should be allowed to penalise the State in that way.

The Minister for Lands: Things were worse when you were Minister for Lands.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: This land has been monopolised for years.

The Minister for Lands: And it was when you were Minister.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At that time other activities were going on, although I may not have done all I should have done.

The Minister for Lands: You could not do it then.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was Minister for Lands during the war period when we had other problems to tackle. Even if I was lax, it is an outstanding reproach against all Governments that this land should be left unimproved, and that we should be going

miles away from it in order to put people on the land. Before any of this new land can profitably be utilised, it must be linked up with railway communication. The privately-owned areas are close to a railway, and close to butter factories, sawmills and other activities that are necessary for economic production. It is within the power of the Government to declare that they no longer intend to have areas of unimproved land lying idle alongside existing railways, and be forced to go to remote parts of the State to bring about land settlement. I am opposed to the clearing operations that are going on now. I warn the Minister that if he clears land and does not immediately settle it, undergrowth will become stronger than ever, and the clearing costs will be greater than the original costs. We went through that experience at Denmark. Many tens of thousands of pounds were wasted at Denmark because we cleared the area and then had difficulty in settling it. We shall experience graver difficulties as regards the land now being cleared. I venture the opinion that that land will have to be recleared, and that the new growth will be more difficult to cope with than the original growth was. I wish to refer to just two or three local matters. I appeal to the Government to realise that something is wanted as regards the administration of fire brigade matters. The Fire Brigades Board is altogether too expensive to-day. The levy put upon property holders and ratepayers is beyond the needs of to-day. The Act which the board administers is 20 or 25 years old, an utterly obsolete measure. We know that fire fighting in the metropolitan area is definitely associated with transport.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you suggest the volunteer system?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I suggest a commonsense system. I recognise that we cannot have two systems in one area. If it has proved to be essential to have permanently paid firemen to fight fire in most parts of the metropolitan area, that system should be made general throughout the area. The matter was reviewed some years ago, and the authorities recognised a permanently paid fire brigade to be essential for the protection of property in the metropolitan area. For special reasons, one or two exceptions were made; but it was definitely agreed, and an honourable understanding was arrived at, that no extension of the utilisation of volunteer firemen would be made within the metro-

politan area. The member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) while Chief Secretary ignored that honourable understanding, and made other arrangements. Although I protest against that, the point I wish to make is that fire fighting is a metropolitan activity, and not a district activity. Fremantle fire-fighters can reach Perth in very quick time to assist the fire fighters here. It is quite a simple matter to mobilise all those activities in and around the metropolitan area. District divisions are not necessary. The matter of fire fighting could be centralised, or it could be confined to two or three organisations. The continuance of the obsolete multiplicity of organisations is unduly expensive. In my own electorate, the Fire Brigades Board proposed to build another fire station at Bassendean. I am glad the local road board protested against that course. There is no need for fire stations so close together when transport has been revolutionised to such an extent in fire fighting appliances. Therefore I trust the Government will appreciate the need for economising in this regard. The Fire Brigades Board is too expensive an institution to-day; its administration is out of date; and great economies could be effected by an amendment of the Act and a review of the board's activities. In conclusion, let me express my hope that in the Budget the Government will make some pronouncement as to relief for the primary producers. A special Royal Commission investigated the position of the wheat-growers in particular, and made recommendations. So far as I know, few if any of those recommendations have been adopted.

The Minister for Lands: You have not read the report.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I read it most carefully.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us some recommendations that have not been adopted.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have no hesitation in saying that the Minister would have great difficulty in mentioning one recommendation that has been adopted in its entirety.

The Minister for Lands: I will tell you all about that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Government have tinkered with some of the re-

commendations, adopting portions of them; but generally speaking the Government have ignored the Commission's vital recommendations. Those recommendations which would prove of assistance to the primary producers have been ignored, and the primary producers have been allowed to toil on under impossible conditions. I have referred to the fact that the State is struggling under impossible conditions. The case of the primary producers is similar. They are saddled with debt to such an extent that now they have to make compound interest payments. That could be avoided if only the Government would provide means for funding the liabilities. I do not suggest that we should at this stage write the liabilities off, but they should be funded so as to protect the producers against demands for compound interest. The existing position is impossible. The Minister for Agriculture knows that what I say is true. Wheatgrowers and woolgrowers are absolutely afraid of commodity prices rising, for they know perfectly well that those to whom they owe money will then be most exacting in their demands for payment. To-day the creditors are giving the farmer a rest; but the liabilities are his, and interest is being charged up. As soon as ever he gets a little return over the cost of what he produces, efforts will be made to collect from him the interest burden he has accumulated. In other words, he will be kept right down to the level on which he is struggling to-day. His standard of living has become deplorably low. The danger can be avoided if only the Minister will take action to fund some of the liabilities which have accumulated during the last two or three years, and to spread their payment over a number of years to be decided in accordance with the farmers' position, thus preventing the liabilities from producing further interest burdens. It could be done by declaring a moratorium in regard to those debts. By that means the whole position could have been relieved in a practical way which would have given new heart to our primary producers. To me it is extraordinary that representatives of country constituencies, influentially situated so far as the Government are concerned, allow this question to drift. That is quite wrong. Every day the farmers are getting worse and worse off. They are becoming more depressed as their debts in-

crease. They see the interest burden continuing to pile up. The women and children, in particular, are beginning to wonder whether they will ever see brighter times again. I ask the Government to do a little more than appoint Royal Commissions. We have had a Royal Commission on wheat-growing; and nothing has resulted from that, so far as I am aware. We have had a Royal Commission on dairying and group settlement. I do not know what is going to be done with regard to the recommendations of that Royal Commission. I have not seen any active move on the part of the Government to carry them into effect. Above all, I consider that when Royal Commissions are appointed, Parliament should have an opportunity of discussing their reports.

The Minister for Lands: So Parliament has.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Government should suggest the period for a discussion. The idea of private members having to move for consideration of the reports of Royal Commissions appointed by the Government is, in my opinion, wrong.

The Minister for Lands: You know that no other Royal Commission report has ever been investigated by this House as the House investigated that last report.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know that there was any close investigation by the House of that Royal Commission's report. Certain members did draw attention to it, and did advance a plea for consideration to the farmers as outlined by the Royal Commission. But Parliament itself did little or nothing, as a Parliament, to give consideration to the report. We make a plea for the unemployed, but at the same time let us not forget those producers throughout Western Australia who have been brought down in income because of the fall in commodity prices, because of the fact that they are selling below cost of production and have been doing so for two or three years, until to-day their standard of living is a disgrace for any Parliament to tolerate. I have already contributed my share to the consideration of the unemployed problem, and I am not unmindful of the fact that another large section of the community has the right to look to Parliament for help, and to expect from Parliament greater consideration than the Government have extended up to date.



**HON. A. McCALLUM** (South Fremantle) [7.58]: I rise to oppose the motion, or at all events that part of it which expresses thanks to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor for the Speech. I see nothing in the Speech to thank anyone for. Comparing the Speech with the Notice Paper, we see that the Government, through the Lieut.-Governor, have made no attempt whatever to advise the House as to the likely programme for this session. Members usually look, and the public usually look, to the contents of the Governor's Speech for indications of the parliamentary programme for the session. But the two or three items which the Speech mentions are altogether overshadowed already—before the adoption of the Address-in-reply—by the notices which Ministers have given of Bills they propose to introduce. This fact conjures up in my mind two or three questions. I do not know whether we are to treat the Lieut.-Governor's Speech as a promise of certain legislation to be brought down. That is the way in which the Speech is usually regarded. From the fact that on this occasion the Premier has caused only three items to be mentioned, it may be inferred that he has learned the lesson not to promise so much.

The Minister for Lands: There might be more items.

**Hon. A. McCALLUM**: The results of the promises which the Premier made to the people of this country at the time of the last election, and also his efforts to fulfil those promises, have so disappointed the people, and so discounted his influence on the public mind of Western Australia, that seemingly the hon. gentleman has determined not to make any more promises.

Mr. Marshall: Not until the next election, at any rate.

**Hon. A. McCALLUM**: If we on this side could be assured that that result had been achieved, we would probably be satisfied that our time here had not been mis-spent. On the other hand, the meaning may be something else. The promises that the Premier made to the electors at the last general election produced such a storm of protest that it may mean that the Premier is not inclined to involve the Lieut.-Governor in any storm that may now break over his own head. Had the Premier included a long list of Bills in the Speech and failed to introduce them, as he failed to keep his general elec-

tion promises, the Premier possibly thinks that the Lieut.-Governor might be included in any consequent adverse comment. We must regard the Speech as disappointing. It is not an indication to the public or to Parliament as to what the legislative programme is to be. The Opposition have been charged with having stonewalled the passage of the Supply Bill, which was introduced earlier in the session. Those who make such an accusation against the Opposition have a very poor opinion of our capacity. If that really was our best effort at stonewalling, my opinion of Opposition members must be materially altered. I do not think any speech extended very much over one hour, and to suggest that that was our best effort at holding up the business of the House, is not much of a compliment to those on the Opposition side of the House. Parliament had been in recess for eight months, during which the affairs of the State had drifted from bad to worse. Tens of thousands of our people were hungry. Men and women throughout the State did not know where their next meal was to come from, or whether they would have a shelter over their heads that night. The Government introduced a Supply Bill, and because we held up that measure, asked for information and protested against what had been happening during the previous eight months, we were accused of stonewalling. If ever the time arrives when it will be necessary for Opposition members to stonewall, those people who levelled that charge against us will have their eyes opened. If they regard the debate on the Supply Bill as stonewalling, it simply shows that they do not know what stonewalling is. It was merely a protest voiced by Opposition members in the exercise of their rights and duties as representatives of the people.

Hon. P. Collier: And voiced with great moderation, too.

**Hon. A. McCALLUM**: With extreme moderation, considering what had been happening.

Mr. Marshall: Many members did not speak at all.

**Hon. A. McCALLUM**: During the history of this State—I do not know that I cannot include Parliaments in other parts as well—there has never before been a Government with so small a majority as the present that received such considerate treatment from the Opposition, as we have extended to the present Government.

The Minister for Lands: You are giving us what we gave you.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: As I proceed, I will endeavour to indicate what attitude was adopted by Government members when they sat in Opposition. I will indicate how they have reciprocated. Complaints have been made by Government members that our criticism has been entirely destructive.

The Minister for Lands: We did not complain about the stonewalling.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: One or two members on the Government side of the House did make that complaint, but the Press was mainly responsible.

Hon. P. Collier: No case could be put up without speaking.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: If it depended upon Government members to state their case, it would not have much effect upon the public. As a matter of fact, the Government do not put up their case, but rely upon other people to do so for them. While we are accused of being entirely destructive in our criticism, and complaints are made that we have not offered any suggestions for the guidance of Parliament, it would appear that an endeavour is being made to assign the Opposition a new role. For how long has it been the responsibility or duty of the Opposition to provide the Government with a legislative programme? Is it our duty to direct the affairs of the country, and not the duty of those holding Ministerial office? When we sat on the Government side of the House and a similar point was raised, the present Premier, speaking as Leader of the Opposition, replied that the people of the State paid us to do the work. Now that he is on the Government side of the House, he and those with him want us to submit a programme for them! If we consider the discussion on the Address-in-reply so far as it has proceeded, we may look for the points that can be regarded as outstanding, points that have commanded most attention and require some examination by the Government. In my opinion two points have been outstanding. The first referred to the overlapping of Commonwealth and State activities with the consequent increased costs heaped on the country, and the second was the need for a changed monetary policy.

The Minister for Lands: You will admit that the latter is not in the hands of the State.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I will show you the position directly. Those have been the

two outstanding points of the debate so far, and both were made by members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. Thus, if it is a matter of furnishing ideas and suggestions as to what should be done, members on the Opposition side of the House have been responsible for the two outstanding points raised so far. It is true that the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) did make the suggestion that the Government should write down the liabilities of the farmers, but I invite him to be a little more explicit and say just what he meant. It will be agreed that this touches on an outstanding feature of the economic situation of the State. We realise that Western Australia depends mainly upon her primary products. If we cannot produce wheat and wool at a profit, there is not much ahead of the State. So when the member for Williams-Narrogin suggested that the Government should write down the liabilities, did he refer only to the farmers' liabilities to the Government, or did he include all the liabilities, embracing money owed to merchants as well? If he suggested the writing-down of the total liabilities, who does he consider should carry the "write-off"? It is useless suggesting the Government should write down liabilities if it is merely those owed to the Government that are to be dealt with. The pressing liabilities of the farmers are those owing to merchants.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: And to the banks.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, to outside private institutions. Does the member for Williams-Narrogin suggest covering those liabilities as well? How does he propose writing off the liabilities, and who is to carry the extra financial burden? Merely to make vague proposals of this description without suggesting how they can be accomplished does not take us very far towards a solution. It is an important point, and I invite the member for Williams-Narrogin to enlarge upon it. When he gets his next opportunity on the Estimates, I trust he will let us know exactly what he means. Even since the initiation of the debate in this House, further encroachments by the Commonwealth on State interests, particularly as affecting revenue, have been noticed. Last year a Bill was introduced in this Parliament to impose a tax on winning bets. Already one or two States have legislation along those lines, but now I notice that the Commonwealth Government propose to explore that field of tax-

ation. I am amazed to notice that no protests have been lodged by State Treasurers. I thought the discussion on the Supply Bill would have awakened the Premier to a little activity. He was assured of the unanimous support of members of this Chamber. The Leader of the Opposition made it perfectly clear where he stood, and the Premier knows where the Opposition stand. We suggested a united protest to the Commonwealth Government against the continual encroachment upon State spheres of action. But the Premier sat dumbly by. He has made no protest and lets the matter go by default. It is left to members of the Opposition to draw public attention to the position and endeavour to have some action taken. The Commonwealth Government have talked about the economies they have effected. I shall have something to say about it. They propose to cut down the old-age and invalid pensions by 25 per cent. The poor old man or woman who is an invalid, blind, crippled, sick, or infirm, drawing the munificent income of £1 a week, has to suffer a reduction of 25 per cent., while High Court judges in receipt of £60 a week decline to give up one shilling and the Commonwealth Government allow them to persist in that attitude.

Member: That is patriotism!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: And the Commonwealth Government talk about equality of sacrifice.

Mr. Marshall: Think of the Postmaster General on £3,000 a year. My God, it is all right!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The judge of the High Court who imposed the 22 per cent. reduction on the workers has declined to give one shilling out of his salary to help the Government in the crisis through which they are passing. That man, in addition to his £60 a week, is drawing a pension from the Queensland Government. When, in face of that, the Government cut the pension from £1 to 15s. per week, it is time a strong protest was made from one end of the country to the other. While the Treasurer here is heaping up huge deficits, he is allowing the Commonwealth to encroach upon what should be sources of income to the State and is sitting idly by. He and other members have urged that, had it not been for exchange and unemployment relief, he would practically have balanced the Budget. He has made a great song about the amount he had to pay by way of exchange. Where would he be

to-day if he had not had to pay that exchange? He is advocating not only a retention of the present rate but an increase of it. If he had not the exchange he would be in a far worse position. The money that he is paying by way of exchange is coming back to him in many ways. If the prices of wool and wheat were reduced by 25 per cent.—the exchange means an increase of 25 per cent. on the prices of those commodities—where would he be? What would become of his finances then? Though he puts the exchange forward as an excuse for his deficit, he is getting the money back in many ways. I agree with him in advocating a retention of the exchange. The cost of exchange to the State he is getting not only in taxation but in freights. There is an impression abroad that we had very much more loan money to spend than the present Government have had. The Minister for Railways repeated it last night by saying, in reply to an interjection by the Leader of the Opposition, "You had £4,000,000 to spend in one year and from present indications we shall not have £4,000,000 to spend during our term." One construction that may be placed upon his remark is he expects an early demise of the Government.

Mr. Raphael: And it will come.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I wish to put the other side and let the House and, I hope, the country know the facts. In our last year of office the loan money totalled roughly £3,600,000. I will add the deficit that the present Premier showed three months later. Every member will agree that, had we remained in office, the deficit would not have been so large. The Premier raked in every account so that every possible penny was paid out, and he pushed back receipts until the following financial year.

The Minister for Lands: You know that is hardly fair.

Hon. P. Collier: It is true.

The Minister for Lands: The books were closed on the 30th June and what you say was not done.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister will not deny that the deficit would have been considerably less had we remained in office.

Hon. P. Collier: The bigger the deficit that year, the better it was for their first year of office.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That was the object. All Governments do that. The present Government are not exceptions.

The Minister for Lands: We were the first Government to close the year on the 30th June, both revenue and expenditure.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: By doing so the Government were merely carrying out an arrangement made by all the Premiers at the conference. We are not denying that, but it does not affect the issue.

Hon. P. Collier: It does not apply to this point.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am prepared to allow the half-million deficit. That would bring the amount of money we had to spend during our last year of office to £4,100,000. The present Government had loan money in their first year totalling £1,750,000, and their deficit was £1,460,000 which brought the total to £3,210,000.

The Minister for Lands: Do not forget your revenue.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The whole argument hinged on loan expenditure. Little of the money for employment is paid out of revenue. Additional taxation was imposed by the present Government, including sales tax, hospital tax, two additional stamp duties, totalisator tax, entertainment tax, parliamentary allowances reduction, income and dividend duties increases. Taking the Treasurer's figures, which can be regarded as conservative, those taxes represented nothing under £400,000 for the year.

Hon. P. Collier: Was it not part of the present Government's policy to reduce taxation?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not dealing with that point. I admit that they did not collect the new taxes over the whole year, but they enforced a wage reduction, and district allowances were cut out. When we were in office it was reckoned that 1s. reduction for the railway men amounted to £60,000 or £70,000 a year to the department, but the railway men, in some instances, have been reduced by as much as 30s. a week. Anyhow, we can say that the present Government had £3,610,000 against our £4,100,000, so the difference between our last year and their first year was only half a million. That does not take into account the wages reduction, and it is apparent how badly the present Government compare with the previous Government. The Leader of the Opposition, in the course of his speech, advocated the use of the drag-line excavator for work on the drains

at Harvey, and he has been twitted by members opposite and by writers in the Press with having handed the other side an argument to use against him when bulk handling comes up for consideration.

Hon. P. Collier: Childish!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not know what attitude the Leader of the Opposition will take towards bulk handling. It is not a party issue; every member on this side is free to express his opinion. But whatever view the Leader of the Opposition takes of bulk handling, it cannot be influenced by his attitude on the question of excavating the drains at Harvey. He pointed out that the Government had the machines, that they were lying idle, and that interest and other charges on the borrowed money had to be met. If there was a given sum of money for the construction of drains and the machines were used, a greater chainage could be done with the machines than with barrow labour. If members opposite considered that the machines would have to be purchased, and that those charges would not have been incurred if the work were carried on by barrow, they were arguing on wrong premises. The introduction of machinery does not necessarily mean cheapness. During my world tour I noticed, particularly in the United States, a country that is over-mechanised, that the cheapest method of handling bricks was for human beings to take them in twos and hand them on. In Sydney I saw bricks at a kiln loaded into the body of a dray, the body put on a punt, the punt towed to Sydney, the body lifted on to wheels and driven to a building and then hoisted to the level where the bricklayers were working. Still those bricks had to be removed two at a time by human hands and passed along. Nowhere has a cheaper method of handling bricks been found. So it cannot be taken for granted that the mere fact of using machinery will cut down costs. The point made by the Leader of the Opposition was that the machines were in the possession of the Government, that the interest charges were going on, and that the Government, instead of using them to earn the money, had the work done by obsolete methods. I have noticed this session that two members on the Government side have changed their allegiance from the party they represented last year. There was a time when such an ac-

tion was regarded as being of some significance. In all Parliaments it is considered that when members change their party, they ought, from a sense of honour, return to their electors and seek re-endorsement.

Mr. Raphael: It is becoming a habit with them.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Regarding the member for Katanning, I do not think there is anything serious. He endeavoured to secure the endorsement of the Country Party at the last election, and I think it is doubtful now where he stands. We do not know whether he is in the Country Party or not. He may be or he may not be. He may have been there last year and may not be there now. With the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) it is an entirely different matter. He entered the House as a member of the Country Party and changed over to the Nationalist Party. There was some little plum of office held out.

Mr. Marshall: He had a feed of the plums, too.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He was refused endorsement by the Country Party. He was not considered a good Country Party man. He was expelled from the Country Party. Later another Government was formed, but there were no plums for the hon. member.

Hon. P. Collier: Much to his disappointment.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Now he has deserted the Nationalist Party, and gone back to the old one. There may be some plums associated with the Country Party.

Hon. P. Collier: A man who in the course of one revolving moon was poet, fiddler, statesman and buffoon.

Mr. Sampson: The Leader of the Opposition can do his little bit in that way.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not know how the hon. member regards it. Even in the short time that I have been in the House there has been more than one man who has found he could not agree with the party to which he was elected, and went back to his electorate.

The Minister for Lands: With what result?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Is it the result that frightens the hon. member? It is not a question of honour or duty, but it is the result he is afraid of. This is what we learn from his Leader.

The Minister for Lands: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It makes a cold shiver run down the hon. member's spine to think of the result.

The Minister for Lands: I asked you what the result had been in the other case.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He is not taking any risk.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is referred to in the Governor's Speech.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It should have been mentioned there. I am protesting against the omission. I am opposing the motion because the Speech is incomplete. It should have advised us about many more questions than it did.

Mr. Raphael: That would come under the heading of elections.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Governor should have demanded an explanation of the hon. member. Perhaps we are judging him too harshly.

The Minister for Lands: Of course you are.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Perhaps the true explanation is that there is no difference between the two parties sitting opposite, that it does not matter a snap of the fingers to which a man belongs, for they are identical. How has the Country Party slipped from its original status? In the first place it was a breakaway from the Nationalists. We remember the statements that were made, that members were dominated by St. George's Terrace interests, that the country members could not get a fair deal, and that the Country Party must have independent representation. Where is all that now?

Mr. Panton: Back to the Terrace.

Hon. P. Collier: They are mild sucking doves.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There is so little difference between the parties that even the electors do not know to which party their representatives belong.

Mr. Brown: What makes you afraid of the Country Party?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is only when I look at the hon. member that I become afraid. I am not afraid of the party to which he belongs. I am only frightened by his expressions. In his reply to the Leader of the Opposition the Premier gave us a lot of information and figures to indicate the economies his Government had effected. He went down the list of departments to show this. What I am going to refer to is a small

item, but it is the feather which shows the way the wind is blowing. We have an instance in front of us of how far the Government have looked to effect economies. I hope what I am going to say will not be taken in a personal sense, because it is not meant in that light. When the position of Sergeant-at-Arms became vacant, every member had it in mind that it would not be filled. If ever there was a useless office that is one. What useful purpose is served by having a Sergeant-at-Arms in this Chamber? It may be very nice to have such an officer, but it is altogether undignified and humiliating to have a full grown man, a Brigadier General at that, walking around the Chamber in knickerbockers, silk stockings and with bows on his shoes. He is wearing a uniform which had to be bought by the people of the country when other men are unable to find clothes for themselves or their children. It is a perfectly useless office. There has never been one shilling's worth of work associated with the position in all the years that I have been in Parliament.

Mr. Sampson: It has been maintained by every Government.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Why was it not cut out in these times? Every member will agree that it was not desired to dispense with the services of the former occupant of the position, but when the office became vacant we did not think it would be filled.

Mr. Sampson: There are duties attached to the office outside this Chamber.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You do not understand the position.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: What are they? There are no duties outside the Chamber, and there are none within it.

Mr. Sampson: In connection with the library.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: No duties are performed that could not be carried out by anyone who is here. The position is neither ornamental nor useful. It is one of the old traditions that has been handed down to us, and should have been stopped now that the country is passing through so serious a crisis. To have filled it does not show a very keen desire on the part of the Government to effect savings.

The Minister for Lands: You are going to judge them on this one office.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I have not finished yet.

The Minister for Lands: You will have to give us some better example than that.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I give that as an outstanding instance of the failure of the Government to effect economies. The people of the State have to pay for the silk suits, silk stockings, patent leather shoes and buttons and to have a full-grown man marching around here in knickerbockers. Of what use is the position? I understand that the holder of the office is the official chucker-out. If any trouble arises, and any member gets over the odds there is always a policeman handy to do what is required. I now want to deal with the point which the Leader of the Opposition raised concerning statements made by the Chamber of Commerce, and the attitude of the Government towards the suggestions advanced by that organisation. I have stated in the House before that I usually prefer to accept the ideas and opinions of hard-headed men of affairs rather than those of theorists and persons who have been academically trained. When we have the President of that Chamber talking as he did the other day, one hesitates about attaching much weight to opinions coming from that source. I am relieved that the Chamber has recently changed its president. Perhaps we may now hope for better things. Referring to the Financial Emergency Act the other day Mr. de Rose made the statement that it would have been a splendid measure had its effect in arbitration matters been made mandatory instead of industry being made the catspaw of the courts. Such a condition, he said, was diametrically opposed to fostering that feeling of confidence which was so necessary, and he impressed upon the Government the necessity for taking measures to amend this particularly offensive portion of the Act at the earliest moment. That meant that instead of the Arbitration Court dealing with wage adjustments, this Parliament should mandatorily reduce wages. That may suit the Chamber of Commerce, but it shows how shallow and short-sighted the views of these gentlemen can be. It may suit Mr. de Rose, while he has his own political colour on the Government bench, to have this policy carried out, but if he approves of that policy, the moment the Government is changed, will he still agree that wages should be fixed by Parliament, and that increases should be voted here? We made our position clear when the Bills were before us last session. I hope the Government will take no notice

of this representation. I do not know what is proposed in the Bills that are coming down to renew these various measures, but if the Government intend to adopt the suggestion of the Chamber of Commerce, they may expect serious trouble from this side of the House.

The Minister for Lands: From the titles of the Bills it does not seem as if there would be any material alteration.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We do not know that yet.

Mr. Kennelly: We have to be suspicious.

The Minister for Lands: If you were not suspicious it would be most unusual.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I want to get some information regarding the Government's idea of piecework and the dispute which has occurred at the Frankland River. We do not know what the scheme is. Nothing has yet received the approval of Parliament. We have passed no vote approving of what is going on down there. No information has been vouchsafed to us and no member knows what is in the mind of the Government. We are told that land settlement is being promoted 40 to 50 miles from a railway. What is the idea of the Government in arranging settlement there, about which the country knows nothing? The Government say their policy is for piece work and that they are going to insist upon it. If they want to make piece work the success they are aiming at, they must adopt different measures. It seems that throughout the British dominions piece work is not the success the Americans make of it. That is largely because both in England and the Colonies the employers will not pay piece workers the same fair wage that is given in America. I remember reading the full report of the Moseley Commission which went through America and the later Commission which was financed by the "Daily Mail," and which followed on much the same lines as the other. The reasons why piece work was such a success in America and such a failure in England were examined. The reports were the same. The moment the piece worker in England, it was found, began to make a decent wage, his pay was cut, but the American employer for the most part did not care how much his workmen made, for he set the figure at one that paid him, and allowed the employees to go ahead and make what they liked. But in England and Australia the piecework rate is

cut as soon as the worker begins to make big money. Further, in America a pieceworker and a dayworker are not permitted to work side by side; but in England and Australia pieceworkers and dayworkers are put side by side, which fact largely accounts for the failure of the piecework system here. Obviously, to deal with the local case, there was no reasonable examination made before fixing prices. I do not know whether the Press reports are correct, but they have not been denied, and they state that at Frankland River the price first was £2, and subsequently £2 odd, and later still £6 odd. That fact proves that there was no proper initial examination, that the men were set an impossible task when they started; and no wonder there has been trouble. At Pindalup the single men were given blocks to clear, blocks of a certain size; and when they stopped work and protested, the areas were doubled. How can it be expected, then, that piecework will be a success, with this kind of thing going on? The Minister for Works was emphatic in his recent declaration, that the statements made by the men to the Premier regarding the position at Northam were wrong. I shall now do what I would not have done—namely, read a certain letter to the House—if the Minister had not taken the extraordinary action he did take, that of mentioning names, of replying on the floor of the House to a deputation which had not received any reply from the Premier, to whom the deputation's representations were made. Such a course as that adopted by the Minister for Works was never before followed in this Parliament. I sent a copy of the speech of the Minister for Works to the secretary of the union, and this is a part of the secretary's reply—

I note that Lindsay contends the work occupied  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days, but the real facts are that their week ends on Thursday, but Allen measured these men up on Friday at 3 p.m., and in some cases anticipated what the men would have cut that night at knock off time, and they were paid for that day, which was included in the amounts mentioned by Lindsay. I note also that he did not mention Itzstein, Wilkins, or Scott in his address. Scott started on piecework, but was eventually paid on a day-work basis. Wilkins started at 1.15 p.m. on the 26th July, and was measured up on Friday, the 30th, at 3 p.m. He secured 18s. 9d., and for Saturday morning he earned 6s. 3d.; so he earned 25s. in four days. The statements in regard to Lyons and the time he worked on the job are a pack of lies. During that

week he went out on the truck with the other men and started at 7.30, and finished at knocking-off time, coming home on the truck at knock-off time. In fact, the only statement he made that is anywhere near correct is in regard to Thompson, who earned £2 10s. in three days and six hours; not half a day, as mentioned by the Minister. You will note by looking up the paysheets that I forwarded to you, that Giblett earned: first pay, £2 1s. 3d.; second pay, £1 17s. 6d. To earn this amount he worked seven days—about 11s. 1d. per day. In regard to Forward, he started after lunch on Monday, 25th July, and was measured up on Friday at 3 p.m. He earned £2 19s. 5d., and as I said before, the foreman anticipated what they would have done in some cases. You will note in the second pay that Forward only earned 7s. 6d.

That is altogether a different tale from that told here by the Minister for Works. I understand that the Premier met the majority of these men at Nornalup, and was satisfied that their statements were correct, because he has taken the great bulk, if not the whole, of them off piecework, and put them on day work. The statement made here by the Minister for Works cannot have represented the full facts; otherwise there would not have been that alteration. Last night I listened attentively to the Minister for Railways. I have known the hon. member for a good many years. It is over a quarter of a century since he and I first met. I must say that during that period he has not altered, at least not in point of tactics. A good many of the Government supporters do not know the gentleman as we know him.

Mr. Kenneally: They will get to know him directly.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: His speech last night was characteristic of him.

The Minister for Works: A very fine speech.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That is the opinion of the Minister for Works. We in the Labour movement know the Minister for Railways. We know his characteristics. One of his main characteristics is that if, when making a speech, he realises that he has a difficult case to answer, is up against a knotty problem, he immediately creates Aunt Sallies, and knocks them over himself. Then he will not face the real issues. That is a characteristic of the hon. member.

The Minister for Railways: I have better characteristics than you have, anyhow.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That is a characteristic of his when he finds himself up

against a difficult problem. He will not face the problem.

The Minister for Railways: I faced this one, at any rate.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Instead of facing the problem and answering the questions put to him, he creates Aunt Sallies that he himself can knock over. He has always done that. During the 25 years I have known him, he has not altered in that regard. His speech last night was typical of him. I shall give one or two instances to prove that. He set out by stating that he had been accused of saying certain things—things that nobody had ever accused him of saying. He set out by asserting that he was so accused, because he wanted to dodge the actual issues which he was asked to answer. Instead of answering them, he selected something easy to answer—in fact, something invented by himself, something he would be able to knock down. He repeated hoary old platitudes that have grown mouldy with age.

The Minister for Railways: Who got that for you?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He set up cases which no one on this side of the House had ever mentioned. Then he turned round and said that no one could allege that party politics were considered so far as he was concerned. But if it is correct that party politics do not enter into the minds of hon. members opposite in dealing with the situation facing this country at the moment, there must have been a mighty change of recent times, because everybody knows that at the last election the party opposite made unemployment the issue. That was the issue on which members opposite fought the election. Their own leader made that the issue before the people, as we have reminded him often enough. He used the unemployed as the sole issue of the election. Similarly, all the time the party opposite were on this side of the Chamber, they used their party politics against us—the whole of the time.

Mr. Kenneally: And now they tell us the trouble is world-wide.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: During the election the present Premier said unemployment was purely a local issue, which he could deal with. He said that not only would he find work for everyone, but that he had done it before. When the present Leader of the Opposition put it to him that that was impossible, because if he did find work for all the unemployed in Western Australia,



the unemployed in the Eastern States would immediately rush over here, and that if he absorbed the unemployed from the Eastern States, the unemployed from the rest of the world would rush here, and that therefore he could not keep his promise locally, all the reply made by the present Premier was that unemployment was a purely local matter, and that he could manage it because he had managed it before. Undoubtedly the other side made unemployment the issue of the election. Now they are faced with a problem concerning which they had ample warning before the last Parliament was dissolved, and ample warning from the public platform throughout the election contest. Warnings were repeatedly given to them by our own leader. Now, when they are in office and are faced with the unemployment problem, they say that they want party politics dropped, and that party politics should not enter into the question. The truth is that the only party politics our friends opposite want dropped are the Labour Party's politics. Our friends opposite never drop their own politics. The Minister for Railways talked about being accused of not having any of the milk of human kindness—I think that was the phrase he used—and he asked whether it should be measured out by a pint measure. No one on this side of the Chamber ever used that phrase.

The Minister for Railways: Oh, yes!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: No matter how much he may possess of the milk of human kindness, as he himself puts it, no matter how deeply he may be imbued with the ideal of helping the down-and-out, those associated with him will not allow him to do it; and therefore he cannot do it. He cannot do it because of the forces that control the Government, forces outside the party, forces that find the sinews of war for that party's campaign and control the organisation. He cannot do it as long as he remains with those who are now his associates. I consider that the Minister showed bad taste in resurrecting his attitude relatively to this party at the time of the war. He said that he left the Labour Party for the interests of his country. There is no doubt as to the interests for which he left the Labour Party.

The Minister for Railways: That is wrong.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister said that last night.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There is no doubt in the world as to whose interests he left the Labour Party for. The Minister would have been well advised to let sleeping dogs lie.

The Minister for Railways: We can have that out any time you like, you know.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am prepared to have it out with him. I think the hon. member should be downright ashamed of himself.

The Minister for Railways: I am not.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He should never attempt to bring that matter up for public discussion, particularly not with those who know him.

The Minister for Railways: I am prepared to debate it with you at any time.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Prepared to debate it now, when it is long past and gone!

The Minister for Railways: All the facts are still there.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes; but this fact stands out, that you soiled other men to go to the war and stopped here yourself, while of military age. You would not go to the war yourself.

The Minister for Railways: I did, in company with your Leader.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: You concealed a lot.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask hon. members to keep order.

Mr. Panton: Anyhow, I think the Minister showed good sense there, seeing the way soldiers are being treated now.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He said he left this party for the good of the country.

The Minister for Railways: I did not say that.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We know what he left this party for; where he has been ever since, clearly indicates it. The hon. member has been putting up bogeys and knocking them down all his life. But he has not answered the two main issues affecting his own department, the two big points put to him in the speech of the member for Geraldton (Hon. J. C. Willecock), as to old age pensioners. There is the case of the two old age pensioners with an income of 35s. per week between the two of them. If some of their family are out of work, those two old age pensioners are compelled to keep three of their dependants before any of their dependants are permitted to get any sustenance. Five of them have to be financed out of old

age pensions for two! Did the Minister answer that question? No! On the other hand, he put up men of straw and knocked them down. He refused to face the issue. There was the instance I mentioned. I read a letter disclosing how a married man with four children, two under 14 years of age, and two over that age, was placed in an unenviable position. Because the two boys over 14 years of age were earning about £2 2s. a week between them, they were forced to keep the father and mother, the two younger children and themselves on that small amount. The father was not allowed to have his name on the sustenance list, and was denied the right of the pick-up. What kind of treatment is that to mete out to human beings? And then the Premier growls about young men not getting married. That is the treatment he inflicts upon them. Why did not the Minister give us information regarding such instances? Why does he deny such people the right to sustenance or work? Why does he compel young boys to keep their whole family? He would not answer that question. On the other hand, he went round the subject and said he had been accused of all sorts of things that none of us knew anything about. He dodged answering the main issues by methods of that description. Moreover, he singled out a new member of the House for special attack and cheaply sneered at him when he suggested that the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) should himself finance the erection of a battery at Kalgoorlie for £10,000. What kind of cheap-jack politics is that? That was the kind of answer he gave to that hon. member.

The Minister for Railways: Cannot you look pleasant sometimes?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I will please myself how I look; I will not study the feelings of the Minister. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe made no accusation—I have taken the trouble to look up "Hansard" on the point—against the Minister that he had no sympathy with the miners. That suggestion was a clear invention of the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe is present; he can deny it if he likes.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: I did deny it.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Of course he denied it, and told the Minister that he was putting up an Aunt Sally. I am not going

to accuse the Minister of not having any sympathy with the miners. He would be an inhuman monster if he did not have sympathy with them, considering his family history. But no member of the House has levelled that accusation against him. He accused himself, and answered the accusation. He made use of that supposed accusation in order to evade answering other points put to him by members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. That was simply in accordance with his usual practice. We know the Minister; the members sitting on the Government side do not know him as we do. I have known him for a quarter of a century. These are the tactics he indulges in; they have always been his tactics. The Minister claimed to have been responsible for the passage of the Miners' Phthisis Act. I do not want to rob the Minister of any kudos applicable to him for having placed the measure on the statute-book. He put it there in 1922 and remained in office until 1924. The Act remained on the Statute-book until we took office in 1925. It was then that we brought the Act to light. It was a corpse; it was dead. We breathed life into it. We found money necessary for that purpose. We had to pass an amending Act because a section was included in the main Act that made it possible, if a man was taken out of the mines and could not fulfil the job offered him elsewhere in consequence of which he had to leave it, for the State's obligation to cease for all time. We altered that section and provided compensation. We made it a living statute and proclaimed it. Until then the Act had remained a dead letter, and it remained in that condition all the time the Minister was in office. The Minister is entitled to what credit there is in placing the Act on the statute-book and leaving it a dead letter. Then again the main Act dealt with tuberculosis only, not with miners' diseases. It affected the man who was suffering from tuberculosis and it was the Workers' Compensation Act that the Labour Government introduced that dealt with miners' diseases. We have cleaned the mines but not thoroughly even now.

The Minister for Railways: You paid the premiums under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act for the mining companies.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, to assist the industry.

The Minister for Railways: Under the Mines Development Act.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, out of the money provided by the Commonwealth loan for the assistance of the miners. By those two Acts we have largely, although not completely, cleaned the mines of that deadly disease. No longer can men go down the mines coughing out the deadly germs and spreading the disease among their fellow workers.

The Minister for Railways: I wish that was correct.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I stated that the work has not been completely effected. Conditions are much better now than they were. Once men are taken out of the mines now, they have something better to look forward to. The Minister can deny it as much as he likes, but his Government did apply the 22½ per cent. cut to workers' compensation payments. Meetings of protest followed, and it was only after members of the Opposition had added their protests that the Government altered their decision and refrained from making the cuts.

The Minister for Railways: I think I said that.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: No, you did not. You said that the cut had not been applied and we interjected that it had been. Your answer was that it had been done by the officers without your knowledge.

The Minister for Railways: The matter was reconsidered and the decision not to apply the cut was made retrospective, so that the men lost nothing.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, but it was after protest had been made by representatives of the mining electorates. The Minister boasted of what he had done for the mining industry not only while he was a member of the Labour Government but as a Nationalist Minister as well. The only definite instance he gave showing that he had assisted the mining industry was in connection with the erection of a State battery. In view of the enormous increase in tonnage to be treated, it would have been astounding had he not provided the battery. The Minister has boasted of what he has done; I want to tell him a few of the things he has taken away from the mining industry. When he assumed office the sustenance paid to prospectors varied from £1 to £1 17s. 6d. according to locality.

The Minister for Railways: When was that paid?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: When the Minister took office.

The Minister for Railways: You know that your colleague announced publicly that he would not continue to pay that sustenance.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It was paid when the Minister took office.

The Minister for Railways: That is only part of the story.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not know when it was stopped, but you stopped it. It was being paid when we left office. It is only during the last few months that you have agreed to pay 7s. a week.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: You reduced the cartage subsidy from 1s. a mile for five miles to 6d., so you halved that subsidy. You abolished the rebate on low-grade ore; you abolished the free trial crushing of five tons from a new district; you abolished the subsidy on railway carting, and also the subsidy on water supply. That was not confined to Kalgoorlie alone, but applied to Gwalia, Meekatharra, Wiluna and other mining districts. The Minister took those concessions away from the industry.

The Minister for Railways: The trouble was we could not continue to pay them.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That is how the Minister helped the industry.

The Minister for Railways: I am not denying what you say.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister boasted of what he did; the few instances I have quoted also show what he did.

The Minister for Railways: I am not ashamed of what I had to do, in view of the circumstances. I could not do anything else.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not concerned as to whether the Minister is ashamed or not; but I want the House to be clear on the attitude of the Government towards the mining industry. I know that in this, as in other matters, the Minister has not been a free agent. The history of latter-day politics and of the Premier himself show that he has never been in sympathy with the mining industry, and has never given it any help. He insisted upon these concessions being taken away from the industry.

The Minister for Railways: Do you suggest that you would have continued the concessions had you been here? Would you

have done it, in view of latter-day circumstances?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I do not know what we would have done. I have often read statements by the Minister in which he referred to the State as being in the same position as an individual. He has said that the business affairs of the State should be conducted in the same way as he would conduct his private affairs. If at this moment I had money to invest, I would spend that money in some direction that would give me an assured and quick return. There is no other field of investment that would give the Government a more quick or surer return than the mining industry. There is nothing else to compare with it. Yet that is the industry from which the Government have taken these concessions!

The Minister for Works: Who gave the concessions in the first place?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Labour Government did.

The Minister for Railways: You lose sight of the fact that other businesses are starving.

The Minister for Works: The concessions were given in 1923 when the then Minister for Mines was Mr. Scaddan.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: What are you referring to?

The Minister for Works: The subsidy on water supplies.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It was when we took office. We gave the industry that assistance at the time the Workers' Compensation Act was proclaimed. I was at a conference when that agreement was effected. The Minister cannot put that over me. There may have been some subsidy, but not to the extent to which it was operating after we took office.

The Minister for Railways: I think you are wrong.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: During the whole of the Minister's speech last night, he dealt with many matters that no one had raised, and answered questions that he himself had put, or framed in his own imagination. Not once did he offer any suggestion for dealing with the crisis confronting us at present.

The Minister for Railways: I seem to have given you a lot of worry.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not worrying about the Minister at all. He need not plume himself by thinking that he has worried me. I have made it my little job for a minute or two to answer some of the points, so as to put the House right where

the Minister endeavoured to mislead members. Not once during his speech did he attempt to offer a suggestion for helping the State out of the crisis confronting it. All he could say was that we would have to muddle through the best way we could. It is true that he cited the offence of people jumping off the trams and dodging the payment of their 3d. fares. He took strong exception to that.

The Minister for Railways: I did not say it in the way you suggest.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: You adopted a more violent attitude. You waved your arms about, wagged your head, and pointed your finger. You were much more emphatic than I am. The House will agree with that. He was in a bath of perspiration all the while, with his emphasis. He came back to it and repeated it during his speech. That was his contribution to the solving of the world's problems. And last night we had what I think was the second contribution from the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker); I think it was only the second occasion on which he has favoured us with an expression of his views. He, too, set out to solve this world's problem, which he said the Premier and the Minister for Mines had emphasised as being a world's problem to be faced from a world-wide viewpoint, that it affected civilisation the world over and so must be recognised as being world-wide. The hon. member submitted his solutions of this world-wide economic problem under three heads. First of all he said we should sack all the girls employed in Government offices. Then he contended that we should prohibit car watchers, and in the third place he declared that parking areas should be arranged at railway stations. Those propositions were the sum and substance of his speech, and they represented his solutions of the world's problems.

Hon. P. Collier: That will make the professors sit up.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, what a pity he was not at Ottawa! We should then have had some results from that conference. I think we are losing the services of a genius when the hon. member gets up only twice during his term in Parliament.

Mr. Kenneally: And presently we shall be losing him altogether.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: That was all I could find in the hon. member's speech.

The Minister for Railways: Even so, you need not attack him personally. None of us is perfect.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not attacking him personally: I am merely referring to the speech he made and the three headings under which he proposed to solve the world's problems.

The Minister for Railways: I understood you were going to solve the world's problems by attacking the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not going to subscribe to the idea that we should not discuss in the House the questions of monetary policy and exchange rates because it might be held that we have no power to remedy the monetary system and so should not attempt to discuss it. But we certainly have power to influence the policy, since the Premier goes quite frequently to the Premiers' Conference, where he is reported to have put up a fight in favour of the exchange being maintained at its present level. That conference has to frame a policy which is expected to put this continent back on its equilibrium, and submit to us for our endorsement or rejection the proposals and plans and schemes that it puts up. So it will be seen that we have power to influence the policy, for the head of this Government goes over there and should, while there, speak for the State. The exchange affects us in every way, in every activity of trade and commerce is its influence felt. We can no longer say that these matters should be left to experts, for they are brought more closely to the people to-day than ever before. Everybody has to think of them and discuss them, because the question of exchange is felt, not only by every individual in trade but in every home, at every meal table, and whether the meal be served in a humble cottage or in a banqueting hall, the exchange cannot be escaped. So this Parliament should consider the subject, and a policy should be set out. Since the country has a right to know where the Government stand, it would be a great thing for trade and commerce if we could have a clear declaration in Parliament. Whatever we may think of a managed currency, whether we like it or not we in Australia have a managed currency to-day, and as we are largely a primary producing State, an exporting State, it affects us more than it does most of the other States. It is impossible for a trader satisfactorily to do business overseas unless he

knows the value of his own currency. He cannot trade with any confidence unless he knows what is likely to be the position. I am aware that it is possible to provide for exchange in some countries; but it is not possible in all countries, and it is difficult enough for traders to do business in foreign countries in normal times. When we have an unstable exchange it frequently means the difference between profit and loss. Yesterday morning a cable message from London showed how anxiously the situation is viewed by traders at that end, and how unstable is the present position of this continent. This cablegram, referring to an article in the "Financial News," in London, says—

The Commonwealth Bank can be relied upon, whereas the trading banks could not, as recent experience has shown, to maintain a rate reasonably parallel to the market conditions. So long as the outside banks take no arbitrary action, a rise in the rate is extremely unlikely; indeed the next move will probably be in the downward direction, but the change is not likely until the export season is well under way.

The primary producers, the Country Party, should be giving careful attention to this. It means 25 per cent. on all agricultural products, yet so far no declaration has been made in that regard. If the Government gave an assurance, if the trading people of this community had an assurance that there would be no fall below a certain figure, it would give great heart to trade and stimulate business abroad.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Even if were only for three months.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, it would let them know something; the country wants a declaration.

The Minister for Works: From whom?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There is only one source. The Premier will be going over to another conference any day now, and a declaration should come from that conference, speaking for the Governments of the country. It is a very dangerous position we are in. For the moment money is pretty cheap, but amongst the money available is a lot of bad money, by which I mean money that may be withdrawn at very short notice. It is here on account of the high exchange, but the moment the exchange falls that money will be exported overseas. What will be the position in this continent when that happens? There is such an insecurity,

such a lack of confidence here that the traders do not know where they are. They cannot plan ahead. It is impossible for any plan to be made ahead unless we know the value of our currency, and what the exchange is likely to be. Why, the very tariff may be upset overnight by an alteration in the exchange. No one can say where he is. The exchange is the very foundation of any scheme that may be set out. And whether we like it or not, we have a managed currency to-day and so, too, has England. It is not our balance of trade that causes the exchange to be 25 per cent. against us, because the balance was £30,000,000 in our favour last year, and indeed we have heaped up such a surplus of money in England that it is questionable whether the Commonwealth Bank will be able to go on buying it. And there is always the risk that something may happen. That England is managing her exchange is proved by the fact that she has created a fund of £150,000,000 to equalise the exchange. But what is Australia doing? When first the suggestion was made that we should have a managed currency, it was predicted that if that happened there would be chaos everywhere. But now, in order to give a sense of security and stability, even conservative England is determined to manage her own currency. Our exchange is pegged at 25. But who has authority to peg it? At the moment the Commonwealth Bank is pegging it, but there is nothing to prevent any one of the private banks from breaking away. The Commonwealth Bank has no legal authority to fix the exchange. The bank has assumed it under the pooling arrangements, but a private bank could break away at any moment, and one bank, probably the most influential bank in the country, is advocating and pressing for an alteration in the exchange rate.

The Minister for Works: For an increase.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, they want an increase. Stability is the main thing, but there certainly should be a declaration that the exchange will not fall below a certain figure, and that declaration should come from those with power to manage the exchange, to fix it, which can be done only by the Governments of the country. I know that certain people regard those who talk about managing currencies as theorists. Those critics do not regard these things as practicable, and they say it is something new. But of course it is not new. It has been going on all down through history.

Talking of making laws to deal with currency, I notice that in ancient times Aristotle expressed an opinion on it. He said that money existed, not by nature, but by law. Those people who think that money cannot and should not be controlled, that laws should not be imposed to regulate it, have an idea that nature has created money and currency, and that they should not be interfered with. It is the law that gives money its efficacy, and it is the law that says what shall be legal tender. Aristotle further said that the value of money depended upon the quantity available. That opinion holds good to-day. Very few people who study the situation will disagree that the price levels are controlled by monetary policies, and whatever the price level of the future may be will depend upon the monetary policy adopted by the great countries of the world. No longer will it be held that Parliament has no right to interfere. Professor Cassel, professor of economics to the League of Nations, Geneva, when addressing the London bankers, impressed upon them the importance of something being done and added—

No further time should be wasted in listening to those false prophets whose resistance to efforts to gain control of the monetary system has helped to cause, intensify and prolong a most disastrous economic catastrophe. It is time the leading central banks agreed to remedy the depression by declaring their intention henceforward to supply the world so abundantly with means of payment that a further fall in prices would be impossible. As long as the central banks refuse the responsibility for the purchasing power of their money, humanity will be in the same situation as the passengers of a liner of which the captain has lost control.

It is no idea of recent date or of political colouring that advocates the control of currency. The most important Commission that I suppose ever inquired into the monetary policy recently reported to the House of Commons. It was the MacMillan Commission, comprised of the most experienced financiers of the world, and they advised urgent action. The report is worth quoting—

To allow prices to be stabilised at approximately the present level would be a serious disaster for all countries of the world alike, and the avoidance of such an event should be the prime object of international statesmanship. Our objective should be so far as it lies within the power of this country to influence the international price level first of all to raise prices a long way above the present level and

then maintain them at the level thus reached with such stability as can be managed. We recommend that this objective be accepted as the guiding aim of the monetary policy of this country.

That has gone forth as the policy of the British nation, and I do not think many people would disagree with it. But Australia has made no declaration. Yet the matter means everything to us. Australia's overseas debt is exercising the minds of all Governments and all thinking people. It is largely paid by our exports, and if measured by the price of exports, it has more than doubled during the last few years without our having borrowed a single shilling. There must be a solution of the problem and we must find it. This Parliament should play its part. The Premier, when attending the conferences at which these problems are discussed, should go there with a knowledge of the ideas held by members of this House. Because the power to remedy does not rest with us is no reason why we should not discuss the question. One thing that the discussion has brought out is the declaration from the Premier that he is still an adherent to the gold standard. He is not alone in that, but it is patent to everyone that had Australia remained on the gold standard, it would have defaulted long ago.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: And that was a national calamity to be avoided at all costs.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The theorists said that a National Government was necessary in England to keep that country on the gold standard. A National Government was formed, and England could not be kept on the gold standard. Within three weeks she was off the gold standard, and now we have the report of the important Commission I have quoted saying that England should not return to the gold standard.

Hon. P. Collier: Winston Churchill said she should not have returned to the gold standard when she did in 1925.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, he said he was wrongly advised. He took the advice of men whom he thought were competent to advise, and he admits that a gross error was made. Although the Premier still subscribes to the gold standard, it is patent that had Australia remained on it we would have defaulted, and had England remained on it, we would have de-

faulted. The Premier said that America had left the gold standard. That is not correct. America still guarantees to pay in gold for all her paper currency, but it is correct that America has established currency with national security as its backing. She has created hundreds of millions of currency by the backing of national security and she has done for several hundred million, what Mr. Theodore suggested should be done for £20,000,000. When Mr. Theodore made his suggestion, critics characterised it as unsound and said that chaos would assuredly follow. Yet a huge nation like America has done it and, so far as we can learn, in the few weeks it has been in force, it has had some effect on the raising of price levels. We seem to be afraid of such proposals. Much depends on where they come from. If they come from our side of politics, they are condemned. When they come from other sources, they are supported. The report of the MacMillan Commission is, in substance and principle, the same as was given out by the Interstate Labour Conference in Sydney 12 months ago, with the proposal that it should be the financial policy of this country. But we are derided and denounced; we are told that we are advocating something fantastical and unsound. What is the virtue of gold as the basis of currency? The Premier refuses to depart from it, though most nations of the earth are away from it for the moment. The teaching of history shows that gold as a basis for currency is a failure, and has been responsible for the crises that have occurred from time to time. If we insist upon our currency being based upon the amount of gold we possess, those crises will recur and the people will have to suffer. Sir Archibald Allison, in his history of Europe, goes so far as to say that the fall of the Roman Empire was due to insistence upon a gold standard for the country. That Empire used to rely on the specie from the mines of Spain and Greece, but the mines gave out and a crisis ensued. The effects on the Roman Empire described by Sir Archibald Allison are similar to those we are experiencing. Members of the Country Party who claim that they mainly represent primary industry should be interested in what happened at the time of the fall of that great Empire and should endeavour to devise ways and means to prevent a similar hap-

pening to our Empire or civilisation. Sir Archibald Allison said—

Rome, saved in its utmost need by an expansion, sank in the end under a still greater contraction of national currency. The supply of currency for the old world became inadequate to the increasing wants of the population. The mines of Spain and Greece from which the chief supplies were obtained at that period, were worked out, and so great was the dearth of the precious metal that the currency in circulation in the Empire at the time of Augustus, amounting to £380,000,000 had sunk in that of Justinian to £80,000,000 sterling. As a consequence of so prodigious a contraction of currency, debts and taxes which were measured under the old standard became so overwhelming that the national industries were ruined. Agriculture disappeared and was succeeded by pasturage in the fields. The great cities were all fed from Egypt and the revenue became irrecoverable.

He said the national industries were ruined. Our two great national industries, wheat and wool, are in a very precarious position. He said agriculture disappeared. No one will deny that our agricultural industry cannot carry on much longer under present conditions. We are facing conditions almost similar to those he outlined. Following through history we can see how the discovery of gold has affected nations. The long depression that followed the Napoleonic wars was largely due to the inadequate supply of currency. There was insufficient to meet the requirements of industry consequent on the industrial revolution, and not until the gold discoveries in California and Australia from 1849 onwards did relief come. As a result of the gold discoveries in California and Australia, the world for 30 years enjoyed comparative prosperity. Then another depression arrived. That was relieved by the chance discovery of gold in South Africa, when there was again a revival. Must we sit down and wait for another gold discovery? Is that to be the only solution of the crisis? Gold as the basis for our currency has definitely failed, and in failing has inflicted untold hardship upon millions of people. The teachings of industry demand that there shall be a change, although the Premier is still pledging himself to gold as the basis. I hope he will alter his mind and use his position at the next conference to effect some alteration in our outlook. Are we to understand that human civilisation and society generally would have been impossible if no gold had existed in the make-up of the

globe? Had there been no gold, would civilisation not have existed?

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Should we all die if gold were abolished?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is absurd, but it is becoming a dangerous and a deadly absurdity. If the situation is allowed to drift, the collapse of civilisation is possible. Country Party members should remember that the primary producing countries were the first to feel the crisis, and are feeling it most. They will continue to feel it most. Their industries are most seriously affected, and they suffer most. Agriculture has gone right out. If we exempt the member for Beverley (Mr. J. I. Mann) what ideas have country members given to us on the subject?

Mr. Marshall: Did you expect any?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I congratulate the hon. member upon the ideas he advanced, his independence and originality of thought. It was quite refreshing to hear him. I hope he will develop his ideas.

Mr. Brown: Perhaps he got his ideas from the same source as you did yours.

Mr. Marshall: It would be interesting to know the source from which you got your ideas.

Mr. Brown: Give us something original.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is held that we cannot influence oversea prices. No one can deny it is possible to influence internal prices. Members opposite will say, as they did last night, that our internal trade is small, and the export trade of our secondary industries is also too small to count. It appears to me the wrong viewpoint is taken of the matter. I asked the Commonwealth Statistician to supply me with figures relative to the consumption of Australian production within the Commonwealth. I asked how much of our production was consumed here and how much was exported. These are the figures for 1930-31. Our production was £319,701,000. Australian produce exported was valued at £99,920,000, and our consumption was valued at £49,780,671. The percentage of the home consumption was therefore 68.7. The value of gold exported, which is included in the above figures, was £12,185,548, which was £8,622,049 more than the amount produced during the previous year. The total consumption, therefore, was £228,402,720, or 71.4 per cent.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I doubt the analysis of the figures.



The Minister for Lands: You should take out the value of the secondary industries. You know these are artificially-made prices.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Everything around us to-day is artificial. The only thing that is natural is that we are alive.

The Minister for Railways: I question that too.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: This is our production and our consumption in all our industries. I admit that the moment we raise our internal price level, the cost of production for our primary industries increases. But there are means of making that up. If 71 per cent. of our production is consumed locally, there is our biggest market. If we can increase the price level for 71 per cent. of our production it will pay us handsomely to compensate the export trade.

The Minister for Lands: There is a danger in inflating prices.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The only thing that will save the world, as the MacMillan report put it, will be an increase in price levels.

The Minister for Lands: What are you to do with the export articles where you have a preponderance to export?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: When it comes to benefiting 71 per cent. of our production, we would have to give compensation to our export trade. That is done in many cases. Are we going to drift on and do nothing, and merely subscribe to the idea that because gold is accepted as a basis for our currency it cannot be altered? Why should we judge the wealth of the country by the amount of its gold reserve? Gold has shown that it is an easy commodity to corner. It can no longer be taken as the standard. The wealth of a country should be judged by the amount of the requirements for the humankind that it is capable of producing. The bank vaults of a nation should not be accepted as indicating the wealth of that nation. The happiness and contentment of its people should be the basis, the deciding point as to the prosperity and the soundness of the nation. I put that forward as an opinion that could be discussed, as it is being discussed the world over. I am anxious for a declaration as to the policy of the country on the value of the currency. Some authoritative statement should be made that action will be taken to prevent the fall of our exchange below a given figure. That would stabilise trade and industry, and give our traders heart that nothing else could do.

The Premier tells me he may be called away to a conference at any moment. I urge him to press for a declaration, and to have some legal stand taken to give authority to the system that is adopted. The Commonwealth Bank are in control, but have no legal right to control. They can be defied at any moment. They have merely drifted into their present position. It has not been given to them by anyone. No one should be left in that position. A few men have the right to say, "We think the amount of Australian gold heaped up in England is endangering the Commonwealth Bank; that we should not buy Australian money that is available in London; that we refuse to do it any longer, and that we intend to force the exchange back to normal." Where would our industries be? Their first policy would be to look after the Commonwealth Bank. The financing of our industries is the responsibility of Governments. The Government of Great Britain have put through their Bill. They have created an enormous sum to equalise exchange. Our Governments have no policy. They have made no declaration and this country wants one. Until we get one there can be no confidence in our trade and commerce, and stagnation will continue. It will be impossible to trade or seek business with any confidence such as we would otherwise be able to enjoy.

MR. WELLS (Canning) [9.55]: I have listened to the able address of the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) and envy him his ability and his knowledge of public affairs in various parts of the world. I am not going to let this opportunity pass without entering a strong and emphatic protest against his remarks concerning the Sergeant-at-Arms. Those remarks were absolutely unwarranted, uncalled-for, and out of place.

Hon. A. McCallum: There was no personal reference in them.

The Minister for Lands: You gave the rank of the officer.

Mr. WELLS: What I objected to was the dirty innuendoes contained in the remarks that were made.

Hon. A. McCallum: Have it that way if you like.

Mr. WELLS: I am not going to listen to such remarks without entering an emphatic protest on behalf of the returned soldiers on this side of the House. The hon. member talked about the silk suit,

knickerbockers and patent shoes worn by a gentleman who has rendered great service to the State, the Commonwealth and the British Empire. The hon. member is not fit to polish the shoes worn by the Sergeant-at-Arms. It was the most contemptible and cowardly attack I have ever listened to.

Hon. A. McCallum: Take it as you like; I explained there was nothing personal about it.

Mr. WELLS: I know the hon. member explained that.

Hon. A. McCallum: The office is a useless one.

Mr. WELLS: That was merely a veneer to cover the innuendoes.

Hon. A. McCallum: You can blow your bag as much as you like; there was nothing personal in what I said.

Mr. WELLS: If I blew my bag as hard as the hon. member blows his, I should soon be a balloon.

The Minister for Railways: He cannot discuss any subject without being personal.

Mr. WELLS: The hon. member undoubtedly launched a personal attack. I do not object to his discussing the expenditure involved, but when he absolutely belittles a man, and speaks of the occupant of this position as a full-sized man walking about this House, I must enter my protest.

Hon. A. McCallum: I belittled the office, not the man.

Mr. WELLS: He spoke of the office as being neither useful nor ornamental. We can imagine the feelings of the officer in question while this was going on.

Mr. J. I. Mann: And one who had not a chance to reply.

Mr. WELLS: It was a dirty and most contemptible action, and I join with other members on this side of the House in making my sincere and earnest protest. I realise we cannot in this House talk ourselves out of our troubles. I, too, must express my regret that we are passing through so great a depression, that we have in our midst honest toilers looking for work and unable to find it. It is a deplorable condition of affairs. I am sure we all feel that we want to do our utmost with the means at our disposal to improve the position of and make life more tolerable for

the people concerned. The sudden collapse in the price of our primary products soon after the Government took office brought about the present position. Of course the depression is world-wide and we are suffering as other countries are suffering. All the channels of commerce have become stagnated. We as a Parliament can do very little to alter the position. There are some things which this Parliament and the Commonwealth Parliament could do and that are within the scope of our ability to do, and to those things we should devote our attention. The larger questions of exchange, the monetary system, and the commercial and industrial welfare of the Commonwealth and the Empire should be left to the larger minds in the political arena. That was so in connection with the great war. The artillery had often to be brought to break through the barbed wire entanglements and clear away impediments, so that the rank and file could advance later. I feel that the conferences recently held at Ottawa and elsewhere represent a gesture of the right kind, indicating that the intellects of the civilised world realise that it is their duty to try in some way to bring about the salvation of the Empire and of the rest of the world. I feel it is their duty to effect the reorganisation required. I believe that they are proceeding on right lines, and that ere long the results of the various conferences will be felt throughout the Empire and the remainder of the civilised world. Meantime I think we should apply our energies in other avenues which will assist us to get out of our troubles probably a little earlier than is at present anticipated. I am glad to know that the Government intend to re-enact the emergency legislation which has been in operation during the last year or two. The Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act has proved itself an excellent measure, saving hundreds of Western Australian farmers from having to walk off their holdings, giving them an opportunity to go on from year to year, and thereby most probably enabling them, when the price of wheat recovers a little, to retain properties which otherwise they would have lost.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: All this is merely staving off the evil day.

Mr. WELLS: For Western Australia, at any rate, the farming and pastoral industries are undoubtedly paramount. When the

farming and pastoral communities are prosperous, the effect is reflected on the industrial centres more quickly than it is from the prosperity of any other industries. If only we can get the farming and pastoral industries on a sound and payable basis, all the rest of the people in Western Australia will reap substantial benefits. It should be the desire of the Government of this State to help as far as possible to reduce the charges levied upon those two industries, and in every possible way to lower taxation and tariff charges which for years past have hampered them. If commodity prices do not lift during the next few months, I certainly think the Commonwealth Government should continue the wheat bonus and that the State Government should continue to allow the carting bonus to settlers far removed from railway communication.

Mr. Raphael: Are you speaking as a cockey, or as a politician?

Mr. WELLS: Four years ago I invested pretty well the whole of my savings since the war in a 3,000-acre block at Newdegate, and I fear I shall have but little to show for it. Therefore I am not without experience of cockeying. The Government should endeavour to pursue as far as possible a policy which has been enunciated by members on both sides of the Chamber. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) mentioned it during last session, and I think it was also mentioned by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson)—the encouragement of our workers to settle on suburban blocks. This would be a good move, and would afford considerable relief to men on part-time work. On days on which they were not employed in industrial avenues, they could improve their holdings. They could grow their own vegetables, and keep pigs and cows, thus largely improving their conditions and lessening their drafts on State finances. Many complaints have been made as to the conditions under which men have been working at Harvey and elsewhere. However, only a few weeks ago I was visited by a man who had gone with his wife and children from South Perth to Harvey; and he told me that he had no desire to live in the city again; that he was in a far better position at Harvey than when living in the city and drawing sustenance. He had a quarter of an acre at Harvey, on which he was growing vegetables. He had plenty of

fowls, and had a pig in the sty. Altogether he was doing remarkably well.

Mr. Wansbrough: He is a lucky one.

Mr. Raphael: The only lucky one.

Mr. WELLS: It is quite possible that many men placed on small holdings in the outer suburban area would be enabled by this means largely to augment their incomes. I am strongly of opinion that the Premier, when attending another conference in the near future, should impress upon the other Premiers, and on all those engaged in discussing the affairs of Australia, the need for making a definite move to obtain a reduction of our overseas interest. The people of the Commonwealth have done remarkably well in their conversion loan, thus pointing the way to the nations of the world in that respect. The Australian people should now make a demand that their overseas creditors should also grant some relief in that direction. It is no use to talk merely of giving relief to people on the land; we must also get relief from our overseas creditors as regards interest rates. There is a good deal to be said about the secondary industries of Western Australia. I am pleased to know that during the last year or two the resources of the South-West have been materially developed. Butter factories are going up throughout the South-West, and are employing a good deal of labour. Moreover, they are now in a position to supply a good deal of the butter requirements which were formerly met by importation from the Eastern States.

Mr. Raphael: All that will soon be stopped when Mr. Bruce comes home.

Mr. WELLS: Much might be accomplished in the way of secondary industries here if we could control our own destinies. Not many years ago—before Federation got such a grip on this land—we had butter factories, boot factories, and white-clothing factories employing considerable numbers of men and women. To-day factories have vanished; they have gone to the centres of industrial activity in the Eastern States. I agree with the many members who have spoken on the over-reaching effects of the Federal Government upon the States. We should make the strongest possible effort to regain our status as a sovereign State. Our sovereignty has been filched from us. It is time we took a definite stand to get on our feet again, as regards political

independence. Hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of Eastern States goods are still coming to Western Australia every year. There are huge imports of clothing and boots from the East. I have no fault to find with the buyers of the large city emporiums for buying in the East, but the fact that they are so buying shows that Western Australia needs some protection against the transaction of its business in that manner. They frequently buy a few thousand pounds' worth of goods at reduced rates and dump them in the State. As a consequence our workers are deprived of employment. Quite apart from clothing, boots and so forth, I find now that beer is being brought across from the Eastern States and put on the market here. I thought the beer manufactured in Kalgoorlie or in Perth was good enough for our people. I was astounded to learn the amount of money spent on liquor here. I find that £8,000 is spent daily on intoxicating liquor. I am not posing as a prohibitionist or a temperance advocate, but to think that such an amount is being spent daily at a time when men are walking about the streets ill-fed, ill-clothed, and out of work, seems to me a reflection upon the good sense of the citizens. We should endeavour to encourage the use of local products. Frequently exhibitions are held and demonstrations are given of the use of locally manufactured articles. My experience is that they fall flat after a week. I know it is difficult to persuade our women-folk to buy locally manufactured goods if Eastern States articles can be bought at a cheaper rate. Under such conditions, it is difficult to make people patriotic. If we could control our own Customs and protect our secondary industries, it would be of benefit to the general community. Recently there was much trouble in the metropolitan area regarding the whole-milk supply. I am pleased that the Minister for Agriculture intends to introduce legislation dealing with the industry. I am at a loss to know how he will improve the position because competition enters into all industry and all business, and it is extremely difficult to control that element. It is hard to tell the milk producer at Harvey or Waroona that he must not send his milk to the metropolitan market. It will be difficult to frame a measure that will comply with the wishes of the milk producers in the metropolitan area.

Mr. McLarty: They are not to be compelled to do so.

Mr. WELLS: I am told that milk from the group settlements and elsewhere is being sold at 5d. or 6d. a gallon. Dairymen in my electorate say it is impossible to make dairying pay if milk is sold at under 1s. or 1s. 2d. a gallon. The reasonable objection they take is against the competition arising from milk produced by group settlers whose efforts have been subsidised from public funds, whereas the dairymen in my district have had to build up their herds and develop their businesses out of their private funds.

The Minister for Agriculture: You do not suggest they should have a monopoly of the trade?

Mr. WELLS: No, I am putting forward their views on the question and they consider the competition is unfair, in view of the circumstances I have outlined. I hope the Minister will give their views consideration and that the legislation will prove satisfactory to all concerned. With reference to local matters, I want to comment on the inadequacy of the ferry service between Barrack-street and Mends-street. Particularly during the winter months is the present service unsatisfactory. The steamer "Perth" is not suitable for the service and it is time that better provision was made. I understand the Labour Government bought a Diesel engine for £4,800.

The Minister for Works: We had to pay £2,000 duty on it.

Mr. WELLS: We have been paying interest on the amount involved for a number of years, totalling about £1,500. If the engine were sold, the Government could construct two smaller boats that would be far more suitable for the service. They should have a carrying capacity of about 130 passengers and, with the extra boats, a satisfactory service could be maintained. I am pleased that the Government have at last decided to improve the Causeway. I realise that there is no possible chance, in view of the financial situation, of the original elaborate scheme being carried out, and I think the work that is being undertaken at present will meet all requirements for many years to come. It will provide a two-way track alongside the tramline. I would like the Minister to consider the extension of the tramway loop to make it possible for a double line to run right across the Causeway. The loop in the centre of the

bridge occasions unreasonable delays. The double line at the Victoria Park end carries an enormous traffic and at times two or three trams have been hung up on the loop in the centre of the Causeway. That involves much delay. Last night, for instance, a passenger travelling from the city to South Perth was held up for 12 minutes on loops during the journey. If the embankment could be extended on the north-eastern side, it would provide a thoroughfare that would meet all requirements for the next 25 or 30 years. I do not desire to criticise the Government regarding the manner in which they have dealt with the unemployment difficulty because I realise they have done their best in the circumstances, with the funds at their disposal. There is one feature, however, that I consider unfair. The man who has been thrifty and saved a little money during his employment, is debarred from securing assistance until the whole of his money is spent. That means that the man has to become a pauper before he can secure work. The thrifty man should be encouraged now as he was before the depression. The man who has squandered his money is assisted, but the thrifty man is penalised under existing conditions, and that should not be. I want to support the remarks of some members who have touched upon the cost of administration of Government departments. I think this Government and the Governments of the various States could do a great deal towards reducing the expenditure of Commonwealth and State departments. I do not know that very much could be done in our State departments, but I think the cost of administration of the Federal Government is out of all reason. I have here some figures which give an idea of the lavishness of the expenditure of the Commonwealth Government. They hold no territory, and they derive all their revenue from the States. When, 30 years ago, Federation was established we were told it would cost about £750,000 per annum. In 1912 the liabilities of the Federal Government totalled £6,351,000, the result largely of the building of the Trans railway and the Northern Territory railway. That was before they embarked upon the orgy of spending, when the cost of administration went up by leaps and bounds until to-day we have a Federal Public Service representing £9,600,000 per annum. From this enormous expen-

diture Western Australia has derived little or no benefit. The loss on the Commonwealth steamships was £8,000,000, Canberra has cost nearly £13,000,000, the Federal Parliament House, exclusive of interest and furniture, cost £670,000.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And that is only a temporary building.

Mr. WELLS: That is so. Then we have a Governor General with a salary of £10,000 per annum, and yet the Commonwealth Government propose to reduce the pensions to old people and invalids.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Well, you voted for the Government. You voted for Nairn and for Pearce.

Mr. WELLS: I admire the stand that Mr. Nairn has taken. But it does not matter whom I voted for, I am speaking of the Federal expenditure and the cutting down of pensions. It is a despicable thing to reduce the pensions of aged and invalid persons. In view of that, it is unfair and unjust that we should pay enormous salaries to people in high places. One of the judges of the Federal court has refused to have his salary reduced by so much as a shilling. The Prime Minister's Lodge at Canberra cost £17,800, and the renovations to Government House, before the present Governor General occupied it, cost £74,971. Then they have a swimming pool which cost some thousands, and they are now erecting a golf house at a cost of some thousands more. And we, the taxpayers in Western Australia who have derived no benefit whatever from these extravagances, are called upon to pay our Federal taxes. The Federal Government have been wildly reckless, and it is time a definite stand was taken by the States and an emphatic protest made against the enormous expenditure.

Mr. Marshall: I hope your Leader is taking notice of you.

Mr. WELLS: I hope so too. At Canberra there is a staff of 93 gardeners, drawing amongst them £24,237 per annum. When first the sales tax was imposed, the Prime Minister said no extra staff would be required to collect it. Yet to-day the collection of that tax is costing £53,000 per annum. Then we have Federal duplication of all the departments. There is the Federal Health Department, costing £290,000 per annum, the Federal Public Works Department costing £140,000 per annum, while in

the Forests Department—actually they have no forests at all—the Conservator is paid £2,000 per annum. There is the Federal Arbitration Court and the Federal Electoral Department and many other Federal departments, all maintained at great cost, whereas the work could be done quite as well by the State departments. The Commonwealth Parliament has encroached upon the States in every way. It collects about, £60,000,000 in revenue from the States and pays them back approximately £11,000,000. The Commonwealth collects in taxation from this State £3,325,000 and returns to us £774,000. The sooner we put a stop to all this overlapping, the better it will be for the States and for all Australian taxpayers. Then this State and the other States are placed in an invidious position when they have to go to the Loan Council cap in hand for every shilling required.

Hon. M. F. Troy: This Government have just had from the Loan Council £500,000 as a free gift.

Mr. WELLS: Yes, after the Commonwealth Government have collected £3,325,000 from us they give us back £500,000. And not only do we have to go to the Loan Council for necessary money, but the Federal Government now tell us how we shall spend that money and are even dictating to us as to how we shall spend our own money. It has come to a fine pass when a sovereign State has to submit to conditions laid down by a Federal Government. It is absolutely humiliating. We have sold our birthright to the Commonwealth, and the sooner we get relief from it, the better. Our commercial houses and even our daily newspapers are all controlled from the East. We have not a say in anything at all, for vested interests are dictating our policy. Federation has never been a success, either in the Commonwealth or in any of the other countries of the world. Both in Canada and in the United States the people complain about Federation. I have here a letter written by a man in a high position in Canada. He is a native born Australian, but has been resident in Canada for many years. After tabulating the figures showing the increased burden of federation on the people of Canada, he summed up with this statement—

This table is instructive in showing that even allowing for the increase in population and production, the demand of the people of Canada for national services has in addition to

the needs of reconstruction resulted in the per capita taxation being doubled.

The same thing applies to the United States—

The demand for reform and retrenchment in Federal administration and expenditure has latterly become insistent in the United States. During last session a Congressman for Indiana of 25 years' standing stated in the House, "During the last two decades bureaucratic power has grown by leaps and bounds until Washington now dominates, regulates and controls the nation, even in the most intimate concerns of its citizens. Local self-government is vanishing in the rush to let Washington do it. Priceless rights and privileges, which our forefathers intended to be exercised locally, are being surrendered without a struggle into the vortex of federal authority. Every day government is being removed farther and farther from the home and fireside into the tentacles of the already overwhelming federal bureaucracy."

That applies equally to the Commonwealth of Australia. I commend those remarks to members and sincerely hope that during the next few months we shall have a brighter and better time, not only in this State but throughout the Commonwealth and the Empire. I feel sure that great things have to be done on the other side of the world, but legislators in Western Australia and Australia can in some small degree assist those who cannot help themselves. I congratulate the Government on the work they have done during the last two years with the means at their disposal. I believe that right-thinking people of Western Australia realise that every effort has been put forth by the Government to alleviate the trouble and distress that exists and find employment under the best conditions possible with the means at their command.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [10.32]: At this late stage I wish to reply to some remarks made by members opposite. I have listened for nearly three weeks to learn something from members opposite to aid the country in its present trouble, and there have been three suggestions, one from the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington) to change the Government, one from the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) to put all the men we can on full time, and another from the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) to peg the exchange. I do not agree with any of the suggestions, but I wish to reply to some of

the statements made by the member for South Fremantle to-night. The Premier is in his seat and I intend to repeat what the member for South Fremantle said. Dealing with piecework, he read a letter from a union secretary at Northam, who was a member of a deputation, denying certain statements that I made here. He mentioned that the Premier had since been to Northam, had met the men, and had taken them off piecework and put them on day labour. The Premier is in his seat, and he denies having done any such thing.

Hon. A. McCallum: The letter said that he had done it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and that is the kind of stuff to which I strongly object. Members opposite accept *ex-parte* statements by any individual and then state them to the House as facts.

Hon. A. McCallum: They have gone on to day work right enough.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Another statement made was a serious reflection on members on this side of the House. The Minister for Railways was claiming that members on this side were not devoid of the milk of human kindness, as had been alleged by members opposite. The member for South Fremantle said he believed the Minister did possess some of the milk of human kindness, but that he could not exercise his sympathy while he was with the parties on this side of the House. The insinuation was that members on this side, with the exception of the Minister for Railways, were not doing a fair thing by the workers of the State. During this session, in a previous debate, I gave certain figures, and they have not been replied to. Yet misleading statements and lies have been indulged in. I took the information from "The Australian Worker," copies of which I have before me. I do not intend to reply to those statements again. The member for South Fremantle said I did not allow for the child endowment scheme in New South Wales, that a man received payment for a child up to 21 years at the rate of 5s. a week. If any member turns up the Commonwealth Year Book for 1931, he can see just what the child endowment provision is. The Act was passed in 1929 and provided for 5s. a week after the first child, not before. Notwithstanding that, the Government of Western Australia are providing more work than are the New South Wales Government, even including child endowment, except for a man who has six

children. We are doing more than is any other State, not only in providing relief work but in the amount of sustenance paid. When we look at the problem fairly, which it is impossible for some members to do, there can be no doubt that the Government have done more than any other Government in Australia and more, I believe, than any other Government in the world. What we have done, too, has been done under the most trying financial circumstances. The member for South Fremantle gave some figures. He said the Premier had stated that last year we had £1,750,000 of loan money and that the deficit for the year was £1,500,000. The total of the two, he said, meant that the present Government had received more loan money than the Collier Government had had in their last year. Of course the deficit was not loan money: it was money provided in order to meet the shortage of revenue. Because of those statements I intend to give some figures. The net loan expenditure on public works, according to the "Statistical Abstract," has been as follows:—

	£
1928 .. .. .	4,654,610
1929 .. .. .	4,372,269
1930 .. .. .	3,693,051

The average for the three years was £4,240,000. In the next two years the amounts were—

	£
1931 .. .. .	1,759,263
1932 .. .. .	1,380,000

In the three years 1928-30 the Labour Government had an average of £2,680,000 more of loan money to spend than we have had in the last two years.

Mr. Kenneally: Lack of confidence.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is not due to any lack of confidence. The Labour Government spent the money, but they did not borrow it. It was taken from trust funds. It was to be borrowed in future and restored, but it has not been borrowed yet. That has been one of the great difficulties with which the present Government have had to contend, that the trust funds were not only depleted but were in arrears and have to be built up. The average revenue during the last three years of the Labour Government was £9,832,600 a year, while for the present Government it has been £8,340,600. In other words, we have had £4,161,500 a year less to spend on the people of the State, less to spend in finding work for the

people and assisting to meet the requests of people requiring work. The story does not finish there. In 1931 the present Government paid by way of sustenance £436,139, and in 1932 £643,996, a total for the two years of over £1,080,000. In addition, we have had exchange payments to meet in two years amounting to £951,000 which the other Government did not have to meet. We have had less money to handle than the previous Government had for three years, amounting to £5,171,900 per annum. When one analyses the position and looks at it fairly and squarely, one can only admit that the Government have done their job well.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You have a great record with 6,000 men down and out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When we came into office there were thousands of men walking round the country with swags on their backs, and single men could not get any sustenance. We have provided sustenance for single men, and yet members opposite say we are grinding down the worker. In 1927-28 the wheat yield of the State was valued at £9,921,039, and in 1930-31 it was valued at £5,973,000. In the former year wool was valued at £5,520,077, and last year it was valued at only £2,516,622. In other words, in wheat and wool the average income of the people dropped by £6,773,000 per annum. Compare that with 1927-28! That is the problem we have to face. It is not a question of anything this Government can do, for we are doing all that is humanly possible.

Mr. Kenneally: A very poor possible.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What did the hon. member's Government do? They want us to put all the men on full time. What would be done with the remainder? They speak of only £600,000 spent on sustenance. Let us make it a million, and put everybody into a job. Why do members opposite want men employed full time? They want to keep the unions together. That is all. They want to get the union fees out of the men that are on full time, seeing that they cannot get the fees to-day. What happened before we came into office? If a man wanted a job in Government employment he had to be a member of "our party," a member of a trade union with his dues fully paid up. They did go so far as to give a man a fortnight's

work, but they took the fees out of his fortnight's pay.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You know that is not right. You reduced the rate on water supply per acre, and you knew when you made the reduction that you could not get the necessary revenue to pay for the work. You knew you could not pay the annual interest on the capital outlay for 12 months.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Spoils to the victors!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Whenever possible the Government have reduced the charges on primary producers.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Just a moment. You know what you did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have done everything we could to reduce the cost to ordinary producers, and we reduced the water rates.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What about spoils to the victors?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We reduced the maximum rate from 1s. in the pound to 6d.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You did nothing of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In connection with the scheme the hon. member is talking about, if the 6d. an acre had been paid a profit of about £2,000 a year would have resulted.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What about the extensions of the goldfields water supply? You know what you have done; given spoils to the victors.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member can reply when the Minister has sat down.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I asked for certain information that I might give it to the House. The water rates were reduced in 1923.

Hon. J. Cunningham: And you put them up.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They were reduced by the Minister who now holds the position of Minister for Mines. That continued in operation until July 12 months later. Where was the money taken from? The sum of £45,000 to £47,000 was taken out of loan funds and put into revenue, and so inflated revenue.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The money is now being taken to make up the deficiency. You are charging per acre for the extensions, rates ranging from 10d. to 6d. I am referring to the whole of the extensions.



The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The figures show that if 6d. per acre was paid by everyone there would be a reasonable profit.

Hon. J. Cunningham: But you are not getting it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the case of the goldfields water supply the Government had no option but to do what they did. The concession was rightfully made. The mining industry was languishing and required encouragement. All Governments have given such concessions. To-day the price of gold has enormously increased. We could not under any conditions take the money out of loan funds, because the Loan Council definitely stated that loan funds had to be used on works that would return interest and sinking fund.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why did you make the reduction; you are not getting revenue.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member to cease interjecting.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Notwithstanding what members opposite have said, we on this side of the House have just as much of the milk of human kindness as they have.

Mr. Kenneally: You have a strange way of showing it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We are doing all we can. No one would be more pleased than I if we could put the right men on full time. Owing to the fact that so many men are on sustenance, and this accounts for a big proportion of the deficit, it is both the policy and the duty of the Government to take as many men off sustenance as possible and give them real work to do. That is what we are trying to bring about. The other night I referred to the number of men being employed on part time. I have had a return prepared showing what married men receive in employment on public works. The average remuneration they get is £2 4s. 11d. per week.

Mr. Kenneally: A magnificent sum.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No other State in Australia pays that amount in such circumstances.

Mr. Corboy: Surely you are not proud of that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. But we have only to compare this with Queensland, to stand out well. There was a change of Government in that State a little while ago, and I have read that the

Government there are giving 9,000 single men who are out of work 6s. for rations in one week, and in the following week one day's work at 15s. 4d., making a total of 21s. 4d. upon which they are expected to live for two weeks.

Miss Holman: That was a big increase on what the Moore Government did. It applied to 13,000 men at one swoop.

Mr. Kenneally: In the time of the Moore Government, men had to travel about 20 miles to get any sustenance.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In Queensland, with a Labour Government in office, 13,000 single men receive 6s. in rations for one week and 15s. 4d. for a day's work in the ensuing week, or a total of 21s. 4d. for two weeks. In this State, although we have not done all we would have liked to do, we have done all we can do.

Miss Holman: Our single men get only 7s.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We are not working under the same conditions as apply in Queensland.

Mr. Wansbrough: Half of the men are not getting either sustenance or work.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not aware of that.

Mr. Kenneally: You close your eyes to that.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The single men in Kalgoorlie get nothing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Minister in charge of unemployment has replied to all those points.

Mr. Corboy: It is the old Yankee game of passing the buck.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think I have dealt with all the questions that have been raised. During the debate members were very reasonable in their attitude. Indeed, they rather surprised me by not finding more grounds for criticising the Government. All I have done is to reply to the few questions put up which concern my department.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	22

Majority against .. 3

AYES.	
Mr. Collier	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munsie	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Angelo	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. Parker
Mr. Church	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Davy	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Doney	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Wells
Mr. J. I. Mann	Mr. Barnard
Mr. McLarty	(Teller.)
Sir James Mitchell	

Motion thus negatived.

**MR. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [10.56]: Since this debate has been proceeding, the Press have shown anxiety that it should be finished, presumably in order that the Government might proceed with the other business of the session. That would be a good idea if one could find in the Government's programme anything likely to benefit the country. If that were so, I would sit down without saying another word. However, I have perused the Speech, and have made all possible inquiries, and cannot see any good that is likely to result from the Government's proposals. It would have been better had the financial emergency legislation not been passed at all, and I hope that it will not be re-enacted. The most important question now facing Parliament is unemployment. Last night the Minister who is concerned questioned one or two statements made from this side of the House; in fact, he described them as mere hearsay, or as incorrect. Now I wish to bring before him one or two cases which are not from hearsay, but for which I can vouch. On the Supply Bill I mentioned two cases in which I had been unable to effect anything. The Premier, during the course of that debate, said that I had never brought before either the Child Welfare Department or the Unemployment Board any case that had not been satisfactorily settled or sympathetically considered. I returned to the officials with the two cases, but up to date nothing has been done. One was the case of a man receiving 21s. Because he earned a few shillings outside, a deduction was made from his sustenance, notwithstanding the fact that he

had not earned anything for many months prior to getting the one small job. Another case is that of a man receiving 14s., and I consider this man to be the worst treated of all. The unfortunate man was able to get a job working on coal at the Fremantle gas-works. He earned 25s. at that work. Although he had earned nothing for the previous 12 months, the department stopped the 14s. for that week. I have been to the officials several times, but so far the matter has not been rectified. Therefore the Premier's assertions as to satisfaction or sympathetic treatment are of no use. Then there is the case of a man with a wife and nine children, three of the children being over 14 years of age. In respect of these three the department do not recognise any responsibility. There are six children under the age of 14 years. The father is an invalid pensioner, and as such he is likely to be getting 15s. in a few weeks from now; at present he is receiving 17s. 6d. I claim that the pension is given to the man for his own keep, and not for the benefit of the State Government, not to enable them to reduce sustenance payments for the rest of the family. Six of the children are unemployed. Up to two days ago the man had been able to obtain only 28s. per week for the keep of his wife and their six young children. I was responsible for obtaining 7s. additional for the man. During the current week I have done my best for him with the department, and have managed to get the other 7s. This means that instead of 28s. he will receive 35s. for the keep of his wife and of six children. For children under the care of the Child Welfare Department, 9s. per head per week is supposed to be allowed. However, our scraping, cheese-paring Government are helping to starve these children, because it is impossible for the family to live on the amount of sustenance granted. I do not think any Minister, or any hon. member opposite, will say that 28s. per week is a sufficient amount for six children and their mother to live on. On top of that, there are the three children over 14 years of age. Nothing is done for them.

Mr. Kenneally: They are not supposed to eat at all.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No. Now there is a new departure. A few weeks ago representatives of the Unemployment Relief Board visited Fremantle and suggested to the

Single Men's Relief Committee that where families were drawing the maximum of £2 9s. a week, the committee should refrain from giving further assistance to children belonging to such families. They claimed that £2 9s. was the maximum that should be paid to any family. To the credit of the Single Men's Relief Committee, it must be stated that they turned the request down flat, and said they would deal with each application on its merits and decide whether or not they would grant further assistance. Apparently the Unemployed Relief Board say that if they cannot get it one way, they will get it another way. They have adopted the attitude that as the Single Men's Relief Committee will not refrain from giving additional sustenance to children over 14 years of age, they themselves will deduct the assistance granted to children under 14 years of age. I have a letter sent by the board to a man who was drawing the maximum and whose children had received a little relief from the committee, consisting of a small quantity of rations. The letter included the following:—

I have to inform you that your sustenance grant from this department will be 35s. as from the 20th August, 1932, owing to children over 14 years of age drawing . . . from the immigrant home. One over 14 years of age only is allowed.

That is the new scheme. Because the committee would not agree to the board's suggestions, the latter are prepared to starve the younger children. Does the Minister for Lands sanction that sort of thing? The Minister does not answer? Silence gives consent!

The Minister for Lands: I tell you that we are doing more than your Government ever did.

Mr. SLEEMAN: For my part, I tell the Minister that what the Government are doing is a dastardly thing. All that the Fremantle Single Men's Relief Committee have supplied to the children over 14 years of age has been 5s. worth of rations. The relief board say, "If the Fremantle committee will not starve the older children, then, by God, we will starve the younger ones." It is a standing disgrace to the Government to allow that sort of thing to be done. The Minister must know of it.

Mr. Kenneally: The Minister admits he does.

The Minister for Lands: I did nothing of the sort. I will speak for myself.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Then there is the position of single girls. I know of an instance in which a widow is drawing the old age pension. Her child, 18 years of age, approached the department and asked for the single girl's allowance. She was asked why she did not get work. We know that no work is available. We also know that the old age pension drawn by the old lady is insufficient to maintain herself and a girl 18 years of age. The pension was never intended to be used to maintain a family, but was merely to provide for the pensioner alone. I am satisfied that if the girl could get a position, she would not attempt to get sustenance from the Government. The Premier says that the single men should marry these girls and so obviate the necessity for sustenance. Notwithstanding the heroics of the Minister for Works to-night, the Government have been sending men out of the country on starvation rates and men have returned from Pindalup who have earned 10s. 11d. for a week's work. How can a man earning that meagre amount enter the matrimonial market?

Mr. Kenneally: There is a big opportunity for the display of that milk of human kindness that was spoken about last night.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If there is any milk of human kindness in Ministers, they have an opportunity to do something, now that I have drawn attention to these instances. The Attorney General said that Opposition members claimed to be the only possessors of the milk of human kindness, but the first suggestion of that came from the Government side of the House. There is another section of the community that is suffering. I refer to children who, perhaps unfortunately for themselves, have been able to save a few shillings. I know of one instance in which a child had to open his money box and spend his little savings before his parents could secure sustenance. Does the Minister agree with that sort of thing? I hope the instances I have cited will be investigated. I have not been able to get anything done so far. If the position is not rectified, I shall have to make another attempt when the Estimates are before us.

Mr. Kenneally: You are an optimist.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister for Railways said last night that definite instructions had been given that where the father was suffering from ill-health or infirmity his son would be allowed to work out the sustenance on his parents' behalf. When the sewerage work was commenced at Fremantle, I was successful in securing the employment of a son to work out the sustenance for his father, but lately when I made a similar application, I was told there was no chance of a boy being placed on the job because such a practice would become the rule and would become too prevalent. I do not doubt the Minister's statement as to his intentions, but what he indicated was to be done is not being carried out. Now the Minister is aware of the facts, I hope that he will see that effect is given to his instructions. Last night the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker) complained that the amount of the dole, as he called it, was too great, because some in receipt of it had indulged in tickets in crossword puzzles. I have been wondering whether he is the nigger in the woodpile with regard to the latest development. We now find that instructions have been issued that local governing bodies are not to take any fresh registrations and that men are to be put on the ration ticket. I wonder whether the member for North-East Fremantle whispered in someone's ear and whether, because he knew that someone had indulged in a few crossword puzzle tickets, the Government determined to find a way out of the difficulty by not allowing men to work on sustenance and by requiring them to be put on the ration ticket. Time and time again have women come to me and told me that if they had the equivalent of the ration order they could do better with it than by having the order itself. They tell me that if they go to some shops with a ration order they are charged 1d. or 2d. more than they would be charged if they went with cash. Then, with the ration order there is no chance of their getting any clothes at all. Even with the sustenance they have to starve themselves in order to get the clothes they require. It seems to me that unless something be done to allow these people to handle a little money, the next thing we shall have will be the unemployed joining that new sect, the Nudists, because they will not be able to get any clothes. I do not think the Minister would like to see a branch of that sect started here, but I am afraid it will

have to come. I have approached the Premier and the Chief Secretary on a certain matter, but have failed to get satisfaction. In my opinion, it is a case of repudiation. On a certain date in 1905 two men joined the Public Service. When they retire, one is granted a pension, but the other is told he cannot have one. Both men were made permanent on the same day, but they are treated differently when they leave the service. I approached the Chief Secretary, who informed me he could not get past the Public Service Commissioner, who had ruled that one man was not entitled to a pension.

The Minister for Lands: I suppose they were in different branches of the service.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, they were in exactly the same branch and the same department, and both were made permanent on the same day; yet one gets a pension and the other is refused.

The Minister for Lands: I suppose one was a departmental officer and the other was on the wages staff.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, they were both in the same class. Here is the reply I got from the Public Service Commissioner—

Dear Sir,—Re Ex-Warder J. J. O'Connor.

The Chief Secretary's Department has handed to me for attention your letter dated 27th January addressed to the Hon. Minister controlling gaols, wherein you request on behalf of Ex-Warder O'Connor that his claim for superannuation, which was dealt with and disallowed by the Governor in Council in September, 1930, be again reconsidered with a view to obtaining another decision in favour of Ex-Warder O'Connor.

For your information I may state that the matter of Ex-Warder O'Connor's claim for superannuation was dealt with and finalised by my predecessor some considerable time before I assumed my present office, and that the records disclose the following facts, viz.:—

- (a) That in the first instance the claim was considered by the Pensions Board, which was of the opinion that in light of admitted facts the claim was not maintainable.
- (b) That after the Governor in Council had disallowed the claim the Civil Service Association and Mr. A. McCallum, M.L.A., separately took up the matter with my predecessor.
- (c) That in compliance with the request of the Association my predecessor again submitted the claim to the Pensions Board for its further consideration in the light of contentions and arguments put forward by the Association.

- (d) That the Pensions Board, after giving the matter such further consideration as requested, adhered to its original opinion.
- (e) That thereafter, in view of the disallowance of his claim, Ex-Warder O'Connor was granted and accepted special retiring allowance, and did not proceed any further with his claim for superannuation.

I do not know if I have any authority in the matter, but assuming that I have, I think that in the circumstances above-mentioned it would not only be improper but also would be unreasonable and unjustifiable for me now to reopen a matter which, after very careful consideration, had already been dealt with and finalised by my predecessor.

The Chief Secretary will admit that this is a most extraordinary case. Certainly the Premier has admitted that it is a remarkable case, and when I asked him what could be done about it, he practically said nothing could be done. Proof that these two men joined the service on the same day will be found in the Blue Book for 1905, where it is shown that they were both made permanent officials on the 1st January of that year. The reason given for the anomaly is that the one was properly employed, whereas the other was not. It is claimed that the appointment of one went through Executive Council, but that by some omission on the part of the then Minister the appointment of the other never went before Executive Council. And now after all these years of service this man finds that through no fault of his own he is debarred from receiving a pension. The best way I can sum up the case is to quote from a speech delivered by Mr. Justice Draper when he was a member of this House in 1910 in moving for certain papers relating to pensions. The hon. member made this statement—

If they refused to give him a pension merely because he is not able to enforce it in a court of law they are not following the principle of justice which should prevail in a British community. I could well understand some South American Republic desiring to repudiate a liability; but it is difficult to believe that in Western Australia we should find a Government seeking to evade their liability upon the mere pretext that, although a man is entitled to a pension, yet as he cannot bring an action and enforce it in a court of law they will not give him one.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

That was the opinion of Mr. Justice Draper when he was a member of this House. It has been the fault of Governments that when they saw a chance to deprive a man of a pension they did not hesitate to seize it. I have been to the Premier, the Chief Secretary and the Public Service Commissioner without any satisfaction, and I hope it will not be necessary for me to move in the House a motion affirming the desirability of granting this man his pension. I understand the Public Service Commissioner is a servant of the House, not of the Government, and in order that I may get justice for this man I may have to move a motion, although I hope it will not be necessary. Quite a lot has been said as to how to get over our economic troubles. All will agree that we are not going to get rid of unemployment by the lengthening of hours. When the Government came into office, one of their first actions was to scrap the 44-hour week and get back to the 48-hour week. I cannot understand how any body of men, let alone Cabinet Ministers, could think that by increasing hours of labour they are going to abolish unemployment. They will never do it by those means. Even Mr. William Morris Hughes has wakened up to the position and is now advocating the shortening of hours in order to meet the unemployment position. In these days of labour-saving devices, with men being thrown on the labour market as a result of the new machinery, the only thing to do is to reduce the number of hours a man works. If that be not done, we shall always have the unemployed with us. The Government take a very queer view of the matter. At the elections they said they were going to find work for all, and make everybody prosperous. Yet their first action was to extend the 44-hour week to 48 hours, which they said would reduce the number of unemployed. Only to-night the Minister for Works was telling us about something being done in Queensland. Even on the Minister's own figures it works out better than obtains in this State where only 7s. a week is given to a single man, and that only in certain districts. We have heard that 7s. is paid in Perth; 5s. is paid in Fremantle; in Bunbury I am told the amount is less, and in other parts of the State I believe nothing at all is paid. The Minister for Works, by quoting Queensland, I think brought himself out on the wrong side of the ledger. There is something that should have been done years ago, though I

admit it is useless to cry about its not having been done before. When the Premier attends the next conference in the Eastern States, he should try to get the Commonwealth and the other States to agree to the inauguration of a system of national insurance. Much time and money have been spent in Australia in investigating the question. There is a record of commissions having sat over five years ago and of having recommended national insurance. Although we have been rather late in starting, it is better late than never. If national insurance could be established the Government would experience some relief. I believe that everyone, on attaining the age of 55 or 60, should be retired and be enabled to live comfortably and so make room for the younger people. At present a man has to keep his nose to the grindstone in order to get the wherewithal to live. If a national insurance scheme were adopted, the workers would not be haunted by the fear of unemployment or the fear of being miserable and probably living in a state of semi-starvation during their declining years. A few men could be absorbed on the Peel Estate. I know the estate fairly well. There are men at Fremantle who would be prepared to take up blocks there provided they were granted at a nominal fee. At present the land is reverting to bush, and if neglected much longer, not only will the bush have grown up but posts and wires will be gone and everything will be lost. If the blocks were made available at a nominal fee people would take them up.

The Minister for Lands: All on our hands have been taken up.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I believe the charge is about £12 per half year.

The Minister for Lands: Less than that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think it is possible to get them for less. I know there are a number of blocks which men in Fremantle would willingly take in hand provided the fee was nominal and that rations were continued for a time. They would be only too glad to get away from the labour market and secure a home of their own. It would be far better to place people on those blocks, even if the land were given away. It would pay the Government to write down the values even more, rather than leave the holdings unoccupied. Considerable reference has been made to the overseas debt. The time is opportune for the Premiers' Confer-

ence to inquire whether some relief cannot be obtained. If a man is practically bankrupt, he does not allow his children to starve. He explains his case to his creditors. He tells them that he cannot pay, but that when he is in a position to pay, he will do so. We are in that position. We should tell our creditors that we are not prepared to allow our people to starve in order that overseas interest may be paid. We are not anxious to default, but we are anxious that our people should be fed and clothed. To enable us to ensure that, it should not be necessary for us to pay interest for a time. Action along these lines should have been taken before. Not long ago, when anyone suggested any action of the kind, he was set down as a repudiationist and everything that was bad. Other people, however, are coming around to that way of thinking, and I hope something will be done in that direction. I was amused the other evening to hear the member for North Perth (Mr. J. MacCallum Smith) asking about a statement made by Professor Fox. Last year when Professor Shann was allowed to go to the Eastern States to write propaganda for the Bank of New South Wales, the member for North Perth made no mention of the fact. I asked questions about Professor Shann, the conditions under which he had gone to the Bank of New South Wales, the salary he was to receive and the time he was to spend with the bank. Quite a little storm of indignation arose that I should have the impudence to put such questions. I did not get much information.

The Attorney General: You got the same answer as did the member for North Perth.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for North Perth was not anxious to make inquiries on that occasion, but he has hopped in now that the occasion suits him. I do not know whether the member for Nelson is giving secrets away, but he told the House that at a meeting he had attended he was informed that tenders were not to be called for the sale of the State Sawmills. I am glad to hear it, and to that I say, "Hear, hear!"

The Minister for Lands: He did not say that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: He did.

The Minister for Lands: He said tenders were not to be called that day.

Mr. SLEEMAN: We are led to believe that tenders are not to be called for the sale of the State ships, and to that again

I say, "Hear, hear!" However, a Bill is to be brought down for closing the State Implement Works as an implement-making factory. The Government profess to wish to help the farmers; they cry out about the tariff, and yet they would close the implement works, which should be made a paying concern by manufacturing implements for the farmers. The Government intend to introduce a measure to authorise bulk handling, as they say, to help the farmer. If they are sincere in the one thing, they ought to be sincere in the other. I cannot understand why they should be anxious to introduce bulk handling, and at the same time should wish to close a factory which should be of assistance to the farmers. The Government cry out about the tariff, but they refuse to do anything regarding their own tariff. I observe that the Attorney General is scratching his head. I refer to the surcharge on the Fremantle harbour dues. This is not the first occasion on which I have mentioned that matter. As the party in power profess so much solicitude for the farmers, they might help a little by lifting the surcharge so that the people of the country will not be penalised as they are penalised to-day by a surcharge that was imposed as a war-time measure. Some time ago I asked a question in the House when the member for Nedlands was a Minister in charge of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. He said he was not prepared to have the surcharge lifted. It should be taken off. It was only put on as a war-time measure and there is no necessity for it. It is certainly a means of collecting revenue, which the Government does not want to relinquish. I hope the unfairness of the charge will be realised and that it will be removed in the interests of the country. A lot has been said about Ottawa, but not much about State-owned concerns. It would seem that the State Sawmills are not going to do much business as a result of that conference, neither are we going to do much with the Wyndham Meat Works. It seems to be a fly in the ointment that we should have these two State-owned concerns to deal with. Some of the works in the Eastern States may get some benefit, but because we have two State-owned concerns of this nature it seems we are to be exempted from any of the benefits. I shall anxiously await results of the Ottawa Conference to see whether we are going to be penalised, although we did the right thing

in establishing these works. When the Government came into office they brought down a hospital tax. It was proposed that a married man earning under £230 a year and single men earning under £150 a year should be exempt. That was the first leg in. The following session these benefits were cut out, and no one knows now who is entitled to free treatment. The Government are evading a responsibility that is legally theirs, by pushing on to the local authorities the payments for infectious disease cases.

The Minister for Lands: You know nothing about the Health Act when you say that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister had no right to shelter behind that Act in order to evade his rightful responsibilities. We are told that all indigent persons are treated free, but that is not so. The Minister has no intention of treating them free. Many infectious cases are sent from Fremantle to the West Subiaco hospital. The Fremantle council should not be asked to bear any of the expense, but now have to pay half the uncollected fees, because of some section in the Health Act that is many years old. No charge should be made for indigent children. They should be provided for under the hospital tax.

The Minister for Lands: We did not bring it into use.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Of course the Minister did, but he amended it later.

The Minister for Lands: I am referring to that section of the Health Act.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is of no use to anyone now.

The Minister for Lands: We will change it from the property owner to the worker.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister should change it to the rightful people, those who are collecting the hospital tax from the workers.

The Minister for Lands: We are charging the landholder under the Health Act.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Not at all. How many big landowners are there in the industrial community? Workers in the towns are not paying their rates to keep indigent children at the infectious diseases hospital, but for the establishment of roads and footpaths.

The Minister for Lands: Under the Health Act?

Mr. SLEEMAN: When the hospital tax was brought in it was never intended that

the Government should shelter behind the Health Act, and evade their rightful responsibilities.

The Attorney General: The Health Act is an old one, and it contains provisions which put the onus on the local authority for the treatment of indigent patients.

Mr. SLEEMAN: When the Hospital Bill was brought down the Health Act should have been amended to ensure that the local authority should not be saddled with that cost.

The Attorney General: That was the law.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It should be altered. The Government are collecting money illegally from the people, and then are refusing to pay these expenses for the people.

The Minister for Lands: Mind you do not get into deep water.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The tax was brought in to assist the sick, and certain exemptions were provided. The Government were not satisfied with the £100,000 they had bush-ranged from the Estimates, but decided to withdraw the exemptions. They wanted to be the sole judges of the position. If the Government thought people had no money, and might not know where they were going to get their next feed, they might have the decency to treat those people for nothing. If it was found there was a chance of getting anything out of them, the Government pursued them to the last ditch.

The Minister for Lands: You know that is not so.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The tax is collected to keep the hospitals going.

Mr. Kenneally: The term hospital tax is a misnomer.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Government are not standing up to their obligations concerning the infectious diseases hospital. If an indigent boy breaks an arm, he is treated free at the public hospital, but if he contracts diphtheria he is sent to West Subiaco and is charged for.

The Minister for Lands: He is treated free of charge at both places. You can put that over Fremantle but not over this House.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Government do not pay the cost; they tell the local authority that it is their job to pay.

The Attorney General: Why is that so wicked?

Mr. SLEEMAN: If I were taking money from the Attorney General on the pretext of doing something for him, and when I got the money I said, "Go to the devil, you can pay for yourself," would he say that was wicked or justifiable?

The Attorney General: If you took the money on the pretext of having broken an arm and—

Mr. SLEEMAN: The tax was originally intended to apply to people earning more than £230. The Government now say that such people can afford to pay for themselves. When the Hospital Bill went through it was never thought for a moment that the Government would take shelter behind the Health Act.

The Minister for Lands: The Act was in force long before that.

The Attorney General: The question of infectious diseases has constituted a running argument between local authorities and the Government for many years.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hospital tax was brought in to help indigent people. I hope before the session is over the Health Act will be amended and the Government made to stand up to their responsibilities.

The Attorney General: Piling it on to the Government!

Mr. SLEEMAN: Are not the Government piling it on to the people? The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) mentioned many taxation cases, too many for me to remember. Yet the Premier recently stated that there would have to be extra taxation—I do not know who will bear it. The Government should not fool the people any longer, but should stand up to their obligations under the hospital tax legislation. We intend to see that those obligations are observed fully. I am sure the Minister in his heart believes that that is the proper course, and I hope that in the near future it will be followed. Now I wish to ask what the Minister for Education intends to do regarding the cleaners in his department, who were lately the subject of a deputation. During the most recent vacation their wages were withheld from them. The same thing happened in connection with the Christmas vacation. As the Federal Government attack old age pensioners, so the State Government are attacking about the hardest-up members of the Public Service. Most of the cleaners are widows with families to



support. It is a shame that at Christmas their usual earnings should be withheld from them. At Christmas there is, in fact, extra work to be done in the way of cleaning up in preparation for re-opening. The fact that these cleaners are not permanently employed should not debar them from receiving the ordinary payment. No Government would dare to treat a body of school teachers in the way these school cleaners are being treated. These poor women are told, "The Christmas vacation is here, and the Government are very sorry but you cannot get any wages for the next three weeks." I believe that the Minister for Education will see that the practice is altered. I believe he will see that the cleaners receive their wages for the Christmas vacation and also for the vacation which has just ended. Now as regards a bridge for Fremantle. Bridges are being proposed all over the Swan River, but with every respect to other localities I hold that no place wants a new bridge more than Fremantle does. The existing structure has been an eyesore for a long time. I believe Ministers realise that fact, and also realise that the bridge is not the safest in the world. If it should go great inconvenience will be caused to a multitude of people for the Causeway and Canning Bridge could not carry the traffic. There is the old proposal to build the bridge with money obtained from bonds. I still believe there is something in that. In the first session of this Parliament the ex-Minister for Works mentioned the suggestion of building the bridge on the bond system. The erection of the bridge would certainly give a considerable amount of work. The building of the bridge on the bond system should be highly acceptable to the Treasurer, and I hope that the present Government, before going out of office—as I believe they will do shortly—will make a name for themselves by building the new Fremantle bridge. On a recent evening the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) pleaded for a new school for girls. I know the very place that would be most suitable for such an establishment—Government House. There is no need for Government House as such any longer, although the Premier is credited with having stated, when last in the East, that he still favoured the bringing-out of Governors from the Old Country. I do not think a Governor from the Old Country will be seen in Western Australia again. I shall prevent

such an appointment, if possible. The subject is one on which I shall have something to say during the consideration of the Estimates. I have nothing to say against the Governors whom I have known; they were very nice gentlemen indeed. But there is no reason for bringing such gentlemen here to fill the office of Governor when the Chief Justice carries out the duties as well as any Governor from Home. As to the social functions associated with Government House, there is no occasion for them in these hard times. I hope I have done some good by raising my protest against certain things. As for the Press and its comments, if I think a matter important enough to ventilate in this Chamber, the Press is not going to tell me otherwise. I hope the Government will take note of the representations I have made.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [11.48]: I have no wish to weary the House at this late hour, but may I at the outset take the opportunity of this, my first speech during the current session, to congratulate the new members on their election to this Chamber. Probably they have come into the House with preconceived ideas—I did when a new member—as to changing the system of government and correcting all the evils that people outside declare they suffer from. During the remainder of the session the new members will have an opportunity of deciding whether it is wise to attempt such alterations, or whether it is just as well to carry on under the old system. Now I wish to reply to some of the remarks made by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), particularly as regards payment for treatment of infectious disease—whether the local governing bodies should pay, or the Government should. The hon. member apparently forgets that nobody, neither a local governing body nor the Government, can pay for services without taking the money from the pockets of the people. Does it really matter—I would like the hon. member's opinion about this—whether we take the money from the landholders of this State as a contribution assisting those who cannot pay for treatment when suffering from infectious disease, or take it out of the pockets of all the people?

Mr. Sleeman: You take it out of the pockets of all the people by the hospital tax.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Then I trust the hon. member is in favour of increasing the tax so as to pay for these services.

Mr. Sleeman: You should pay the cost out of the £100,000 already taken.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member shows that he does not understand where the money comes from. It is a matter of indifference to me at the moment whether we get it from the hospital tax or take it out of the pockets of the people by other means. The fact is that to-day we have not got the money to enable us to do it. If that is the only reason, then surely it justifies matters being left as they are. It may interest hon. members to know that the main purpose of the applicable section of the Health Act was to make local authorities do their best to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you think the local bodies would encourage the spread of the diseases?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but they could contribute to the spread by indifference.

Mr. Sleeman: They would not do that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I can quote one local authority that asked us to abolish the cart system and allow people to bury the nightsoil in their backyards. There are some local authorities that must be kept up to the mark, hence the inclusion of the section in the Health Act. I want to inform the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) that the local authorities do not pay the whole of the money involved.

Mr. Sleeman: I did not say they did.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member led the House to believe that they did.

Mr. Sleeman: By way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, I will not allow the Minister to put words into my mouth that I did not utter. I said that the local authorities paid half the amount owing on account of the treatment of infectious diseases.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So long as the hon. member says that now, I am content. The local authorities do not pay more than one half of the amount owing. If the local authorities do not pay their proportion, then the Perth Hospital is responsible for the payment. It is not a charge against the Government, because the Infectious Diseases Hospital is a branch of the Perth Hospital, which is responsible. In the interests of the workers, we may ask the landholders to pay a little extra.

Mr. Sleeman: Fancy the Minister telling me what is in the interests of the workers!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I pointed that out to the hon. member because, if the Government have to bear the cost, then we must increase the hospital tax, and that will affect the workers. But for the imposition of the hospital tax, we could not have rendered benefits to the Fremantle people in connection with their hospital. The hospital fund enabled us to open a ward that had been closed because funds were not available to maintain it. During the few years I have been in public life, there has never been a Minister for Health who has not done his very best in the interests of our hospitals, but every Minister has had to go to the Treasurer for funds. It has always been difficult to get money to provide for the sick poor of the State, and during the term of office of my predecessor, he found it impossible to get all the money he desired, in consequence of which wards had to be closed. The hospital tax has been the means of enabling us to open hospital wards and carry out necessary renovations. The member for Fremantle knows that within the next few weeks we shall commence the building of an out-patients' department, which is necessary at Fremantle. In the interests of the people who receive benefits at our hospitals, the tax is worth while. There is more talk in this House about the hospital tax than is ever heard outside. The people who derive the benefit desire the tax and they have no complaints to make about it.

Mr. Corboy: Our grievance is that you spend it in Perth and Fremantle and the people in the country get nothing.

Mr. Patrick: It is a godsend to the people in the country.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Corboy) is unfortunate in that he has one hospital in his district that is leased, and there has been no claim from them. We pay for all the indigent patients at hospitals, with that one exception. Even so, I believe that many of the patients from that part of the State go to the Northam hospital, or some other hospital, to receive treatment. I do not think there is one hospital in respect of which those in control will not admit that they benefit appreciably as a result of the hospital fund. There are one or two other points raised by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) and the member for Albany (Mr. Wansbrough) that I wish to

clear up. I know those hon. members had no intention deliberately to mislead the House with regard to the £15 paid to the matrons at the Government hospitals they referred to for Christmas cheer. The money was used for the purpose indicated.

Mr. Wansbrough: Do you say that money was not called up?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say definitely it was not paid into revenue. In order to comply with the requirements of the Auditor General, that money has to be paid into a trust fund and drawn from it. The payment of £15 was available to each matron provided she gave proof that the money was used for the purpose indicated.

Mr. Wansbrough: Why were the cheques called up?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Because they were paid into the trust fund. It would be very difficult for any Minister to answer some questions immediately respecting any amount of £15 allotted to a specific hospital. I am sure that if the hon. members were to ask the matrons at the Albany and Bunbury hospitals, whether the money was spent on Christmas cheer, they would say that it had been spent in that direction.

Mr. Wansbrough: But after the money had been spent, they received instructions to pay it into revenue.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The matrons are not expected to be experts in finance.

Mr. Wansbrough: But after they had spent the Christmas cheer cheque that they had received, they were asked to pay it into revenue.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the matron had indicated that the money had been spent, the matter would have been cleared up.

Mr. Wansbrough: But why should she be asked to return it?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Because the money had to be paid into a trust fund, and the Auditor-General insists on the requirements of the Act being carried out. What does it matter? Some hospitals have committees that provide comforts, and other have not.

Mr. Withers: Why should not the matron at Bunbury have had a share of that fund?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They may not have had a comforts fund. I am afraid the hon. members made out a weak case, but I am sure they had no intention of misleading the House. The £15 was used

only for the patients, and, in some instances, for the staff.

Mr. Withers: But the staffs are a responsibility of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And sometimes we give them Christmas cheer out of comforts fund.

Mr. Withers: Not out of the charity funds?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course it was paid out of the charity funds. It is simply a matter of opinion. At one hospital where there were only two patients there was the £15 to spend. Does the hon. member suggest that it should have been spent entirely on two patients? The trouble is that members get hold of information which they could always have cleared up at the department without referring it to the House. The member for Victoria Park (Mr. Raphael) said that the £900 subsidy paid to the dental hospital had been subjected to a 22½ per cent. cut under the emergency legislation. I definitely say that was one of the institutions in respect of which no cut was made. There was so many of the unemployed requiring dental treatment that I could not justify the imposition of the cut. And not only did we allow them to draw the full amount of their subsidy, but we gave them £12 per month extra to meet some of their special requirements.

Mr. Corboy: They would need more than that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no institution that does not need more than it is getting to-day. Still the hon. member had no right to come to the House and give incorrect information. He was certainly not speaking on behalf of the institution, else his information would have been correct. Generally speaking the debate has been very fair to members of the Government. Much has been attempted to be made out against the Government, but there is a definite reply to everything put up by members of the Opposition. To-day, not only outside the Chamber but inside it also, some people make a paradise for criticism. Not only do they not appreciate the difficulties with which Governments are confronted, but they are very harsh in their criticism. Those who regard this as a paradise are treading on very tender ground. It is no pleasure to any Government to find their people on short pay. But what are we going to do? If we were to carry out the suggestion that we should pay away all our money in full wages to the

men for a short period, we should have to let them starve for the remainder of the time. If we could get the whole of our loan funds at one time, it would not be so bad, for we could then see at the end of six months what the position would be. But unfortunately we get our money spread over the whole of the year, and so if we were to provide full-time employment on full wages, a large number of people would be left to starve. Certainly unless members can show us how to get money in a way at present unknown to us, the experiment would end in starvation for some people. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) criticised the Premier for his optimistic spirit. I am glad to know there are still some optimists amongst us when there are so many Dismal Johnnies. Despite what the Leader of the Opposition said, I believe there was a slight optimistic strain running through his speech. He certainly said we had not turned the corner, but judging by the tone of his remarks he does not think the corner is far away.

Mr. Corboy: We shall reach it at the next election, when there will be a change-over.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If there is to be a change-over, I hope the difficulties we have been experiencing will not be passed on to our successors. There is certainly justification for a little optimism to-day, for there is a distinctly better tone in both the wheat market and the wool market. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) remarked upon how little of the tremendous wealth of Australia is exported. In Western Australia we are different from the Eastern States, where they have big manufacturing centres. In this State our money comes very largely from wool and wheat. We use 7 per cent. of the wheat we grow, and we export the rest. I doubt whether we use so much as  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of our wool. So it will be seen that we depend entirely on the overseas prices. It is true the exchange has benefited our primary producers, probably more than it has benefited the primary producers of the Eastern States; but whether it is possible definitely to fix the period over which the present exchange is going to last is outside my knowledge at the moment, and can be dealt with only by the Associated Banks and the Commonwealth and State Governments getting together and making a decision. Even then it would be difficult to peg the exchange, be-

cause it is possible for somebody else to come along and release credits.

Hon. A. McCallum: But it is pegged now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so, but even now there are some people selling exchange for less than 25 per cent. We must have some optimism. In this State so much depends upon primary production, and if we do not have optimism with which to encourage our primary producers there is nothing but collapse ahead of us. There can be no permanent solution of our unemployment troubles except the putting of the men on to primary production. They can be put on to road work, and at the end of the period they are back on our hands not a penny better off. The permanent solution is to put them on the land and let them produce commodities for export.

Mr. Withers: But you are putting off a bigger percentage than you are putting on.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That statement is not right. It is true that to-day because finance is so difficult many men who in the past have been able to make a living on the land are unable to do it now, and neither the Government nor the financial institutions are able to extend to them the big advances that they received in the past. Members, when they ask for big Government expenditure, are apt to forget the reason why we cannot give it. I wish to make a comparison so that members may appreciate the position of the present Government with that of the last Government. During the last year of the Labour Government, 1929-30, the national income was £42,505,000, whereas last year it was £32,635,000. So practically there was a drop of £10,000,000. That is £10,000,000 we have not in circulation, but it was in circulation in 1930. It works out at £25 per head of men, women and children in the State. During the last full year of revenue of the Labour Government, they received £9,750,000. Last year our revenue was £8,035,000, or a decline of £1,715,000, or a total of £11,715,000 less than our predecessors had. Then during the last year of the Labour Government they spent from loan funds £2,312,000 more than we had to spend. Those three items total £14,027,000. The Commonwealth Government spent loan funds to the extent of £7,000,000 a year in Australia for a number of years. Last year they did not spend £2,000,000 in the whole

of Australia. That difference, added to the £14,000,000, makes a tremendous sum less in circulation and the result is that industry has had to dispense with the services of employees and the responsibility for their maintenance has been thrown on the Government. The total of those figures represents £33 per head of the population of the State, which is a big sum of money. If we had it in circulation now, we would be a very happy community and there would be little for us to worry about. To show the fall of commodity prices, in the last year of the Labour Government wheat averaged 4s. 8d. a bushel and wool 10½d. a lb. Last year wheat brought 2s. 6d. and wool 8d. Members can see what that falling off meant. Any man would have needed a great deal of foresight to foretell such a collapse in prices.

Mr. Sleeman: Did the 2s. 6d. a bushel include the bonus?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The bonus applied to last season's wheat, the sales of which have not been completed, but the price will be 2s. 10d. to 3s. a bushel. Those figures should be kept in mind. No one could foresee the utter collapse in the price of export commodities. Had we had the amount of revenue that the Labour Government received in their last year of office, we would have had no deficit at all, but could have carried the liability of £600,000 for exchange and £600,000 for unemployment relief. We could have met both those outlays and still shown a surplus.

Hon. J. Cunningham: We made it possible for you to do that.

Mr. Withers: You might have been more extravagant.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will tell the hon. member something of extravagance presently. We could not increase commodity prices, but we did the next best thing and that was to reduce expenditure. We started with what we considered was extravagant expenditure. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) said the Scullin Government came into office at a time when it had to take the consequences. That very argument could be put up in defence of the State Government. We came in just at a time to take the consequences.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You made so many extravagant promises.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In normal conditions we were justified in making them. When the promises were made, wheat was 4s. 8d. a bushel and wool 10½d. a lb. Certainly overseas borrowing had stopped, but the statement was justified on the amount of money that we considered was available.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You were warned.

Mr. Withers: We refuted the statement from every platform.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the Government took office, we found the Treasury empty. No one will dispute that. However, we faced the position as any other Government would have done. We had to steer the ship of State through an unknown sea of depression, the like of which had never before been experienced. The deficit is excusable on the ground that we had to find £620,000 for exchange and £643,000 for unemployment relief. Had we had the revenue that the Labour Government received in 1929-30, we would have been able to meet that expenditure and show a surplus.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Provided you had made the cuts in wages.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. I told the House that we could not increase commodity prices and consequently we had to reduce expenditure. That was the only course open to us. It is true that the exchange rate has benefited the primary producers. With the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I do not know what would have happened without the help of the exchange last year. It assisted the farmers to bridge slightly the difference between the cost of production and the returns received. It has not bridged the whole distance but it has materially assisted. Without it I do not know what relief the farmers could have looked for. The Government cannot expect any relief until there is an increase in commodity prices, which will justify the removal of the exchange rate. There are only three ways I know of in which we can assist. We can hammer away to get a reduction of interest rates. Money must be made cheaper.

Hon. J. Cunningham: How are you going to do that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A good deal has been done in the last year. We are going to discourage the payment of high rates of interest and make it unprofitable for

moneyed men to keep their funds locked up in banks. We are going to encourage cheaper money. The main thing is to get down the rate of interest so that it will be unprofitable to lock money up. It will be more profitable to circulate it in industry. In this State there is no question about work to be done. There is plenty of work. The question is to get the wherewithal to pay for the work. We are doing our best to deal with the interest question. The Government of this State led the way in that matter. We reduced the Agricultural Bank interest to 6 per cent. on the 1st January of last year, and now it is down to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Hon. J. Cunningham: How are you going to thaw a way out of the frozen interest bill?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It must be remembered that the banks are still holding a good deal of money on fixed deposit at  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent., and until those contracts have expired, they will pay that rate of interest. As soon as that rate of interest comes down, the rate to borrowers will be lowered. The security of the banks depends entirely on the success of the primary producer. The City of Perth securities will decline with those of the primary producers. In the interests of the bank securities it is necessary for them to make money available as cheaply as possible. That is one way in which relief will be provided. A second form of relief will be an alteration in the tariffs, which must come. I remind the member for East Perth (Mr. Kennelly) that there must be a reduction. We have to make available for the primary producer every possible market.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You as the Government have no responsibility for the tariffs.

The Minister for Lands: We have no responsibility for finance because it was given to the Loan Council long ago.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why not be fair?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have a responsibility—

Hon. J. Cunningham: You have not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Individually and collectively we have the responsibility of telling the people that in a State like ours we cannot afford to have tariff barriers built up that prevent us from marketing our products abroad.

Hon. J. Cunningham: As a State Government you have no responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All we can do is to talk about it when the Premiers meet and that has been done. I believe that

would provide one of the solutions of our difficulties. Last year the prohibitive tariffs restricted our markets. Germany, France, Italy and Egypt were almost closed against us as a primary producing country. The more markets we have the more competition will there be for our goods. But for China and Japan last year, and the year before, I do not know what we would have done with our wheat. It is a question of the law of supply and demand, because the carry-over is so great. It is remarkable that the MacDonald Labour Government should have allowed Russian wheat to enter Great Britain when Russia had repudiated her debts, knowing that the wheat was grown under slave conditions and paid for in Russian currency. Not only did that Government allow that, but bought the wheat with good British currency. Britain then expected the Dominions to pay their interest account, although they knew we would have to pay with the goods we sent, the prices of which were at a low figure. I hope we may get some relief from that position. We have to get the rate of interest reduced, and see that tariffs are brought down, so that we can trade with countries that will trade with us. Until this is brought about it is vitally necessary to continue the exchange rate. That will assist us to bridge the gap between the cost of production and the price of our goods.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You have no authority over that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: According to members opposite we have all the authority. Undoubtedly it is an Australia-wide question. Ours has been an unpleasant task. We have had to introduce salvage legislation, as the Leader of the Opposition put it. That was a most fitting expression. We were trying to prevent the State from going to pieces. We had to do things that proved unpopular, such as make cuts in members' salaries, in civil servants' salaries and reductions in wages. I would point out that the coalition Government have done their job, and that there has been no split in the ranks. I cannot mention any Labour Government in Australia in which there has not been a split in the ranks.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Are you foreshadowing a further reduction in members' salaries?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not heard of it. The only place where there was no split in the Government was in New

South Wales, and what a dreadful mess they made of things! Complaints have been made about the heavy taxation. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) referred to gun licenses. We do impose a tax of 5s. to cover the cost of printing, and the registration of firearms, but any subsequent tax is 1s. a year. One registration covers the whole family. Most of the taxes have been imposed on people who cannot pass them on. I refer particularly to the entertainments tax and the tax on bookmakers.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They pass it on.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. We have given relief to an industry that we knew could not possibly meet its present expenditure. I refer to primary production. We abolished the land tax, and assisted primary producers by relieving them of local Government taxes. We assisted the people up North with a slight reduction in their rentals. This indicated that the Government appreciated their difficulties and were offering the people some inducement to carry on. The hospital tax has been in the interests of the workers. I know the difficulties experienced in good times by Ministers for Health. When my successor takes over from me he will be pleased to know that he can lay his hands upon a certain sum of money, and make up the deficiency on hospital accounts. The member for Mt. Magnet complained that nothing had been done in the Lands Department. We have done as much as it was possible to do with the money available. We have put a number of small farmers on homestead blocks, built shacks for them, and given them £2 a week as sustenance. That is a charge upon the land.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why not build workers' home in Kalgoorlie?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Kalgoorlie is well looked after. I agree with the remarks of the member for Geraldton (Hon. J. C. Willcock) with regard to the fine belt of country suitable for settlement in his electorate. No doubt the money that has already been spent at the port of Geraldton will be made the fullest use of when funds are available for the development of the hinterland. If the Government thought we could find sufficient settlers with capital to take up this huge territory, the surveyed holdings would be thrown open to-morrow. We should decide our railway policy before we open new land, so that we may know

where the sidings will be and what the road system will be. The hon. member accused the Premier of bringing new people into the State whenever a silver lining appeared. Those we have helped most have been Australian-born. Many have come from the goldfields and have settled in the South-West.

Hon. J. Cunningham: They are good people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, a splendid type.

The Premier: Some of them are even in Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Mt. Magnet said there was nothing being done in the Lands Department. He boasted of the tremendous activity of that department when he was in office. I am sorry he is not present to-night. For the three years that he was in charge he cost the State a lot of money, and broke the hearts of numbers of people he put on the land. I refer particularly to the 3,500 farms scheme, which should never have been started.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That came about under the migration scheme.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: People were put out there before the Government were ready for them, and we have had to take them off. The first thing I did was to issue instructions that no one else was to go there until we knew what the railway system was to be.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The £32,000,000 had evaporated long before you came into office.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In some of the hon. member's water supply schemes.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You had it spent in your district.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The preliminary investigations for the 3,500 farms scheme cost £105,000, and prior to taking possession of their blocks the settlers were promised a railway. They went out, and now their position is perilous. I shall not say that there is not a considerable area of first-class land in that district, but the fact remains that some of the settlers were placed 70 miles from a railway. It was no use putting people out 60 or 70 miles from a railway, especially at that time, if one knew what was ahead of this State.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You are condemning the land now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. Money was not available to give the necessary transport facilities.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That is all right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The State will not get out with a loss of less than £600,000 or £700,000.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: What about the six millions in the group settlements?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have some interesting figures about group settlements. I will inform the House who was responsible for the loss. I would not have referred to the question had not the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) raised it, and had he refrained from certain interjections last night. The loss incurred by the Agricultural Bank will amount to between £600,000 and £700,000, and £320,000 will be required to remove the settlers closer to railway communication. Thus we are in deep water irrespective of what we do. Every one of those settlers sent there was on first-class land.

Hon. P. Collier: Those settlers were not sent there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They were promised an advance of £1,500 per farm.

Hon. P. Collier: They went there of their own volition.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am speaking in general terms. We still have land available there, but we do not allow anyone to go there.

Hon. P. Collier: Still, those settlers who are there went there of their own volition.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They went there, and this State agreed to advance £1,500 for each of those settlers. While we have not put many additional men on the land, particularly in the wheat areas, the proposition being too unattractive, we have set ourselves to produce more bushels to the acre, as these statistics prove:—

Year.	Acreage.	Bushels.
1929-30	.. 3,568,225	39,081,183
1930-31	.. 3,955,763	53,504,149
1931-32	.. 3,158,888	41,360,698

The following figures show how the State average has been increased:—

Year.	Bushels.
1929-30	.. .. 10.95
1930-31	.. .. 13.52
1931-32	.. .. 13.09

So that during the last two years we have obtained more bushels to the acre. This State must turn its attention to that aspect. In my opinion, we have got our settlement far enough advanced to turn our attention towards getting a higher production per acre.

Hon. P. Collier: Who started that policy?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We did not get much result from the hon. member's policy.

Hon. P. Collier: But we made fallowing compulsory, and what you have quoted is the result of that fallowing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would not say that altogether.

Hon. P. Collier: It is so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This last year we have done very little fallowing. The trouble is that we cannot get the money for fallowing.

Hon. P. Collier: During the last year or two you have obtained the results of our fallowing policy.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This last year we have been able to exercise a certain measure of control. The question has been one of fertiliser. Instead of spreading the fertiliser over large areas, the farmers have had to confine it to small areas; and the result is a better return per acre. The member for Mt. Magnet is always telling the House what happens on the group settlements. Because of his interjections last night I will now give certain figures. To the 31st March, 1924, this State had advanced £940,789 for group settlement in a period of a little over two years. During the first 15 months of the Labour Government £1,280,219 was spent, and in the next 12 months £1,195,770. In the next year the expenditure was £1,260,883 and in the following year 911,339. The member for Mt. Magnet, who had so much control and who claims to have done so much more work than I have been doing, took control in 1927, and finished up in 1930. During those four years he spent £1,260,000, £911,000, £630,000, and £568,000, this last being the amount on the Estimates. For the period of two years just closed, amounts of £209,000 and £67,000 have been spent, respectively. During the whole term no less than £4,600,000 was written off group



settlement. It is no use blaming the Mitchell Government for the expenditure, because the expenditure took place during the time the member for Mt. Magnet was Minister or his predecessor was Minister.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course, we had to spend that money on stock.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amount of £1,280,219 would have stocked the whole of the South-West.

Hon. P. Collier: Those figures prove nothing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They show the money that was spent there. The member for Mt. Magnet also referred to the manner in which this State was going back in importing foodstuffs. May I tell him that that is not the case at all. The imports for 1929-30 were £18,781,000, those for 1930-31 were £10,881,000, and those for 1931-32 were £10,879,000. So that there has been no increase in imports. The exports were—For 1929-30, £17,769,529; for 1930-31, £17,026,654; for 1931-32, £16,287,191. So that we keep up our exports fairly well, while the drop in imports has amounted to £7,901,000. And most of the stuff we imported, as hon. members are aware, was produced in the Eastern States. The member for Mt. Magnet went on about the importation of foodstuffs, and took the figures for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1931. The imports for the period in question amounted to £6,819,000. The imports for the 12 months ended on the 30th June, 1932, amounted to £7,532,000, or about £700,000 in excess of those for the preceding year. On going through the figures, however, I find that those imports included agricultural machinery, drugs, fertilisers, paints, surgical instruments, jewellery, paper, stationery, rubber, and so forth. None of those lines is produced on the group settlements. The importation of paper and stationery increased by £64,000 during the year and the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) could not have given consideration to that phase when he gave the total as £700,000. I do not think the hon. member could have dissected his figures, or he would not have misled the House. I propose to give particulars regarding the imports of goods that are produced on the group settlements. For instance, the importation of butter decreased in 1931-32 as compared with 1930-31 by £54,856.

The Minister for Agriculture: And we exported a large quantity.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, we exported 25,000 boxes, which I did not allow for. We have but recently commenced to manufacture cheese in this State, and during the period under review imports increased by £3,343. For some reason, the importation of eggs in the shell increased by £1,140, but I think that must have been on account of eggs imported from South Australia to the goldfields. When we come to eggs in liquid, we find that the importations were reduced to the extent of £2,863. Fish in tins increased by £964, but on the other hand the importation of meat, poultry, bacon and hams decreased by £40,122. Concentrated and potted meats, and meats preserved in tins showed a reduction in imports to the value of £31,014. Dried milk or milk in powdered form showed a decreased importation of £3,991, and the importation of condensed milk was reduced by £26,379. Thus the net reduction of foodstuffs imported represented a value of £143,553 and not an increase of £700,000, as indicated by the member for Mt. Magnet. He took into consideration many lines that are not produced in the group settlement areas. One large item in the list of importations is tinned fish. Surely the hon. member would not suggest that we should apply to the South-West, the slogan "Grow more fish!" That would be absolute stupidity.

Hon. A. McCallum: They tell me they are good at using dynamite for fishing purposes down there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not propose to detain the House much longer, but I would like to point out to the member for Mt. Hawthorn (Mr. Millington) the position regarding the Fairbridge Farm School. He complained about the number of children migrating from England to that school. As a matter of fact, the number has been reduced by 18. The difficulty is that those in authority enter into contracts in England to take a certain number of children. I understand the latest contract is to take 140 children.

Hon. P. Collier: Who entered into the contract?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Child Emigration Society at Home, who run the institution. We have pointed out to them that they cannot enter into any further agreements without consulting the State Government because of the difficulties that

exist here. At the same time I would like hon. members to understand that we do not pay for any children over 14 years of age.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The average age of the children coming out now is 10 years, so that they will not be released from the Fairbridge Farm School until they are 14 years of age. It would be difficult to say what the position of Western Australia will be four years hence. It cost the State Government £2,845 in 1930, and in 1931 it cost us £2,305. At the outset we were paying 4s. 3d. per head in respect of the children at the school, but that is now reduced to 3s. 6d. per head. The balance of the money is made up by contributions by the Commonwealth Government, who in 1930 made available £2,824, and for the year ended the 30th June, 1931, £2,326. On the other hand the British people provided much more than that. In 1930 the Child Emigration Society and the Overseas Settlement Committee contributed £7,397, and for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1931, £6,935. So that the people at Home are bearing the largest proportion of the expenditure. In addition the English people subscribed £6,600 for the erection of a church at the school. It is not desirable at the moment that we should bring any more children into Western Australia because of the difficulty of placing our own young people. At the same time we must remember that a large amount of capital expenditure is involved, and those in authority have to pay £6,000 a year in interest. If we do not allow them to keep up their numbers they will not have the benefit of the Overseas Settlement Committee's subsidy. After all, we contribute a small amount towards the maintenance of an institution that all members are agreed is a very worthy one.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not a matter of keeping up their numbers, but of our contribution.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Our contribution for the financial year ended the 31st June, 1931, was £2,305, and we had in circulation in this State, apart from our contribution, not less than £9,300. In addition to that, there was private money sent out from the Old Country that circulated as well. When we allow such an institution to be built up in our State, we must consider the position very fully before we commence reducing the numbers and making it impos-

sible for them to meet the interest on their capital expenditure.

Hon. P. Collier: We do not cut down their numbers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We do, in effect. We have told them they must not bring any more children here without consulting the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: They can bring as many as they like so long as they maintain them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are allowing them 3s. 6d. a week for each child until it reaches the age of 14 years.

Hon. P. Collier: Lots of our children would be glad to have 3s. 6d. a week now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I suppose so, but at the same time it is rather difficult when we allow such capital expenditure to be involved in the creation of an institution in our State—

Hon. P. Collier: It was not a question of allowing it. They undertook the work.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but we gave them encouragement, and we paid them a little more some time ago than we are now contributing.

Mr. Marshall: Did I understand you to say that the Government had notified the farm school authorities that we did not want any more children brought out from England?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but that before they complete any further agreements at Home, they must consult the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: How long has the latest agreement to run?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It all depends on how long it takes to bring the children out. I think the agreement covers 140 children, and about 70 have been brought out so far. I think it spreads over a period of two years. There is accommodation at the school for 300, but only 200 are being paid for now. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) referred to the report of the Farmers' Disabilities Royal Commission. I will give the hon. member an opportunity to inform the House just what he knows, and the effect the Government have given to the commission's findings. I do not think any other Royal Commission's report has been so fully dealt with as the one referred to by the hon. member. The Government did not desire to burke discussion when the report was be-

fore the House, but effect has been given to many of their findings before the report was received. It is the desire of the Government to do everything possible to assist the farming community, who have rendered wonderful service to the State, and also to assist those people who, for the first time in their lives, find themselves out of employment.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-reply adopted.

## **BILL—BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.**

*Leave to introduce.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [12.57]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the handling of wheat in bulk, and for the establishing and financing of a bulk handling system.

**HON. A. McCALLUM** (South Fremantle) [12.58]: If the Bill is what I expect it is, I propose to submit certain amendments in Committee. I am afraid that if the leave to introduce remains as it has been moved, my amendments will be ruled out of order. In order that I might have an opportunity to move those amendments in Committee, it will be necessary to amend the order of leave, so that my amendments shall come within the Standing Orders. Not only do I want to move my proposed amendments at the proper time, but I want to know now how many men the Bill is going to displace. Bulk handling will throw thousands of men out of work in this State, so while we are making the change we might just as well make provision for finding employment for those men. I want that embodied in the Bill. At Fremantle there will be from 350 to 500 men permanently thrown out of work. That will mean that there will be from £2,500 to £3,000 less per week paid in wages and circulated at the Port. Every business man in Fremantle will be affected. It will paralyse High-street, Fremantle. Moreover, this new unemployment will extend to Bunbury, Geraldton and Albany in a lesser degree, for men at those ports will be sacrificed on the altar of bulk handling. I am told there are 2,000 men employed wheat lumping at the various railway sidings. Of course there will be no further

work for them once we have bulk handling. As for the bag-sewers to be thrown out of work, we have some 10,000 farmers, and no doubt it would not be unfair to estimate one bag sewer for each farmer. So there will be 10,000 of those men thrown out of work. The Premier, when this was stated to him, said it would prove the case for bulk handling. But that is a very superficial view to take. Money paid out in wages to-day may have to be paid out in other ways. As to the unemployment to follow bulk handling, it is inevitable. In Canada an inquiry was held, and the committee of investigation said that the labour employed in bulk handling was 12 per cent. of that required for bag handling.

The Minister for Works: You are not very much concerned about the wheat-growers.

**HON. A. McCALLUM**: I think I grow as much wheat as the hon. member, probably more, but just now I am giving reasons why I want the leave to introduce altered so that the title of the Bill can be amended. Not only does bulk handling mean the throwing out of work of men on the wharves, but they in turn will throw out hundreds of others. I am positive that bulk handling will mean the throwing out of work of thousands of men. I saw the system at both ends, watched it in Manchester, Glasgow and Hull, and again in Montreal, Winnipeg, and Vancouver.

The Minister for Lands: And you said kind things about it. I have here some Press cuttings.

**HON. A. McCALLUM**: I said nothing about it. From what I have seen, the finding of the Canadian committee of investigation was about right, and where we have 100 men employed now in the wheat industry we shall have only 12 men under the bulk handling system. It is going to make a marked difference. It may mean that the wheatgrower will not derive any benefit, which may be absorbed by the other expenses. We have carried on for generations improving the mechanism of industry in a lopsided way. Shortly after the industrial revolution operatives set about smashing the machinery.

The Attorney General: Did you ever read "John Halifax, Gentleman"?

**HON. A. McCALLUM**: Yes.

The Attorney General: Those people talked as you are talking now.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am beginning to think they were long-sighted. Provision was made for cheap production to displace many of those men, but no provision was made to absorb them. For years trade unions have advocated shorter hours of labour.

The Attorney General: I consider that is utterly fallacious and a policy of despair, because our wants are increasing all the time.

The Minister for Lands: Fancy using a rickshaw when a motor car is available!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: No one wants to do that. Sixteen thousand men are at present receiving help from the State and are we going to add thousands to the number? It is our duty to provide now for the employment of the men who will be displaced, so that we shall stop the lopsided methods of the past. This is the place to do it.

The Minister for Works: Well, let us have it.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister should not be impatient. I move an amendment—

That the following words be added:—"and to provide for the securing and financing in employment of those who lose their positions through the establishment of such system." The amendment asks nothing unreasonable and is logical, particularly in view of the unemployment difficulty now existing. Any system of bulk handling will throw men out of work.

The Minister for Works: I agree.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Then what does the Minister propose to do? Are the lumpers to be thrown on to the dole straight away? It is claimed that the scheme will save the farmers 2d. per bushel.

The Minister for Works: I hope it will save them a lot more than that.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It might pay the State to retain the present system and subsidise the farmers to the extent of 2d. a bushel, rather than adopt bulk handling. I do not know that the possible effect of the scheme on the State has ever been investigated. The introduction of bulk handling will have a great effect on the business of Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: And India.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I represent a Fremantle constituency.

Mr. Withers: Is not India part of the British Empire?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It will have an effect on values and the whole outlook of the port will be altered. We have no right to pass a Bill that will add thousands to the men already out of work. Their wives and children should not be thrown on the cold world and required to live on 1s. per day under the dole system. We must tackle the problem now. I have amendments to move in Committee and I am submitting this amendment now in order that my amendments in Committee shall not be ruled out of order.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall—on amendment) [1.10]: I shall oppose the amendment. I am surprised that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition should take such action at this hour of the night.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not a question of the hour of the night.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is the first time anything of the sort has been done in my recollection.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) talks of thousands of men being put out of work. Why should we not provide that the wheat farmers shall foot the bill? Surely the whole question can be dealt with later. Let the hon. member wait until he finds out what the Bill contains. The wheat farmers of this State are providing between £400,000 and £500,000 for people in India for the bags that are imported into the State. All this money would be saved under the bulk handling system, and the money kept within the State.

Mr. Wansbrough: It is all within the British Empire.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have heard the hon. member's party talk about black labour. This is an important Bill. The principal problem for our wheat industry to-day is to reduce the cost of production. The member for South Fremantle spoke of the saving of 2d. a bushel. I am of opinion it would be much greater than that. We are a great wheat-producing State, and I visualise the day when we shall be producing 100,000,000 bushels. This proposal would help to bring that day nearer. I hope the amendment will be rejected.

**HON. P. COLLIER** (Boulder) [1.12]: The Minister has not touched the point embodied in the amendment. He is

surprised that it should be brought down at this hour of the night. Must an amendment be judged according to the hour at which it is submitted? The hon. member has not uttered a word in opposition to bulk handling. The talk about keeping people in work in India is beside the point. What the hon. member asks is that an opportunity should be afforded in Committee to protect those men who will be displaced from their occupations. To secure that opportunity it is necessary to amend the order of leave. The Minister himself admits that a number of men will be thrown out of employment.

The Minister for Works: I agree.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We want the opportunity to deal with the men who will be displaced. This is not the first time such an amendment has been moved.

The Minister for Works: It is the first time in my experience.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Amendments have frequently been moved to a motion such as this. Our Standing Orders will not permit of amendments, which are outside the order of leave, being made to a Bill. We want to broaden the order of leave so that amendments may be submitted. The Minister is not committed to accept one or any of the amendments.

The Minister for Works: That has nothing to do with bulk handling.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is entirely wrapped up in the question, and a most important aspect of it. If Parliament favours the principle, an obligation is cast upon us to say what is going to be done with the men who are put out of employment.

The Minister for Works: Put it into the Bill that the farmers shall keep them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is absurd.

The Minister for Works: That is what you are asking for.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is a ridiculous and a stupid statement. That is the kind of talk the Minister will use around the country.

The Minister for Railways: Could not the matter be discussed under a Bill brought down by the hon. member?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The appropriate time to discuss it is on this Bill.

The Attorney General: You will not be prevented from doing so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The matter can be discussed, but we can move nothing with regard to it. We can take no definite action to protect the men.

The Attorney General: You would not like to see any Bill of this nature containing a clause providing for the employment of people who may be displaced?

The Minister for Railways: It would be like the pelican's bill, all bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The House might decide upon the matter. We only ask for the opportunity to move amendments which could not be moved if this amendment were not carried.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Within the last 18 months the Federal Parliament made special provision for some 4,000 men who were to be put out of employment in the coalmining industry in New South Wales.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is not an uncommon occurrence. In the past when we have brought down legislation dealing with the examination of men required to hold certificates for jobs, in which certificates were not previously required, special provision was made for the men concerned. Provision was made in those cases for men who would or might be displaced. I consider that is the proper place to discuss such a matter. The Minister for Works seems to have assumed, and others will no doubt assume, that the attitude of the member for South Fremantle is one of opposition to bulk handling. It is nothing of the kind.

The Minister for Works: It can only be construed in that way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister has no warrant whatever for saying that. It will depend on the merits of the suggestion. Part of the demerits of the Bill may be the displacement of thousands of men. Although one might conclude that in the interests of the wheat-growing industry and of the State, bulk handling is advisable and essential, what is it going to cost the State? It may be a good thing for the wheatgrowers.

The Minister for Lands: What is good for the farmer is good for the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Although good for the wheatgrower, it may be bad for the State. We are not opposed to bulk handling. Personally I am in favour of it if a case can be made out for it.

The Minister for Works: You supported bulk handling previously.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will support it again if the Minister can make out a case. Ten years ago I may have said things in favour of bulk handling that I would not

say to-day. All that is asked for is opportunity in the direction of providing for men who may be displaced.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir James Mitchell (Northam) [1.25]: It might reasonably be argued that the introduction of bulk handling will increase employment in the State, because it will in any case save a good part of the £600,000 sent out of the State last year for bags. We can employ men only if we have the money with which to employ them. I believe that bulk handling will increase the amount of money available for employment. A deputation told us that £73,000 was paid for the handling of wheat in a year. That amount would not employ a large number of men—probably about 250. If we went to the Lake View and Star Mine, we would see automatic machines which were not there a few years ago. But for the improvements in the methods of handling the ore, the mine would not be working and men would not be employed. The same argument can be used in favour of agriculture as is used in favour of mining. The question which has been raised will receive the fullest consideration, and any inquiries that hon. members think reasonable can be made. The subject calls for very full inquiry indeed. However, we must not confuse the issue just now. I agree that it would not be good for the State if a saving of 3d. per bushel meant the throwing out of work of 10,000 men, but I think it can be shown that the adoption of the system will lead to greater employment.

Hon. P. Collier: It is quite possible.

**THE PREMIER:** On the discussion of the proposal, every aspect of the question will be considered. I think such an amendment as that of the member for South Fremantle has never been moved before.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I do not remember one in this House, but in another place it is done every day of the week.

**THE PREMIER:** If so, it is done with the object of defeating a Bill without taking a vote against it.

Hon. P. Collier: After all, the amendment only provides opportunity for discussing every aspect of the subject.

**THE PREMIER:** We can discuss every phase later on.

Hon. P. Collier: But your hands are tied; you cannot move.

**The PREMIER:** I do not think so. If the amendment were agreed to, it would be a long time before bulk handling would become an accomplished fact.

Mr. Kenneally: No.

Hon. P. Collier: Why so?

**The PREMIER:** No proposal of a similar nature would be advanced. Why have a dredge, a drag line or any labour-saving machinery if we would be better off regarding employment without it? All these modern appliances must mean improvement. I know a lot can be said regarding the effect of the advent of machinery, and with regard to some it may be said that few have benefited and many have suffered. But that has not been so in many instances. Surely it cannot be said that will be the position in regard to the proposal now before the House. It must not be forgotten that we have to send £600,000 out of the State each year for bags.

Hon. P. Collier: Let us stop that if we can.

**The PREMIER:** Yes. I assure the Leader of the Opposition and the member for South Fremantle that there is no intention, nor wish, to burke the fullest possible discussion and inquiry into the whole question. I do not agree that the amendment will facilitate any such inquiry or achieve the object the hon. member wishes. Let us discuss the matter on its merits. The fullest opportunity will be given to consider every aspect.

**MR. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [1.32]: The Premier's reply is unsatisfactory. On several occasions since I have been a member, I have endeavoured to amend various Bills, but I have been told by you, Mr. Speaker, or by the Chairman of Committees, that my amendments were out of order. I had to accept that verdict. There is nothing unreasonable in the amendment proposed by the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum). If, at the end of the second reading debate, or during the Committee stage, the majority disagree with an amendment that the member for South Fremantle may desire, the Government should remember that they have a majority. Why, then, hold the House up at this early hour merely because of a harmless amendment moved by the member for South Fremantle? The displacing of men from employment is a serious matter not only for the waterside

workers but for all sections of the community. In my opinion there is no harm in labour-saving devices provided that those engaged in industry derive some benefit. What provision is made in the Bill for workers who may be displaced from their present employment? The member for South Fremantle desires to make sure that something will be done. Surely the Premier does not want another 8,000 or 12,000 unemployed people on his hands. It may be better for the Government to grant a bonus of 2d. or 3d. a bushel to the farmers and keep our people in work.

The Minister for Railways: You want to send the money to India.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I want to keep our people at work. Surely the Minister does not want thousands more men on his hands.

The Minister for Railways: That is not the point; you suggested a bonus to the farmers.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I said it might be better for the State. I have not gone into the figures but the suggestion may be worthy of consideration. Because of his amendment, the member for South Fremantle is accused of holding up the proceedings. We have had samples of labour-saving machinery. Grabs have been installed for work on super boats and on coal boats. Who received any benefit from that system? Certainly the workers did not benefit. Probably the middlemen were the only ones who secured any benefit. The Government cannot have a strong case in favour of bulk handling if they are not prepared to allow the amendment to be passed.

**MR. KENNEALLY** (East Perth) [1.36]: It will be admitted that the introduction of the proposed Bill may mean the inauguration of a new era in wheat handling. It is introduced in altogether a wrong atmosphere, seeing that the Minister says he will give attention to one phase only, the handling of wheat. Surely others besides farmers are interested. The people of the State are concerned. In the circumstances, we should give close attention to the effect the legislation will have on the people. It is useless for the Premier to say that we will have every opportunity to consider all aspects of the problem. It will be your duty, Mr. Speaker, to say whether discussion can proceed along certain lines. Why should

not the amendment be agreed to so that if it is desired, amendments can be moved to the Bill to provide for the interests of other than the wheatgrowers. If the Government do not agree with any amendment moved, they have the numbers to vote it out. It is no new thing for provision to be made for the absorption of labour displaced by some change. When the Great Southern railway was taken over, provision was made for the absorption of the labour displaced. So, too, in making this proposed change, it is only right that we should provide for those who will be thrown out of work by the new system. When dealing with the operations at Harvey the other night, the Minister sought to justify the use of obsolete machinery on the score that it provided additional work.

The Minister for Lands: The one is temporary and the other permanent.

Mr. KENNEALLY: But now when we propose to give the House an opportunity to discuss the question of providing for the men to be thrown out of work by the bulk handling system, the Minister does not approve. If the Minister is not going to discuss this question, he will antagonise many now in favour of the bulk handling system. We on this side do not agree with the Minister's inclination to let the men thrown out of employment go to hell, as he virtually said. That attitude will not help him get the Bill through. The problem of providing for the men who will be thrown out of work is capable of being solved, and if it is to be solved this is the stage at which we should begin to consider it. It is claimed that the proposed system will result in a saving to the farmer of 3d. per bushel, or approximately £500,000 per annum. But that is not the whole of the story, for if it is going to put out of work only 1,000 men, who will have to look to the Government for assistance, and if it means, say, £2 per week for each of those men, we have in that one item alone a deduction of £104,000 per annum. If this measure is to be discussed, the House must take into consideration the interests of all sections working in the wheat industry, not only those who grow the wheat, but also those who handle it. I am prepared to discuss the Bill on its merits, believing as I do that we should advance with the times and accept every

benefit that improved machinery brings to the human race. But we are not going to do that, if our consideration is to be restricted to sectional interests alone.

### THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. P. D. Ferguson—Irwin-Moore) [1.40]: I oppose the amendment. The subject of bulk handling has no relation to the question of providing employment. The Bill is to provide for a scheme of bulk handling, and that should be dealt with on its merits and not camouflaged by introducing the subject of employment.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not call that camouflage, do you?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, there is a right place to discuss unemployment. This is the time to deal with bulk handling.

Mr. Kenneally: And create more unemployment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We have it on the authority of those handling the wheat that £73,000 per annum is spent on that work. If we allow that those handling it receive an average of £4 a week, 365 men are engaged in handling it.

Mr. Sleeman: Where?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At the ports and sidings of this State.

Hon. A. McCallum: I was given 2,000 as the number of men employed at the sidings. That was the figure of the merchants.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am giving the equivalent of full-time employees. At the sidings men are employed for about one month in the year.

Hon. A. McCallum: No.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If the men engaged in handling wheat were employed the whole year round at £4 a week, 365 men would be engaged.

Mr. Sleeman: Are they employed only one month per year?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At the sidings.

Mr. Sleeman: No, four months.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At the average siding the men get four, five or perhaps six weeks of full-time work. In an average year we send out of Western Australia £500,000 for bags. If we divide that amongst the 365 men, it would amount to £1,388 per man, which amount would be sufficient to establish everyone who is working full time on a farm where he could go on

producing wheat. If the bulk handling system were installed, I believe those men could produce wheat profitably.

Mr. Withers: You would not reduce the importation of bags by £500,000?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A farmer who produces 10,000 bags of wheat told me that he would never buy another bag after bulk handling was introduced.

Hon. A. McCallum: Your figures include superphosphate bags.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, they present the bags for an ordinary harvest of 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 bushels. The farmer who buys super in bags will wash them carefully and put into them the wheat he has to bag, pending carting to the siding. I do not expect to buy another bag and I think that will apply to many farmers. Of the amount at present sent overseas for bags there will be enough money saved to put every man now employed in handling wheat on to a farm, if necessary.

Mr. Sleeman: This is the place to make provision for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, this is not the time to discuss unemployment. Possibly it could be discussed when the Estimates of the Minister dealing with unemployment are being considered. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) is endeavouring to camouflage the proposal and throw dust in the eyes of members of this House.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister is not justified in saying that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am.

Hon. P. Collier: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that the member for South Fremantle is throwing dust in the eyes of members of this House.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Should I withdraw it, Mr. Speaker? It is so palpably true.

Hon. P. Collier: I ask for an unqualified withdrawal.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I withdraw.

**MR. COVERLEY** (Kimberley) [1.45]: I do not intend to delay the House.

The Minister for Lands: You have no bulk handling of wheat up your way.

Mr. COVERLEY: No, but I appreciate the attitude of Ministers. We have never had such a ready response on the part of



Ministers as we have had on this subject. The Premier and two other Ministers have spoken in the course of half an hour, although they had sat for three weeks and said nothing.

The Minister for Works: That is not right.

The Minister for Lands: Next time we will keep you here until 4 o'clock in the morning.

Hon. P. Collier: That does not matter. We can stay as well as you.

Mr. COVERLEY: The attitude of the Minister for Works and the Minister for Agriculture is very unfair. There has been no intimation from this side of the House that we intended to oppose bulk handling. All we ask is to be allowed to amend the order of leave so that further discussion may take place, if necessary. The Minister spoke of camouflage, inferring that we were deliberately opposed to bulk handling. That may be all right in the House, but it will not go down with the farmers.

The Minister for Works: You are deliberately opposing the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. COVERLEY: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. P. Collier: Not at all. We are not opposing it.

Mr. COVERLEY: Members on this side of the House believe in co-operation, and bulk handling represents co-operation on the part of those engaged in the wheat industry. I have realised for a long time that logic does not count in this Chamber. I remember when sitting on the other side of the House some amendment was moved and disagreed with, and the present Minister for Agriculture for one twitted us about using a brutal majority. We might direct that same criticism at him to-night. It is not correct to say that we are opposed to bulk handling.

Amendment put and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	16
Noes	..	..	..	21

Majority against .. 5

#### AYES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Munse
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Raphael
Miss Holman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Barnard	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Parker
Mr. Church	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Davy	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Doney	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Wells
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. North
Mr. J. I. Mann	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

#### First Reading.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

### BILL—STATE TRADING CONCERNS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

#### First Reading.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [2.3]: I move—  
That leave be given to introduce the Bill.

**MR. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [2.4]: I do not know that we would be in order in permitting this motion to be passed. The time of the House should not be wasted on putting a Bill of this sort through all its stages. Were the Government sincere in wanting to assist the farmers, they would make these works what they should be for the manufacture of agricultural implements. We do not want to see money continually flowing to the Eastern States and Canada that ought to be spent in Western Australia. One member of the Government admitted that we had the tradesmen and the material in this country. What is to prevent the works being established on a proper basis in order that our farmers might be supplied with locally-made machinery? I intend to vote against the motion.

Question put and passed; Bill introduced and read a first time.

### BILLS (22)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Main Roads Act Amendment.
- 2, Road Districts Act Amendment.
- 3, Factories and Shops Act Amendment.
- 4, Special License (Waroona Irrigation District).

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

- 5, Metropolitan Whole Milk.
- 6, Fruit Cases Act Amendment.

7, Dairy Cattle Improvement Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

8, Financial Emergency Act Continuance.

9, Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act Continuance.

10, Constitution Acts Amendment Act, (1931), Continuance.

11, Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment.

12, Reduction of Rents Act Continuance.

Introduced by the Attorney General.

13, East Perth Cemeteries.

14, Land Act Consolidation.

15, Swan Land Revesting.

16, Closed Roads Alienation.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

17, Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Richardson.

18, Criminal Code Amendment (No. 1).

19, Criminal Code Amendment (No. 2).

20, Land and Income Tax Assessment Further Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. H. W. Mann.

21, Aged Sailors and Soldiers' Relief Fund.

Introduced by Mr. Parker.

22, Timber Workers.

Introduced by Miss Holman.

## **BILL—TENANTS, PURCHASERS AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Leave to introduce.*

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [2.25]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend Section 29 of the Tenants, Purchasers and Mortgageors' Relief Act, 1930.

**HON. A. McCALLUM** (South Fremantle) [2.26]: This Bill is merely a proposal to amend one section?

The Attorney General: That is the continuation.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Does the Bill allow opportunity to discuss all the sections?

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The discussion will be confined to the continuing clause?

The Attorney General: Yes; but that, of course, is subject to Mr. Speaker's ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not seen the Bill.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: If the section is to be amended, we shall have the right to discuss it.

The Attorney General: This is a continuing Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: The Title does not say so.

The Attorney General: No. Probably the draftsman has slipped a bit there. He ought to have made this Bill similar to the others. It has exactly the same effect as the others have.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The others are amending Bills.

The Attorney General: No; continuation Bills.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We shall be able to move amendments, too.

The Attorney General: I do not think so.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: In this case, then, only one section comes up for discussion. If we want to review the measure, the Attorney General ought to give us an opportunity to discuss it. He should not restrict us to discussing whether or not the Act is to be continued.

The Attorney General: My view is that you can discuss the merits of continuing or not, but that the House will not be in a position to amend other sections.

Hon. P. Collier: Except those in the Bill.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It rests with you, Mr. Speaker, to say whether the order of leave will allow us to amend other parts of the Act.

The Attorney General: I do not agree with you.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We will argue that later on. The order of leave has not been confined to one section where the Bills to amend other Acts are concerned.

Mr. Richardson: This Bill will apply to one section only.

Hon. P. Collier: It will not restrict discussion, but will confine us to the one section.

The Attorney General: That is the intention.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I think the Attorney General will agree that this Act in particular requires amendment in the interests of both landlord and tenant. I urge him to

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. F. W. Allsop on the ground of ill-health.