

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 6th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—WHEAT BELOW MILLING QUALITY.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Honorary Minister: 1, Whether the arrangement between the Wheat Scheme and Messrs. Dalgety & Co., whereby the latter were appointed sole distributing agents for all wheat below milling quality is still in existence, or is likely to be renewed? 2, What is the minimum price now being charged for wheat suitable for feeding poultry?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Dalgety & Co., Limited, have been appointed to act as sole distributing agents on behalf of the Scheme for the selling of inferior wheat until the 31st December, 1919, when the question of renewal or otherwise will receive the consideration of the Wheat Marketing Advisory Board. 2, No minimum price has been fixed for wheat for poultry feed, but it is sold for this purpose according to the value of the wheat, most of which is disposed of at 4s. per bushel.

QUESTION—PASTORAL LEASES, WITHDRAWAL.

Hon. H. CARSON (for Hon. J. Mills) asked the Minister for Education: Will he lay on the Table the file of the Lands Department relating to the withdrawal from sale of certain pastoral leases in the South-Western Division of the State?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Yes.

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES BOARD AND RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: Whether it is a fact that the Workers' Homes Board refuse to consider applications from returned soldiers? If so, why?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The Commonwealth Government having declined the assistance of the Workers'

Homes Board in regard to the War Service Homes Act, and as special privileges are therein provided for returned soldiers, such applicants are referred to the Commonwealth authority.

QUESTION—SHELL SHOCK CASES.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: In view of the large number of shell-shock cases, will the Government take steps to prevent any further firing of guns for ceremonial purposes?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The matter is being referred to the Federal and State Health Authorities for their advice.

QUESTION—TAXATION RETURNS.

Hon. J. E. DODD asked the Minister for Education: How many incomes were given under the Land and Income Tax of £1,000 and over, and £5,000 and over, for the years 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Incomes of £1,000 and over—1914, 953; 1915, 973; 1916, 1,092; 1917, about 1,100; 1918, about 1,100. Incomes of £5,000 and over—1914, 54; 1915, 65; 1916, 103; 1917, about 100; 1918, about 100. This does not include companies. The Commissioner of Taxation writes: "I desire to explain that I have estimated the figures for the last two years for the following reasons:—In the year 1917 returns were furnished for six months only, namely, for the first half of the year, and as six months' figures for business concerns were of no statistical value, especially in respect of farmers, pastoralists, merchants, etc., I have not had them tabulated. The figures for 1918 will, when the tabulation is completed, represent incomes for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1918, and as the assessment is not quite complete, I have delayed tabulating the figures until it is complete, which will be in a few weeks' time. I believe, however, that my estimate for the last two years is reasonable."

QUESTION—FIREWOOD WORKERS' DISPUTE—GOVERNMENT RELIEF.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN, for Hon. J. Cornell, asked the Minister for Education: 1, Under which department did Mr. Stanley Low distribute Government relief in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts? 2, Is he still acting for the Government in that capacity? 3, If not, who is now acting, and what are the reasons for making a change? 4, What is the scale of relief inaugurated and for a time distributed by Mr. Stanley Low? 5, What is the present scale of relief? 6, Has any protest been received by the Government against the existing scale of relief, if so, do the Government intend to modify it? 7, When inaugurating his scale of relief, did Mr. Stanley Low seek the counsel and advice of prominent traders

in Kalgoorlie and Boulder? 8, Did Mr. Stanley Low's successors, if any, act similarly when inaugurating the present scale of relief, if not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Under instructions from the Premier. 2, Yes. 3, Answered by No. 2. 4, As shown in the attached schedule No. 1. 5, This also is shown in a schedule attached, No. 2. 6, No protest has been received against the present scale. 7, Yes, as well as others. 8, Answered by No. 2.

[No. 1.]

LIST SHOWING REDUCED RATIONS ISSUED FROM THE 30TH JULY, 1919.

| Description. | Single. | 1 to 3 Dependents. | 4 to 5 Dependents. | 6 to 7 Dependents. | 8 to 9 Dependents. |
|--------------|---------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Tea | 4 lb. | 6 lbs. | 2 lb. | 1 lb. | 1 lb. |
| Flour | 1 lb. | 3 lbs. | 4 lbs. | 6 lbs. | 6 lbs. |
| Sugar | 1 lb. | 1 bar | 1 bar | 1 bar | 1 bar |
| Soap | 1 doz. | 1 doz. | 1 doz. | 1 doz. | 1 doz. |
| Matches | 1 pkt.* | 1 pkt.* | 1 pkt.* | 1 pkt.* | 1 pkt.* |
| Candles | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 1 lb. |
| Butter | 1 tin | 2 lbs. | 2 lbs. | 2 lbs. | 2 lbs. |
| Jam | 6 lbs. | 10 lbs. | 11 lbs. | 12 lbs. | 13 lbs. |
| Potatoes | 1 tin | 2 lbs. | 3 lbs. | 3 lbs. | 3 lbs. |
| Onions | 1 tin | 1 tin | 2 lbs. | 3 lbs. | 3 lbs. |
| Milk | 1 tin | 1 lb. | 2 lbs. | 3 lbs. | 3 lbs. |
| Oatmeal | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 2 lbs. | 3 lbs. | 4 lbs. |

* Once a fortnight.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motions by the MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch), sessional committees were appointed as follows:—

Standing Orders: The President, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. J. Nicholson, Hon. A. Sanderson, and the mover.

Library: The President, Hon. A. Sanderson, and Hon. A. J. H. Saw.

Printing: The President, Hon. R. G. Ardagh, and Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom.

House: The President, Hon. R. J. Lynn, Hon. H. Millington, Hon. J. Duffell, and Hon. H. J. Saunders.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Mental Treatment Act Amendment. Introduced by the Minister for Education.
- 2, Sale of Seeds.
- 3, Drovers Act Amendment.
- 4, Fruit Cases. Introduced by the Honorary Minister.

MOTION—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Restoration of Measure.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): I move—

That the following Message be forwarded to the Legislative Assembly: "Mr. Speaker, The Legislative Council requests that the consideration of the State Children Act Amendment Bill, which was before the last session of Parliament, may be resumed."

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan): I desire in the first place, Mr. President, to take this opportunity in common with other members of extending to you hearty and respectful congratulations on your election to the position which you now hold. I am sure that the perfect unanimity which attended your selection for that office is proof of the very high esteem in which you are undoubtedly held by all hon. members. It is also a mark of the confidence and the belief of the members of this Chamber that you will discharge the duties appertaining to your high office in the same worthy manner as your predecessor did, whose loss we all deplore. May I also be permitted to add my expressions of cordial welcome to Dr. Saw and to the new member, Mr. Panton. Turning now to the Governor's Speech, one thought naturally rises uppermost in one's mind, the thought of the very serious condition of our industrial life, which is referred to in the Speech. The serious position thus created in our State and in the Commonwealth arises mainly from the maritime trouble or seamen's strike.

[No. 2.]

REVISED LIST OF PROPOSED ALLOWANCES FOR SEVEN DAYS FOR MINERS AND THEIR DEPENDANTS AT PRESENT OUT OF EMPLOYMENT THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN, AND IN NEED OF PUBLIC RELIEF.

| Description. | Single Men. | Married Couple. | Each Child. | Remarks. |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------|---|----------|
| Tea | 4 lb. | 6 lb. | 34 ozs. | |
| Flour | 1 lb. | 2 lbs. | 104 ozs. | |
| Sugar | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | |
| Butter | 1 tin | 2 tins | 1 tin, with limit of 3 tins | |
| Jam | 6 lbs. | 1 bar (max) | 1 tin for 2 children with limit of 3 tins | |
| Soap | 1 bar | 7 lbs. | 1 lb. | |
| Potatoes | 1 tin | 1 tin | 2 lbs. | |
| Milk | 1 tin | 1 tin | 34 lbs. | |
| Oatmeal | 1 lb. | 1 lb. | 34 lbs. | |
| Meat | 34 lbs. | 7 lbs. | | |
| Bread (2 loaves) | 7 lbs. | 14 lbs. | | |

After five years of terrible war we have concluded a peace which we hope will prove satisfactory and lasting, but with this strife existing in the industrial world, it almost seems as though, not satisfied with years of warfare, we must continue the conflict amongst ourselves in those industrial avenues. I ask, can anything be more disastrous to our welfare as a State and as a community. For years during the war business has been disorganised, production has been interfered with, resulting in national loss, and an increase in our deficit. Surely, then, this is a time for combined effort, on the part of those interested, to avert a disaster which must follow a continuance of this strife. It is in increased activity in all the avenues of production that our salvation lies. The problems created by the war are many, and it has been generally admitted that as the result of the war there must be a readjustment of social conditions. All those who have the interests of the people at heart wish to see an amelioration of the social conditions. But that amelioration will not be achieved by any upheaval or reversal of the present form of government. One might take unhappy Russia as an example. What is the position there? According to the latest accounts, her population has been decimated by disease, starvation and other causes. Other countries are withholding that intercourse with her which she enjoyed before the war. Her industries have been stagnated, and she finds herself unable to dispose of her surplus products. A false credit has been established within her borders by an increased paper currency. In a state of chaos, she becomes a prey to any designing enemy. That is, I think, a picture of Russia at the present time. I feel sure that the common-sense of Australians as a whole will guard against following an example so disastrous. A readjustment of our social conditions will only be accomplished by a wise consideration of the whole position as between the two parties affected, and, above all, by mutual trust. One of the chief disturbing factors in connection with this industrial unrest is found in the increased cost of living. I congratulate the Government on their intention to introduce a Price Fixing Bill. It will have my earnest consideration and support. My only regret is that the Bill, when it comes into force, will not have the far-reaching effect we should like it to have, because it will not affect the profiteers outside our own State. This consideration emphasises the necessity for our stimulating local production in regard not only to secondary but to primary industries. An interesting phase of the increased cost of living is to be found in the enhanced price of meat. The promise given in the Governor's Speech of increased transport facilities between the North-West and the South-West will be widely welcomed, because such an improvement will make available to the people down here the meat supply produced in such abundance in the North-West, and will certainly lead to a reduction in price of that staple diet, while conversely

it will allow the people in this part of the State to send up the provisions necessary for the comfort and well being of those who occupy the North-West. In the Governor's Speech reference was made to a promise on the part of the Government to suitably repatriate our returned soldiers.

Hon. J. Cornell: The men require more than repatriation, they want work.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Precisely. We all agree with the wishes expressed in the Speech; but we desire to do more than merely express pious hopes. It is necessary that something tangible should be done for the returned men. I learn that, amongst the schemes of land settlement for soldiers, an area has been set aside in the hills at Piesse's Brook. In connection with that scheme I notice that the returned soldiers, in order to assist in the settlement of the land in that district, have decided to form a co-operative concern in the shape of a sawmill to provide the necessary material for house building, etc. This will enable them to produce the required material at the lowest possible cost and will also afford whatever advantage such an industry would mean to those seeking to settle on that area. I congratulate the returned soldiers on this step. I have had some personal experience of the district in question. From my own knowledge I can say that the district is a good one. Large areas of suitable land are to be found in the numerous valleys. The locality has the advantage of being close to Perth and connected by rail. Whilst the railway facilities are probably not all that one could desire, still I have no doubt that as the result of the settlement of returned soldiers in the district the Government will see to it that those facilities are improved. There is an additional attraction for returned soldiers at Piesse's Brook in that a convalescent home has been there acquired by the repatriation authorities, through the Red Cross, and that home will be used also as a training ground for men desirous of pursuing a vocation in those hills. Therefore, I think the Government were wise in setting aside that land for soldier settlement. But, whilst I recognise that the particular area referred to is well suited for the purpose, I do not think the Government would be wise in settling, as has been suggested, many of our heavily timbered areas in the South-West. I consider those lands which are timbered should not be interfered with, but should be kept for the purpose for which they are so admirably suited, namely, the conservation of timber and the expansion of the timber industry. We wish to see our returned men, not only settled on land suitable for the purpose, but successfully settled. There is a danger of failure in connection with the settlement of men at Piesse's Brook unless they are assisted by the advice of competent men. So far as I am aware, no local board or committee has been appointed in the district to act in an advisory capacity to those men. Experienced orchardists have told me it is necessary to

exercise the greatest possible care when selecting land for an orchard. The question of aspect is a very great one in connection with a particular class of fruit desired to be grown. The question of soil is of vast importance, as well as the general surroundings of the land. Having selected, cleared, and prepared the land, the next question is the selection of the proper variety of trees, and instruction in the care and general attention necessary to ensure a successful orchard. In no walk of life is there more trouble in combating diseases than that experienced by an orchardist. It will be readily seen that advice and instruction of this kind are of vital importance to success. Some men who have taken up land have had experience, but it may be found that the majority have not. No doubt their brothers and friends will assist them as far as possible—

Hon. J. Duffell: Some who have taken up land have never been to the war.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I believe that is so. This particular land, because of its close proximity to Perth, should be set aside for the benefit of returned soldiers. They are deserving of the utmost consideration, and so far as I can I will help them. I urge the Government to appoint a local advisory committee. There are men in the district capable of advising.

Hon. A. Sanderson: They have one already.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Not a local advisory committee to advise on these questions. I believe there is a committee which, when there is an orchard for sale, is asked to express an opinion whether it is good or bad; but there is no committee to advise men in the direction I have indicated. It is one thing to get a man with local experience to say whether an existing orchard is good or bad, but it is another matter to extend that guiding help and assistance essential when a man seeks to establish himself in a new orchard. The services of a local committee would be invaluable, and if such help is not granted to these men, I foresee that, in the course of two, three, four, or five years, when the orchards come into bearing, the men will become disappointed with the results and, seeing nothing but failure awaiting them, abandon their orchards. And thus, instead of these orchards proving successful, they will become a menace to the district at large, and the money advanced on them will be lost. When the orchards reach a stage capable of producing fruit, there is the important point of marketing. We cannot expect these men to be possessed of all the knowledge essential in a new undertaking such as this. Our population is so very small that it affects most seriously the demand and the prices realised for fruit when put into the open market. Stone fruits, excluding early varieties, all ripen within a very few weeks about Christmas time, and the result is that orchardists send in promiscuously to the open market their fruits for sale. The population and demand, being so limited, cannot absorb the heavy quantities which come

forward during that limited period. If the fruit is not sent forward immediately it is destroyed, and the orchardist, who has depended upon his crop for his income for the year, finds himself without an income. Oftentimes growers have received for some of the finest samples of fruit a return of a few pence where they should have received pounds. It has not been uncommon, during the season when the fruit comes forward so rapidly, for a grower to receive a debit note back, or a few postage stamps, in return for a very heavy consignment. This is not the fault of the markets but is due to the limited demand arising from a small population. Some men in my own district, and in the South-West, have found it almost useless in that season to send forward their crops of stone fruit. Instead of sending it to market they have simply allowed it to rot, fed it to pigs, or otherwise utilised it. This is not a right way to use the rich and fine fruit produced by this State. I have been informed by a man, who has travelled in California and other parts of the world where similar fruit is produced, that our fruit is not only equal to, but in his opinion finer than specimens he saw in California—that land so rich in the production of peaches, apricots, etc. In that country endeavours have been made to meet the requirements of the industry. Vast areas suitable for the culture of such fruit are set aside and fruit preserving works are erected, and we see in our shops samples of the fruit so preserved. We are importing thousands of pounds worth of fruit which we ourselves should be producing, and which should yield a handsome income to those engaged in the industry. To ensure the success of these men, it will be necessary for the Government to aid the establishment of factories for preserving fruit and assist in opening up outside markets. Some little time ago, unfortunately, the Government were roundly denounced for having invested in jam factories and fruit preserving works, but notwithstanding the denunciations uttered, the works which I suggest should be erected would be up-to-date and under capable and proper management. Under such management, there is no reason why we should not be able to produce fruit in quantities equal to those imported from California and elsewhere, and in addition to export largely, and thus provide lucrative employment for not hundreds but thousands of men. I recognise that the success of this, as of any other scheme, depends on skilled management. It might be asked—“Why do not the orchardists undertake a co-operative scheme and start such works?” There is a ready answer. The men who have depended for a living on the growing of stone fruit have had a very hard time indeed. The low prices obtained for the product have prevented them from acquiring means to establish such a co-operative concern. Even the men engaged in growing other varieties of fruit have, during the war, suffered severe losses, and even if they were willing to assist the others, the

same unfortunate position applies to them. Stone-fruit growing is not like that of apples, oranges, and other fruits. Apples and oranges can remain on the tree for a considerable period and then be preserved for some time, either by cool storage or otherwise. I should very much regret to see the fruit-growing industry impaired as must be the case if the Government do not extend that help which is essential to the successful cultivation of our lands for the production of the stone fruits to which I have referred. In the case of farmers, the Government arranged a certain pooling scheme. I noticed in the Press a day or two ago that pooling schemes were being suggested in connection with other products.

Hon. H. Stewart: In connection with butter, by the Commonwealth.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes. Orchardists have probably an equal claim upon the Government for assistance by means of a pooling arrangement. At present orchardists send forward their produce promiscuously. Whenever a man has a few cases ready these are sent to market, and no one knows exactly until the cases arrive what the supply for the public is.

Hon. H. Stewart: They cannot pull together.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is the trouble. If some pooling arrangement could be inaugurated—and it could best be done with the help of the Government—a central depot could be established, and fruit sent forward to markets in such lots as would maintain a sort of standard price to the grower. At present prices vary according to the supplies in the market at the time. On one particular day a man may be fortunate in having a few cases in the market which return a good price. On the following morning, when these prices are read in the newspaper, there is a rush on the part of all those who happen to have been advised that prices were good on the previous day. The result is that on the following day a huge quantity of fruit comes forward, and there is a glut in the market. This is not fair to the grower, nor would it be fair to our returned soldiers if it were allowed to continue. If a pool were established, with Government assistance, this position might be obviated, and means provided which would assure to our men a fair and reasonable price for their produce, as well as enable them to make their calling a success instead of a failure. With regard to the importation of our dried fruits, I was astonished to see the large amount which is paid out yearly. There are certain parts of our State where dried fruits can be grown to perfection, and I urge upon the Government the desirability of seeking the assistance of those who can advise as to the areas best suited for that form of fruit. I am sure that good results could be obtained if men were settled in the right districts, and that this would provide a means of employment for many where only two or three are now engaged. I hope these suggestions will result in some good for our returned soldiers, and be of benefit also to

those who are engaged in the fruit growing industry. Generally speaking, I am in accord with the views which have been expressed here, an it is my intention to support the motion which has been moved.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban): The congratulations which have been offered to you, Sir, from all sides, I beg to support. We all regret the death of our late esteemed President. We also welcome back the hon. Dr. Saw. I think that those members of the Council who have been to the Front have not only covered themselves with glory, but their work has caused a portion of that glory to be reflected on this Chamber. The newly elected member for the West Province (Mr. Panton) has received from all speakers, very properly, a welcome to this Chamber. May I be permitted to associate myself with that welcome. I have followed his political career closely, as I follow the political careers of all candidates. The successful candidate, however, is the only one whose career I continue to notice. The hon. member's speech on the 23rd June may be dealt with at a later opportunity. It certainly is an interesting contribution to political discussion in this State. It appears to be almost a custom in the speeches on the Address-in-reply to wander—I say wander, advisedly, in view of what we have sometimes listened to—over a very wide field. Possibly I have transgressed as much as most hon. members in this direction, but I am going to turn over a new leaf this afternoon and confine myself as closely as possible to the Speech to which we have listened. If the Speech contains much of interest it also omits much that is a great deal more interesting. I do not know whether the memory of members is failing, or whether their courtesy is so great that they do not wish to refer to anything in the past of a painful nature. The fact remains that no reference whatever has been made to what appears on the second page of "Hansard" this session. Hon. members will see there a list of four Ministries which have held office in this State since we last met here. Of these all except that which forms the present Government have passed into history. We can, therefore, refer to them without any feeling of passion or prejudice, and a very discreditable lot they are. I do not take a gloomy view of the position, and my own view is that everything is going on as well as can be expected in this country as well as outside. It would be most extraordinary and unreasonable if, after the conclusion of the great war, there was no industrial unrest, and no great financial and other distress. The Commonwealth Government since the war has become a nation, sitting at the conference in Paris on terms almost of equality with the greatest powers in the world. Why is there this feeling of pessimism and alarm with regard to the future of Western Australia?

Hon. A. H. Panton: It is shell-shock, I think.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Of course the hon. member can speak with knowledge of the

effects of these weapons in the field. At any rate none of them have fallen here. Western Australia is a portion of the Commonwealth and of the Empire, and that being so I am puzzled as to why there should be this feeling of fear, to put it mildly, for the future. I have been advocating for ten years consideration of the abolition of State Government, with fear and trembling at the beginning and with confidence at the end. The State Government for all practical purposes has gone. I am convinced that once we get rid of the State Government an era of sound prosperity will open for Western Australia. By no system of any government can we put humpty-jumpty on the wall again. There is no necessity for Mr. Panton to advocate the abolition of this honourable Council. This is the last institution in the country I would wish to see destroyed, but I say that not only this but every other State institution in the country is practically destroyed, and the last three Administrations have assisted in their destruction. The questions dealt with in the Speech are of importance. There is the question of finance, that of immigration and price fixing, and that of land settlement. What we are really waiting for is the speech from the rustic throne of the president of the Farmers' and Settlers' Association, which will be delivered to his Boottian supporters on the 15th August, and then having had the Trades Hall and the Country party announcements we shall know exactly where we stand. Let us take the immigration question and see what is said about it in the Speech, and I may be able to contribute from some London and local correspondence something which may assist hon. members to understand the question. This is what is said about immigration in the Governor's Speech—

In view of the need to increase our present sparse population, the question of immigration is receiving the consideration of the Government, with due regard to the present responsibility of absorbing our returned soldiers and relieving the unemployed market.

I ask hon. members to make a special note of what follows; perhaps they have already done so.

Negotiations are proceeding with the Imperial Government, and it is hoped that arrangements will be made whereby the State will be assisted—

Presumably by the Imperial Government.

—to secure and to satisfactorily settle upon the land considerable numbers of Imperial service men.

Anyone who treats a Government utterance with deference and respect, which I certainly will not pay to it, will read that to mean that serious negotiations have been entered into or are taking place between Western Australia and London on this subject, and that the Government are under the impression and expect that the Imperial Government are going to take steps to assist settlers to come out here. What is the true position of affairs? Of

course a full statement can only be given to us by the Government. I am not attempting to give a full statement, but I am attempting to give what I have found out for myself by a close study of this question for many years. We will not start at the beginning; we will start at the end, and the end of the notes which I have is an interview with Mr. Connolly, our Agent General, published in the *Times* of the 31st May last. In order to prevent any misunderstanding, especially at a distance of 10,000 miles, let me say at once in the fullest and clearest manner that any remarks which I may make will not be in the form of hostile criticism of Mr. Connolly. He is an old friend of ours here; he is now in an official position and unable to answer any criticisms. Therefore I emphasise that it would be most unseemly on my part if I made a hostile attack on him. I am taking Mr. Connolly as the mouthpiece of the Government.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Which Government?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The West Australian Government. He is our official representative, our ambassador in London I may say, for we are a sovereign State. Mr. Connolly has been criticising the Minister for Shipping. The interview runs into half a column of the *Times*, and I am taking him as speaking for the Government, and he does it fairly and fully. That is to say, the same announcements which Ministers make here Mr. Connolly has to repeat in London, and he does it. This is one of the things he says—"Western Australia will be able to absorb these men and women." He is dealing with hundreds and thousands of immigrants. As we are dealing with practical politics, suppose it was announced from Mr. Connolly or anyone else in London that a thousand men were going to arrive here every week for six months, I ask hon. members whether that number could be properly absorbed and properly dealt with, and also whether they would be satisfied? A thousand a week is not a large number, but if they arrived here at that rate, do the Government think they could satisfy themselves with regard to the treatment of those people and secondly, would those immigrants themselves be satisfied apart from what the Government might think was proper treatment. Mr. Connolly goes on to say—

Advances are made in cash to enable improvements to be undertaken. When the settler has a sufficient area of land cleared further advances are made for stock and machines; and in fact for all things necessary for sowing, harvesting and marketing the crop.

Hon. members know that anyone reading in the London *Times* a statement such as that from a prominent official source, would consider it reasonable and fair. But would the Government satisfy the settlers, and would the settlers be satisfied with what had been done for them? That interview appeared on the 31st May. A much more interesting article appeared on the 10th June dealing with complaints made by Mr. Connolly and Sir Charles

Wade, the Agent General for New South Wales, with regard to the Minister for Shipping. Mr. Connolly's chief complaint—I have no desire to go right through it—was that the Minister for Shipping had practically blocked Western Australia from receiving immigrants, and Sir Charles Wade made a similar charge on behalf of New South Wales.

Hon. J. Duffell: There was a tremendous fuss amongst the soldiers themselves—those who were unable to get back.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am not dealing with the soldiers; I shall deal with them later on. The whole of the responsibility in regard to them is with the Federal Government.

Hon. J. Duffell: If they were then unable to get the soldiers back, how were they expected to send immigrants out?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That is what the article of 10th June says—

Although the Shipping Minister is silent—That is with regard to these complaints.

—the matter is not of importance for the future because the Shipping Minister is going out of business, and then rates will again be subject to the ordinary influence of market competition. It is suggested by Sir Charles Wade and Mr. Connolly that the increase in the fares made last year by the Minister for Shipping was evidence of the desire to discourage emigration.

A reference to that, of course, will be seen in Mr. Connolly's speech.

—That is not so. The increase may have been, and probably was entirely due to the general rise in prices.

That is a reasonable explanation.

Emigration is a question of policy, and it has nothing to do with the Minister for Shipping. Passage rates will shortly become subject to the ordinary laws of market competition, and it is unreasonable to expect them to fall to the old level.

We agree with that. That is the point to emphasise—

It may be found desirable by the Imperial and the Dominion Governments independently or in conjunction to devise some scheme for cheapening the cost of Imperial communications. Sir Charles Wade declares that emigration is a great Imperial issue.

Now I turn back to His Excellency's Speech delivered to this House, and read in it that negotiations are proceeding with the Imperial Government. Let us have a copy of the communications with the Imperial Government so as to find out what they are doing. Whatever they are doing, it is nothing new; it is a subject that has engaged the attention of everyone interested in the British Empire for many years. The article to which I have just referred quotes the proposal brought forward in 1869 by Mr. Young, who was connected with the Colonial Institute, and wanted a permanent system of national emigration conducted with the Government resources, Government responsibility, and Government control. I understand that. But what do hon. members of this House, and what does the country, and what do the people in England

understand by a proposition such as we see in this Speech? I myself take no notice of it. At the proper time, however, I am going to ask for a full file of all the negotiations which have taken place between this Government and the Imperial Government, and we shall then see what weight can be given to that statement on a most important question. Twenty-five years ago the great Mr. Joseph Chamberlain said to Western Australia, "Get population, and all other things shall be added unto you." Now I come to the question of repatriation, and I can be very brief on that, because, as I understand the position, that subject ought not to appear in this Speech at all. The Speech says—

The first duty of the State is to suitably repatriate our returning soldiers.

I say it is nothing of the sort. That duty has been specifically taken over by the Federal Government, and we have been told not once but half a dozen times that the Federal Government assume the responsibility—they are the only proper authority to assume that responsibility—of dealing with the repatriation of the soldiers. I am very sorry indeed that the State has committed itself in the way it has already done. We have guaranteed—which we ought never to have done—to the Federal Government that we will find interest and sinking fund on money which the Federal Government are advancing for repatriation. The question is a difficult one, looked at from any point of view; but it becomes, I will not say impossible, but a great deal more difficult when we have two sovereign bodies dealing with the subject of repatriation. Mr. Nicholson has dealt at some length with the repatriation scheme at Piesse's Brook. One reason why I do not take a pessimistic view of the position of that country is that, although I have been more or less intimately connected with the district of Kalamunda and the hill country for very nearly 25 years, I have never known such solid progress and development as we have there at the present moment. And we have mighty little to thank the State Government for in this respect. The only thing likely to damage us in the hill country is the discovery—I use that word advisedly—of the Kalamunda district and the hill country by the Premier. On the 27th June the following appeared in the "West Australian"—

Orchards for the soldiers. Wealth in the gullies. The Premier's impressions. Although already acquainted with the vast stretches of this State, Mr. Mitchell found yesterday that he still has much to learn regarding the potentialities of the State of Western Australia. He confessed as much in a statement which he has made on his return from the Darling Ranges.

The Premier had been out to Piesse's Brook. Naturally, I read this with very close attention. The Premier is reported as having said—

I have been through the Darling Ranges often, but never before have I been so im-

pressed with anything as I was by the inspection to-day. In connection with the settlement of our soldiers on the land, it is necessary that the department—

That is the Department of Agriculture, presumably.

should guarantee the land as productive, and the department is facing this responsibility.

What is a guarantee worth in this country? Now, this is where I entirely agree with the Premier—

The lesson to be learnt from a trip of this kind is that I know so little.

I say with the greatest emphasis I can command that we people of Kalamunda and the hill country have for 20 years been asking for a proper railway service, that the railway service to-day is worse than it was 15 years ago, and that we do not want Mr. Mitchell or anyone else to come and stimulate us, but that we do ask, and that the soldiers who are to be settled in that district will ask, for a reasonably satisfactory railway service. As regards the development of that district, it may be said that the people owe nothing to the State departments; and possibly one of the reasons why the foundations there are so securely laid is that they have been laid by the independent energy of the individual settlers. Now a few words on the financial question. The deeper I delve into that question, the more interesting it becomes to me. There again I say I fail to see any cause for alarm, but I can see every cause for winding up the affair. And that is coming right enough. Listen to this from the Government on the finances—

The financial arrangement which existed with the Commonwealth during the war period has practically terminated.

Hon. members know perhaps more clearly than I do exactly what that means, and if they do not know I am not going to take up the time of the House by entering upon any lengthy explanation. I assume for the purposes of the discussion that we all know the arrangement made by which the Commonwealth financed the State during the war on the loan account. But this from the Government is interesting—

It will be necessary to revert to the method of obtaining funds for financing the loan requirements of the State which existed before the war, and preliminary action has been taken in that direction.

We all know what that means. The Agent-General is probably kept pretty busy in these days with the emigration negotiations and the loan policy. I do not envy him his job after the performance here with the sinking fund and after the treatment extended to the holders of our securities in that respect, and also having regard to what our dear friends the Midland Railway Company have to say about Western Australia. I have spent a portion of the recess in looking very carefully into the public accounts, and I have made one or two interesting discoveries. I am going to leave aside this evening altogether

the question of the State trading concerns, merely giving this assurance, if it interests anyone, that I have a few particulars of those enterprises which I hope to find an opportunity of placing before hon. members; and of course I shall seek the assistance of hon. members in seeing that the matter is quite clear, so that the electors, or the shareholders, can understand the position of affairs. But on the question of the finances I ask the special attention of the leader of the House to something I observe on page 90 of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended on the 30th June, 1918. The point seems to me of some importance. It is the question of loans falling due, which has an intimate connection with this statement in the Governor's Speech that the Commonwealth arrangements have gone by the board and that we are now dealing direct with London on our own account. Now, in 1920, four millions—Treasury Bills for the most part—will have to be taken up. But there are also several loans floated in Australia, amounting roughly to a couple of million sterling, which, according to a footnote in the accounts, fall due in 1932, though it really appears that the year is 1922. That is to say, the Government and the stock holders each have the right to require the loan to be redeemed in 1922. I ask for special attention to this matter, because I think there is possibly a small error here, and these Government official statements ought to be quite accurate. If the figures given here are correct, the amount should be not two but three millions. To make the position quite clear, I wish to put this forward. Every loan we float in London is redeemable over a period of 10 years, on the Government giving notice. This is a common arrangement through all the States—the Government give notice. But according to this statement, Western Australia has secured on the Australian market a couple of millions falling due between 1922 and 1932, all of which are under the extraordinary proviso that, not only the Government, but the holder, can give notice, if he wants his loan redeemed. All the London loans are redeemable on the Government giving notice; the holder cannot give notice at all. I do not desire to make any attack on this point, but I do say that the position should be made clear, and that we should have time in which to consider it. It will reflect more credit on us, and will assist us in the proper discharge of our duties, if, this session, we insist that we shall have plenty of time in which to arrive at an understanding of the financial position of the State, and not have, as we had last session, the whole thing rushed through in the last week, without any attention being paid to it. Last session I refused to go on with the business at 4 a.m. and went to bed instead. If the Government think that the rushing through of everything in the last week is the proper way in which to conduct business, I at all events am not going to admit anything of the sort. In regard to the State trading concerns and the

financial position, we have very great powers; and we ought to take advantage of those powers, not to block anything, but to insist on having a clear statement of affairs, and, further, time in which to discuss it in order to arrive at a proper understanding of the position. I see no reason whatever for the slightest degree of alarm about the future of Western Australia, for I can see no possible chance of the Government of Western Australia continuing to exist. That is not paradoxical; it is a brief statement of the position.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Who will be the official receiver.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I want to see that members of Parliament are treated with some consideration, and that we shall be in the position of official receivers, that we shall have the power to draw up the new Constitution. We require to exercise our power in these very difficult circumstances in which we find ourselves. There is no occasion for panic, but we require to understand the position, and express a considered opinion as to the proper way of dealing with it.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is rather an Australian than a West Australian question.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That is a very tempting interjection, but I am not going to be drawn out of the strictly narrow lines on which I am dealing with these matters. Then there is the question of price fixing. I remember something of price fixing. The principle is quite abhorrent to me, holding, as I do, sound views on finance. But I regard it as a medical man would regard morphia and cocaine, namely, as having certain important functions to perform at the proper time. That is my attitude of this price-fixing business. I supported it in this Chamber when it came forward as a war measure. It was brought forward again, and again I supported it, as a war measure. The leader of the House, speaking on the 26th November, 1915, said—

When the measure, which was almost of the same terms as this one, was introduced in 1914, I took the same view as that taken by Mr. Sanderson just now, that these powers are powers which should be conferred upon the Government in time of war. But as a matter of fact these powers have been used in exactly the opposite direction to that in which they were intended, and which this Legislature, at all events, expected they should be used.

The hon. member strongly opposed the measure, and his influence was distinctly felt in the rejection of the Bill. This is what he said on that occasion in reply to an interjection by Mr. Cornell—

That will happen every time an attempt is made to put out of office the law of supply and demand. It will beat one every time.

And he concluded like this—

The existence of this legislation will not make things cheaper, and it will drive out of the trade those people who are best able to handle it. The Government will rush in, and the result will be as in the

past, the producer will get less, the consumer will pay more, and the taxpayer will be mulcted to a considerable extent.

Yet we are informed in the Governor's Speech that—

My advisers are convinced that the high cost of living is contributed to by the utilisation of opportunities to extort inequitable profits. For much of this, influences beyond the control of the State are responsible; but, in order to protect consumers against local exploitation, you will be asked to pass legislation giving the Government power, whilst the present abnormal conditions prevail, to regulate the prices of commodities, having regard to the reasonable profits and risks of the producer.

Of course, one so able as the leader of the House to make words do his bidding, will have no great difficulty in reconciling his attitude this session with his attitude in 1915.

Hon. J. Cornell: I advised him at the time to read "Pilgrim's Progress."

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not think he should read anything more; but I do wish he would act more, and not rely upon those literary touches which so often serve to confuse the Chamber. When the Honorary Minister (Mr. Baxter) was in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility, this was his very characteristic attitude on the question—

I do not see any feature in the Bill which will suit the farmers, and therefore I shall oppose the measure.

That was his contribution to the discussion. In regard to industrial unrest, having followed with the closest attention what is going on here and elsewhere, I must say the authority who seems to me to take the longest and the soundest view is that great captain of industry, Lord Leverhulme, better known as Sir William Lever, the great Sunlight soap man. He has written a book entitled "The Six-hour Day and other Industrial Questions." He is not terrified by the bogey of labour unrest. On the contrary he says more than once that we should have to feel real anxiety about our country were there no such unrest. That is my view of the position. Sir William Lever is not a socialist. He regards socialism as a dangerous slough, as well he may, since he identifies it with a crude egalitarianism—it is not my word—which would bar the way to all progress. He is an individualist, a believer in enlightened self-interest, and to this question, which we are all putting to ourselves, "How are you to secure for all members of the community sufficient leisure to enable them to enjoy a full human life and develop freely all their higher faculties, without reducing the total production on which the possibilities of happy existence for any and every one in the last resort depends"—his answer is, "Six hours daily, but get through a good day's work in those six hours." Having regard to what is being done in my own district, I am perfectly sure we do not want Mr. Mitchell making

discoveries up there. We are quite satisfied with our local government in the roads board, and in respect of broader politics we are looking to the Federal Government. If the Premier and the leader of this House are to come up to that district, let them come and see what has been done. I have never seen the district in a happier condition. I believe that if the rest of Western Australia also was free from the interference and blighting influence of a Government such as we have at present, there would be an era of greater prosperity for the State.

On motion by Hon. H. Millington debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 7th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—BILLS, COPIES FOR MEMBERS.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister: Are copies of the Sale of Seeds Bill and the Fruit Cases Bill, which are on the Notice Paper for the second reading, available for distribution to members?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: I am not sure whether they are out of the printer's hands yet.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: And the Droving Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: My answer applies to the three.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER.

Hon. H. CARSON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Have the Government yet decided whom they intend to appoint Commissioner of Railways? 2, If so, who is the gentleman? 3, If not, when are they going to decide this important question?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The filling of this important office necessitates the closest inquiry into the qualifications of applicants, many of whom are outside Western Australia. This inquiry is being proceeded with as expeditiously as possible, and on its completion the decision of the Government will be announced.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. A. H. PANTON (West): At the outset I would like to thank members for their very kind remarks and welcome to me as a representative of the West Province, and I trust that they and yourself, Sir, will extend kindness and leniency towards me until I have become au fait with the Standing Orders of the Chamber. I tender my regret at the circumstances which made possible my election at this juncture. I did not enjoy the personal acquaintance of the late lamented President, but I have taken sufficient interest in the public men of this State to realise the loss that the late Sir Henry Briggs must be to this Chamber. I congratulate you, Sir, on your elevation to the office of President. Looking over the Governor's Speech I was struck with one particular paragraph, which reads—

In the great work of reconstruction with which we, in common with the whole civilised world, are now confronted, my Advisers recognise that the first duty of the State is to suitably repatriate our returned soldiers.

As a returned soldier, the words "are now confronted" struck me very forcibly because, after five years of warfare, the Government admit that they are now confronted with the necessity of repatriating their soldiers. Men were coming back to this State at the latter end of 1915, and right through 1916, and yet we are told by the Government of the day that they are now confronted with the necessity for repatriating our soldiers. I well remember at the latter end of 1916, the trenches of France were flooded with literature as to what the Federal Government, at any rate, were going to do for returned soldiers. One particular manifesto signed by William Morris Hughes intimated that 22 million pounds had been set aside for the repatriation of returned soldiers, and that two millions of it had already been expended. Since my return to the State a few months ago I have been over a good deal of Western Australia looking for indications as to where this two million pounds was spent, and I find that our share of it consists of six poultry farms at Osborne Park. I disagree with the hon. member who last night stated that repatriation was a matter for the Federal Government. Repatriation is a matter for the citizens of Australia, and the State Government, as the representatives of the citizens of Western Australia, should and must take a hand