

land, and I am thoroughly familiar with the Queensland sugar country. I have not been in our North-West, but from reliable information received I believe we have up there all the conditions necessary to the successful growing of the sugar cane. If we are to start a jam factory in this State it will be necessary that we should have the sugar industry also. The member for Forrest said that the reason why we could not achieve success in the jam industry was the cheap female labour obtainable in Tasmania. That constitutes the best argument I have heard in favour of our industrial arbitration being placed under the Commonwealth, so that we might have uniform laws. I remember an arbitration case in the boot trade in Sydney a year or so ago. The judge in dealing with the evidence admitted that the men were receiving nothing more than a living wage, but explained that he was compelled to reduce their wages owing to the competition from Victoria, where the wages were even lower. He was compelled to reduce the wages of the employees because there is no uniformity on the wages question in the various States. The sooner the Federal Arbitration Court fixes the rates of wages the better for all concerned. We have no hope of competing with Tasmania with the cheap female labour there. There is one matter I wish to refer to. That is in regard to the wheat question, but I shall have plenty of opportunity when the report of the Royal Commission that is now sitting dealing with the wheat question comes before the House. I trust, however, every assistance will be given to the farming industry. The mining industry is referred to in the Governor's Speech. The industry on the Murchison has received little assistance. It appears that those who cry out most get most. We on the Murchison have kept very silent and we have not criticised the Government and have suffered in consequence. I trust when the Minister goes to the Murchison he will see our requirements and that we shall get justice.

On motion by Mr. Maley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th September, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."] ]

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT — WHEAT GROWING AND STOCK RAISING.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.42]: In view of some of the remarks made by the member for Beverley (Mr. Brown) last night, with regard to the question of wheat growing in Western Australia, I should like to make a brief statement to the House. There appears to be a general misunderstanding in regard to certain advice given from London on this matter. The member for Beverley asked why the advice of the London Wheat Committee to the Australian Wheat Board, to curtail the growing of wheat and engage in stock raising, had not been publicly announced. I desire to state exactly what occurred. The question of the relative merits of wheat growing and stock raising was put forward by the Australian Wheat Board in the following cable which was sent to the London Wheat Committee in January of this year—

Owing to the probable shortage of tonnage for some years, question of reducing our wheat areas in favour of stock and pig raising is in our mind.

That is to say, in the mind of the Australian Wheat Board.

When present crop delivered there will be  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million tons export wheat in Australia. If scarcity of tonnage likely to continue for another two years, stock will increase and big deterioration take place. We desire to know if tonnage is likely to improve in view of all circumstances. Any information you can ascertain on this question will be immense benefit to Australia. Suggest that you consult Wheat Committee and other authorities on whole matter.

The following reply was received from London by the Australian Wheat Board:—

As long as war continues Commission—That is, the British Wheat Commission.

see no prospect improvement tonnage Australia. They consider at conclusion war wheat will be more valuable, even allowing for deterioration, than stock; also more readily negotiable and movable.

After discussion at the Australian Wheat Board conference on the 16th January last, it was decided that the matter of advising farmers be left to the Governments of the individual States, to give whatever advice they might think fit. On the return of this State's representative from Melbourne, the subject was carefully discussed by the Government, and a decision was arrived at that there was no cause for alarm on the part of the growers, in view of the opinion of the London Committee which I have just read to the House, in view of the opinions expressed by Mr. Love, the British Government Wheat Commissioner for Australia, and lastly, in view of the opinions expressed by Professor Lefroy. Further, Mr. Love and Professor Lefroy gave it as their opinion that wheat would be more readily saleable at a profitable figure after the war than it is at the present time. That opinion was expressed to me, and also to this State's representative at the conference. Under that advice the Government did not consider it wise, and I certainly did not consider it my duty,

to recommend the Western Australian farmer to refrain from growing wheat. I felt that our farmer should be encouraged rather to grow wheat, since, at the conclusion of the war, wheat is likely to be of considerably greater value than it is at the present time. Hence the Government of this State did not make any public announcement on the subject. There was no public announcement to make.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How long is it since you received the London cablegram you have just read?

The PREMIER: It came in January last.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is not on the file.

The PREMIER: I do not wish to have any argument at all, but I may point out that this cablegram did not come to the Western Australian Government. As I have already told the House, the cablegram came to the Australian Wheat Board from the British Wheat Commission. The message was in the possession of the Australian Wheat Board, who decided to leave the matter to the individual States. In the circumstances, the Western Australian Government did not think it wise to alarm the Western Australian farmer and discourage him from wheat growing.

#### QUESTION—FIRE BRIGADES BOARD, AUDITOR'S REPORT.

Mr. HOLMAN (without notice) asked the Premier: Has the hon. gentleman brought to the House the auditor's report in connection with the Fire Brigades Board?

The PREMIER replied: I have not got the report. I do not know that it is necessary for me to enter into an explanation. The hon. member asked yesterday whether I would lay on the Table of the House a certain report. I said I would go into the question and give it due consideration. I do not know whether it is necessary for me to offer any explanation of the fact that I have not the report now in my hands.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not necessary.

The PREMIER: The hon. member led me to understand that the report referred to is the report of one of the Auditor General's officers to the Auditor General. When the Auditor General forwards his own report to the Minister concerned, the Government will be pleased to lay the paper on the Table, if the House desires that that should be done. However, certain inquiries are being made; and until they have been completed I shall not be in a position to lay any paper in this connection on the Table.

#### BILL—DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' LAND SETTLEMENT.

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. MALEY, leave of absence for one month granted to the member for York (Mr. Griffiths) on the ground of urgent private business.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough) [4.54]: As shall direct my remarks chiefly to the question of land settlement from an agricultural member's point of view, I wish to take the opportunity of paying a tribute to the memory of the foremost son of Western Australia—I refer to the late Lord Forrest. We look back we must recognise that Western Australia's land policy, which was initiated by the deceased statesman, is on absolutely in the best interests of settlement and one framed with a full knowledge of pioneering difficulties, a subject with which Lord Forrest was intimately acquainted. As a member of the executive of the Farmer and Settlers' Association, I happened to be appointed to a committee who were to frame a definite land policy for that association and after exhaustive inquiries into the subject we are forced to the conclusion that we could do no better than revert to the original land policy inaugurated by Lord Forrest when he was in control of affairs in Western Australia. As to land settlement generally, let me point out that in no country have the pioneers of settlement themselves ever succeeded in the reward of their efforts and the enterprise has been reaped by the succeeding generation. But with modern methods we should be able to direct land settlement on such lines as will enable the pioneer to make good in his own lifetime. Up to the present our policy has been directed towards asking the selector in the first instance to buy his land and to pay for it at an exorbitantly high price; and we have imposed certain improvement conditions and settlement conditions. The third function of the settler has been to make a living. But, unfortunately, he cannot do the three things at once. The gravest problem confronting this State at present is to keep on the land the man who is already there; to make the conditions remunerative and more attractive so that he may be able to enjoy some of those comforts of life which his city brethren enjoy. I was extremely interested to hear the leader of the Opposition, speaking on the Address-in-reply, remark—

The whole of our destinies are wrapped up in the agricultural advancement of this State.

The realisation of that fact induced the Government of three or four years ago to pass the Industries Assistance Act. The fundamental idea underlying the creation of the Industries Assistance Board was not, as some people think, to keep worthless farmers on the land by paying them the magnificent wage of 9s. per day, but the protection of the Government's own securities—nothing more and nothing less.

Mr. Munsie: What Government were responsible for that assistance?

Mr. MALEY: I presume the Labour Government. The Industries Assistance

Act was passed in 1914, when hon. members opposite were in power.

Mr. MANSIE: That is correct. I am glad you give us some little credit.

Mr. MALEY: I give hon. members opposite all the credit they deserve. As regards the overcoming of certain difficulties pertaining to land settlement here to-day, I have heard one or two constructive suggestions from our friends opposite. One suggestion was to bring all unutilised lands along the existing railway system into use by imposing a tax on unimproved land values. Another suggestion, emanating from the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen), was to make life in the country more attractive by sending picture shows out there. This last is indeed a helpful and constructive suggestion. But, apparently, the farmer to-day is too hard-up to allow of even rural picture shows proving reproductive or profitable. As to the scheme, propounded so enthusiastically, of taxing unimproved land values, if hon. members opposite are so desirous of carrying that into effect, let me remind them that this State already has a tax on unimproved land values, and that they have the opportunity, if they wish to do so, of giving effect to their purpose in connection with the taxation Bills brought down. But it is false to think that the introduction of this tax is going to bring into production all that land which is lying idle alongside railways. It is impossible to tax the land into production. If hon. members want a reason for the land not being brought into production, they have not far to seek for it; they have an illustration of this reason in the condition of the agricultural industry at the present time. The industry has been so unprofitable that there has been no encouragement to others to invest their money in the direction of improving land beyond the purpose for which it is already used. People are not going to put their money into unprofitable concerns, and of recent years we have come to realise how really unprofitable agriculture is. This realisation has been brought about by the scientific methods adopted by the Taxation Commissioner, who is making us indulge in an annual stock-taking to find out exactly what our position is. If the Taxation Commissioner has achieved no other purpose by the system of accountancy which he has promoted in connection with the furnishing of these returns, he has made us understand exactly what our position is, and how little the interest is which we earn on the capital we have invested. With regard to land settlement generally, it is absolutely essential that a bold and comprehensive policy be adopted immediately. Ministers when touring through the country have received deputations from all quarters pointing out the exact position of settlement in the various localities. Many statistics have been supplied showing the cropping returns over various periods, and complaints have been made about the high values placed on the land thrown open for selection miles from a railway. It is important, in my opinion, instead of tiddly-winking with the position, to grasp it boldly and provide relief in various direc-

tions, such as in regard to arrears of rent and deferred interest and so on. The Government should immediately revise all conditional purchase leases and add the accumulated rent and payments due to the end of the lease. The Country party have assisted in bringing about the provision that exemption from rent, in the case of new selectors, shall be granted for the first five years. But why should not a man who has been struggling ever since 1910 receive similar relief? It is absurd to think that the man who has borne the heat and burden of the day under a wrong policy of settlement should not be entitled to take advantage of the five years' exemption from rents, especially if the adoption of such a course would have the effect of saving him. This is a matter to which the Government should give immediate consideration and bring into effect without delay.

The Premier: Why not empty the Treasury straight away?

Mr. MALEY: Better that than to let the settlers go off the land never to return. They have bought their experience, and heaven knows how much they have paid for it, and no effort should be spared to save them.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): You cannot make a general rule about the payment of rents, because there are people who are in a position to pay.

Mr. MALEY: After all we have been paying rents with borrowed money and the deficit has not been affected one way or the other. It is only a book-keeping entry. Why not adopt the policy which I have suggested and tack the burden on to the end of the leases?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): We cannot do it; no Minister can upset what Parliament decides.

Mr. MALEY: The Minister knows that I am not speaking through the roof of my head in connection with this matter, because I have brought more than one petition under his notice and the notice of the Premier. And if this kind of thing is happening in my district it must be happening in every other district in the State. I desire to say a few words on the subject of repatriation. I hope the Government will bring down their legislative proposals without delay, and that those proposals will provide that every soldier settler shall have some equity in his land, perhaps in the shape of a home, which will be a sheet-anchor to him. It is no use settling these men on the land and taking a mortgage over the property without creating some equity which will keep them there. One of the principal provisions, I suppose, will be an exemption from the payment of rent for a considerable period, perhaps ten years. But should a selector strike a series of seasons such as we experienced a few years back, he has no equity in connection with his holding, and he will simply walk off it and say, "Take your old dug-out back, I am off." It should be the bounden duty of the Government to establish something in the nature that I have suggested in return for the services the soldiers have rendered us. Another matter to which I wish to refer briefly is that of the lamentable centralisation policy which is followed by this Government. It is particularly emphasised at the port of Geraldton, to which

the whole of the produce of the hinterland should find its way. We are producing in those parts half a million pounds' worth of lead annually, and the whole of that is hauled past the very door of Geraldton to Fremantle, a distance of 400 miles. I understand also that there was a definite proposal made that there was to be no wheat stacked in Geraldton this year. The Scheme found that only half the provision which had been made for storing last year's crop in Geraldton was used, and then decided that they would only avail themselves of that. That means, of course, that we are going to have most of our wheat stored elsewhere. Again, a definite statement has been made that after the present appraisalment of wool at Geraldton is carried out that town is no longer to be a centre for wool appraisalment. I am quite aware that the Premier will say that this is a matter which comes within the purview of the Federal Government or the Central Wool Board, but surely the State Government should not stand idly by and see one of the principal towns of the State absolutely ruined, as it will be if Geraldton is no longer to be a wool appraising centre. A very strong protest should be entered to prevent the Central Wool Board taking the action it is said they propose to do. Another matter which I wish to bring under the notice of the Government, and particularly that of the Honorary Minister for the North-West—who I am sorry to find is not present in the Chamber—is in connection with the shipping trade. We claim that Geraldton is entitled to the trade of the North-West so far as produce is concerned, but a difficulty is experienced through vessels not calling at Geraldton on account of the bad management of the State steamship service. I would like to read a letter giving the point of view of the Geraldton District Co-operative Flour Milling Company, who should gain the whole of the North-West flour trade. The letter gives an idea of the shipping question at Geraldton—

Shipping at Geraldton.—For some considerable time prior to March last the s.s. "Bambra" was not calling at Geraldton for cargo. We think this boat was off the coast for some time and that this was mainly the reason for it not calling here. In April last we took up this matter with Mr. Willcock, and he arranged with the manager of the State Steamship Service for 50 tons of space for cargo for Geraldton to be reserved on each trip of the "Bambra" north, and we have advised the agents that we are prepared to fill this space on each trip. In regard to shutting out of cargo we find that just before the Singapore boats stopped calling here they had left cargo behind fairly frequently, but their agents have always given us reasonable notice that the boat would not be taking our cargo aboard. The "Bambra" has frequently shut out cargo, and on her last trip she shut out some eight tons. This costs us 2s. 6d. per ton to load and 2s. 6d. per ton to unload, including wharfage charges, and there are several other small expenses, such as stamps for bill of lading, etc. There is also the annoyance caused our clients, as these people could have easily ordered from Fremantle, with more cer-

tainty of having their orders shipped. The main complaint we have against the State Steamship Service is the lack of information given to the local agents and shippers. We can very seldom get any information concerning the boat. As we do not commence to load cargo here until the boat is advertised to leave Fremantle, we think that if the head office was to notify the local agent by wire, stating what ports they could not take cargo for, we could then stop the loading for those ports and thus save the above expenses. We have not gone into details to ascertain our exact expenses on cargo shut out, but from one or two amounts we have before us, the total amount during the past two years must be considerably over £100.

In this connection some months ago we had 60 tons of flour waiting on the Geraldton wharf for the State steamer. Arrangements had been made through the agent for lifting the cargo, and it had been run out on to the wharf in all good faith for loading. It cost the milling company 5s. per ton for loading and unloading and taking it back to store.

Mr. Teesdale: The department should have refunded the amount.

Mr. MALEY: In the Governor's Speech the return of the last wheat harvest is given as 9,303,787 bushels from an area of 1,249,762 acres cropped, which on an average does not amount to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  bushels to the acre. Seeing that the farming methods pursued by those under the Industries Assistance Board are perhaps the worst in the State, it is safe to say that the farmers under the board could not have harvested more than four or five bushels to the acre. This lamentable condition of affairs has been brought about by the extraordinary policy of the board in regard to cropping. The board's system is to reward a man according to the area he puts under crop, to increase his wages as the area increases. Thus, a man who crops from 160 to 180 acres is paid a higher rate of wage than the man who crops from 120 to 150 acres. The sliding scale continues until the maximum amount of assistance is reached with the area of 250 acres. A man cropping that area receives the magnificent wage so much criticised by hon. members opposite.

Mr. Munsie: Nothing of the sort; it is not criticised at all.

Mr. MALEY: Well, I will withdraw that. Clearly, under the system referred to, every encouragement is given to a man to put in as large an area as he can in order that he might get the maximum assistance from the board. It is a direct incentive to bad farming, and in my opinion the management of the Industries Assistance Board have themselves to thank for the low returns achieved by their clients. The board should be giving every encouragement to improved methods of farming. It would be a good policy if the board arranged to have half the area under crop and a great deal more fallowing done. Under the dirty conditions which have obtained during the past two or three heavy years, the land will not bear the scratched-in crop, and it would be wise if the Government

were to encourage fallowing by giving a bonus.

The Attorney General: In what way?

Mr. MALEY: By giving a bonus of, say, 5s. per acre, as is done in New South Wales. I would have liked to touch upon the question of the Wheat Pool, but I realise that this is practically sub judice at present. I hope that the report which the Government are awaiting from the Royal Commission will be expedited. I was surprised to learn from the Premier's statement made to-day that the Imperial Government have advised the Australian Wheat Board that it is essential to still encourage wheat production, because only a short time ago the Minister in charge of the Wheat Pool stated definitely on the public platform that the Imperial Government did not want our wheat. It is encouraging to hear that so recently as January of this year the Imperial Government declared that wheat production is more necessary than the production of stock or wool. I do not know how the Premier reconciles his colleague's statement with that which he himself made on the floor of the House. I would like to know why the Government did not earlier recognise that the production of wheat is just as important to-day as it was three or four years ago?

The Premier: I told the farmers so. I do not know that the Honorary Minister told the farmers not to grow wheat.

Mr. MALEY: At the recent conference, which has been so much discussed, the Honorary Minister said that the Imperial Government did not want our wheat.

The Premier: That is a totally different thing.

Mr. MALEY: No encouragement has been given to wheat production in this State. If it is essential that the farmers should produce wheat, surely a Ministerial announcement of a guarantee should have been given in time to encourage the farmers to put their best efforts into the areas going under crop. It was not until two months after tilling operations ceased that the Government said the obligation was on them to guarantee 3s. out of the 4s. 4d. per bushel.

The Premier: That was done long ago.

Mr. MALEY: No guarantee was given in this State, notwithstanding that a definite guarantee for the next two years was given by the New South Wales Government to the farmers of that State. No such guarantee was given here.

Mr. Munsie: And I hope it never will be without the question first being submitted to Parliament.

The Premier: That has been known for months.

Mr. MALEY: In conclusion, let me say I recognise that, perhaps, we are having some little difficulty in regard to finance, but that I think we ought to be prepared to bear our share of the burden, as other countries are doing. No Government of to-day can know exactly what is ahead of them, and I think the position in which we find ourselves is not

so very bad when compared with that of other countries.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [5.28]: I have a few remarks to make, notwithstanding that the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) may characterise them as so much gas. I am pleased at learning that the hon. member had devoted his recess to a visit to the Eastern States, and that in the course of his sojourning he acquired considerable knowledge which is likely to be of use in this House. I was particularly pleased that he should have gone to Queensland, and that even if he went to scoff he remained to pray, as he was man enough to admit when speaking of the activities of the Queensland Government in regard to the repatriation, in which respect he declared that Queensland is far ahead of the other States. I have here a pamphlet on the subject, entitled "Socialism at Work." I can honestly commend it to the attention of those hon. members who would know what Queensland is doing for her returned soldiers.

Mr. Johnston: Can other copies be obtained.

Mr. LUTEY: Yes, free of cost. I would like to refer to the question which was touched on last night in an admirable speech by the member for Cue in regard to the cost of mining requisites. I brought this matter up some nine months ago, but we have yet to learn that the Government have taken any steps to reduce the cost of mining requisites. It is most important to the mining industry at the present time. I believe the cost per ton has gone up 4s., which is a very serious handicap. The Government should grapple with this question, and see if they cannot relieve the mining industry in that direction. The Attorney General speaking the other evening said that it was the intention of the Minister for Mines to make the conditions of mining more attractive. I consider the Government have done very little indeed to make the mining industry attractive. We have made repeated requests for the appointment of a workman's inspector for the Westonia district. At the present time Inspector Crabb has to deal with the districts of Coolgardie, Dundas, and Yilgarn, and no man can look after such a large area of country. It is impossible for him to carry out the work that should be done. The mines are long distances apart and the inspector cannot see that the workings are safe for the workers. Another inspector should be appointed for that district. It is said that no serious accident has happened in the mines in this particular district, but I would point out that it is wrong for the Minister to wait for a serious accident before waking up. To loose methods and bad inspection in the early days a great deal of trouble on the Golden Mile is due. Instead of leaving pillars, the ore was gouged out in the face for hundreds of feet, and now the miners are reaping the benefit of the neglect of the past. Westonia is a young field, and the ore is likely to go to a great depth. It is now that strict supervision and inspection should be carried out to see that proper pillars are left so that in the future the mining industry will not suffer from bad inspection. If this had been done in the past many lives would have been saved

on the Belt. It is essential that an extra inspector should be appointed to assist in the work in that district. It is reported that everything is in order in this district, yet we must remember that a few days back it was found that at the Edna May Deeps there was only one shaft in the mine, only one outlet, which proves conclusively that the reports from the inspector are not true, or that he does not know his business. When mines are going down to any depth and only one outlet is left, and an inspector reports that the mine is safe, he either does not know his business or he is not telling the truth. In the past it has been reported that this mine was in order. In that wet district there is no knowing when a mine may be flooded, and if there is only one outlet it is a serious state of affairs. The Attorney General said the Minister for Mines was endeavouring to make mining more attractive. If so, then it is essential that another inspector should be immediately appointed for that district. In the Laverton district requests have been made for the radius outside Laverton to be extended from eight miles to 12 miles, so that the Childe Harold mine may be included in the inspector's district. It is only a small matter, but after frequent requests the Minister is not prepared to extend the radius to 12 miles, from the Laverton post office as asked. The Childe Harold mine was deemed to be unsafe when it was worked years ago, and it is a mine that will require to be carefully watched. It is little enough for the Government to extend the boundaries to allow the workmen's inspector to inspect that particular mine. The inspector in that district has to travel from Comet Vale to Laverton, and he is given a bicycle to ride. Anyone who knows that district must recognise that it is impossible for a man to get round the country on an ordinary bicycle. At times the inspector may land in one particular town and not be able to get away for two or three days. The Government should give the inspector other means of locomotion rather than a push bike.

The Minister for Mines: What inspector are you referring to?

Mr. LUTEY: The workmen's inspector between Laverton and Comet Vale. A motor bike or a motor-car might be provided for the inspector. I would like to refer to the creep in the Great Boulder Mine. More than 12 months ago I brought this matter before the House when a man named Flanagan was killed in the mine and I pointed out the danger and asked that a Royal Commission might be appointed to inquire into the position on the Great Boulder mine. It is extremely dangerous not only through loose mining in the early days, but at the present time we find that there are two parallel lodes between the Boulder and Ivanhoe and the Horseshoe, with 200ft. to 250ft. of ground between. If there is a slip of ground with lodes on both sides going to a depth of 2,000 feet with work going on almost continuously, anyone must realise the danger there is to the workmen engaged. Any creep or slight movement that takes place must prove a great danger. When

Flanagan was killed it was like a shot going off underneath my house, which is only a mile or a mile and a half from that particular mine. If there is a proper creep and the ground gives way, which it might at any time, there will be a big catastrophe. It is interesting to note that Mr. Montgomery in his report stated—

There is a condition in the Great Boulder mine and in the adjacent Ivanhoe and Golden Horseshoe mines immediately west of it which would appear to conduce to the possibility of heavy pressure in all three mines. The principal workings of these mines are on two parallel lodes. Only some 200 to 250 feet distant from one another. Both the Great Boulder lode and the Ivanhoe-Golden Horseshoe lode have been stoped out nearly continuously for long distances along their length and down to 2,000 feet in depth, and as the ore bodies were nearly opposite to each other we have a large flake of country some 200 or more feet thick standing on its edge between two large worked-out areas in the lodes. As the lodes underlay westerly this large slab of country must have a tendency to throw considerable part of its weight upon the Great Boulder working on its eastern side, it seems possible that if it once starts to move it would soon exercise a very heavy pressure.

Members who are acquainted with mining can quite understand what a pressure like that means; an immense slab of country 2,000 feet deep and 250 feet side-worked out on either side. The Great Boulder has gone under that ground to a great depth and any shifting of this ground at any time would mean a big accident. The Government have appointed the Chief Inspector from New South Wales to make a report on this district. I understand that it is intended that he shall put in a fortnight in that district. I am sorry that this inspector has not been appointed a Royal Commissioner so that he could call witnesses and take evidence on oath. A fortnight is altogether too little to carry out such a big task as examining the workings of this mine. I also wish to refer to deep boring. This has been brought before the House on many occasions. I referred to it during the debate on the last Address-in-reply but the Attorney General says the Government are doing everything possible to further the gold-mining industry. If there is a chance of furthering the gold-mining industry in any State, it is on the Golden Mile at the Northern end. From the Hidden Secret at East Kalgoorlie to Moss Hill there are hundreds of feet of country that I feel sure if a bore was put out from the workings of the Hidden Secret, the shaft of which is 400 feet deep, something would be struck that would pay the Government. If the Government do go in for boring here, I think the Government should take up the ground in which they intend to bore. It is unpegged at the present time, and if anything is struck then the Government would easily recoup themselves. We are not able to build railways or smelters and if a good mine or two was discovered on the Belt where the railway is adjacent and where there

is every convenience for carrying on mining, it would be of great value to the State. It would be of greater value than finding something miles away in the mulga. I hope the Government will give this matter their serious attention. If the Minister goes to Kalgoorlie in a week or two, which I understand he intends to do, I hope he will go to the locality I have referred to and inquire into this matter of deep boring and see if he can give the mining industry a fillip in that district.

The Minister for Mines: You mean at the north end?

Mr. LUTEY: Yes. I mention the north end, but I believe that in the south end, too, there are splendid prospects for deep boring. We have heard of bores being put down in the early days, which have now been abandoned without anything having been done. I know of one place at the southern end, upon which the Great Southern Development Co. put down a bore some 19 years ago. Their prospects were such that they sunk a shaft of hundreds of feet in depth. The shaft is still in good condition, but the company, through their operations in other parts of the world, failed, and they therefore abandoned the show upon which nothing has since been done. I believe that the records of the bores have also been lost. I have not been able to trace them, or get any particulars in regard to them. It is a pity that this should be the case because, had the State been in possession of these particulars, the authorities would know what to do at the present time. I believe that even at the south end there would be good prospects for deep boring. Either the mover, or the seconder, of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply appealed to this side of the House, and to the unions, to work together, and do the best they could for the advantage of the shipbuilding business that is about to be started in this State. The making of this appeal was an insinuation that the tactics of Labour bodies were not in the best interests of the community. Whilst this request is being made in regard to shipbuilding, we find that the shipbuilding company, and the employees who were to work for it, came to an agreement, which both parties were prepared to sign, but the governing powers in the Eastern States objected to their doing so. If members were honest, and placed the blame where it should properly lie, namely, upon those who are really causing the trouble at the present time, we should all get along very much better. Reference has also been made to the "go slow" tactics. One would almost think that the Labourites and unionists in the State were really I.W.W. people. On the goldfields we find that a new union is being formed, in a district where there is already a union in operation. In face of the law, and the arbitration legislation, I do not see how it is possible for another union to be registered in the mining industry. Three attempts have been made to have this new body registered, but possibly owing to a lack of knowledge on the part of those concerned—I do not know to what else to attribute it—these applications have all been refused. We know that the

secretary of this new body has journeyed to Perth on many occasions. I do not know whether he has the Minister's ear, or not, or who it is that he interviews when in Perth.

Mr. Pickering: He has the same right as any other man to have the ear of a Minister.

Mr. Green: More right.

Mr. Pickering: I say he has the same right.

Mr. LUTEY: The point is as to what necessity there is for this union. If this was in the interests of the workers and of the State, I should say that it was all right. My opinion is, however, that it is against the interests of the State for another union to be registered in that particular district. With regard to the "go slow" policy, I have the interests of the people at heart. As a rule the annual report of the Mines Department is laid on the Table of the House during the month of July, but through the courtesy of the Minister in charge of the department I have here certain figures relating to a period up to the year 1917. We find from these figures that the number of tons of gold ore raised and treated per man employed underground and above ground in the whole of the State was, in 1917, 229.86 tons. For 1916 the tonnage was 227.20; for 1915 it was 237.95; for 1914, 230.51; for 1913, 214.08; for 1911, 184.94; for 1909, 193.98; for 1907, 187.32; for 1905, 157.05; and for 1903 it was 124.68 tons. It will be seen that during the currency of the war, that is for the years 1914 to 1917, the quantity of ore raised per man was higher than in any other period of the history of the State. I have here also the figures showing the ounces of gold won per man employed. We find from these that, with the exception of, perhaps, the year 1903, there is an increase in the number of ounces per man, proving conclusively that the men on the goldfields are doing as well as, if not better than, they did before the war. To hear some people talk one would think that the miners were going slow and not doing their best at this particular juncture. This sort of thing does not apply only to Western Australia. We find in the latest report of the South Australian Chamber of Commerce a computation of the gross value of articles manufactured per employee in South Australia for the period 1911-12 to 1916-17. The value of the output in 1911-12 was £445 per man; for 1912-13 it was £472; for 1913-14 it was £491; for 1914-15 it was £492; for 1915-16 it was £549; and for 1916-17 it was £669 per man. This shows an increase of £224 per employee in five years. Not only, therefore, is the same cry being heard so far as this State is concerned, the insinuations of slowing down on the part of the workers, but it is also heard in regard to the Eastern States. Figures, however, can be obtained which will prove that the contrary is really the case. Last session, I made reference to the principal warden in Kalgoorlie. At that particular time members may recollect that Warden Walter sentenced a man named Rowley to three months' imprisonment. I was in the court at the time and felt that the sentence was a savage one. Hon. members will also recollect that the leader of the Opposition was fined for making what was

supposed to be a disloyal statement. I am of opinion that the warden is biased. I believe he has gone for a trip to Burmah and that a large proportion of the residents on the goldfields would be highly pleased if he would stop there.

Mr. Jones: Or somewhere else.

Mr. LUTEY: I think he would be far more fitted to be put over a number of niggers or coolies.

Mr. Pickering: That is only your opinion.

Mr. Troy: He is a waster.

Mr. LUTEY: Some months ago this warden heard a case in connection with the Half Way. Some children of the residents there took some sleepers that were lying about. These had been thrown out from the railway road, and were broken and seemed to be of no value. Some of the children took a few of these sleepers and were prosecuted for so doing. The warden so far forgot himself as to refer to the people of the Half-Way in a very derogatory manner. I take very strong exception to his remarks because, I say, practically the whole of the people at the Half Way are better than the warden ever knew how to be. They are working men and honest miners. They are mostly men with families, and many of them have their sons fighting at the Front. This is what the warden had the audacity to say from the Bench in Kalgoorlie, according to the newspaper report:—

The case showed a low standard of morality in the neighbourhood. It was inconceivable to him that the defendants should not have realised that the sleepers were of some value.

Imagine the warden referring to respectable citizens, such as these, in these terms. Although this place is in my own electorate, I look upon these men as being the salt of the earth. They are the finest men on the goldfields and, indeed, are the finest men I have ever come across. Notwithstanding this we find that a man in the position of warden refers to them in this scathing manner. I hope the time will come when he will be moved to some other part of the State. I would not mind if the authorities sent him up amongst the bananas, at Carnarvon, where he would be able to look after some of the Cingalese. I should like to make some reference to what are referred to as breaches of the Electoral Act. There have been many prosecutions recently upon the goldfields in connection with people who have made application to get on the roll. I believe a political point was made use of at the time, and that prosecutions were made against people for the purpose of scaring them from voting. We know that there are many people who, if there is any question of a prosecution, will keep away from the polling booth rather than run any risk. I recollect the time when the franchise was reduced from £25 to £17. I also remember the expressions of opinion used on the platform and throughout the country when we were trying to have the franchise lowered. I could hardly conceive of a dwelling which would not be worth £17 a year. One has to pay 1s. a night for a bed anywhere in town. So long as a man had a

domicile in which to sleep, cook, and wash, and which contained the necessary sanitary arrangements, surely that would be worth £17 a year! That was really the intention of the Legislature when that particular reduction of the franchise was passed. We now find the warden assessing values according to the municipal or roads board valuation in the district, a valuation which is both unreliable and unsatisfactory. I had a property which was valued at £18 a year, but it was situated in a district in which I could not either sell or let at that particular time. I eventually sold the property for £26. It was valued at £18 a year, and I suppose was really worth £150 to £200. It was sold merely for the iron and timber in it. Such valuations are deceptive.

Mr. Pickering: What is the usual basis of valuation?

Mr. LUTEY: I can hardly say what it is, so far as roads boards are concerned. Some roads board valuations are low, and others are high. The valuations differ in the various districts.

Mr. Pickering: Is it not a fact that for the purposes of the Act, the roads board, or municipal valuations, are those adopted?

Mr. LUTEY: That is a matter which has not yet been finalised. It is suggested that there should be a test case in order to ascertain what the position really is. I always understood, from what we were told in the past, that if a man had a place that was worth 7s. 6d. a week, he was entitled to be put on the Legislative Council roll. We now find the warden taking the valuations of the roads boards or municipalities. These valuations differ in the various districts, and afford no satisfactory guide as to the value of a house. I do not believe that it was intended the municipal or roads board valuation should be taken into account in that connection. The man with a domicile is, I consider, intended to have a vote. In the case of one of the prosecutions a lady, Mrs. Kemp, was the defendant, as hon. members may be surprised to learn in view of the fact that she is a widow, her husband having been killed in France. She was summoned by the Federal authorities only a day or two previously for not being on the Federal roll; and, in order to make herself safe, as she thought, she filed in an application to be placed on the Legislative Council roll. For that action she was brought to court, and was cross-questioned there as though she had been a criminal. Eventually the lady was fined. One would have thought that the warden's common sense would have prevented that. Further, the electoral registrar should have taken the case into court, instead of solicitors being employed for this and other similar paltry cases. The employment of lawyers means that defendants have to pay legal fees instead of the 3s. summons fee, which is all the costs that should be imposed. I hope these prosecutions will be dropped altogether. Either the franchise should be altered, or a test case tried to determine the legal position of the people concerned. The belief was general that so long as the premises occupied



were worth a certain amount to the occupier, he was entitled to be on the Legislative Council roll. A second case is reported as follows:—

**Roll: Stuffing.** A goldfields case. Kalgoorlie, 9th September. William John Burnett was fined £10 with two guineas costs, in default two months' imprisonment, by Mr. P. L. Gibbons, R.M., in the Kalgoorlie Police Court to-day for having at Boulder on March 23rd made an untrue statement in a Legislative Council claim card that he had seen a claimant, John Kinsella, sign the claim, whereas he (defendant) had not. This matter was connected with one of the recent cases of roll stuffing on the goldfields where several persons were fined heavily.

**The Attorney General:** What would you do with a man who signed a statement that he had seen somebody else sign the claim card?

**Mr. LUTEY:** I would believe he had seen it done.

**The Attorney General:** Do you suggest that it is wrong to punish such a man? Here is a person who signed a claim card as witnessing it, but never did see it signed. A shocking thing! Such a man should be fined.

**Mr. Jones:** If he is a Labour supporter.

**The Attorney General:** No.

**Mr. LUTEY:** How many people have been prosecuted by the Attorney General who are known to be supporters of the National party? Not one National supporter has been in the court yet. Now let me give a Federal case on all-fours with this State case.

**The Attorney General:** But why not answer my question? Would you let the man off?

**Mr. LUTEY:** I think the Government are culpable in not having put the matter in a straightforward way. It has been chopped about for years.

**The Attorney General:** Then you advocate forgery?

**Mr. LUTEY:** No.

**Mr. Jones:** That is not forgery.

**The Attorney General:** Well, falseness?

**Mr. LUTEY:** Here is another case yet—

Breach of Electoral Act. A plea of guilty was entered by—

**The Attorney General:** I think it is very wrong for a member of Parliament to advocate a breach of the law.

**Mr. LUTEY:** My hon. friend should keep cool, and not get ruffled.

A plea of guilty was entered by David Douglas in the Kalgoorlie Police Court yesterday morning to a charge that he, on April 5, signed his name as a witness on an electoral paper under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, to wit, on a form of electoral claim, without having seen the person whose signature he purported to witness, sign the said paper. Mr. J. Roberts, Commonwealth Electoral Officer, did not press for a heavy penalty, the offence being practically an irregularity. The magistrate imposed a fine of 1s. with 3s. costs.

Let hon. members observe the difference between the penalties inflicted in the two cases. Moreover, in the Federal case the official was

there to prosecute, instead of the defendant in a trivial case being burdened with two guineas for a solicitor's fee.

**The Attorney General:** Any man who signs an untrue statement such as that should go to gaol for six months.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. LUTEY:** Let the Attorney General use a little common sense in dealing with these matters; and a fair go should be given to defendants.

**The Attorney General:** You are advocating fraud.

**Mr. LUTEY:** No.

**Mr. Munsie:** He is commenting on the severity of the fine imposed just because the man was a Labour supporter.

**Mr. LUTEY:** I trust the Government will consider the advisableness of dropping all these vexatious prosecutions. It is certain that up to the present only Labour supporters have been prosecuted. We know or numbers of men without the £17 qualifications voting on the other side. One can go through the rolls and find dozens of voters who have not the £17 qualification. For my part I would be loath to debar any man from obtaining a vote for the Legislative Council. I feel sure that the construction placed on the law by the warden, that the valuation should be a municipal one, is wrong, and was never intended when the Act was passed.

**Mr. MUNSIE:** (Hannans) [6.9]: Though I do not intend to deal with very many subjects, I must have a word or two before the question is put. One subject with which I particularly desire to deal affects the Premier; and I shall take that first, starting at the head. For the last four or five months we have had the Premier travelling around Western Australia and meeting deputations putting forward local requirements, with the usual headline in the Press on the following day, "The Premier sympathetic." However, that is just about as far as the Premier ever gets—being sympathetic.

**The Premier:** Where money is concerned.

**Mr. MUNSIE:** Not always where money is concerned. I propose to take the Premier to task for, in my opinion, deliberately flouting the law of the country in a matter where there is not a shilling at stake. It may be argued that the matter is trivial, but it is of serious consequence at present to a large number of people. I refer to three buildings held in Kalgoorlie and Boulder district: one held by the Australian Labour Federation and known as the Kalgoorlie Trades Hall; another the office of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Federated Miners' Union, known as the Fimiston office; and the third the property known as the Workers' Hall, Burt-street, Boulder. I shall have to go a little way back in order that hon. members may thoroughly understand the position to-day. Originally the Kalgoorlie and Boulder workers' hall and the office of the Miners' Union were vested in the trustees of the organisation; and this position obtained for years without any alteration in the registration of the trustees in the Perth

Government offices. The position obtained until the auditors called attention to the fact that the then trustees of the organisation were not those named in the title deeds. The auditors advised that this would have to be altered. Just prior to being returned to Parliament I happened to be general president of the Miners' Federation, and that organisation naturally communicated with me on the subject. I made inquiries in the Government offices here, and after about four months' search I had obtained the signatures of all the original trustees with the exception of that of one. There were three trustees for the Miners' Union office, and three for the Boulder office. I succeeded in obtaining five out of six signatures, and I went so far as to obtain a copy of the death certificate of the sixth trustee. But even on all that information I could not obtain a transfer.

The Premier: That does not appear on the file, I fancy.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not think there was any file in connection with this matter. Mr. Bennett can bear me out in what I am now about to say, for he went with me to interview the Crown Solicitor. After a great deal of negotiation the Crown Solicitor eventually agreed to accept the evidence placed before him by Mr. Bennett and myself. Before going into the Crown Solicitor's office Mr. Bennett gave me the warning, "Once he agrees, get it from him in writing." That we did. We succeeded in getting from the Crown Solicitor, in writing, the position regarding the obtaining of the title. I returned with Mr. Bennett to his office, and he told me to call there at eleven o'clock the next morning, when everything would be all right. I did call; but the Crown Solicitor had withdrawn his consent. He had got in before us, and had withdrawn the written consent he gave us the previous evening. The result was that we could not obtain the title. We went again to see the Crown Solicitor, who then said that it was advisable, in order to prevent the possibility of legal quibbling in the future, to have a special Act of Parliament put through. After argument, Mr. Bennett and I agreed that that was the best course. At that time Mr. Bath was Minister for Lands. I approached Mr. Bath, who saw the Crown Solicitor in the matter; and the Crown Solicitor drafted a Bill which was submitted to and passed by this House, and also passed by the Legislative Council. I contend the statute-book of Western Australia does not contain an Act which is plainer than that particular measure. I will read the section bearing on this question, and if hon. members can find any loophole I will admit that I do not understand plain English. Section 1 refers to the Short Title, and then Section 2 provides—

Section 2. All that piece of land known as Boulder Town Lot 313 demised by the Crown to the trustees of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Workers' Association by a lease dated the 24th day of May, 1901, registered in the Office of Titles, Volume CCXVII., folio 188, and all that piece of land known as Boulder Lot 1727 demised by the Crown to the trustees of the Goldfields Amalga-

mated Miners' Union, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder No. 1 Branch, by a lease dated the 10th day of December, 1903, registered in the Department of Lands and Surveys No. 299/42, are hereby respectively re-vested in His Majesty as of his former estate, to the intent that leases thereof in the form of the Thirty-third Schedule to the Land Act, 1898, may be granted to trustees for the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Federated Miners' Industrial Union of Workers.

[Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.]

Mr. MUNSIE: When the House adjourned for tea I was reading from the Act of Parliament which I contended the Premier had failed to carry out. I had read Section 2 referring to the two lots at Boulder. I now intend to read Section 3 referring to the Trades Hall, Kalgoorlie. I do this because the Act is so explicit that no one can read into it anything other than that it really means. Section 3 reads—

All that piece of land known as Kalgoorlie Town Lot 883 demised by the Crown to the trustees of the Kalgoorlie, Boulder and District Trades and Labour Council by a lease dated the 5th day of November, 1900, and registered in the Office of Titles in Volume CCIV., folio 14, is hereby re-vested in His Majesty as of his former estate, to the intent that a lease thereof in the form in the thirty-third schedule to the Land Act, 1898, may be granted to trustees for the Eastern Goldfields District Council Australian Labour Federation.

I contend that section is absolutely plain. The Act was introduced because the Crown Law authorities were afraid, seeing that we could not get the signatures of all the old trustees, that there might be some legal complication in the future. I do not altogether blame the Crown Solicitor. He was wise in getting an Act passed so that there should be no dispute. The Act was assented to on the 30th December, 1913. Unfortunately just after that Act became law there was a change of secretaries in both organisations almost simultaneously, and the result was that no application was put in for a title under the new Act for some time. Eventually the district Council of the A.L.F. in Kalgoorlie wrote to me and asked me to intercede. I did so, and I was distinctly informed that there was nothing to do but to grant the title. Then matters went on unaltered for some time. I have the whole of the correspondence which passed between the department and the secretary of that organisation. There was no difficulty put in the way until a certain gentleman in Kalgoorlie by the name of Edgar Harris also put in an application for the Trades Hall in connection with the new Trades and Labour Council which had then recently been formed in Kalgoorlie. I do not know whether he contended he had any right to do so, as from that date we have never been able to get any satisfaction from the present Premier. I have a letter from the secretary of that organisation to the Premier himself, but some considerable time before I went with Mr. Clifford, the secretary in question, as a deputation to the Premier. We placed the whole matter before him

and as I have stated he received us sympathetically, and promised me faithfully that I would have a reply in the course of a day or two. The letter which I am about to read is dated the 18th December, 1917. It is as follows—

To the Hon. the Premier, Perth. Dear Sir, Some time ago Mr. Munsie and myself waited on you with reference to the title of the land on which the Trades Hall is built at Kalgoorlie. My Council would be glad to know if anything has yet been done in regard to the matter. Thanking you in anticipation, R. E. Clifford.

I have read that letter because I want hon. members to realise the time which has elapsed since it was written, namely 18th December, 1917. It was two months before that that Mr. Clifford and I waited on the Premier, and up to date I have received no answer from the Premier either one way or the other. A few days after Mr. Clifford wrote his letter he received this acknowledgment—

Premier's Office, Perth, 19th December, 1917. Dear Sir, I am in receipt of yours of the 18th inst. on the subject of the title of the land on which the Trades Hall at Kalgoorlie is built, and have to advise you that same is receiving attention. Yours faithfully, L. E. Shapcott, Secretary.

Things went on for about three months, and I was written to once more from Kalgoorlie and asked to arrange another deputation to the Premier. This time it consisted of Mr. James Cunningham, M.L.C., the leader of the Opposition, and myself. We again placed the whole of the facts before the Premier, he again received us sympathetically, and again he promised he would let us have a reply within a day or two. That was at least five months ago, and up to date we have not received from him even the scratch of a pen. That is treating members of this House with the utmost discourtesy.

The Premier: The secretary has had a reply.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Premier promised me definitely that I would have a reply. I admit he has written to the Secretary of the Council. I have spoken to the Premier at least on half a dozen occasions in the corridors of this House, and asked whether I could get a reply, but I have not been furnished with one. The leader of the Government has not the backbone either to refuse or to grant the request. That is the position, and until we get a Premier who has a little backbone we cannot expect the State to progress satisfactorily. The letter to which the Premier refers is dated the 7th January, 1918, and is to Mr. Clifford, the secretary, and not to me. It is in reply to the letter which Mr. Clifford wrote inquiring whether anything had yet been done with regard to the title of the land on which the Trades Hall is built, and it goes on—

I have to advise you that the Government consider that as this land was granted for the erection of a hall for the general use of the workers some arrangement should be arrived at whereby it should be retained for its legitimate purpose, and that all those originally interested should continue to en-

joy the use of the land. (I shall be glad if some arrangement can be arrived at between the bodies interested.)

That letter was signed by the Premier. When we met the Premier by way of deputation we received sufficient information to lead us to believe that Mr. Edgar Harris had also put in an application for the Trades and Labour Council. The Premier has made that the excuse, and he has written to both bodies and asked them to confer. He is evidently going to try to get out of it in that way. But what about the application in connection with the Miners' Union hall at Boulder? There was no objection there. They had their title granted. Why then is it denied to us? It is said that people do not do things without a motive. I believe there is a motive here, and I believe I shall be correct in forecasting why it has not been possible to get the title deeds in question up to date. It is a well known fact that there has been another Miners' union established on the Eastern Goldfields. They have applied on three occasions for registration, and they have failed each time. I have information that only recently the Registrar went to Kalgoorlie and Boulder and met the organisation which put in the application, and he met the organisation who were objecting to the application being granted, and on the claim which was put in he could not possibly grant registration. I am informed now that a fresh citation is to be put in. There have been three already and now there is to be a fourth. The advice which the secretary has now received is that if he can convince the Crown Law Department that the members of the present Miners' Union on the goldfields are members of an organisation of a political thought different from that of the members of the other organisation that will be considered a reasonable ground for granting registration.

The Attorney General: Who says that?

Mr. MUNSIE: I am told that is so, but I trust it is not true.

The Attorney General: What you are saying is quite news to me.

Mr. MUNSIE: It would not go before the Attorney General.

The Premier: It is news to me, too.

Mr. MUNSIE: I hope it is news to both the Premier and the Attorney General, and I hope before the registration is granted stronger grounds will have to be given. I hope they will not override the present Arbitration Act by any such subterfuge. We have been told often enough that in times of stress we should endeavour to pull together. How can it be expected that the members of the Miners' Union, numbering just on 1,800 in Kalgoorlie and Boulder, should bury the hatchet when an organisation which it is admitted has lost members, and which has been formed from the parent body, are being backed up by the action of the Government in refusing the original organisation the block of land which they have had for the past 20 years? In the face of action such as that we cannot expect good feeling to exist.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): They are getting on pretty well without them.

Mr. MUNSIE: They will get on much better if justice is done to those entitled to it. Much has been said in regard to the attitude of the Labour party towards the war and recruiting. The point I would draw attention to is that for the last two months we have been told through the daily Press of this State that since the Governor General's conference on the subject of recruiting, all the promises made on the Government side have been carried out; and the question is asked, what attitude is the Labour party taking in regard to recruiting?

Mr. Teesdale: Not much has been said about it in the House.

Mr. MUNSIE: No; I am referring to the daily Press. Unfortunately, the daily Press of this State wields considerable influence among the people.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Not enough to put the Government out.

Mr. MUNSIE: Possibly because you have all the influence of the "Daily News" with you to offset the efforts of the "West Australian." The Press has led the people to believe that the Government have carried out all their obligations. Here let me say that the representatives of Labour organisations at that conference pledged themselves to nothing. They did not promise to do anything. They put forward suggestions as to what, in their opinion, was injuring recruiting, and said they believed that if those obstacles were removed the number of recruits would increase. The several Governments agreed to do certain things, one being to replace the trades unions of Australia on the footing on which they had stood prior to the upheaval. There were only two items with which the Government of Western Australia had to deal: one was that the embargo placed on the men working on the wheat stacks should be lifted, and the other that the lumpers' union at Fremantle should be granted equal standing with the National workers' union. Have the Government made any attempt to carry out either of those promises? Absolutely no. The Government of New South Wales said that they would replace all the unions in their State on the footing they were on prior to the strike. Yet only five weeks ago that Government issued a mandate signed by the Premier which refused 83,000 unionists in New South Wales the right to become registered again. And then they wonder why they cannot get unanimity! Let me emphasise the point that while no compact was entered into by the representatives of Labour at the Governor General's conference, to their credit be it said that when they returned to their various States they did all that the conference expected them to do. And what thanks did they get? Take our own case: Mr. Collier had not long returned to Western Australia when he got on the public platform to give the people a lead to go upon. What reception did Mr. Collier get when he spoke at Midland Junction on the subject of recruiting? The conscriptionist

Press of this State at once declared that Mr. Collier had twisted. They said, "He has seen the error of his ways and has come over to us."

Mr. Teesdale: They did not use the word "twisted."

Mr. Davies: I did not see that in print.

Mr. MUNSIE: Mr. Collier was perfectly consistent. Mr. Storey went back to New South Wales and did exactly the same thing. Mr. Ryan went back to Queensland and did the same, and Mr. Tudor also adopted a like attitude. What have the Federal Government or any of the State Governments done towards carrying out their obligations? Nothing whatever. Now let me deal with another subject. It was to me remarkable that the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) should take exception to criticism from this side in regard to the financial position.

Mr. Mullany: I do not think you are quite correct in making that statement.

Mr. MUNSIE: Well it seemed to me the hon. member took us to task for having criticised the financial position, and pointed out that the leader of the Opposition was in this only doing what Opposition leaders had always done. The hon. member sat with us for four or five years, during which time he must frequently have heard on this side criticism of the financial policy of the Government of the day.

Mr. Mullany: I explained that.

Mr. MUNSIE: That is so. What was to me remarkable was that the hon. member should have been surprised at the criticism. I wish to refer to one or two statements made by the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) outside the House. Personally I do not pay particular attention to what the hon. member says here, but when he goes to my own electorate to make statements, I expect him to stick to the truth.

Mr. Davies: When was I in your electorate?

Mr. MUNSIE: The hon. member spoke in Boulder, where I meet practically the whole of my electors. When the hon. member addressed the electors in Boulder he was probably speaking to as many electors of Hannans as of Boulder.

Mr. Davies: I did not know that.

Mr. MUNSIE: That is not the point, the point is that you should stick to the truth, which you did not do if you were correctly reported in the "Kalgoorlie Miner." The hon. member, after casting all kinds of innuendoes, as he does even here, in regard to the party with which I am associated, went on as follows:—

Coming to more domestic matters he discounted the criticism which Labour members had levelled against the recent Income Tax Bill on the ground that the Bill introduced by the Labour party some time before was framed on exactly the same basis, namely £100 exemption for single men and £156 exemption for married men, with an allowance for each child. Speaking in the House on the same subject the hon. member certainly did say that he could not understand why the Opposition were raising any objection to the Bill, seeing that

we had introduced the same Bill ourselves. By interjection I contradicted the statement, and later on, when I was speaking on the Bill, I got an admission from the hon. member himself that it was not the same Bill. From the hon. member's own lips I will prove the statement published in the "Miner" to be a lie. When I was speaking on the Income Tax Bill the first interjection was from Mr. Davies. Here is the report from "Hansard"—

Mr. Davies: But if he earned £157 he would have to pay £1 income tax and that would have reduced his income to £156.

Mr. Munsie: The minimum to be collected under the Labour Government's measure was £1. Suppose a man earned £158, what would he have to pay under that Bill?

Mr. Davies: One pound.

Mr. Munsie: And what would he have to pay under this measure?

Mr. Davies: One pound eleven shillings.

Mr. Munsie: Is there no difference in that?

I could not get another answer from the hon. member. Here we have the hon. member admitting on the floor of the House that the Bills were not the same. He knows positively that they were not the same, that if a man earned £200 under our Bill he would get an exemption of £156, whereas under the Bill the hon. member was supporting, if a man earned £158 he paid on £158, and not on £2, as under our Bill. Yet in my own electorate the hon. member repeated the same old statement. Here is another statement which the hon. member made—

Referring to Queensland Mr. Davies predicted the doom of Mr. Ryan as Premier of that State. An examination of the conditions existing there would show that it could not much longer stand the financial strain which it was being subjected to.

The hon. member was selected by his own party, I take it, to second the Address-in-reply to the Governor's Speech in this House this very session. He goes up to my electorate and makes that statement. I am prepared to admit that according to the returns for the last financial year the Queensland Government were £400,000 to the bad. But while the hon. member is seconding the Address-in-reply he does not think it worth while to mention the financial position of Western Australia.

Mr. Davies: You never gave me a chance.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Government which the hon. member is supporting went to the bad £705,000 during the year in which Mr. Ryan went back £400,000.

The Colonial Treasurer: Remember they have no sinking fund there.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am speaking of the financial returns as they are submitted year by year. I am not going to decry the position of Western Australia.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear!

Mr. MUNSIE: I believe that Western Australia can get out of the difficult financial position which she is in. However, that has nothing to do with the making of incorrect statements by the hon. member.

Hon. P. Collier: Not incorrect. He merely overlooked the £700,000.

Mr. MUNSIE: Let us see how they have panned out since. On the 30th June this year Queensland was £400,000 to the bad, while Western Australia showed a deficit of £3,005,000 odd. Notwithstanding this, the hon. member goes up there and says that the people of Queensland are not much longer going to stand Mr. Ryan as Premier, because they cannot stand the financial strain which is placed on the country.

Mr. Davies: Time will tell.

Mr. Jones: And it will tell with you.

Mr. MUNSIE: Let us look at the two months of this financial year. We find that Western Australia, for the month of July, went to the bad to the extent of £131,054, and for the month of August £107,959, or £239,030 for the two months. In the "West Australian" there appeared the financial returns from Queensland, and for the same two months of the financial year Queensland showed a surplus of £331,118. That is to say, Queensland almost wiped out the loss of £400,000 in the first two months of this financial year.

Mr. Davies: The men are on 44 hours a week there.

Mr. MUNSIE: Some are on less than that, but not for want of money, but because they cannot get the raw material.

Mr. Davies: That is the Commissioner's statement in the court.

Mr. MUNSIE: What has this to do with either the figures given, or the statement made, by the hon. member? A good deal has been said inside and outside the House with regard to profiteering. The hon. member went so far as to throw out an innuendo—he did not say it outright; the leader of the Opposition said he dare not—that even the leader of the Opposition had supported profiteering. We have always opposed profiteering on this side of the House.

Mr. Davies: You say I said that at Kalgoorlie?

Mr. MUNSIE: No, on the floor of the House. This is what the hon. member did say—

Profiteering was going on—

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member quoting from the speech made in the House this session?

Mr. MUNSIE: No, I am quoting from a speech made by the hon. member in Burt-street, Boulder, as it appeared in the "Kalgoorlie Miner."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member's speech at Boulder has not much to do with the Address-in-reply.

Mr. MUNSIE: When an hon. member is dealing with other hon. members of this House, and making statements about them, I contend that I have a right to show in what direction he is wrong. I trust you will allow me, Sir, to deal with profiteering, as hon. members before me have done. The hon. member said—

Profiteering was going on, but what steps had the Labour Government taken to deal with it when it was in power during the early part of the war?

This is in connection with the Queensland arrangement. The hon. member wanted to

know what steps the Ryan Government had taken to deal with profiteering in Queensland.

Hon. P. Collier: Why does he worry about Mr. Ryan?

Mr. MUNSIE: There was a fairly long controversy in regard to the increase in the cost of living in Queensland, as compared with that in Western Australia. The point is this: What the hon. member did not tell the people of Boulder was that immediately the Federal Government, under the War Precautions Act and Regulations declared any commodity a necessary commodity for the purpose of fixing prices, no State in the Commonwealth had anything to do with the fixing of the price of such commodity. It then became a matter purely and simply for the Federal Government. He should take his National friends to task if there is profiteering going on in Queensland. The only thing the Queensland Government have the right to fix the price of is meat, and they have done this by contract. In this direction they have done better than any other State in the Commonwealth. Dealing with the cost of living, near the conclusion of his speech, the hon. member said—

In spite of Mr. Ryan's criticism of the way in which the Federal Government had fixed the price of meat, a motion had been carried in Perth by the Labour executive supporting Mr. Watt's proposals.

Mr. Davies: I am not correctly reported there.

Mr. MUNSIE: I thought not. The hon. member, however, has not been manly enough to correct the statement. That statement was read by 30,000 people, and if the statement was incorrect, these people should have been told.

Mr. Jones: You do not expect him to do anything manly?

Mr. MUNSIE: It is an absolute misstatement. I have here a copy of the resolution which was carried.

Mr. Pickering: Where was this carried?

Mr. MUNSIE: It was carried at a meeting of the executive of the Australian Labour Federation, Perth.

Hon. P. Collier: A similar organisation to yours.

Mr. Jones: But with higher ideals.

Mr. MUNSIE: The resolution was carried on 1st July, 1918.

The metropolitan council wrote asking the executive to use its influence in the direction of forcing the Federal Government to take action regarding the fixation of the price of meat on the lines laid down by the Interstate Commission. Mr. Collier informed the delegates that some of the evidence given at the Interstate Commission was of a startling character, and he hoped to be able to make arrangements to have some of it published in "The Worker." In his opinion it should be very widely circulated amongst Labourites in this State. Moved by Mr. Mooney and seconded by Mr. Munsie, "That we protest at the delay of the Federal Government in adopting the recommendations of the Interstate Commission, and we also protest against the selection of Mr. Fritz Lang by the Federal authorities

to represent Western Australia vested interests in meat." Resolution was carried.

We had the hon. member saying in Kalgoorlie that the Labour executive had carried a resolution supporting Mr. Watt's proposals. The Federal Government had not these proposals before them at the time, and we were trying to force them to fix the price of meat. It was our policy to have the price of meat fixed, and I trust it always will be. I wish to deal now with the leather that is obtainable in Australia. I do not know whether the present Government can do anything in the matter or not, but it is up to them to make inquiries and to see if they cannot do something. Some time ago an embargo was placed on prepared leather in England, that is to say, on tanned leather. A deputation waited on the Federal authorities, who did, to some extent, get that embargo released. I believe that 1,040 bales were permitted to be shipped from Australia, and that 14 bales represented Western Australia's quota. What I desire to draw attention to is that there is any amount of space for the export of the raw hide, and the position that the people of Australia, and particularly of Western Australia, are in is that, no matter how much they are prepared to pay for it, they cannot get good sole leather. The result of the arrangement between the Federal and British Governments is that all the good heavy hides, which would make good heavy sole leather, are being exported, and not only can not the people of Australia get the best leather, but they cannot even get second class leather.

Mr. Pickering: They want the best hides for the men at the Front.

Mr. MUNSIE: That may be so, but we do want better leather here than we are getting at present prices. I did intend to deal with the shipbuilding industry, but the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) has already fairly dealt with that. I give the Minister for Industries credit for his energy in trying to establish industries in this State, and for having gone to a great deal of trouble in his endeavour to establish the shipbuilding industry here. At the same time, I hope he will busy himself in the direction of inducing the Federal Government to allow the arrangements made by the local company to stand. This company got the contract for building a number of ships here, and made certain arrangements accordingly. It has been stated that the Western Australian contractors received an increase in their price on account of the higher cost of labour in this State. They were, at all events, satisfied with their contract. After negotiating in Melbourne they returned to Western Australia, and entered into negotiations with the whole of the unions interested in the shipbuilding trade, and came to an agreement with them. The directors of the company were quite prepared to sign the agreement and to give the unions everything they asked for. They do not dispute a single item. The Federal Government, however, will not allow them to do this, because the agreement is not exactly on the same lines as those of the agreements entered into in the Eastern States. That is an absolute absurdity. The people of Western

Australia are interested in this contract. The State Government have guaranteed £30,000 of their money in connection with the laying down of the plant. Every individual of the State is, therefore, interested to a certain extent in the proposition. The members of the company are finding the balance of the money required, and are agreeable to giving the unionists everything they ask for. The agreement has been submitted to the Federal Government, but they have refused to allow them to sign it.

Mr. Holman: The question of the conditions and wages has not been touched yet.

Mr. MUNSIE: The whole of the conditions have been discussed.

Mr. Holman: I represent the workers; you keep off.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am sorry I did not bring the telegram—

Mr. Holman: I have been at every meeting. Do not touch it.

Mr. MUNSIE: There is a telegram signed by the directors in Western Australia asking for the permission of the Federal Government to make an alteration in the agreement to comply—

Mr. Holman: That is in connection with the contract; it has nothing to do with wages and conditions.

Mr. MUNSIE: At all events, the Federal Government have refused to allow the company to do this. Before sitting down, I should like to deal with the mining industry, without, however, going very fully into the matter. Three of the hon. members who have already spoken have dealt fairly fully with what, in their opinion, would assist the mining industry. One hon. member to-night contended that we were wrong in our advocacy of a tax on the unimproved value of land. Although the member for Greenough (Mr. Maley) disputes this, I am still of opinion that we should have such a tax, and that a proportion of the tax so collected should be placed to the credit of the Railway Department for the purpose of reducing freights on our railways. This would certainly assist our mining industry. I believe that the Minister for Mines is going to Kalgoorlie next week end. For some years past there has been an agitation on the goldfields in connection with our water scheme and the water supply to the mines. I am positive that the Minister will have this matter brought before him again. I would point out that the big mines get water at a lower rate for the purpose of pumping their tailings away. I am not complaining of the prices charged by the scheme to the mining companies. But what I do complain of, and what I have always thought ridiculous, is that if a mine with a battery and employing a wet process can obtain 10,000 gallons of salt water per week from its own shaft to use over the plates, the Water Supply Department will not allow it. I contend that the department, if they want to do something to assist the mining industry, should go into this question very carefully. It should receive the Minister's consideration. In existing circumstances a mine that has salt water must either pull or pump that salt water and then let it run to waste—in my opinion, a deliberate ex-

travagance. I see no reason whatever for such a state of things. A mine should be permitted to use its own salt water without on that account being penalised in respect of the water required for boiler purposes from the scheme.

Mr. Teesdale: What about the scheme if every mine did that?

Mr. MUNSIE: Fortunately for the mining industry of Western Australia, the eastern goldfields district is comparatively a dry mining belt. In most of the big mines on the Golden Mile there is not sufficient water to run a 20-head battery one shift per week; so that the concession I suggest would not make a great deal of difference. Any mine working anywhere within the area of the goldfields water supply scheme should be allowed to use the whole of the water it can obtain from its own property. The granting of that concession will, in my opinion, enable some mines now closed to resume work. Had the concession prevailed in the past, several mines that I know of in Coolgardie and around Kalgoorlie would have been enabled to keep on working; whereas they are abandoned. The only argument in opposition to the granting of the concession is that it involves a reduction of the quantity of water used from the scheme, and thus would make the scheme a heavier loss than it represents at present. If the Government can assist other industries to the extent they have done, surely it is up to them to grant mining that little assistance. If the Government can afford to stand guarantors for the farmers to the extent of millions—

Mr. Pickering: Not millions.

Mr. MUNSIE: It amounts to millions—it is not asking too much to require them to accept a loss of £150,000 or £200,000 per annum by allowing the mines, and particularly the low grade mines, to use their own water. The result will be to benefit not only Western Australia, but also the Commonwealth and the Empire generally.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) [8.20]: I thought we would have seen a member rise from the other side of the House to reply to criticisms. Evidently, however, members opposite do not intend to touch the important questions which have been raised in the course of the debate. Accordingly I take the opportunity of making my position clear. The Address-in-reply affords ample scope for dealing with all the important questions at present facing the country. The criticism launched by the leader of the Opposition has not been answered with any degree of success by Ministers or by their supporters. We know full well that since the advent of the so-called National Government—and I may go even further back and say, from the time the Labour Government were deposed—all the assistance that could possibly be given to any Government has been given the present and the previous Government by this side of the House, and given without criticism and without loss of time. Not on a single occasion has anything been done by us to prevent the carrying on of the business of the country. Unfortunately, however, owing to the fact that the present Government have not the ability, or perhaps not the desire, to

bring about a better condition of affairs here, Western Australia to-day finds itself in the worst position, from every aspect, that has obtained since the inauguration of responsible Government. The member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) said the other evening that he was sorry a truly National Government had not been brought into existence. By that very statement he admitted that the present Government are not truly national. Indeed, it has been proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the present Government represent the worst form of party government that has ever existed either here or in any other State. The reason is that they do not fight as a party should, standing up to advocate what they think right. On the contrary, by a system of intrigue and treachery amongst themselves they have brought about a form of government which would be a disgrace to any country. We are told that there has been a sort of coalition. In the early stages of that coalition we were asked to join it. The member for Menzies, who referred to that aspect of the matter, knows that members on this side are forbidden, by the constitution of their party, to join in any coalition of any description. But we gave it out, and this has been agreed to by every member on this side, that for the duration of the war and for so long as the effects of the war might be felt we had no desire to trench upon party, but wished only to promote the safety of the State and the advancement of the State. Indeed, that has been the attitude of Labour all along. What has this coalition been? Let me quote, on the subject of coalition, Edmund Burke, who died about 120 years ago—

False coalitions.—No system of that kind can be formed which will not leave room fully sufficient for healing coalitions: but no coalition which, under the specious name of independency, carries in its bosom the unreconciled principles of the original discord of parties, ever was, or will be, an healing coalition. Nor will the mind of our Sovereign ever know repose, his kingdom settlement, or his business order, in efficiency or grace with his people, until things are established upon the basis of some set of men, who are trusted by the public, and who can trust one another.

The public do not trust the present Government, who cannot trust each other. We had a demonstration of that quite recently in this House, when one section of members opposite attacked the other section. No two members on the other side of the House would trust each other out of each other's sight.

Hon. P. Collier: They know each other too well.

Mr. HOLMAN: What can we expect when we are governed by people of that description? The present coalition has not been brought about for the advancement of the State at all, but purely in order that the members of it might get into power and keep in office at the expense of the country and of the people in it. I do not think the

country could be in a worse condition if we had no Government at all; indeed, we might be in a better condition. We do not know exactly what has brought about the disruption of Russia, but we know that in that country there have been the same intriguing and treachery for the purpose of securing office that have been practised in Western Australia by the politicians of to-day. I prefer, to the present condition of affairs, a straightforward, stand-up fight between parties. Reference to the Press proves that the National form of party has reached even further than the Ministerial bench. I was indeed sorry to observe a certain statement published in the "West Australian" of the 9th of this month referring to Mr. Speaker himself. I do not know whether the statement is true; I hope it is not true. But, if it is not true, we should uphold the dignity of the House, and protect the Chair against such attacks. Previously, I believe, a paragraph had appeared in the "West Australian" to the effect that Mr. George Taylor had made an almost impassioned appeal for unity, stating that the only effect of disunion could be to advantage the Official Labour party. If that is not a purely party sentiment, I do not know what is. If that statement indicates the form of National government in which all are to sink party for the advancement of the State, it is a very funny form of nationalism. I now quote from the "West Australian" leader—

On the other hand, Mr. George Taylor, who occupies the high position of Speaker, and as such is expected to hold the balance evenly between all parties on the floor of the House, appealed passionately in caucuses for support for the Government.

Surely a statement like that should not be made against a gentleman occupying the highest position in the land, a gentleman who should see no party, who should not know any party politics at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member can construe that article so as to apply it to any action I have taken as Speaker of the Assembly.

Mr. HOLMAN: No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then there is no need to dilate on the article.

Mr. HOLMAN: It only goes to show that the Nationalist party in Western Australia are prepared to do anything whatever, to utilise all the strength available behind them, for the purpose of keeping in office and carrying on as they have done in the past. They are prepared to go even further than any party have ever done before. Mr. Speaker, if they attack you as Speaker here, I should think that you yourself would call those responsible before the bar of the House in order that you might protect the privileges of the House. I refer to the matter really because we have been told that we on this side of the House are purely party, as we have refused to become Nationalists. I am now stating what action had been taken by those on the other side of the House, in order to



prove that there are worse forms of party government than ever existed previously in this State or in any other. The Nationalist party are a party prepared to do anything in order to retain their present positions. Though we on this side have been accused of being purely party, I maintain that we have never put party before country at all, never in the history of politics, and it is a remarkable fact that in the past we posed as being a party of the people. The party on this side of the House to-day is the same as it was then; we have always been prepared to sink our personal feelings for the sake of the country. Hon. members opposite have told us that they are not in their present positions for party purposes, that their desire is to do the best for the people, and amongst other things also to win the war. That was the cry at the time of the last election. What have they done in the House since they were returned? They have deposed those who faithfully carried out their duties and put in their positions members of their own parties. I occupied the position of Chairman of Committees for many years and during the whole of that time not one of my rulings was ever questioned. Yet when the party opposite were returned to power they chose those who had given them support for the positions which were available.

Hon. P. Collier: And the member for Williams-Narrogin voted for the member for Wagin.

Mr. HOLMAN: We were told that when the Labour Government were in office they were not doing right. Everything that could discredit them in the eyes of the country was said and done by hon. members on the Treasury benches who were then in opposition. Every insinuation was hurled at us, and they declared that they were the party who would put things right. What do we find? The position to-day is worse than it has ever been and if anyone dares to criticise the Government we are told, "Why do you not tell us what to do; why do you not assist us; why do you not let us know how we can make a success of things?" The people returned the party opposite to power because they declared they could put things in order. But if they are not capable of doing that why do they not get out and allow someone else to come in and make the attempt? What have they done since they have been in office? They have merely placed their own political friends in positions which were waiting to be filled, and now they are being kept in power by reason of the fact that the people have no opportunity of telling them to go. If the people had the chance of doing so, they would without doubt reverse their decision of 12 months ago. We have tried to tell the Government what to do, but they have never adopted any of our suggestions. Even if we ask for a return so as to show that things are not done properly the information is refused to us. The Premier even refuses to allow us to see ordinary reports. What chance then have we of helping to rectify things when

that state of affairs exists? With regard to the Governor's Speech, so far as length is concerned it holds the record, and it also holds the record so far as empty platitudes go, and so far as it is deficient in showing constructive ability and containing suggestions for the improvement of conditions generally in the State. We all agree with the patriotic sentiments expressed in the opening paragraph and we realise what has been done by the men who went to uphold the Empire in the terrible struggle which is taking place. We can express to them our appreciation and offer them our thanks for what they have done. At the same time, I have to express regret that a great deal of political capital is being made out of the present war. Members on this side of the House are being condemned for the attitude they have adopted. So far as members of the Opposition are concerned, they represent more men who have gone to the Front than the whole of the members on the other side of the House, and they number three to our one. The union I have the honour to be associated with had a membership in 1914 of over 4,000 and they have sent to the Front no fewer than 2,000 men, and because we do not knuckle down and become part and parcel of a rotten Administration, we are accused of working against the Government and refusing to assist them to win the war. We on this side of the House have shown a keener and more patriotic desire than members opposite in the direction of winning the war. Without exception hon. members opposite have used this great national crisis for the sake of paltry and petty political purposes. What is being done now? Even the Recruiting Committee have sent letters to individual members to ask them to endeavour to find something on which to attack us. So far as I am concerned, I intend to do in the future what I have always done in the past. I offered my services to the country without avail, and I have endeavoured to get every available man to enlist, but I am not going to prostitute my political opinions for the purpose of supporting an Administration which is of no benefit to the country and is no credit to itself. We continually hear in this Chamber platitudes and empty mouthings from members who have become Nationalists for merely party purposes, and because there were those who would not join them they sent out candidates to oppose them at the last elections which took place. Owing to the action of Perth nationalists a man was sent to oppose me because I would have nothing to do with them. That is the crowd who pose to-day as a National Government. We have heard all that they are prepared to do, yet when we read the Governor's Speech and see what is being done for our returned soldiers, we cannot but express disappointment, and when an effort is made to censure them for their failure to carry out their promises, we can only get three supporters from their side who are not satisfied with what has been done. My opinion is that it will not be long before the men directly affected take these matters into their own hands so as to make sure of

getting the treatment which they are entitled to receive. So far as provision for their future is concerned, there is no defined policy, yet those in office still have the confidence and the support of members who sit behind them. There are some statements in the Governor's Speech as to what it is intended to do for the returned men. Many are to be provided for on the land while provision is to be made for prospecting, etc. So far as settling men on the land is concerned, there are some who may be able to go on the land, but there must be thousands who have never been on the land and never will go on it. As I have advocated before, we should give our returned men assistance so that they may go out prospecting for gold and other minerals. So far as gold mining is concerned, the old system which was in force in the early days, but which does not exist at the present time, was the best. When I first came to the country 25 years ago men worked on mines for wages and while earning wages they sent others out prospecting. The Government should now take the place of those men who in the early days backed the prospectors, and support the returned soldiers while out prospecting. There are in Western Australia many opportunities in that direction and if a system were put into force for assisting returned men to open up the almost deserted fields and the copper and lead centres, I am certain it would prove remunerative. The Government should assist with money grants, turn-outs, and tools, and with proper supervision that fillip which mining requires would be at hand.

The Minister for Mines: We are getting good results now.

Mr. HOLMAN: I have given several returned men whom I knew many years ago letters to the department and I am glad to say that those men were helped by the department. I spoke on the mining Estimates last year and suggested that in the big mining centres there should be established depôts from which men could obtain outfits and supplies.

The Minister for Mines: That is being done with the exception of the supervision. A genuine prospector does not want to be restricted in his actions.

Mr. HOLMAN: I mean supervision in the distribution of the assistance to be given to those men. Of course no supervision can be exercised over the prospector himself, but with a proper supervision of the distribution of assistance the men could go to a local committee and get necessary impedimenta without having to send all the way to Perth.

The Minister for Mines: That system is in vogue at present.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well it has not been carried very far. We know that at present the finances of the State are in a parlous condition. But if any effort is made on this side to give assistance we are met with a blank refusal to furnish the required information. When discussing the Estimates last session I showed that the Government had appointed a certain person to be manager of State hotels at an increased salary. That vote was re-

duced by direction of the House. Later on the question was asked whether the officer concerned was receiving the same salary, and the answer was in the affirmative. Again, although certain moneys have been granted to the Fire Brigades Board, the granting was not in conformity with the Act which came into force last year. I shall be able to deal more fully with this when we get the officer's report and the Auditor General's comments on it. The whole of this expense was illegal, and moreover, the money was spent without the Governor's approval. If that can be done in connection with the Fire Brigades Board it may be happening in many other directions. It is all controlled by an official in the Colonial Secretary's Department, probably the most rottenly administered department in the State. The Colonial Secretary's Department is responsible for a good deal of expenditure which is not reproductive, and because of that it calls for very careful administration. Yet the Colonial Secretary pursues the same tactics as he did when a pressman, that is to say, he utilises his knowledge of advertising to make out that he is a careful, keen, capable Minister. In respect of his administrative abilities I think that, poor though the Ministerial team is—I do not think we could get a poorer team in the House—the Colonial Secretary is probably the worst of the bunch. The accountant in the Colonial Secretary's department is allowed to go out as manager of the State hotels. He does not put in his time in the office. I intend to get the details of the expenses in regard to the Fire Brigades Board. I think we are entitled to them, because the report is in the hands of every member of the board. Yet the Premier is so spineless and weak that he refuses to give the House a copy of that report. I daresay that the officer concerned has told the Premier that he should not give it to us, and the Premier is so weak-kneed that he obeys the officer. Surely, if members of the board have the report, we as members of Parliament are entitled to it. The Colonial Secretary has administered the Fire Brigades Act just as rottenly as he administers the other affairs of his department, and in all probability he has told the Premier that he must not present that report to the House, and the Premier, as weak as he is in everything else—he has not as much backbone as a jelly fish—

The Premier: I wonder what the hon. member thinks of himself.

Mr. HOLMAN: When I am sitting under a Premier such as we have at present I cannot be expected to have a very high opinion of the company in which I find myself. I have nothing against the Premier as a man, but as an administrator he has my deepest sympathy. I knew him when he was Minister for Mines, and when he was Agent General, and he was weak enough then, in all conscience. As a man he is very nice and gentlemanly; we all refer to him as a fine old English gentleman; but as an administrator, he is a very different proposition. I say it is a bad thing for the country to have him in office at a time like this.

Mr. Nairn: He has stayed in office longer than you did.

The Premier: I suppose if I gave way to you I would not be weak-kneed.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not want you to give way to me. A man who will give way to his officials and refuse to members of the House a report that has been in the hands of members of the Fire Brigades Board for months, is not expected to give way to me.

The Premier: The hon. member has seen the report.

Mr. HOLMAN: In all probability I have.

The Premier: It is only a report from one of the officers to the Auditor General.

Mr. HOLMAN: Surely we are entitled to it!

The Premier: No, you are not.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, I am profoundly surprised. If reports are given from one officer to another we, as representatives of the people, are not entitled to those reports! I am indeed surprised, and I will make an effort to get that report from one of the members of the board.

The Premier: You will be able to get it when the Auditor General has finished with it.

Mr. HOLMAN: It has been in the possession of the Fire Brigades Board for months. Surely it has been dealt with.

The Premier: No.

Mr. HOLMAN: It has been in their possession for months.

The Premier: For months?

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, for several weeks, at all events.

The Premier: Perhaps for a few days.

Mr. HOLMAN: No, for several weeks. The member for Swan just now remarked that the Premier has stayed in office longer than I did. In all probability the greatest credit I, as a Minister, had was when with yourself, Sir, I was turned out from the team by one who proved, as others have proved during the last few months, a traitor to the Labour party. It is one of the brightest recollections I have that the man who dismissed me from his Ministry proved a traitor to his party. I am not ashamed of any of my administrative acts, and I am pleased to think that I was held to be not fit to associate with traitors and rats.

The Attorney General: Did anybody say you were?

Mr. HOLMAN: The interjection by the member for Swan seemed to imply that.

Mr. Nairn: Oh, no.

Mr. HOLMAN: Had I sacrificed my political opinions and become a traitor I might have held a higher position in the House to-day. But I am not prepared to sell myself. The attitude I took right through was in the best interests of the State and of my party. I am not going to sink my opinions for any man. The party that hold office to-day have been our political and industrial enemies all through. They have not changed one iota, even since the outbreak of war. They are the same autocrats and despots as they were before the war, and I am not going to sell my political opinions to be associated with them.

Mr. Nairn: You might wait until you are invited.

Mr. HOLMAN: I may say that I have been asked to join the Nationalists. We were all asked. I was asked to join the Nationalist party when the others joined last year, and I declined without thanks. Ministers have told us of economies they are supposed to have effected. At the same time we have only to look at the expenditure totals to find that we are in a worse position to-day than ever before. Not a solitary instance of any lasting economy has been placed before the House. The Minister for Works told us the other night what has been done in the Works Department. But that is not the true position. Almost without exception every dismissal of an officer has been owing to the fact that practically no loan money has been expended as compared with the millions in previous years. Can economy be pointed to in any other direction? There is, I think, one, and only one, which the present Government have effected. That is to be seen on all railway trains and in every Government department, in the shape of printed paper provided for use instead of the customary sanitary paper. The Government rose to their proper level, and stopped there. We find them appointing their personal friends to fat positions. Is that Nationalism? We have the mayor of Northam appointed to the Fire Brigades Board without any knowledge whatever of his new duties. Then we have the appointment of William Lemen Thomas to a seat on the Bunbury Harbour Trust. If this had been done by the Labour Government, what would have been said? I should like to know why the men who previously held those positions were not re-appointed.

Hon. P. Collier: What about Cook?

Mr. HOLMAN: I have a keen recollection of Cook being in Fremantle in the early days. I do not know if it is the same gentleman. The Government ought to inquire why Cook severed his connection. The Government are quite prepared to appoint anybody if by doing so they can serve their own political purposes. If a man is doing good work in any position, especially at a time when we are supposed to sink all party differences, he should receive recognition. Political sops should not be held out for services rendered. I know some of the experienced lumpers on the Bunbury wharf, who should have been appointed before the retired politician, William Lemen Thomas. There are other appointments but the least said about them the better.

Mr. Thomson: You used to think he was all right at one time.

Mr. HOLMAN: That may be, but when a man becomes a traitor to his party or the country he ceases to have the respect of any man. That has been so for all time, especially in British politics. There is one subject that we can approach, and always have approached, apart from party and that is the mining industry. It should be fostered and encouraged in every way but the treatment that is being meted out to prospectors and leaseholders is not too satisfactory. The industry is on the wane because of the domineering treatment of the State battery managers. I have written letters to the Government in regard to the mining industry but the same old reply is received

from the department. We find leases are being held under exemption for years. The Minister for Mines has, however, taken up a matter that has been before the department for some time. I refer to the Wiluna leases in liquidation. I have been to the Minister several times about this matter. The leases are held up because the company is in liquidation, but the company have acquired leases since they have been in liquidation. They have held many leases without working them. We know what exemption has done in the past. I do not believe in granting this indiscriminate exemption, locking up the best areas we have in the country. Many persons in Perth, interested in mining and connected with mining, are forming a society, but many of these persons have been the greatest blocks to mining which this country has seen. I hope no assistance will be given to them. I could refer to these persons by name but I have no desire to do so. These persons have locked up, and held more leases, without properly working them, than is desirable. The country outback is what we should look to but it is receiving no assistance. We should help those persons in such places as Peak Hill, Wiluna, and on the copper fields. The Minister promised to give some little attention to these matters but we have heard nothing. I desire to point out that if the Government wish to give mining a fillip, better treatment must be meted out to prospectors who desire to open up the country outback. There are the copper and lead mines. Some provision should be made for the areas in the northern portion of the State, where the lead industry and the copper industry should be taken in hand. But this is a matter that can be dealt with more fully when we are dealing with the Estimates. The Governor's Speech refers to encouragement being held out to people on the land. But since the Government have been in office the encouragement meted out to people on the land has not been of the proper sort. Many people have been driven off the land. I could quote my own case in regard to the different treatment that is meted out to different people. I do not know if it is because I maintain the position which I have always held, but it seems to be the case. The rabbit question is an important one and should be dealt with. Those looking after the interest of the farmer should take the matter in hand and see that it is remedied. I do not altogether agree with the action of the Government in distributing poison throughout the country. We should make an effort to turn into greater profit the rabbits, as they are doing in the Eastern States. They should be turned into food. There is one matter which I am keenly interested in and that is the timber industry. The position of that industry to-day is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, more depressed than ever. The timber industry is not in a satisfactory condition. I maintain the future of the timber industry is assured, but the timber workers are not being treated as they should be treated. The price of timber, taking the years from 1906 to 1918, as far as this State is concerned, has increased probably 100 per cent. The export

trade to the East has increased by leaps and bounds, but I wish to call attention to a danger which may creep in. We should not export timber to Broken Hill which is not suitable for the work for which it is to be used. We should see that timber that is suitable for the work is sent to Broken Hill. I believe a great deal of karri is being sent to the Broken Hill mines. I have inspected the karri in the stacks at the mills and noticed that the karri is subject to a fungus that rots the timber in a year or two.

The Attorney General: Under certain conditions.

MR. HOLMAN: Under damp conditions.

The Attorney General: Mr. Delprat, of Broken Hill, says he is satisfied with the timber which he is getting.

MR. HOLMAN: When I went to the Broken Hill mines to work in the late eighties, they were using hardwoods. I do not know what kind of timber it was but that hardwood was subject to a certain kind of fungus and as soon as I inspected the karri stacks quite recently the same smell came from the fungus attacking the karri as attacked the hardwoods at Broken Hill which I noticed years ago. If the karri timber is utilised in mining it should be used on work where there is no danger. If it is used for timbering on levels, every precaution should be taken. We have other valuable timbers in this State that could be used for timbering the main level. I speak with a knowledge of the actual working of the timbers underground, but I am afraid the karri, if not treated, will be subject to this same fungus as the hardwoods were in the early days before ore was introduced. We have plenty of other valuable timbers that could take the place of karri for this work, but so far as superstructure is concerned karri is unequalled. If the timber is used in a position where it is immediately filled up with mullock, the karri can serve the purpose as well as any other timber. But do not let us get the timber a bad name when the trouble can be rectified. It must not be used in the wrong places.

The Attorney General: It has been condemned in the past because people used it wrongly.

MR. HOLMAN: Do not let us do that again.

The Attorney General: We are watching it.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

MR. HOLMAN: I know what the timber industry has been said about the timber industry and at no time in the history of Western Australia has this industry such great prospects. To-day we are producing from what was previously waste timber, useful articles which were never thought of before. Thousands of feet of timber is going to the Eastern States that previously went into the fire. The treatment of the men working at the timber mills to-day is not what it should be. Those who have the interests of the workers at heart should give the matter serious consideration. The wages paid in Queensland in 1906—this is shown by evidence

given in the arbitration court in those days—were 5s. 1d. per day, and it is now considerably higher than the wages paid in Western Australia. The minimum wages have increased in the northern areas of Queensland, while in Western Australia the wages have practically been at a standstill. I could quote the schedules showing the wages paid in the various States. The highest wages, as stated by Mr. Teesdale Smith, paid in Queensland in 1906 was, for big benchmen, 8s. 8d. The minimum wage was 5s. 1d. To-day the minimum wage paid in the Queensland sawmills is 1s. 8½d. to 2s. 5d. per hour for skilled men. Yet in Western Australia we are drifting along at the same rate of wages. We know the price of timber has increased by over 100 per cent. in some cases and the timber is being utilised as it never was before. Greater returns are being received, and although the wages have increased in every State in the Commonwealth, the highest rate in Western Australia a few years ago is to-day the lowest rate of wages paid anywhere in the industry. Then again, with regard to the administration, even in our Government mills the men are victimised in connection with their stores, the men being overcharged in this direction. An example which I sent to the department came under my notice, showing where men are overcharged for their stores, and are being underpaid, according to the awards. I also pointed out an instance in which, if the Government general stores on the sawmills, one woman bought some flannellette on Saturday at 10½d. a yard, and for the same article on the following Monday another woman was charged 1s. 4½d. That is nothing more nor less than robbery. The Minister has promised to go into the matter. If he does not rectify it we must take other steps to see that it is put right. So far as the workers in the timber industry are concerned, while they are endeavouring to improve their position, they are not going to allow the price of timber to be increased 100 per cent. and the cost of living 50 per cent., and to go on themselves at the same rate of wages. Another matter of interest to the people of the State is that of shipbuilding. This is supposed to be starting in the near future. There has been some argument in connection with the matter. So far as the present position is concerned, I believe that the agreement has been signed by the directors of the company. At the same time the shipbuilding industry is not receiving that patriotic treatment from the Sawmillers' Association which it has a right to expect. I understand that the association has increased the price of its timbers considerably.

do not know exactly what the result of this will be. So far as the agreement which has already been mentioned in the House is concerned, the unions in this State are not prepared to sign it as it was sent over for their signature by the Commonwealth Government. They are prepared to carry out the work in the directions without an agreement, but there is no chance whatever of their signing

this one. The reason why it has not been signed is because of the objectionable clauses in it. These objectionable clauses have been placed before the directors of the shipbuilding company, and they have agreed unanimously with the proposition set forth by the representatives of the unions and the workers concerned. On every occasion the directors agreed with the representative of the workers. The Federal Government, however, said that they could not agree to this proposition unless the agreement was signed in its entirety. One of the objectionable clauses is the first one, which reads as follows:—

That the employee will accept work under the Commonwealth or any company, person or firm in connection with shipbuilding by the Commonwealth or by any such company, person or firm, for or under contract or arrangement with the Commonwealth.

The agreement says that they will accept work with any firm or company or person in any part of the Commonwealth in which they may be required to engage in the shipbuilding industry. They can be required to go anywhere, or work for any firm or person. In my opinion the worker himself should have the right to say for what firm or in what State he shall elect to be employed. The employers agreed unanimously to this. Another clause in the agreement is one which requires the worker, in connection with shipbuilding, to work such hours per day as he shall be required to work, and that he will not under any circumstances or on any considerations whatever take part in any strike in connection with shipbuilding or the manufacture or supply of material required for shipbuilding during the continuance of the agreement. He can be called upon to work any number of hours. The standard for a day's work has been established in this State for some years, and we are not going to allow any person or company to dictate to us as to the number of hours that may be worked. The Federal Government also ask that the union shall incorporate a rule to provide for enforcing compliance with the terms of the agreement on the part of its members working in connection with shipbuilding or in the manufacture of any material required for shipbuilding under the Federal Government's Scheme. That is to say, the unions must take the responsibility of compelling any of their members to work for any person or firm or company in any State in which they are called upon to work. That clause in the agreement the directors have agreed is neither fair nor reasonable, and yet we have a section of the so-called National Labour party asking that this agreement should be signed. With regard to the portion of the agreement dealing with the question of strikes, the representative sent over by the Federal Government to Western Australia came to a meeting of the men interested in the shipbuilding proposal, and advocated that they should take up the same attitude

as he once took up in Victoria. He advocated that the unions should draw their men from that work, that they should first sign the agreement, and get what they wanted afterwards. I took him to task for that. He advocated that we should prove false to our signatures, and bring our men out on strike afterwards in order to attain our own ends. The whole of the unions—I do not refer to the section of the unionists who are nationalised, for we call them by another name—in Western Australia who are interested in the shipbuilding proposals are prepared to do, to the best of their ability, everything possible to foster and encourage that industry in Western Australia. We do not think, however, that we should become subservient when we do that. We want to work under fair and reasonable conditions. We are prepared to do our part in a straightforward manner, and not in the manner advocated by the man who was sent here by the Federal Government. This representative did not advocate that there should be a cessation of work as a body, but that the men should be drawn out one by one on the system that was adopted by him in Victoria. This is not an agreement referring to either conditions or wages. That question has not yet been discussed by either party. This is an agreement which the unionists must sign before the industry can be started. The men are anxious to start work at any time, and to endeavour to the best of their ability to bring about the successful launching of the shipbuilding industry here, so long as this is done under good general working conditions and under proper wages. We are in accord with the directors regarding the objectionable clauses which I pointed out. We agree to amend the agreement by adding a proviso to protect the men in this State and to retain them here, and to provide that they shall work under the conditions that have obtained here in the past in regard to piecework, and the hours of labour. It is the Federal Government who stand in the way. If the industry is not launched in this State it will be the fault of the Federal Government and not of the union. There are other industries here which require development. These can be dealt with later. The one I have mentioned is, however, the most important. I should like to deal with the question of the granting of country liquor licenses. The attitude of the Government in allowing the conditions of sale to go forth in the way that have been allowed to go forth here is, to my mind, usurping the functions of the court. If that can be done in one court it can be done in other courts. We find that land was sold recently on the understanding that it should only be used for hotel purposes, that the application for the license should be made to the next court sitting after the sale of the land, and that premises had to be built within twelve months after the granting of the license, and that the present lessee should have the right to remove any of the existing improvements within 30 days from the date of the sale. It is a revelation to me that any Government should allow to go forth an order

of this kind. What are we coming to? The magistrate concerned possessed the courage to speak as in his position he should speak, but he may suffer because of the stand he took up. We find that the men who pander to the Government and undertake such work as this always get on best, whereas the official who stands up and does the right thing will in a probability be victimised. For the Government to place such conditions on the sale of land is tantamount to ordering the court to grant a license to the purchaser. Unless a man had some backbone he could not very well refuse to grant the license. It is pleasant to know that we have a magistrate who is prepared to explain his position. I am sorry that when he saw what was going on he granted the licenses at all. If anything can be done to stop that license it should be done. There was a leading article in to-day's paper referring to some of the applicants for licenses. I do not know anything about their connections, but it appears to me that we are degrading the laws of the country when orders like these go out. I do not desire to criticise the position too strongly at present, because in a probability some inquiry will be made into it. Surely the blame will not be thrown upon some lesser official for putting this clause in the title. That cannot be done by a mere official, but must surely be done by someone of authority.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): The trouble is not the putting in of the clause but the writing of the letter.

Mr. HOLMAN: That is a detail. The conditions are placed in the title, which is brought into court.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): The conditions are placed in every title either for or against.

Hon. P. Collier: Not conditions of the kind.

Mr. HOLMAN: Some inquiry should be made into this, and if we find that the position is as it appears to be, some radical change will have to be made in the administration of the affairs of the department concerned. I do not think we have ever had such a degrading spectacle in this or any other country. Such conditions should not appear on the title at all.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): They have to appear there.

Mr. HOLMAN: Land should not be sold under such conditions. They absolutely take the hands of the magistrate, and appear to give special favours to some persons.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Not at all.

Mr. HOLMAN: They amount practically to an instruction from the Government to grant the license. There is no doubt about that. Suppose the man, after buying the land, cannot obtain a license.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): That would be his look-out.

Mr. HOLMAN: Surely there is some moral obligation on the part of the Government to the man who has been induced to pay a high price for a block of land in such circumstances; otherwise the Government are guilty

of obtaining money under false pretences. However, that would be only in keeping with the attitude adopted by the Government in other directions, revenue being obtained by means which are a disgrace to any Administration. Officials in all departments are administering without regard for the laws of the country. As to betting, I have always maintained that we cannot do away with it, and that a course far preferable to that now adopted would be to register men, under license, to bet in shops or elsewhere; and let the betting be restricted accordingly. The administration of the Fire Brigades Act is a disgrace, too. Reverting to this question of the block of land, I do not know why the particular persons referred to should be so favoured.

The Premier: You could have had the same opportunity.

Mr. HOLMAN: Perhaps, if I had served the Government in the same way as others have served them. All the opportunity that has been granted me by the Government has been the dockage of 1s. on my wheat, driving me out of farming.

The Premier: The hon. member should stick to facts. What he is telling the House is largely fiction.

Mr. HOLMAN: What I have stated I will stand by. I do not know the exact details of the case, but it is a disgrace that such a title should be issued, and should be presented in evidence before the court.

The Premier: The opportunity was open to anyone in Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: The endorsement on the title represents an instruction to the court.

Mr. HOLMAN: No Government with any sense of honour would impose such a stipulation. The same justice has not been meted out in other courts of the country, and the sooner that state of things is altered the better. It is a marvellous thing that the people should take such action on one application, and such different action on another application, as reported in the Press. These matters require investigation, and no doubt will be investigated. An extraordinary thing was the deputation that waited on the Premier some time ago. They termed themselves National Labourites, and they asked for the introduction of legislation to do away with the use of union funds for political purposes. It is wonderful indeed that men who have been fed from such levies for years should ask for them to be made illegal. Almost the whole of the industrial legislation of Australia has been brought about by the payment of such fees by the unionists. And yet there are men who in the past have fed from some of these sources, having become mixed up with another organisation that disguises itself as Nationalism—

Mr. Davies: There is no man in this House who has been fed more largely from those sources than the member for Marchison.

Mr. HOLMAN: I would rather be fed from those sources than sell myself to be fed from other sources.

Mr. Davies: That is all right.

Mr. HOLMAN: In view of our Parliamentary salaries and of the upkeep of our families, we have to be fed from some other source. Our Parliamentary salary is not sufficient to keep us and our families. It is a standing disgrace that men who have been assisted from this source should turn round and bite the hand that fed them.

Mr. Teesdale: You have not had your price yet.

Mr. HOLMAN: Probably not. If the hon. member had his price, he would not receive very much—about the price of an ordinary show dog in a circus.

Mr. Teesdale: Poor old show!

Mr. HOLMAN: Who financed these so-called National Labourites in the past? Who paid the election expenses of many of them? When, in 1904, the Registrar did away with the rule that unions which permitted the levying of dues for political purposes to be registered, some of those members howled loud and long against the Registrar's decision. And yet, finding themselves received into another fold, they are prepared to trample down the pyramid on which they climbed.

Hon. P. Collier: But the National conference instructed them.

Mr. HOLMAN: I daresay. Gold help any country in whose government such men assist. Who finances the Liberal candidates? Their association. Who finances Country party members? Their party.

Mr. Pickering: No. They finance themselves.

Hon. P. Collier: No fear!

Mr. Pickering: I know who financed my election expenses.

Mr. HOLMAN: How are such men going to be financed in the future? It will be a bad thing for us if the unions are forbidden to undertake henceforth the work which they undertook in the early nineties. After the big strikes in the early nineties the unionists were told not to strike again, but to take political action; and they followed that advice. To-day, we have men who have been assisted by the unionists, going back and asking the Government to take away that power. The object is to re-introduce bogus unions, under the name of National unions. In the struggles of 30 years ago we had the same sort of men, who were called rats and blacklegs. But the Liberals called them free labourers, and then loyalists, and now they call them Nationalists.

Mr. Davies: They are fairly numerous.

Mr. HOLMAN: You, Mr. Speaker, will remember the great clouds of grasshoppers which devastated the country from end to end. They were numerous, but they did not do much good. The plagues of rats we have had in this country were numerous, but they did not do much good. The plague of Nationalist politicians in Western Australia are numerous, but they do not do much good. We on this side are trying to do our best. It is a remarkable fact that Mr. Scaddan, when leader of the party on this side of the House, was for years stated to be absolutely useless; when, on the other hand, he turned traitor and joined the opposite party, he was held

up as a shining example for other labourites in this country to follow. The best members in any party are those who are loyal and true to the pledges they give, who work for their country, and not for themselves alone. The Nationalists told the people that great services would be performed, that they were going to save all the wheat and win the war. What have they done, however? They have appointed the Mayor of Northam to the Fire Brigades Board, and William Lewan Thomas to the Bunbury Harbour Trust. But what have they done to assist in the winning of the war? All unionists throughout Australia have paid their hard-earned money to assist in getting industrial legislation passed, yet to-day we see an attempt to break down that system. What is the reason? The very same men who attended that deputation were not so very long ago stating in the country, "The Labour party are the party for the country; they are out for the benefit of the country; they are the party of reform." Where do we find those members to-day? Either they were false then, or they are false to-day. The Labour party is the same to-day as it has always been. How is it possible for anyone to join with lifelong opponents in order to bring about reform as some of the National Labourists have done? One of the most distasteful things we know of is for the men who have been financially assisted in the past from the earnings of the workers, to break away from them. Whether the action be right or wrong, I am not going to say here, but I will say that the Labour cause to-day is as it has always been and those who have joined our lifelong enemies are not worthy of the name of Labourists.

Mr. Mullany: Do not forget that the men who supported me financially years ago, did so on the last occasion.

Mr. HOLMAN: I do not doubt that. The disruption in the great Labour movement in Australia is being brought about by influences which are hard to fathom. We know what the movement was a few years ago, and we know also what influences have been brought to bear in order to divide the party. The influences were the same as those the Germans used. There is no doubt that the same Hunnish tactics have been adopted to disrupt the movement. I do not blame the rank and file because many of them have been misled, but I do blame the leaders who sacrificed the cause and joined those whom we have been fighting all our lives. Not one solitary thing can we point to that has been done by the National Government which has been of benefit to the people as a whole in this or in any other country; not one act of legislation nor of administration has been of advantage to the workers. Yet those so-called National Labourists are giving that party now their whole hearted support. In days gone by when labour struggles have taken place we have seen men taking a certain stand; we have seen the same men in recent times practically blacklegging on their fellow workers. It is a sad spectacle indeed. The labour movement may be under a shadow at the present time, owing to disruption and owing to malign influences which have been

at work and which have caused a break amongst the rank and file. The rank and file have followed the same men; I do not blame them for having done so, but they certainly have been led astray, and the leaders who have been responsible will suffer in the future as other false leaders have suffered in the past. The movement is one of democracy; this is being realised in other countries; a provision is being made for it, and the world will eventually be the better for it. The speeches of the greatest men to-day have a tendency towards democracy, but unfortunately it is like every other movement, it retarded in its progress by those who betrayed. I repeat that the rank and file have been misled by the attitude of those who were formerly leaders. In Western Australia, had it not been for the Labour party, we would not have had one industrial law in the country. It is practically the same in every other country.

The Attorney General: Did you say that your party introduced the Arbitration Act?

Mr. HOLMAN: I say there is no legislation of any use which the Labour party did not assist to introduce. I know as much about the Arbitration Act as the Attorney General.

The Attorney General: It was introduced by a Liberal Minister.

Mr. HOLMAN: The first Arbitration Act which was passed was never availed of; the second one was.

The Attorney General: Give credit where it is due.

Mr. HOLMAN: It was introduced with the support of the Labour party, and at the time the Labour party held the balance of power. As a matter of fact it was drawn up by them to a great extent, and had it not been for the fact that the Labour party were there we might not have had an Arbitration Act, and the Minister knows it.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Attorney General: Nothing of that kind. The Minister at the time knew that the conditions of the country were ripe for such a measure.

Mr. HOLMAN: When I speak of the Labour party, I mean the great party outside of Parliament who have done as much for the cause as members of Parliament. The moving masses outside have been the force. Another matter to which I want to draw attention has reference to the Stamp Act, which was passed last session. This measure is not fair in its operation because while it exempts an ordinary worker who obtains wages under £5, it compels the affixing of stamps to receipts for wages earned by those engaged on piece work. I hope the Attorney General will see that this is rectified.

The Attorney General: I will pass it on to the Treasurer.

Mr. HOLMAN: It is a matter which affects a lot of people. I wrote to the Commissioner of Taxation on the subject and asked him to let me know whether all piece workers were in the same category as sleeper hewers, and he replied as follows:—

I have to inform you that the Solicitor General has advised me that piecework of every kind, whether it be sleeper hewing,



tailoring, bootmaking, &c., does not come under wages and salaries as used in the Stamp Act. Therefore, the exemption £5, and under, in regard to stamped receipts, does not apply to piece work.

I contend it is not right to compel those engaged in piece work to stamp their receipts for wages; they should be treated as ordinary wage earners. There are other matters of vital importance to which attention might be drawn, but I have gone on long enough and there will be ample time to criticise the various departments when we get the information we are asking for. So far as I am personally concerned, while I am prepared to give the Government every assistance and give them a chance to rectify matters, after the criticism which was unfair and ungenerous in every respect which they hurled at the Labour Government when in office, and their many declarations as to what they were prepared to do to straighten the finances, and their failure to make any attempt in that direction, I do not feel justified in any longer continuing the attitude I adopted last session. It is my intention to endeavour to the best of my ability to prevent a continuation of the same rotten state of affairs as far as administration is concerned. People outback are penalised in every direction. The cost of everything is going up and the wages received have not increased in proportion to the added prices put on everything. Yet we find that the extravagance of the past on the part of the Government is being continued. No attempt has been made to effect reforms or bring about economies. So far as the administration of various departments is concerned, we find that the same slackness is apparent and that practically nothing has been done. There are many officials in our public service who should not be retained in the positions they occupy, while at the same time a great many are doing more than the work they should be called upon to do. There are many valuable officers whose efforts can be appreciated, and they should be given every assistance and support. So far as I am personally concerned, I am not going to use the same toleration towards the Government as I have used in the past. Yet I am sure the effort will be in vain, because they have the blind support of a gang of followers who are afraid that if any change is made they may have to face their masters, the people. To us on this side it is immaterial which members of the Opposition party occupy the Ministerial benches. The position to-day is worse than ever before, and the outlook is depressing, notwithstanding that the State is one of the richest in the Commonwealth if given a fair chance, while the people, I may say, are of the best class to be found in Australia. But the workers outback are not receiving the assistance that should be forthcoming. I sincerely hope that, despite appearances, the future will prove brighter than is anticipated. I re-echo the opening remarks in His Excellency's Speech, and express the hope that not many more suns will go down before peace is proclaimed and democracy and justice reign once more.

Mr. BROWN (Subiaco) [10.1]: It seems to me that words, words, words; more words, all kinds and conditions of words, are used in this debate, and with very little effect. I am not going to take up time in a display of words. I do not think there is much in the Governor's Speech upon which the Government are to be complimented. It seems to me that the same sentiments have been expressed in that historic document for the last four years. The Government fail to realise that we are drifting on and on, and that soon we shall be in a position of financial collapse. It appears to me that party politics constitute one of the greatest curses we have in Australia. In this House the formation of a new party was attempted only a week or so ago. A party representing repatriation, retrenchment and reprobation was introduced from Northam and, I suppose, was dry-nursed at Albany. The "West Australian" sympathetically buried the party on the following morning. I trust that no similar attempt to introduce further parties will be successful. The Cabinet should realise that our accumulated deficit, now standing at three millions odd, requires the gravest consideration. The year before last we had a deficiency of £698,000. Last year it was £705,000, and for the first two months of the current year it ran into £240,000. That cannot continue. In connection with our finances we must remember that we are citizens, not only of the State but of the Commonwealth also. In respect of the State we have had certain extravagances, possibly far more than we should have had, but the Commonwealth extravagance has been infinitely greater than our own. We have in the Commonwealth the Northern Territory, Papua, Canberra, and the four Commonwealth railways. Every one of those works has been very extravagant indeed, and has served to build up a debt of which we shall have to carry a share. In addition we have the war loans, and were told the other day that they represent 80 millions yearly. It was arranged with the Commonwealth that they should obtain 40 millions every six months. The last April loan produced 43½ millions, and it is expected that that will have been spent by the 15th October next, when the new loan will be ready. Loans raised in Australia so far total 149 millions, while we have had 47½ millions from Britain, and are owing Britain 38 millions for the maintenance of our soldiers and for munitions. This gives a total of 234½ millions. The seventh loan now being placed will bring the total to 275 millions, leaving us a per capita debt of £55. We have on top of that our own per capita debt of £118, so at the end of the year, providing we do not go any further back, we shall have to pay interest on a per capita debt of £173. In respect of the present loan, the Prime Minister has stated that no lotteries will be permitted. On the occasion of the last loan these expedients were indulged in, but without success. I mention this because I think that had the new embargo been in existence when we were passing the Stamp Act we would not have legalised book-makers. I stress these financial difficulties because we must recognise both individual and State economy. We can set a good example by

reducing our Parliamentary machinery and lessening the cost. I was sorry that no mention was made of these reductions in the Governor's Speech, and still more sorry to hear the Premier to-night inform the member for Leederville that it was not the intention of the Government to reduce the number of members in either House.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is nothing to prevent you moving a motion.

Mr. BROWN: That will be my next step.

Mr. Teesdale: Robinson is attending to that.

Mr. O'Loughlen: No, he is on salaries.

Mr. BROWN: We are supposed to be exercising war time economies. I fail to see that either the Government or the people are doing anything in that direction. I think the Government would have been well advised had they refrained from carrying out the usual custom at the opening of Parliament. It is an old institution, and old institutions die hard. At the opening of Parliament we have the bands and the flags; we turn the corridor into a second-hand conservatory; we have tea drinking and other kinds of social functions. For what purpose? Simply for the glorification of politicians.

Mr. O'Loughlen: By how much would the elimination of those things reduce the deficit? They cost nothing.

Mr. BROWN: Even if they cost nothing they set an example to the people. We should try to do something which would stir the people into asking the reason why. If members of Parliament were to set a good example in economy, the electors would quickly follow. We require to remodel our Parliamentary system in respect of our representation. As it stands, it is absurd. Theoretically, representation should recognise the principle of one vote one value. Let us look at the existing representation. For convenience I have taken from the "Statistical Abstract" of the 30th June the four highest and the four lowest representations. The figures are as follows:—Leederville 7,779, Canning 7,414, Guildford 7,404, Subiaco 6,811, or a total of 29,428, giving an average of 7,357. The Minister for Mines remarks that I cannot take the existing conditions as being normal. Of course, we know that conditions have not been normal for the last four years, and we have no reason to expect a return of normal conditions during the next few years.

The Minister for Mines: May I ask who keeps the cities?

Mr. BROWN: The people of the whole State. Primary production keeps everything going. The four lowest figures are, Roebourne 717, Pilbara 826, Gaseoyne 901, Menzies 1,038, giving a total of 3,482, or 371 electors to each representative. Is not that an absurd position?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I agree.

Mr. Teesdale: In the case of Roebourne, we have the quality.

Mr. BROWN: Quality or no quality, the Roebourne representative exercises ten times the power of the representative of Leederville. I draw attention to those figures in the hope that, sooner or later, the Government will seriously consider effecting some alteration in our representation. I was also sorry to see no

indication in the Speech of any intention on the part of the Government to endeavour to do away with party politics and unite both sides of the House. A very mild appeal on behalf of the country would induce all members to work in harmony for the good of the State. There is no reason whatever why the party spirit should continue. All over the world old systems have had to be dropped and it appears to me that the Parliamentary system we have here is altogether too expensive, and creates no end of trouble, without any advantage being gained. During the course of the debate we have heard members on the one side warmly complimenting the Government on their proposals, while members on the other side stoutly condemn the Government's policy. The same thing has been going on for as long as I can remember.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And will continue till the end of the chapter.

Mr. BROWN: Sooner or later the people will have to recognise that it is necessary that we should work under a different system from that which we have to-day. I am convinced that whilst party politics remain we shall have little or nothing in the way of economy. There is no reason why we should not all sit around the table instead of being divided as we are. Only the other night an effort was made to oust the Government from office. This was a bit of censure in an attempt to harass the Government, which might have been brought forward on some point in the Speech without our having been called upon to waste so much of the time of the House. In my opinion the Government were foolish to accept this amendment as a motion of want of confidence. They did so simply because in the past it has been the custom for Governments to accept such amendments in this light. Apparently the Government intend to stick to custom. I am prepared to put this custom on one side, and would follow anyone if I thought an alteration would be beneficial to the State as a whole.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We say the same.

Mr. BROWN: I should like to congratulate the Minister for Industries. There is no doubt that he is doing his utmost to assist in making Western Australia a better country and more able to pay its way. He says he is giving the best in him for the purpose of developing industries in the State, but I recognise that he has a formidable task ahead of him. As, however, he is attacking the work, I am in duty bound to praise him for so doing. I hope that the research work he is advocating will bring forth good results. I do not know whether this is due to the energies of the Minister, but it is a striking fact that a day or two ago we had an announcement to the effect that Western Australia had exported 1,351 dozen eggs. I hope that these will meet a profitable market. A great amount of criticism, mostly of an unkind nature, has been thrown at the Minister on various occasions because of his energy in the direction of poultry farming. He is now getting the results of his energies, and I hope these results will continue. In connection with the Address-in-reply, I think I could commence now and speak upon

many subjects, in fact almost any subject I chose to bring up. I noticed in the Speech a proposal to appoint three railway Commissioners. I should like the Minister for Railways to consider the possibility of running the railways a little more rapidly than they are being run at present.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They could not be much worse.

Mr. BROWN: The slowness of our trains has been a matter of public comment for years past. For a train to travel 60 miles in six hours, as is the case on the South-Western line, is hardly tantamount to travelling at express speed. I hope the Minister will speed up the railways a little bit. I would also point out that the tram track throughout the city requires serious attention. It is more or less like an ordinary spring board, and people who ride in the cars might quite well feel that they were riding on the ocean wave. It is a discomfort to most passengers. I hope that, despite the financial troubles we are in, these little matters will receive the attention of those in charge. I am now going to enumerate a number of subjects upon which I could speak, if I desired to do so. It seems to me that every question under the sun can reasonably be discussed in the Address-in-reply without interfering with the rules of debate. It might be well for the House to know that if I had the inclination I could speak upon these various matters.

Mr. O'Loghlen: That is common knowledge. You could talk for a week.

Mr. BROWN: Some of my constituents now the subjects that I like to speak upon. It may be rather foolish of me to do what I am condemning others for doing, but as "Hansard" has not been troubled very much by me, I am going to ask them to put down the subjects upon which I could speak. A subject with which I could deal at length is that of health, hospitals and asylums. Other subjects are cemeteries and cremation, harbours and wharves, freezing and canning works, sanitation, septic tanks, sewerage and deep drainage, and an improved water supply for the metropolitan area, education, primary, secondary, technical and university, fisheries and shhocks, whale oil and shark's teeth, the late implement works, State brickworks, late timber mills and powellising works, butter, bacon and ham sandwiches, wheat, potatoes, pumpkins and bananas, rabbits, vermin, evil wallabies, and white ants, prisons, bad sanitation and conveniences for escape. These are a few of the many subjects upon which I could spend a good deal of time. In view of the fact, however, that it would do very little good, and would waste the time of hon. members, besides occupying considerable space

"Hansard," I will resist the temptation to do so. I trust that some members, who have had long years of experience in connection with the Address-in-reply and the forms of government, will consider seriously whether the time is not more than ripe for an alteration of our present Parliamentary system. Anyone who will introduce a measure to alter the custom, under which we have lived for so many years, an alteration which in times past may not have been permissible, but should

be permissible now, I will have very much pleasure in lending him my support and encouragement.

On motion by Mr. Harrison debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.23 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 12th September, 1918.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

[For "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [11.6 a.m.]: One of the earliest passages in the Governor's Speech, I observe, expresses gratitude to our soldiers and sailors for the solid defence they have put up in behalf of liberty and justice being preserved to the free peoples of the universe. With other members, I desire to record the admiration felt for the gallant and stubborn defence put up by the Australian troops, and especially by those from this State of Western Australia. Let me add that our congratulations are extended not only to our own Australian soldiers, but also to the troops of Britain and her Allies. Again, had it not been for the British navy we in Australia would find ourselves in a terrible plight. I do not know that all of us realise the obligation we are under to the stalwart defenders of the freedom of the seas, that command of the ocean which enables the most distant portions of the British Empire to receive supplies and send away products. It is surprising to read in the "Statistical Abstract" the volume of Australian imports and exports which has continued throughout the war. A crucial question for the whole Commonwealth is the lack of shipping tonnage. Had we been able to liquidate our assets to the full, instead of being dependent upon the British Government for financial aid in the matter of our wool and wheat, we should have been able to realise the full value of those commodities without ultimately having to pay interest on advances. Had our Press tried to educate the people, we would not hear so much complaining against members of Parliament. It appears to me that the newspapers are not trying to uplift or uphold the standard of what we who are left behind should do for those who have gone to serve in our defence. The Press ought not