

Hon. E. H. Gray: Is that wrong?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Of course it is wrong. The banks are the salvation of Australia to-day by having created reserves in the past. Had the hon. member listened to Mr. Lovekin's speech last night, and understood it, he would not have interjected in that way. Mr. McCallum went on to say he was glad to know that the Prime Minister intended to bring this matter before the Imperial Conference. Mr. Lovekin pointed out that when money was scarce commodities were cheap, and when money was plentiful commodities brought fair prices. In the meantime we have to get back, and the only way to get back is to have all sections of the community working together, as the Prime Minister has requested from Colombo, when he pleaded for support of Mr. Fenton, and as the Prime Minister has asked for support for the Premiers' Conference.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But not for support for attacks on the standard of living.

Hon. G. W. MILES: As I have pointed out, some £200,000,000 was written off the value of securities in Australia before wages were reduced by one penny. Owners of big concerns have had to go right out of business. That ought to be sufficient. I want to appeal to the good sense of all sections of the community and urge them to follow the Prime Minister and the State Premiers, who are trying to pull together, instead of indulging in the red-rag element which we have represented in another place and in the Eastern States. We ought to be ashamed to think that men could go Home and appeal to the Mother Country to assist us out of this temporary crisis we are passing through. If the position is tackled, and tackled at once, we shall come out all right, but we have to be prepared to make sacrifices from the top to the bottom. And if we are to have efficiency in industry, we must accept payment by results.

#### *Personal Explanation.*

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The hon. member rather misrepresented me in suggesting that I was opposed to the reduction by members of Parliament of their salaries. I never said anything of the sort. I am quite in favour of a reduction of the salaries of members of Parliament as a part of a general scheme beginning at the highest and ending at the lowest, each contributing according

to his means. But what I have objected to is the singling out of either members of Parliament or public servants, and leaving others in abeyance.

On motion by Hon. J. T. Franklin, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.*

## **Legislative Assembly.**

*Thursday, 11th September, 1930.*

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

### **QUESTION—GROUP HOLDINGS UNOCCUPIED.**

Mr. McCALLUM asked the Premier: How many group holdings are at present unoccupied?

The PREMIER replied: The reply is in the nature of a return which will be laid upon the Table of the House.

### **QUESTION—WATER PIPES, TENDERS.**

Mr. RICHARDSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have tenders been called recently for 4-inch cast-iron pipes? 2, What was the quantity? 3, Has any tender been accepted? 4, If so, who was the successful tenderer and what was the price. 5, What amount was paid per ton for the last 4-inch

pipes manufactured for the Government and who was the manufacturer? 6, Does the present contract price include sales tax?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, 6,000 pipes, equal 423.21 tons. 3, Yes. 4, State Implement Works, £14 per ton. 5, £17 5s. per ton. State Implement Works. 6, No.

## QUESTIONS (2)—EDUCATION.

### *Dentists, Treatment and Hours.*

Mr. COVERLEY (for Mr. Raphael) asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What remuneration do the school dentists receive? 2, Do the Government intend to provide free dental treatment at schools for children up to 14 years of age? 3, Do the school dentists have the same holidays as school teachers? 4, Between what hours do the school dentists practise?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Of the three dentists employed, two are on a classification of £504-£600—present salary (1) £576, (1) £552; the other officer has a range of £408-£504—salary £456. 2, There has been no change in the policy. The Government cannot undertake to provide free dental treatment at schools for children up to the age of 14 years. The policy is to treat children under the age of 8, as this is the crucial period upon which the children's future denture depends. Moreover, no more than this can be done with the present staff. 3, Dental officers have the ordinary public service holidays. 4, During school holidays they are engaged at orphanages and institutions.

### *Lower Victoria Park School Ground.*

Mr. COVERLEY (for Mr. Raphael) asked the Minister for Works: Is it the intention of the Government to drain properly the school ground at Lower Victoria Park?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: A contract has been let and the work commenced.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

### *Mr. Marshall and the Premier's Absence.*

Mr. MARSHALL: I desire to make a brief explanation. Last evening, amongst other things, I accused the Premier of ab-

senting himself frequently from the House, and gave as the probable cause that he was advocating secession instead of attacking the big problems ahead of us more seriously by attending the sittings of the House. Since making that statement I have learned that the Premier, apart from the duties of his office and his duties as member for Northam, has been strenuously endeavouring to straighten out the Budget, and that every night he has been working in a private room within the precincts of the building. I am convinced that the Premier is taking the position seriously, and I think my remarks were a little too drastic. I now desire to withdraw them and apologise to the Premier. I have no wish to attack any member or to accuse him of anything that is false or unjust, and I think the words I used were far from the truth and positively unjust.

Members: Hear, hear!

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

### *Tenth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [4.35]: I desire to associate myself with the remarks of previous speakers in offering to you, Sir, my heartiest congratulations on your election to the Speaker's Chair. I am sure it is an honour well deserved after the many years of service you have given to the State. I do not intend to speak at any length, but I should like to create a new atmosphere in what I have to say by dealing more or less with the dried fruit industry. Before doing so, let me say a few words about wool and wheat. With other members I fully realise the position of the wool and wheat growers. It is a serious one, and I am sure that every member is out to do his best to assist them to reach a good footing once more. Last evening we heard different opinions expressed about banks and about finance. I am of opinion that the banks have more or less let down the wheatgrower and the woolgrower. In good times the banker will go along to the farm and tell the farmer what a wonderful property he has, what value his acres represent, and that his land will carry a much bigger overdraft. Really, money is forced upon the farmer. Now, however, the tale is a very different one. In times like the present, when the farmer is

up against things, the banker does not go around. The banker is a very good man in good times, but he is not too good a friend in bad times. I can mention an instance of a farmer having a fairly valuable property, who was told that he could operate on an overdraft to the same extent as before, but he has now been informed that he must cut it down by £300, which makes it very hard for him to carry on. It is pleasing that the prospects for the present season are very good. Dealing with the dried fruits industry, before the returned soldiers took a place in that industry, it was running along fairly smoothly. With the advent of returned soldiers, we were accused of over-production. I do not blame the Government at all for having settled returned soldiers in the Swan district to engage in the viticultural industry. Unfortunately, when they were settled there, prices were at a very high level. The industry was passing through the boom stages and was receiving £60 to £80 per ton for dried fruits. As time wore on, conditions had more or less to right themselves. For the past seven years the producer of dried fruit has been in the position in which the farmer finds himself to-day, and has been having a very hard struggle indeed. Nevertheless, I do not agree with the cry of over-production. We reach a certain stage in production and have to start exporting. For Australia to do any good on the world's market, she must increase her production, not decrease it. Australia cannot supply all the dried fruit that the English market requires, and England has to take about 44,000 tons of currants alone from Greece. Our object, I think, should be to go on increasing our production until we can supply the whole of the English demand. One thing that has put the settlers of the Swan district on a fair footing is the revaluation that took place a few years ago. That was a wise move. At one stage I sat as arbitrator between the returned soldiers and the manager of the Agricultural Bank, and I think the decisions reached that day went a long way towards bringing about the revaluation. I pointed out that I considered it would be wise for the Government to cut their losses right away and keep the men on their blocks. The value of that advice has since been proved. I made inquiry at the Agricultural Bank the other day and ascertained that practically 90 per cent. of the returned soldiers are standing

up to their obligations to the bank. If the revaluation had not been made, those men would not have remained on their holdings, and I claim that the men who have stuck to their blocks are the right class to hold. Previously the returned soldier could get no revaluation, but the moment he abandoned his block, his successor could get practically a 50 per cent. reduction, which was a very foolish policy indeed. I thank the late Government for having brought down a dried fruits measure. That legislation has proved quite successful. There was opposition when the Bill was being considered, but the strongest opposition was organised by a packer on the Swan, and he was only concerned about the huge profits he was making out of dried fruits. The passing of that legislation reduced his profits by 50 per cent., and he received only what he was entitled to, while the other growers shared the balance. Before the measure was passed there were many instances of growers carting their dried fruits to Perth and bartering them for soap and candles. One man went as far as Fremantle with a load and sold it for 1½d. per lb. I claim that it costs at least 2d. to 2½d. per lb. to produce dried fruit, and to allow that sort of thing to continue would have had the effect of dragging the industry into the gutter. Over and over again we tried to get the dried fruit growers to organise voluntarily, but found that was an impossibility. At the time I was a director of the largest packing company on the Swan and, because of my thorough belief in co-operation I refused to sell my fruit on the Perth market for less than the fixed price. Year after year my fruit was exported to London, netting me 2d. per lb, whereas many outside growers received 4½d. per lb. It has also been claimed that the dried fruits legislation was the means of putting up the price of the commodity to the public. However, the price has never risen beyond the level fixed by the Dried Fruits Association. Certainly there was some little levelling up to association prices, but the growers have never attempted to raise the prices above that level. The ex-Minister for Agriculture is to be thanked for the decisive step he took to prevent the export of sultanas from Western Australia. It was ridiculous that this State should be asked to export 80 per cent. of its sultana while the local production was less than

50 per cent. of the local requirements. The then Minister for Agriculture did a great service to Western Australian growers in in that respect. When the measure was brought forward I expressed the opinion that there should be a Western Australian quota instead of a Commonwealth quota. A mistake was made in entering into the latter, because there was an agreement to abide by the Commonwealth quota and export accordingly. The position of the wine industry of Western Australia is most serious, and that is a great misfortune. The wine industry is the most important secondary industry from the aspect of viticulture. It is the only means of insurance the viticulturist has against loss. Year after year hundreds of tons of grapes go to waste in the Swan district, these wasted grapes just about representing the viticulturist's profit. Practically all the wine licenses in Western Australia are to-day controlled by Eastern States wine interests. I was a member of the deputation to the late Minister for Justice which pointed out that the Western Australian Government were giving preference to Eastern States wine interests. The Minister replied that it was a business arrangement, and on that point he was right. Unfortunately, however, Eastern States wine firms were allowed to come here and buy up licenses, whereupon they turned down Western Australian wines. Eastern wine growers are a strong combine, as is evident from the fact that the total Australian production of wine is 17,300,000 odd gallons, of which the Eastern States produce 17,000,000. They stake us 17,000,000 gallons against our 300,000 odd. It is plain that we have too much to contend against. Western Australians interested in the wine industry are not sufficiently financial to combat Eastern States wine interests. Solicitors tell us that one can shoot a pea through an Act of Parliament, and I hope a pea may be shot through Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution; otherwise there should be a Western Australian law giving some form of preference to Western Australian wines.

Mr. Willcock: To some extent that is done through the Licenses Reduction Board issuing licenses on the understanding that only Western Australian wine shall be sold.

Mr. THORN: I believe there are two or three such licenses. Yesterday I was

supposed to accompany members of the Licensed Victuallers' Association on a tour through the wine cellars in the Swan district. The licensed victuallers are making a move to use their influence in favour of the local product. However, I thought I was going to speak here yesterday, and on second thoughts I considered that it would not suit my health to visit too many wine cellars. I really believe that if we stand to our guns and continually advocate the use of local products, we shall get over our difficulties. It is useless to blame any Government, or anybody else, for the financial depression existing to-day. It has been clearly shown that the depression is universal, and therefore it is only a waste of time for one Government to blame another for the existing position. There is a way out if we keep on advocating the use of local products. Of the 303,000 gallons of wine produced in Western Australia, 125,000 are distilled. That leaves only 233,000 gallons of marketable wine produced locally. Yet we import from the Eastern States 158,000 gallons annually, and from overseas 5,000 gallons, making a total of 163,000 gallons of wine imported annually. The total consumption of wine in Western Australia is, roughly, 565,000 gallons per year, leaving a balance of 201,000 gallons of Western Australian wine consumed. I believe that one hon. member of this House is doing his level best to secure preference for Western Australian wines. Now I wish to deal briefly with the position of the poultry farmers. I am glad to know that the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) is bringing forward a measure on the lines of the marketing legislation relating to dried fruits, with a view to affording our poultry farmers some assistance. When production reaches the stage at which export becomes necessary, I contend that the producers should be given adequate control over the product. I see no harm whatever in Parliament allowing the poultry farmers to have control of their own industry. I can assure hon. members that dried fruit growers, ever since they had their Act, have found things working smoothly, and that the legislation has proved most helpful to them. A corresponding measure for the poultry farmers would be of great service to them. All they ask for is control of their own industry. Before

such a measure can come into force, two-thirds of the growers must agree to it. The growers find all their own expenses, and ask the Government for no help in that direction. In the case of the poultry farmers, the producers will appoint their own inspectors to examine the eggs when being packed, and to see that they are put up in proper marketable condition for export to the Old Country. I hope, therefore, that the egg producers will receive some consideration in the direction I suggest. I know of one poultry farmer who is losing £20 per week on his enterprise. It is disastrous to find eggs selling for as little as 6d. per dozen. From to-day's "West Australian" I learn that the Minister for Agriculture says the value of our poultry industry now is £600,000 per annum. That is a big consideration. The dried fruits industry, though only in a small way here, yet brings to Western Australia £60,000 of fresh capital from overseas every year. There is need for a jam factory and a pulping plant in Western Australia. Going through the hills districts in the fruit season, one sees thousands of cases of soft fruit lying on the ground. At the same time plums and other fruits are bringing only 1s. per case in the Perth markets. With an up-to-date jam factory and pulping plant in Western Australia, growers could regulate supplies to the Perth markets and obtain a much better return. I have heard it said that Western Australia does not grow the right varieties of fruit. Undoubtedly we are short of some kinds, more so possibly in berry fruits than in anything else. I claim, however, that we have in Western Australia enough varieties of fruit to make a start with a jam factory and a pulping plant. The unfair way in which Eastern States competition treats the Western Australian fruit industry almost makes me believe in secession. When the late Mr. Rayner was manufacturing jam here, there were representatives of the Jones firm, of Hobart, going round among country storekeepers offering to let them have all their requirements for the year on six months' terms free of interest—anything to stop the local jam manufacturer from getting a start. I know of one instance in which that offer was made to a storekeeper whose annual requirements of jam amounted to 500 cases. At present two Perth firms are doing their level best for the producers—the R.S.D. and Plaistowe's Ltd. I believe Plaistowe's are

putting up tomatoes in concentrated form, and the R.S.D. have started jam production in a small way. I hope that those firms will receive the support of Western Australian citizens, and that Eastern States interests will not be allowed to crush out Western Australian enterprise. Tomato pulping is a very important phase of the industry. Western Australia grows large numbers of the best tomatoes. Yet large quantities of concentrated tomatoes are imported into Western Australia, where there are ample supplies of tomatoes put up in concentrated form. Moreover, there is a good market for concentrated tomatoes overseas. Again I strongly advocate the use of the local products. I am convinced that if we stick to our own products, we shall soon rectify the financial position. I have to make a request on behalf of the fruitgrowers: that the Government consider the advisableness of running the "Kangaroo" an extra trip or two annually to the islands. I have it on good authority that the ship could be loaded profitably for three such trips during the fruit season. It has been suggested to me, and I suggest to the Government, that the "Kangaroo" run to the islands in the first week of February, the second week of April, and the second week of May. Those who made this suggestion to me, guaranteed that they could load the ship profitably for three trips. I hope the Government will see their way clear to meet them.

The Chief Secretary: Where would the vessel run to?

Mr. THORN: To Sourabaya and Singapore. During the recent election campaign, it was part of the Country Party's policy to secure a reduction of the land tax and the re-instatement of the £250 exemption. I stand by the promises I made on the hustings to work along those lines. About five or six years ago, when our activities were booming and when wheat was bringing 5s. or more a bushel, wool 2s. a lb., and dried fruits up to £60 per ton, a valuator, operating on behalf of the Federal Taxation Department, increased the values of holdings very considerably. In my own case, the increased valuation represented a rise of 200 per cent. I do not contend we should object to paying taxes when times are good. It is just the same as a union going to the Arbitration Court for improved conditions and, generally speaking, a more advantageous award. That is all right in prosperous

times. I do not know of any reason why everyone should not have a little of the spoils. On the other hand, when wheat is down to 2s. 9d. a bushel, wool to 10d. a lb., and dried fruits to 3d. a lb. or under, the position is very different, and I think it is high time that the Federal valuator took another trip round the country districts. I suggest to the Government that we should endeavour to secure a sliding scale applicable to land taxation, based on the average prices obtained for products. The only proper method of valuing an acre of land is to base the valuation on the productive capacity of the land. The value of an acre of ground to-day is at least 50 per cent. less than it was six years ago. We have a sliding scale in connection with our railways, and it works well. I do not see why the Commissioner of Taxation cannot compile a sliding scale along the lines I suggest, and impose the land tax accordingly.

Hon. P. Collier: I do not know how it will be possible to get the tax at all now.

Mr. THORN: At any rate, it will be hard to collect. I wish to deal with the question of closer settlement, in which regard the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) stole my thunder last night. I intended to ask the Government to turn their eyes north sometimes instead of always looking south.

Mr. Angelo: Hear, hear! That is right.

Mr. THORN: I had the pleasure of accompanying three Ministers of the Crown on a trip through Wanneroo.

Mr. Angelo: All that way! I thought there was a catch!

Mr. THORN: Wanneroo is in a northerly direction. I showed the Ministers some of the finest swamp land to be found in the State—black, peaty soil, with good depth. I understand there are about 500 acres in one of the Government reserves, naturally drained through limestone country. Despite the fact that such land is available, it is suggested that we shall go hundreds of miles to the south, although a few miles to the north there is some of the finest swamp land to be found anywhere in Western Australia. The Ministers were agreeably surprised with what they saw, and I hope when they give consideration to the question, they will be able to see their way to release the swamp land I refer to for occupation by producers who await the opportunity anxiously. A practical demonstration of what can be done

on that swamp land was seen just outside the boundaries of the Government reserve. One settler, who has five acres of swamp land, is employing four men, and that goes to show that we have good land to the north as well as in the south. I would like to interest the Government in the necessity for some assistance being rendered to the communities at Toodyay and Gingin, two of the oldest towns in the State. They are passing through very quiet times, and, if possible, I wish to brighten their future by securing closer settlement of the surrounding country. In the outlying areas, such as Mooliabeene and Wannamal, the settlers could carry more cows if there were facilities available for taking their produce.

Mr. Angelo: To whom does the land belong? To the Government or to the Midland Company?

Mr. THORN: Naturally, to the Midland Railway Company. I have another request to put before the Government. It is not a new proposal, for it has been mentioned many times in this House. I refer to the purchase of the Midland railway. I know the present is not an opportune time for broaching such a request, but I put it forward. I urge the purchase of the line as soon as possible. The settlers concerned are suffering under great disabilities because they cannot secure assistance that is available to others. They have to battle along without any Government aid, and I contend it is essential that the Government shall take over the areas I refer to as soon as possible. That concludes the few requests I wished to put before the Government. I can only add that I am pleased indeed to have the privilege of representing the Toodyay electorate in this Chamber. If I have bored hon. members to-day I hope they will attribute it to my nervousness, and I sincerely hope that during my term in this Chamber, I shall be of some use to the Government and the State of Western Australia.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [5.8]: I do not intend to delay the House for long. Before making my speech I wish to join with other members in extending the congratulations that are due to you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to the high and honourable position you hold to-day. I do not know of anyone else who could have been secured on the Government side of the

House for that particular job. This is the occasion during the session when members can place before the Government some of the requirements of the districts they represent, if we do not indeed tell them how they can square the ledger. Statements have been made regarding vapourings in this House. I do not know whether there have been vapourings or not, but I do know that this is the one opportunity during the session that we have for dealing with a variety of subjects of interest to our constituents. I have not been able to find anything very encouraging in the Governor's Speech, and I shall not attempt to read it. There is one passage, however, that says—

Among other measures you will be asked to give consideration to—a Stipendiary Magistrates Bill; an Amendment of the Local Court Act; an Amendment of the Main Roads Act; a Consolidation and Amendment of the Supreme Court Act; an Amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act; an Amendment of the Traffic Act.

Of the legislative proposals mentioned, there is one only that may have any influence on the squaring of the ledger.

The Minister for Lands: There are some surprise packets coming along.

Mr. WITHERS: I do not know how the measures enumerated will be beneficial at this juncture. Of course there is the proposal to reduce the salaries of members, and we hear of other reductions as well. The proposed amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act should receive the favourable consideration of the House. The Premier has been castigated by Opposition members regarding the promises he made during the election campaign. I join the band of those who have commented on those pre-election statements. We have been told—and I hope it is true—that the present is not a promising Government, but one that will do something. Promises made before an election are bad enough, but promises made subsequently are worse in some respects. Promises made subsequent to an election re-act because if elected to power, those who make the promises have to carry more responsibility. On the other hand, promises made before an election—

Mr. Barnard: Are taken notice of by no one.

Mr. WITHERS: Some of the promises made were so futile—I will not say stupid, because I do not wish to be

offensive—as to be unworthy of one who on a former occasion held the reins of office. Anyone who has tried to understand the position, not only of Western Australia and Australia but of the whole world in connection with the unemployment problem, would have hesitated to make such promises on the hustings, and yet that is what the Premier did prior to the last elections. I do not think some of the statements he made did him justice in view of the high and honourable positions he has held in this State. He went so far, in my opinion, as to influence my opponent—I do not know that he convinced him—to make some drastic statements regarding what Sir James Mitchell would do if returned to power.

Mr. Barnard: But the people did not take any notice of them.

Mr. WITHERS: No, not in Bunbury. My opponent went to the extent of asserting that if, after having been three months in office, Sir James Mitchell did not solve the unemployment problem, he—I refer to my opponent, of course—would resign his seat in Parliament and contest Bunbury as an independent against the Mitchell Government's nominee. That indicates the value that gentleman placed on the statements made by the present Premier. No Government should endeavour to delude the people at any period, whether before or after an election, particularly regarding matters that they know very well must be absolutely untrue. So far as we have been able to secure an indication of the policy of the Government, the position has not been very illuminating. Perhaps we will have to wait until the Budget speech, and I trust that utterance will be more illuminating than the contents of the Governor's Speech. So far the Government have merely tinkered with the position of the State. The action referred to in the amendment moved to the Address-in-reply dealt with one of the tinkering methods adopted by the Government—approaching the Arbitration Court to take away privileges enjoyed by some sections of the Public Service. The Government's policy, I understand, is also to interfere with the allowance of parliamentarians. The idea, according to the "West Australian," is that we are to have a reduction of 10 per cent. in our salaries—if the House agrees, of course. I do not know that the reduction of parliamentarians' salaries is going to have a very important effect on the balance-

ing of the budget. As for setting an example to the other fellow, it is not going to be worth twopence. If we were to give away the whole of our salaries to-morrow, and do our job for nothing, it would not affect the other fellow who, perhaps, is getting four times as much as we are.

Mr. Angelo: Would you suggest cutting the allowances of others and not our own?

Mr. WITHERS: I am not making any suggestions, for we on this side are not in office. That is a job for the other side. It is their job, and I do not propose to offer any suggestions.

Mr. Sampson: Well, then, you cannot criticise them.

Mr. WITHERS: If I am in the House when the vote is taken on this question of reducing parliamentary allowances, I will not be found voting for the proposed reduction. Also I know others in the House who are of the same mind as I am. Perhaps it is thought I ought to qualify that statement by saying that I am prepared to submit to a reduction in my parliamentary allowance provided the Premier gives an undertaking that he is going to impose certain reductions on others outside of Parliament.

Mr. Angelo: There are some on this side who are wishing they didn't have to determine the question.

Mr. WITHERS: It is not that with me. It is merely a question of the means of bringing in some equitable legislation whereby all people will be called upon to submit to reductions. But to suggest that members of Parliament should accept a reduction in their allowances, merely by way of setting an example to the other fellow—I hold that the other fellow will not take a scrap of notice of it. When it comes to the formal discussion on this question I hope to have a little more to say.

Mr. Angelo: Should not the representatives of the people afford a lead in this at such a time?

Mr. WITHERS: I have already said that in my opinion our example would not be followed by the other fellow. If we were to give away the whole of our allowances, it would not be any inducement to the other fellow to do likewise. In my view the only fair thing to do is to tax the people, for setting an example in the acceptance of a reduction of allowance will not be of any use.

Mr. Raphael: We can take it that the Government are proposing this in order to afford them a precedent for the reduction of all workers.

Mr. WITHERS: Well, we can discuss that later on. I do not know how the Government are going to bring about the proposed reduction of parliamentarians' salaries, whether by way of a Bill or by way of the Estimates; but when it comes up for discussion doubtless we will deal with it on its merits. If the Government do not succeed in squaring the ledger, how are they going to relieve the unemployed? I am not saying that anybody else could do it better than the present Government are doing it, but when people pledge themselves to do something and say they can do it, we look to them to do something better than the mere results revealed by the reply to a question asked by the member for Mt. Hawthorn the other night on the subject of unemployment. I find that in February 3,161 unemployed persons were registered; in March it rose to 3,349, in April to 3,483, in May—directly after the election of the present Government—it was 7,401, in June it was 8,040, in July the number had fallen to 7,792, while the incomplete figures for August show the number of unemployed to have been 6,589. There has been a marked increase in unemployment since the Government took office.

Mr. J. H. Smith: And many hundreds of unemployed persons have not registered.

Mr. WITHERS: That is so. It is shown on this document that there are many not registered. When a Government succeed in ousting the sitting Government by telling people that, if elected, they will immediately square the finances and see to it that every man is put back to work—

Mr. Angelo: That was not the promise; it was not as strong as that.

Mr. WITHERS: Had the people not expected something exceptional from the present Government they would not have been elected. Of course, members of Parliament knew it could not be done. I for one knew it could not be done, and Sir James Mitchell on the hustings was well aware that it could not be done. So I hold that he was elected under false pretences. We are all sorry that the Premier is not in his seat these days. It is unfortunate, but we understand he is so



busy that he cannot attend these sittings. I do not blame him, but I think that when members, particularly new members, are putting up their cases on the Address-in-reply, it is a pity the Premier cannot be here to know what they are thinking and doing in regard to the requirements of their respective electorates. Certainly if the Premier is so busy that he cannot be here, he is not likely to have time subsequently to read it all in "Hansard." Then, again, the Premier by his absence averts attacks. Nobody likes to attack another in his absence. If I were attacking the Minister for Lands, I should like him to be present.

The Minister for Lands: Certainly you have no right to attack the Premier on the score of his not being here, for he is too busy with affairs of State to be here.

Mr. WITHERS: I know that. I am not blaming him for his absence, but I say it is a pity he cannot be here. The retrenchment taking place in the various departments of State are not, perhaps, having the effect the Government thought they would have. In my opinion, not only should the heads of the departments not look to the lower-paid men in those departments as a means of overcoming the difficulties, but I think it is high time we had a considerable tightening up in the administration of all departments. I have here the annual report of the Commissioner of Railways. In that report the Commissioner states in effect that it is not the shorter hours and the big money the railway worker is getting that is causing the deficit in the railways, but that principally it is on account of the concessions granted to people in country districts. Presumably they are the people who kick up the most row, and so succeed in securing the most concessions. The concessions and privileges enjoyed by the railway men, about which so much complaint is made by certain sections of the community, are as nothing compared with the concessions that the men on the land enjoy in the way of cheap freights and other things. I am not going to say that those people are not entitled to consideration; no one will dispute that. But I say that if the Government think the farmers and settlers are entitled to those considerations they should not ask the Commissioner of Railways to bear the burden, but should recoup him so that he might be able

to balance his figures. We have been fostering the wheat industry ever since it started. We have never had a penny piece in wharfage for all the wheat that has gone over our wharves. We have fostered other industries in the same way. We are carrying sugar over the railways at a loss. I do not say the farmers are not entitled to those concessions, but I contend the railways should not have the burden of them, and then have people say that the loss on the railways is due to the privileges and concessions granted to the railway men. Referring to wheat handling, the Commissioner of Railways in this report makes a complaint against wheat-acquiring agents. He says—

Wheat hauled last year totalled 850,045 tons over an average distance of 139½ miles, compared with 864,536 tons over 141.98 miles during 1928-1929. On June 30, on account of the low price for wheat, 2,250,000 bags remained stacked at sidings, apart from a considerable number held by farmers at homesteads. The withholding from circulation of the cash represented by such a large amount of wheat had a telling effect on the purchase and carriage of many other commodities. For some years it has been the practice to confer with the wheat acquiring agents and to set out a programme of haulage from December 1 each year. This programme has been rigidly adhered to by the Railway Department, but, unfortunately, the agents have refrained from consigning the necessary tonnage, involving the department in extra expenditure for staff and engine power at certain vantage points remaining idle.

So although the agents for the wheat have entered into a compact with the Commissioner of Railways, who is in charge of a big Government concern and is expected by those people to keep to his contract with them and carry the prescribed quantity of wheat that he promised to carry over a period, they break their contract. The Commissioner has to put on extra staff, which costs the railways a good deal more money than if the haulage was spread over a longer period. To oblige those people the Commissioner says he will shift so many thousand tons of wheat per week over a certain period. He keeps his contract, but the agents say the wheat can stay at the siding, and the railways can show a loss. The agents do not care. That is all they think of affairs of State. The private individual does not care a hang about any of the public departments. Later in his report the Commissioner deals with the question of having to take a cer-

tain class of coal that is not economical at the price he has to pay for it. I do not know what has happened to lead up to the taking of that coal, but I think there was a distinct understanding that the coal was not to be taken. There has been a change of Government, and I do not know what influence, if any, has been brought to bear, but evidently the Commissioner has been accepting 400 tons weekly of this coal, although it has been shown to be uneconomical at the price. The Commissioner himself is not in favour of using that coal.

The Minister for Lands: Which coal?

Mr. WITHERS: The Griffin coal.

The Minister for Lands: And you say it is not satisfactory?

Mr. WITHERS: The Commissioner himself says it is not satisfactory. When this party was in power it was definitely decided that the coal was not to be taken by the railways.

Hon. P. Collier: The Commissioner in his report says it is not satisfactory.

Mr. WITHERS: I do not know whether the proposed amendment to the Agricultural Bank Act will be the means of providing any more money for the development of our land. I hope, however, that whatever is done in the way of land settlement, some consideration will be given to the South-West. One may smile when new members come to Parliament and put forward the claims of their districts for recognition. It is now some six years since I made my first appeal in this House on behalf of the great South-West, which is ever growing greater. I said that the time would come when the South-West would have to carry the wheat growers owing to the fall in price of that commodity. I appealed to the Labour Government to turn at least one eye towards the South-West and not to keep both eyes glued upon the wheat belt.

Mr. Angelo: For how long has the wheat belt carried the South-West?

Mr. J. H. Smith: And the North-West as well?

Mr. WITHERS: It was claimed that we should develop the wheat belt because it was easier to handle, the turnover was quicker, and bigger money came from it, and that when the wheat belt was nicely settled some of the money which had been raised there could be spent in the South-West. If the South-West depended upon the wheat belt,

with wheat at 2s. 9d. per bushel, we would soon starve. We can grow the dairy produce required for the State if given the opportunity to do so, and we are certain of a demand for that which we produce. Farmers can grow wheat, but they are unable to sell it at a profit. There is a demand for everything we can grow in the South-West. At Harvey some five years ago I said the same thing to the then Minister for Lands (Hon. M. F. Troy). It was being said that the Government of the day had become "wheatened" because they could see nothing else but wheat growing. In 1926 I put up a proposition to the Government for a land settlement scheme adjacent to Harvey. The whole of that scheme is found set out on pages 241-2 of "Hansard" of August of that year. The scheme provided for the clearing of holdings and fencing them, and bringing them to a stage when they were ready for occupation. Up to that point they would have cost a little over £1,000 each. They were then to be thrown open for selection to persons who would have to make themselves responsible to the Government for the payment of interest and the making of a livelihood. That scheme is still workable, and if any money becomes available for land settlement I hope that proper attention will be paid to it.

Hon. P. Collier: The groups in the South-West have exhausted all the money. They have mopped it all up.

Mr. WITHERS: I am not talking about group settlement of that kind. I am glad to say that group settlement is no responsibility of mine.

The Minister for Works: But it is in the South-West.

Mr. WITHERS: It is too far south. I understand that many people are being sent to do clearing at Nornalup. That is a fatal mistake on the part of the Government. That part of the State is too far away from the market and from railway transport.

The Minister for Lands: The people are within 10 miles of a railway.

Mr. WITHERS: The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) quoted the cases of people at Northcliffe who were so far from a railway that they could not get their produce to market. Some weeks ago I met in Perth two men who had walked off their holdings. They said they had settled 20

miles from Pemberton, could grow potatoes and other things at will, but found it was altogether too costly to get their crops to the market. We know the value of the land down there and what it can produce, but we also know how far it is from the general body of consumers. One man had three acres of potatoes, but they were not worth a penny to him.

The Minister for Lands: The price is very low.

Mr. WITHERS: This man said that potatoes would grow all right, but he could not afford to put them on a lorry and cart them 20 miles to the rail head. Of course there was no need for him to grow potatoes, but in other respects the land is too far away from the market. Between Perth and Bunbury the position is altogether different.

The Minister for Lands: Do not tell the member for Albany that.

Mr. WITHERS: He knows this other land is too far away and that the clearing is too expensive. In the districts of the members for Albany, Murray-Wellington, and Nelson, as well as in my district, there are thousands of acres of land adjacent to existing railways. At present they are not carrying a bandicoot to the mile, when they should be carrying a cow to the acre. The previous Government should have seen to that.

The Minister for Lands: What is the good of trying to run cows, when you cannot run bandicoots?

Mr. WITHERS: The owners are not using the land to the fullest advantage. They have never attempted to do anything more than fence it. They want to hold it for ever. They say it is a bit of God's acre, and they want it to remain in that condition. It is time the Government gave them the alternative of putting it to use or parting with it to someone else who will use it.

Hon. P. Collier: What are you to do with people who want to live in Busselton?

Mr. WITHERS: We do not need to go as far south as that, because between Perth and Bunbury there are thousands of acres of land suitable for settlement. This is all close to the central market. If we reach out as we go along, Nornalup will get its turn, say, in a quarter of a century. If the Government did the right thing they would establish as many settlers as possible on the lands between Perth and Bunbury,

adjacent to the railway, where they could engage in dairying and allied industries. I am glad the Government are going on with the extension of the Harvey irrigation scheme. The results already achieved in that district show the wonderful value of irrigation to the State. There was a time when people tried to grow oranges there with irrigation, but the trees died and they have now substituted cows. They pulled up the oranges, and now they are pulling down the teats. If the irrigation scheme is completed, it would be the means of absorbing a large number of unemployed. That will be something in the Government's favour. Men will be engaged on reproductive work that will prove of wonderful value to Western Australia. The system would then be continued to the Brunswick and Collic Rivers, and other districts where we have running streams. By that means there can be created several Harveys in the South-West adjacent to established railways. I join with the member for Nelson in espousing the cause of the Cranbrook-Boyup Brook railway. By this time tomorrow night I hope to have advanced about 15 miles along the proposed route of that line, but of course I shall have to travel by motor car. I know the district well and what it can do. I have not travelled as far as Cranbrook, but have been over the Bunbury end of that district. There is no part of the State where a railway is more necessary to link up with the Great Southern and the South-West. It would open up a lot of fine country that would not be so hard to clear as is the case in other parts and would be admirably suited for intense culture or mixed farming. If the promise of the Minister for Lands is carried out, and the earthworks are gone on with, the undertaking will be the means of absorbing a number of unemployed who are already in the locality. The class of man down there is hard-working and has an understanding of the bush. These men would give a good quid pro quo for anything that is done for them in the way of employment. They understand work of that nature and would be sure to give satisfaction. I hope that, if any money is available for railway construction, the Cranbrook-Boyup Brook line will receive consideration at the hands of the Government. It may be asked why I interest myself in Harvey, which belongs to the district of Murray-Wellington, or in the

Boypup Brook-Cranbrook line, which is associated with the district of Nelson. I am actually the member for the north-west corner of the South-West.

Mr. Angelo: Having been born in Bunbury, you have no limit to your future.

Mr. WITHERS: There is no limit so far as Bunbury goes. It is the pivot of the South-West and the centre of all attraction. We know what is causing the present depression, so I shall make little or no reference to that. I should, however, like to allude to the question of transport to which I have referred in this House on previous occasions. There was a time when our railways were a monopoly. They had no opposition, could charge what they liked, run when they liked, and so on. People had merely to use them.

Mr. Panton: They run when they like now.

Mr. WITHERS: We have for some time been living in a competitive age, and the railways have run up against another form of transport, that by road. Some four years ago I said it was time the department considered means to combat the road transport by absorption. I give credit to the private individual who was far-seeing enough to discover what routes could best be established, and profitably to run a service. Some of these people have done wonders. They have put on a good service and have made money. I say, good luck to them. I admire the individual for his enterprise, and have nothing against him. If the man in the street can see that, what have our administrative heads been doing that they have failed to see it and have not linked up with this new means of transport? We have the tramways and the railways and the suburban passengers, but we have also bus services introduced by people, with perhaps little education, but possessing a lot of intuition, which has enabled them to make a success of their undertakings. Our administrative heads are drawing large salaries, but they have been unable to see that they can absorb this trade which rightly belongs to the State utilities. I do not know what is at the back of the Traffic Act Amendment Bill that is coming along, but I do say it is time the Commissioner of Railways endeavoured to keep all forms of transport within the sphere of the State system. I have some clippings here showing what is being done in the Eastern States where motor competition is playing

havoc with Government services. In Victoria there is now a Transport Act administered by the Minister for Transport, and what Mr. Hogan, the Premier of that State says about the effect in Victoria will apply to Western Australia, except perhaps that our figures are not quite so large. The capital cost of our railways is 23 millions, whilst that of Victoria is 71 millions, and the annual interest payable is three and a half millions. The Victorian Government saw the position, which is not unlike the unemployed problem, in that it is world-wide. Motor transport has come into competition with the railways the world over. In England efforts have been made to combat it just as has been done in Victoria. I should like to read this extract on the subject. It is in the form of a telegram from Melbourne—

A long statement was issued to-day by the Premier, Mr. Hogan, on behalf of the State Ministry in defence of the Motor Omnibus Act under which many country motor bus routes have been cancelled. The statement has been printed in pamphlet form for distribution. After denying allegations that Parliament was not given sufficient time in which to consider the Act, Mr. Hogan said that the Ministry and Parliament were trustees for the people, and when the interests of individuals conflict with the public interests as was the case in this instance, it was the duty of the Ministry to protect the interests of the public.

Then after referring to the capital cost on the railways and the annual interest bill, he goes on—

The loss to the railways owing to the competition of motor buses already amounted to £170,000 annually. If motor buses and lorries were allowed to continue their competition and extend their operations, and so prevent the railways from earning sufficient to pay working expenses and interest, the shortage would have to be met by the people by increased income tax and land tax.

The report of the Commissioner of Railways of our State draws attention to the losses on the railways and more particularly those of the suburban area, and he attributes that loss to the same cause—the competition of motor transport.

Mr. Angelo: The Victorian railways give a good suburban service.

Mr. WITHERS: When competition is set up against a monopoly we must wake up and, realising that there is going to be trouble, we should nip it in the bud. Un-

fortunately now the bud has bloomed and it will be a difficult matter to pluck it. I have no intention of speaking disparagingly about the railway officials, because I know that in the service there are many, not old men either, who are quite capable of taking the position in hand and coping with it. There should be some means whereby these officials should be given the opportunity to display their ability in this direction. There is plenty of scope for them here. In Victoria the Minister for Railways said recently that the Transport Bill he intended to introduce would provide for co-ordination of rail, tram and motor services, and that an advisory committee representing those three interests would be appointed and would assist the ministry of transport. This is what should be done in Western Australia. I do not intend to labour the subject because the Minister for Works has already announced his intention to submit an amendment to the Traffic Act and I can only hope that whatever is done will be on the lines that I have suggested. It would not be right for me to conclude my remarks without making some reference to the Bunbury harbour. This will be the "umteenth" time on which I shall have alluded to the subject. With all due respect to those who are urging the construction of the outer harbour scheme at Fremantle, I contend that whatever attention is given to the harbour at Bunbury will be money more than well spent. Moreover, the interest on the money that will be required for the Fremantle scheme will complete the Bunbury proposal which is more justified.

Mr. Angelo: Do you suggest transferring the trade from Fremantle to Bunbury?

Mr. WITHERS: No. We heard last night the word "subsidiary" used on a number of occasions by the member for Murchison. We might class Bunbury as subsidiary to Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: I thought you were satisfied about Bunbury after my recent visit.

Mr. WITHERS: I should like the Government seriously to consider the question because it is costing something like £12,000 a year to keep the harbour dredged to the required depth.

Mr. Barnard: But you have no timber going out from Bunbury harbour now.

Mr. WITHERS: The wonderful thing about the South-West is that although we may lose trade in respect of one of our products, we have other assets. Although it is not a wheat-growing district, Bunbury gets a fair proportion of the wheat that is grown in the surrounding territory. Already we have had a record shipment this year of over a million bags from the port and there is still a lot stacked there. The very fact that the export of timber is less will not deter the progress of the South-West in any way. You cannot stop the advancement of that part of the State. Cut out timber and something else takes its place. Some of the money that is required for Fremantle ought to be spent at Bunbury. Timber is a diminishing asset for the time being only, but there are other products being shipped from the port. Now we have established the Mt. Lyell and Cuning Smith superphosphate works, and vessels conveying phosphatic rock put into the harbour once a month or more. These two companies will materially assist to keep the port going and there is no reason why the harbour should not receive consideration at the hands of the Government. I trust when the debate on the Address-in-reply is concluded we shall get seriously down to business and that the Government will be able to place before us proposals which will show that there is a way by which the ledger can be squared other than by the petty means to which I referred at the beginning of my remarks. I hope the Government will get down to the business of the State's requirements and that the depression will be lifted to a great extent with the aid of the measures that may be brought down.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [5.55]: I should like to add my congratulations to those of the other speakers on your appointment, Sir, to the Speakership, and I have no doubt you will worthily uphold the traditions of your high office. Coming as might be said direct from the plough to this Parliament I feel a certain amount of diffidence in addressing hon. members, but I am fortified by the knowledge that I am representing not only the largest agricultural electorate in the State, but one which is not the least in importance. I am also proud to be a representative of the Country Party, and it is peculiarly appropriate that the con-

stituency should have a Country Party representative. I should like, however, to pay a tribute to the good work done by the former member for Greenough (Mr. Kennedy). I came into frequent contact with Mr. Kennedy in connection with local Government affairs and I always found him most attentive to his duties and most conscientious in the performance of whatever task he undertook. It is also pleasing to recollect that that hon. member voted against a measure which is regarded in the agricultural districts as being very unfair. I allude to the Redistribution of Seats Act. I have had the opportunity of reading the speeches of the ex-Premier in which he stressed the importance of the agricultural industry to Western Australia, and in which he declared that our future prosperity depended on that industry, and so forth. At the same time I think the hon. gentleman clearly recognised that the future of his own party lay in the big centres of population in the State. A Redistribution of Seats Bill was inevitable. The gold mining industry had declined until it had become a shadow of its former greatness. Many gold mining towns had practically disappeared and the result was a great decrease in the mining population. On the other hand, the agricultural industry has advanced until it has become a leading factor in the State's progress. In fact, nearly all our increase of wealth and population in recent years has been due to agriculture. Yet we find the former Government abolished five goldfields electorates and gave them all to the metropolitan area. That was not the only bad feature of the measure. There was the difference in the quotas of agricultural and mining, to the primary industries. I ask the House to consider for one moment the immense area of the new Greenough electorate. It extends to the Murchison River on the north, east some 40 miles of Mullewa on the Cue line, south nearly to Dalwallinu in the Wongan district and to Watheroo in the Midland district. And yet this immense territory containing nearly 6,000 electors returns one member to Parliament, while the compact area covered by Kalgoorlie and Boulder with 9,000 electors returns four. I hope that the present Government, before their term is up, will introduce a new Redistribution of Seats Bill to make at least an equitable adjustment of the mining and agricultural quotas.

It is a mockery of political representation to say that 2,000 odd electors in a compact area like Kalgoorlie and Boulder shall return a member of Parliament as against 4,000 electors in a widely-scattered farming district.

Mr. Panton: To say nothing of 9,000 in the Leederville district.

Mr. PATRICK: And 4,000 in Mt. Hawthorn. Another matter requiring adjustment is that of the Legislative Council boundaries which should be brought into line with those of the Assembly. While on matters electoral, let me refer to the residential qualification of an elector. I think it was when Newton Moore's Government was in power that the residential qualification of an elector was reduced from three months to one month, but it remained for the Collier Government to show how it was possible, by rushing a number of casual workers from the city into country electorates—and this in spite of the fact that any number of men were available in the electorates—to disfranchise an electorate for three years. I hope the Government will ensure that there is no recurrence of that sort of thing by raising the residential qualification from one month to three months. There is no doubt that the great question to be considered is the financial position. The Government are faced with a very grave situation and, in spite of the views of the Opposition, that situation has materially altered since April last. We need only to read the newspapers to realise how even daily it is altering as regards the position with the Federal Ministry. When the member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) was speaking about district allowances to railway employees, I interjected that a somewhat similar course was being adopted by the Labour Government in South Australia. The hon. member, rather unkindly I think, suggested that I was wrong as usual. If he had consulted one of his colleagues, the member for Collie, he could have told him that I belong to a race of people who are not in the habit of making statements, unless they can be proved by easily demonstrable facts. The only difference is that the Government in South Australia have gone a long way further than have the Government here. There was a report in the Press about the opening of a case before the Arbitration Court to which the Commissioners of Railways in several of the States were parties. I think the Leader of

the Opposition is correct in his contention that this matter has nothing to do with the Commissioners of Railways but is purely a matter for the Government. When the case was opened, the Commissioners pointed to the huge losses being incurred by railways and tramways, and asked to be relieved of an undertaking given by them not to disturb the conditions of the men. The Governments had given an undertaking not to disturb the conditions, but application was being made to the court for relief from the undertaking. Mr. Hill represented the Commissioners and said that unless the court prevented them from reducing wages and increasing hours, the Commissioners proposed to adopt that course. They intended to go a long way further than the Government of this State contemplate, for in addition to increasing hours, they proposed to reduce the wages. Mr. Hill, the Premier of South Australia, is very disgusted because he has to go to the Federal Arbitration Court at all. When he returned from the meeting of the Loan Council, he made a comprehensive speech to the South Australian Assembly, in which he denounced the Federal tariff and the Federal sales tax in terms which would have gladdened the heart of any Western Australian secessionist. In the course of his speech he said—

Our industries are prevented from thriving by the ever-growing pressure of the tariff. Our standards in education, health and social service are set by States grown rich through our impoverishment. When we seek to cut our coat according to the short length of cloth left us, we find we are prevented by Federal instrumentalities and actions.

That is, the Government were prevented by Federal instrumentalities from reducing wages and increasing hours on the railways. Another matter dealt with by the member for South Fremantle was the proposed Federal wheat pool. The hon. member referred to the condition of the farmers, and seemed to blame members on this side of the House for not having supported the Commonwealth proposal. If the Federal Government had succeeded in getting their wheat pool proposal through, they would have been ready to repudiate it by now. Taking the present price of wheat at sidings, a guarantee of 4s. a bushel would have cost the country something like £12,000,000, that is, £6,000,000 to the Common-

wealth Government and £6,000,000 to the States concerned. On a quarter basis, the cost to this State would have been £1,250,000 on a normal crop. The hon. member said that if the guarantee had been adopted, the difference could have been spread over the whole community, instead of requiring the farmer to bear the whole of the loss. I do not know how the hon. member would have raised the £1,250,000, whether by extra taxation or in some other way, but if it had been spread over the whole of the community by way of charging an additional price for wheat for local consumption, it would have been necessary to charge at least 10s. per bushel. I do not think the hon. member's constituents would have approved of that. It is interesting to recall that Mr. Parker Moloney's wheat pool proposal went before the electors at the last election, and I do not know that the Collier Government gave any lead in the matter. According to Press reports, replies were received by the Federal Minister from every State excepting Western Australia. I know it was a burning question at the time, because I was asked my attitude to it at every meeting in the country. The ex-Premier went through my electorate during the campaign, and I give him credit for this, that he, unlike some members in the Eastern States, did not promise the farmers 4s. or 5s. a bushel for their wheat. When he was asked at Carnamah whether he favoured the wheat pool, he replied that personally he was against it. Considering that the ex-Premier was opposed to a Federal wheat pool and that the present Premier, the Leader of the Nationalist Party, was also opposed to it, I do not think there would have been a ghost of a chance of getting it approved by this Parliament, even if it had been passed by the Federal Parliament. There is no doubt about the gravity of the financial situation. For the last 12 years, speaking generally, and this applies especially to the cities, Australians have been having a good time. Not only have we not paid our way, but we have created with loan money an artificial prosperity, and have set up standards which, with the fall in the prices of primary products and a drying up of loan funds, threaten to topple in ruins. The old-fashioned and sane idea of Governments paying their way seems to have gone out with the war. Western Australia, as compared with

the other States, has had an unprecedented run of good seasons. According to Mr. Bruce Leake, of Kellerberrin, the eastern districts have never had such a run of wet winters. Yet no provision has been made for lean years. One Government has merely boasted that its deficit has not been so great as that of its predecessor. Governments have borrowed money and expended it, sometimes not too wisely, and then have borrowed more money to assist to pay the interest on their previous borrowings. If you, Mr. Speaker, and I went to a banker to raise a loan—it would be a forlorn hope at the moment—but if we succeeded, and then next year said we were sorry we could not pay the interest and would he please lend us more money for that purpose, how long would we last? Yet Governments have been doing that for years, and what is bad in an individual is just as bad in a State. The financial position is such that money to be borrowed is only to be used for works that will give a profitable return. Many years ago one of the leading planks, and to my mind the finest plank, of the Labour platform, was that money was to be borrowed for reproductive works only. That plank appeared in Labour's platform at the time of the Daglish Government, and when Mr. Daglish tried to carry it into effect, his Government was called the mark-time Government. Had Labour carried out that plank right through up to the present, Australia would not be in the bad financial position she occupies at present.

Mr. Willcock: Only the Labour Party?

Mr. PATRICK: Both parties, but Labour members have done their share of borrowing. Expenditure is to be closely watched in future to ensure that we get value for every penny spent. Economically, all is not well, and we have now to knuckle down and acknowledge the fact. We seem to be the last nation in the world to come to the reorganisation process and get back to normal. This is largely due to the fact that for a number of years, Australia has been loan drunk and the prices for her primary products have been at high levels. From 1913 to last year, exports from Australia, mostly primary products, have more than doubled in value, though actually the quantity exported has not been a great deal more. Now falling prices have reduced Australia's income by from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000, in addition

to which money is difficult to borrow, and the rate of interest has gone up. Australia is staggering under an enormous burden of debt amounting to some £1,100,000,000, and over £30,000,000 has to be sent overseas every year to pay interest on that portion of the money owing abroad. This interest can be paid only by exports, which are principally primary products, and as prices have fallen, production must be increased. Every Australian party now admits that the position is serious. To my mind the position is that we have £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 less to spend, owing to the fall in prices, and probably another £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 less owing to the impossibility of borrowing. If the existing standards are to be maintained with the present production and present conditions, then a section of our people are going to be employed at good wages while another section are going to be permanently unemployed. It is impossible to draw a quart of beer out of a pint pot, and it is equally impossible to escape the fact that if we render an industry unprofitable, we inevitably create unemployment.

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

Mr. PATRICK: Before tea I was referring to pessimism. There are different kinds of pessimists and optimists. The late Thomas Hardy, the great English writer, is supposed to have been a confirmed pessimist, and he gives the following definition:—

Pessimism: My motto is, first correctly diagnose the complaint, and ascertain the cause, then set about finding a remedy.

Optimism: The motto of the optimist is, "Blind the eyes to the real malady, and use empirical panaceas to suppress the symptoms."

There are many of this type of optimist in Australia to-day, especially in the Federal sphere. There seems to be an aversion on the part of politicians, or there has been in the past, to put the facts before the people. They seem to prefer as Sir Thomas Hardy says, "Empirical panaceas to blind the eyes of the people to the real facts." The position reminds me of a little story I came across some time ago. It is about an Irish schoolmaster. He was addressing his class and he said he would give a shilling to the boy or girl who could tell him the name of the greatest man who ever lived. One child said Napoleon, another referred to some other notability, another to Sir James Mit-



chell, and so on. At last one little Jew boy said he could answer the question, and named St. Patrick. "You are right, my boy," said the teacher, and handed him the shilling, "but how did you come to think of the great man's name?" "Well," said the little Jew boy, "it was this way: right down in the bottom of my heart I knew it was Moses, but business is business." So it has been with many of our politicians. Right down in the bottom of their hearts they have known the facts of the position but they were not game to state them. The remedy seems to lie not so much in a reduction of wage costs, although to a certain extent that is inevitable, but in a reduction of costs by increased production. There is something vitally wrong with Australia. We are a strong and virile race capable of holding our own with any other nation. In the last few years we have been slipping badly, especially with other Dominions such as Canada and New Zealand. In Australia we have a protective tariff, and have had it for years, and yet we cannot ship a pound's worth of manufactured goods outside the country. Canada has built up a large export trade in manufactured goods. That Dominion can put a binder into Australia in competition with our own makers, after paying duty and charges amounting to at least £30. There must be something wrong with the country when that sort of thing can happen. According to the implement maker, Mr. McKay, wages are just as high in Canada as, or higher than, they are in Australia, despite the fact that Canada has no basic wage and no elaborate arbitration laws. There is certainly not so much interruption in Canada through strikes and disputes. In 1927—the last year from which I can obtain the figures—there were in Canada 79 disputes, and 22,000 men lost 165,000 working days. In Australia, where idealists instituted the system of arbitration, with which to abolish strikes, there were 200,000 men involved in 441 strikes, and they lost 1,713,581 days. New Zealand is in a far more prosperous condition than we are. That Dominion has no difficulty in borrowing money in London and its finances are in a sound condition. It also recognises the value of primary production. In its taxation measures it provided a total exemption on all incomes earned by any owner of land from the direct use or cultivation of it. The farmer paid no income tax. In the Budget that was introduced a few weeks ago

this has been altered, but making an income tax payable only in the case of land where the unimproved value is over £7,500. That would exempt practically all the farmers in this country. Australia can only advance by increased production, and this can only be brought about by an increase in production per head of the people. To ignore the economic factor as to the ability of an industry to pay the wages asked can also only lead to unemployment. What shall it profit a man if he gain a high arbitration award and loses his job? I remember in my young days, when the Wallaroo and Moolta mines were working in South Australia. It was a prosperous community there. Every man owned his own house and everyone was contented. They had a system there whereby wages were affected by the price of copper. Wages rose or fell automatically as the price of the metal rose or fell. The Australian Workers' Union then came along and organised the miners. The Arbitration Court gave them a splendid award, but the mines were closed down and have never since been opened. We have a country rich in gold, silver, copper, tin, etc. and yet mining is practically at a standstill. If our metals existed in any other country they would be worked, and would be employing thousands of men, and be the means of establishing secondary industries in the manufacture of machinery, etc. Because the cost of production is high from various causes, the mines in Australia remain closed. This leads to further unemployment. Apparently only our farmers are expected to suffer a reduction of 50 per cent. in their earnings and wages, and still carry on. I put it to members opposite who own farming properties, if the same rate and conditions were to apply to farmers, or men working on the farms, as apply to the men handling wheat on the railways and the wharves, how long would they retain possession of their farms?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The two things are not comparable. One is a seasonal occupation and the other is a permanent one.

Mr. PATRICK: It is a matter of the rate of wages. The same thing would apply to any other industry. If it were applied to the farming industry it would close down, and if that happened, the result would be chaos and ruin to Australia.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Very few farmers pay less than the basic wage to-day.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not think many pay it.

Mr. Panton: That is a very sane admission.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: In my district we pay £2 10s. a week and keep. That is equal to the basic wage.

Hon. P. Collier: I pay more than the basic wage.

Mr. PATRICK: I am referring to the average throughout the State. I wish to refer to our wretched arbitration laws, which attempt to put every man on the same basis.

Mr. Panton: They do nothing of the sort.

Mr. McCallum: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. PATRICK: They put every man on the same level.

Mr. Panton: On the same minimum.

Hon. P. Collier: You had better stick to farming.

Mr. McCallum: And talk about something you understand.

Mr. PATRICK: It does not matter whether a minimum is fixed or not, it becomes the wage for the industry.

Mr. McCallum: The Arbitration Court does not do that.

Mr. PATRICK: If the shearers worked on a daily wage, what sort of tally would we get? What incentive would there be for the fastest man to shear any more sheep than the slowest man in the team? I remember when I was on the platform for the first time, six years ago, I referred to the great expense of clearing on the group settlements by means of day labour. The irony of the thing lies in this, that when the Mitchell Government went out of office and the Collier Government came in, the new Government abolished the system of day labour clearing on the groups, and introduced that of piece work or contract. When speaking on this question in the Legislative Council, Mr. Thomas Moore, who was a Labour member for the Central Province, and a member of the Group Settlement Royal Commission, quoted the remarks of a group foreman, who indicated that after a time the good men fell back to the pace of the slow men, and the whole business came down to the pace of the slowest man. On this point Mr. Moore said that any man who was working amongst men must know that was quite true. He said, "If you have a gang of men not working on their own blocks, it will be found that the slow men amongst them will regulate the pace of the work of the others." That

is quite true. Human nature is the same everywhere, just as it is on the groups. The principle applies almost throughout every industry in Australia. If a bricklayer can lay 400 bricks a day and receives the same rate of pay as the man who can lay 1,000, and if the employer continues to pay the fast worker only at the same rate as the slow worker, the 1,000-brick a day man will drop down to the 400. He would be a mug if he did otherwise. Thus building cost go up, and higher rentals follow from these increased costs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They always lay bricks by piece work.

Mr. PATRICK: When speaking on this question in the Federal Arbitration Court in 1924 Mr. Justice Powers, the President of that tribunal, who knew well what he was talking about, said—

My duty is to prevent strikes as far as possible, and give fair rates and conditions to both parties. The court cannot, in my opinion, do anything that would prevent strikes and give to the workers the value of their work to the employers, more than to induce the workers to accept piece work rates fixed by this court. The members would increase their incomes and get what they claim, some share of the profits made by the employers with their assistance.

Further on the judge said—

No unionist who has had piece work rates fixed by this court would dream of going back to the old wages system under which men cannot improve their positions, or rise from the one dead level of labourer or fitter, or whatever work they may be at.

At McKay's implement works in Victoria most of the work is done on piece work, and the men earn good wages. I understand that Mr. McKay proposed to establish works in Western Australia, but the union here objected to the Victorian conditions. It, therefore, followed that works which would have employed many Western Australians at good wages, and which would have saved many pounds to our farmers, were retained to Victoria.

Mr. Panton: The union only asked them to comply with the laws of the land.

Mr. PATRICK: Members may say we have our own State Implement Works here. I have heard hon. members say we ought to use local products. I am acquainted with a considerable number of Labour farmers in my electorate, but I do not know of a single one who uses a State Implement Works machine.

Mr. Sleeman: You cannot have looked round very much, because I know one in your district who uses State Implement Works machines.

Mr. PATRICK: In that case, he is uncommon. I know one centre where the farmers are all Labour supporters, and yet there is not a State Implement Works machine among the lot.

Mr. Sleeman: As a matter of fact, a farmer in your district used one of the first harvesters built by the State Implement Works, and he is still using it.

Mr. PATRICK: That may be so. I am speaking of men within my own knowledge.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have a State harvester which I have been using for years and years.

Mr. PATRICK: It is really marvellous how inefficient State enterprises can be. McKay starts in Victoria in a small blacksmith's shop, with practically no capital, and gradually, over a series of years, builds up a business which makes him a millionaire. The State Implement Works started in Western Australia with all the experience that McKay had gradually to acquire, and with ample capital; and yet this State undertaking makes a lamentable financial mess. Admittedly McKay had a good thing in the tariff, but the State Implement Works here enjoyed not only the benefit of the tariff, but also the advantage of interstate freight, equivalent to at least £15 on a harvester. I can give another example from Queensland. Either Mr. Theodore or Mr. Ryan—I forget which—said to himself, "This pastoral business is highly profitable"; and he proceeded to acquire or resume station after station, which his own Government ran at enormous loss, and which succeeding Governments, Labour and otherwise, have been gradually getting out of at further heavy losses. In fact, I noticed in the Press recently that the final station had been sold and that the total loss was £1,900,000. It takes our own Government all its time to make a profit out of State hotels in good towns where they have a monopoly of the trade and everybody knows that to be a highly profitable game.

Mr. Panton: We shall have to start a drink-more-beer campaign.

Mr. PATRICK: The money wasted in State enterprises would have been better employed in opening up country and mak-

ing for that increased production which Mr. Scullin declares to be vitally needed in order to save Australia. To reduce production costs, taxation on the primary producer must be reduced. The wheat grower is urged to grow more wheat, in effect to work longer hours, to "scorn delights and live laborious days." How, then, can any Government justify the many privileges and concessions which were given to our Public Service at a time when prices were high, and which even then were made possible only with the assistance of borrowed money? I repeat, taxation will have to be brought down. With regard to the land tax, previous Governments removed the exemption of £250 and doubled the rate of tax. On top of that came a State vermin tax. On top of that again there came fresh valuations, raising the valuations of our lands to at least double, on the average, and thus making the tax four times as great. The increased valuation of our lands does not cause them to produce any more. In fact, the new valuations were made at a time when the prices of all primary products were at the very top. If a new valuation were made on the basis of the selling values of farms—as it should be—quite a different tale would be told. Yet I understand that the new valuations, under the law, must remain for three years in the case of one Government, and for five years in the case of the other. Then we have two income taxes to pay; that is, if we are lucky. I do not think the farmers will be paying any income tax this year. In New Zealand, as I have already mentioned, there is no income tax as regards the farmer. The present Government should as soon as possible carry out their promise to reduce the land tax by 50 per cent., and amend the law so that the farmer will only pay land tax or income tax, whichever may be the greater. An idea seems to be prevalent, especially in Federal circles, that high taxation in lieu of reduced expenditure can save the present situation. Taxation is no remedy, for it can reach a point when industry begins to collapse. Thus, taxation—as it has proved in the case of Federal taxation—can defeat its own end. The position to-day is that the prices of wheat and wool are back on the pre-war basis. At a time when wheat and wool values were high, agricultural machinery more than doubled in price. All building materials increased in

price. Railway freights increased. Taxation increased. The cost of workers' compensation went sky high. Wages and conditions generally were vastly improved. High prices for primary products, with the assistance of loan money, carried all these increases. The farmer, who was not exactly making a fortune in pre-war times, is now asked to carry all these additional burdens with pre-war prices. That is the problem which Governments have to solve. In my opinion Australia will never get back to a sound basis until a bag of wheat or a bale of wool will purchase the same in essential commodities as it could purchase in 1913. I notice that Mr. Hughes, speaking on the gold bonus deputation to the Prime Minister, declared that only a miracle could save Australia.

Mr. Panton: He was looking in the mirror then.

Mr. PATRICK: Then Mr. Hughes went on to talk about the possibility of a new gold find or an oil discovery. There are in Australia many politicians like Mr. Hughes—Micawbers waiting for something to turn up.

Mr. Angelo: But Mr. Hughes is now an extinct volcano.

Mr. PATRICK: What we have to do is, in the homely phrase of Mr. Hill, the Premier of South Australia, cut our coat according to our cloth. There are many unemployed in Western Australia to-day, but the picture shows still seem to be raking in large sums of money, and trots and race meetings still go on merrily. To the casual man from the country visiting the city, the waste of money is something appalling; and yet, side by side with that waste, there are poverty and distress. It seems highly doubtful whether at present wheat growing can be carried on profitably without other primary activities. In my opinion the Government should give up all idea of a 3,500 farms scheme and so forth, and concentrate on consolidating the farms which are already settled.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do you include the new groups in that statement?

Mr. PATRICK: I think quite enough has been spent on groups already. There are scores of abandoned farms in good districts alongside the railways, farms that should be

written down and brought back into production. In the northern area, where there has been no railway development for years, there are rich, improved districts such as Balla, Dartmoor, East Yuna, Mendels, and Wongoondy, which should have railway communication before money is spent on sending farmers out into newer and doubtful areas. East Yuna has been turned down by the Railways Advisory Board, but I understand that the late Government gave a promise that the board would be sent to the Balla-Dartmoor area. I do not think there is much chance of new railways being built in the immediate future, but I am desirous of having it established in principle that that land is suitable for railway development when opportunity offers. If the Government send the Railways Advisory Board to Balla-Dartmoor, they should also send them again to East Yuna. On a recent Sunday Mr. Drew and I had the opportunity of driving over and inspecting some of the country which the Railways Advisory Board, in their previous report, condemned as absolutely unfit for wheat growing; and that country was carrying really splendid crops. Personally I do not take too much notice of Government experts since having heard from Mr. Drew that the Lands Purchase Board absolutely condemned Mendels and Wongoondy estates, in my opinion, some of the finest land in Western Australia. Golden opportunities have also been lost in the past for purchasing the Midland railway, which runs through some of the best land in this State. I realise that at present the finances would not permit of the purchase of the railway, but I consider that the Government should make a proper valuation of the Midland Company's assets so as to have it ready when funds are available.

Mr. Withers: If the lands were taken, the railway would not be much of an asset. It would all have to be reconditioned.

Mr. PATRICK: The general manager of the Midland Company, Mr. Poynton, speaking in Geraldton two or three years ago, said—

He was not aware that the Government had made any serious attempt to value the assets of the company. The Government had never made any attempt to determine what the property was worth, and had never made any valuation worth considering.

If the Government negotiated for that property as I understand they did in the past, surely they would have had some proper valuation made of the company's assets. In my opinion it would have been a good thing if some of the money wasted in the South-West had been spent further north, among other things on the purchase of the Midland Company's assets. The South-West is not the only district in Western Australia suitable for dairying. There is a large area north of Perth and extending beyond Geraldton which, with improvement of pastures, and with top-dressing and the provision of silage and so forth, could carry on dairying just as profitably as the South-West, and with a fraction of the capital expenditure. There seems to be an idea—I believe it is largely fostered by the Agricultural Department—that the South-West is the dairying part of the State, and that the other part is the sheep and wheat part. In the Eastern States butter factories are to be found scattered all over the wheat districts. In fact, Victoria is said to have more butter factories outside Gippsland, which is the Victorian equivalent of our South-West, than in Gippsland itself. This development has been largely retarded in Western Australia by the high prices of wheat and wool. However, the farmers of this State have now to learn that they must go in for a greater diversity of farm practice if they wish to carry on successfully. Conditions in the country districts generally should be improved in order to encourage people to live there. A leading politician of the Eastern States—I do not remember at the moment who it was—said recently that Australia had been over-borrowing for years, and that far too much money had been spent in providing conveniences for the people and far too little in making for development and increased production. It is a crime, in my opinion, to spend loan money on non-reproductive work in the city while railways are urgently required to open up new areas in the country districts, and when water supplies, schools and other incidentals to civilisation are required for the men and women, with their children, who have gone out miles from anywhere to develop new holdings. The sympathy of this House should go out every time to those men and women who are doing so much to develop this State. I had an excellent study

in contrasts a few months ago. Prior to commencing my election campaign, I read an account of a meeting of a parents and citizens' association held in one of the leading towns. One of the members complained about the necessity for calstomining the walls in the school building, which was one of the finest in the State, equipped with every convenience. A week later I called at a farm to see a man and was told that he was doing some work at the school nine or ten miles east of the Wongan line. I went there and found four or five settlers busily engaged in erecting the school building. They had gone two or three sidings down the line, demolished the old school building, carted the material to the railway siding, placed it on trucks, taken delivery at the new siding, and were then engaged in re-erecting the building to the satisfaction of the department and without costing the State one penny. In passing I may add that a generous Government charged those settlers with the cost of freighting the material for the school over the railways! I was glad to hear the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Cunningham), when referring to district allowances, mention the difference between the position of city and country children with regard to the University. I referred to this question on the hustings, and say again that the University may be a free institution for city children residing with their parents, but it can hardly be described as such for country children who have to pay for their board and lodging when they come to town. It would be no great hardship if we asked the people in the metropolitan area, whose children attend the University, to contribute something towards the cost of upkeep of the institution, because it seems to be incurring larger deficits with each succeeding year. Most people to-day are talking about secession, and this brings me to the fact that Western Australia, which is essentially a primary producing country and will eventually be the greatest in the Commonwealth, has recently been dealt a series of severe knocks per medium of the Federal tariff. It is a lamentable thing that party interests in this State should prevent us from securing a unanimous protest from Western Australia against the operations of the Federal tariff. I have already referred to the fact that Mr. Hill, the Labour Premier of South Australia, made a bitter attack on the Federal tariff in a recent speech in

the South Australian House of Assembly. I remember that a few years ago Mr. Troy, when Minister for Mines, travelled round the country areas and denounced the then Nationalist Government's tariff which, he said, was ruining the gold mining industry of Western Australia. Certainly a great deal of the decline in the mining industry has been due to Federal legislation. Just after the recent Federal election we had the spectacle of the ex-Premier, when touring the South-West, telling the people, according to published reports, that he hoped the new Federal Government would not unduly increase the tariff as it would do a serious injury to Western Australia. The point I wish to make is that all those I have mentioned agreed that the Federal tariff has operated detrimentally to this State and to South Australia. Nevertheless, at the Federal election recently held they supported the Labour Party who favoured the imposition of a prohibitive tariff. That demonstrates that their words of protest were merely as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

Mr. Munsie: The present Federal Government have increased the tariff, but not nearly to the extent that their predecessors did.

The Attorney General: He did not say they did.

Mr. PATRICK: The new tariff seems to have been increased principally in the interests of the larger centres of Australia, which emphasises the fact that the Labour Party is becoming essentially a city party. The tariff seems to have been framed under no particular system or method. For instance, we are told that the wool industry is in a bad way, and we are urged to use more wool. Artificial silk, wool's chief competitor, of which over £6,000,000 worth was imported into Australia last year, principally consisting of Rayon which is made out of waste cotton, under the Federal Government's tariff is given a distinct advantage over wool. Farmers' requisites have been hit up sky-high. Galvanised iron has become a classic instance. The bonus paid on galvanised iron to Lysaghts is more than sufficient to pay the wages in the whole industry. I think most of us could carry on wheat growing successfully under those conditions.

Mr. Millington: Some could not do so.

Mr. PATRICK: I remember that a few months ago the city newspapers published columns of letters dealing with the question of farmers' finance, and we were given a lot of gratuitous advice as to how we should run our business. We were told it was necessary for us to become more efficient so as to increase production. If the position were not so serious, the reading of such statements would be quite humorous. I do not know how some of these efficient city men are getting on, particularly those who own farms.

Mr. Panton: You mean the terrace farmers.

Mr. PATRICK: There was a story told by Artemus Ward, the great American humorist, who said that an enemy of his got hold of him and gave him the father and mother of a hiding. "But," Artemus Ward said, "a year or two later I had a terrible revenge. His uncle died and left him a farm." Some of these efficient city men are now in the position of Artemus Ward's enemy. Despite the knocks dealt by politicians, droughts and diseases, the wheat-growing industry is really one of the most efficiently run in Australia to-day. Without the assistance of heavy duties or bonuses, it has to compete in the world's markets against grain grown in cheap-labour countries like India and the Argentine, and has to place wheat in the world's market at the world's highest price. The Australian consumer really gets the cheapest wheat in the world because he gets it at world's parity, less longest distance freights. As a matter of fact, there are really two competitive industries only in Australia to-day—wheat and wool—and it is a pity that politicians should constantly cast additional burdens upon them. Australia's secondary industries are heavily protected, and sugar, butter, dried fruits and wine are heavily bonused. The wheat and wool growers are urged to make themselves more efficient in order to be able to compete in the world's markets, yet a premium on inefficiency is granted to every little tinpot industry that likes to start in Australia. They are not told to make themselves more efficient to compete in the world's markets. Those controlling such industries could not sell two-pence worth of goods outside Australia in open competition. Their methods and machinery may be out of date. Never mind! Give them some protection and cast addi-

tional burdens on the two great industries that are carrying Australia to-day and facing world competition. It is to me an amazing thing that the Federal Government should choose the present of all times to make the tariff prohibitive. The present British Government are against all food preferences, and are only seeking for an opportunity to abolish them. The dried fruits industry in Australia is largely in the hands of returned soldiers. That industry exists only because of the generous British preference. If Australian dried fruit had to struggle in open competition with the products of cheap-labour countries like Turkey and Greece, the industry would fade away. Butter, sugar and wine similarly enjoy a generous British preference. Yet at a time like this when Australia desires to borrow money in London and has difficulty in getting it, we deliberately throw the present tariff in the face of Great Britain. Other countries are beginning to retaliate. France buys three times as much from Australia as Australia buys from her. France has already retaliated by placing a prohibitive tariff on Australian wheat. Germany, Italy and South Africa have followed along similar lines. During last season, Australian wheat was shut out of practically every market in the world except that of Great Britain. I suppose if it were not largely a matter of sentiment, they would have hit back also. The serious position regarding the overseas markets lies in the fact that the Soviet Government in Russia are working hard to regain their old pre-war export trade. In those days, Russia was the largest exporter of wheat throughout the world. If Russia is in a position to export wheat, all the European nations, including Great Britain, will grab her wheat with both hands, because Russia is prepared to buy their products.

Mr. Withers: Because they can secure it at cheaper rates.

Mr. PATRICK: Because Russia will take manufactured goods in exchange. Ours is a suicidal policy, because the prosperity of the city and the manufacturing interests in the cities depend upon keeping the country districts prosperous. Mr. King O'Malley, one-time Federal Labour Minister, when speaking in the House of Representatives, said, "You can destroy your cities in the night and they would be rapidly rebuilt. Destroy your country districts and the cities will fade away, never to rise again." I am

glad to know that we will not be asked to deal with much new legislation this session because, to my mind, Australian Parliaments in the past have displayed a perfect mania for passing Bills. These Bills once passed have never had an opportunity to function properly. Parliament has to be eternally tinkering with them.

Mr. Pantou: Some Bills passed here have not functioned at all.

The Minister for Works: Thank God!

Mr. Pantou: The Dog Act, for instance.

Mr. PATRICK: When I was speaking on the hustings, I said it would be a good thing if, certain necessary legislation having been passed, and we could rely upon good administration, we shut up our Parliaments for ten years, and saw how the position would work itself out. There is one question I must refer to, namely, the reduction of Parliamentary salaries. I should not like to conclude without giving my opinion on that. I am certainly in favour of a reduction of salaries, provided it is done on the same lines as in South Australia, where the reduction extends also throughout the Public Service on a graduated scale. Still I should not like to see so high a rate as Mr. Hill, the Premier of South Australia, has imposed there. Under Mr. Hill's scheme there is to be a graduated reduction throughout the Public Service rising to 25 per cent. on salaries of £1,000 and over. I do not wish to abuse the patience of members much longer, but in conclusion I should like to say that personally I stand for the interests of country districts all the time. For I know that if the country districts are prosperous, the towns and cities will always get their share, probably more than their share. All the real wealth of this or any other country comes from the land, which produces everything essential to the preservation of life. Agriculture, as Adam Smith puts it, is the one abiding source of national stability. If I may make another quotation, the men who cultivate the land create incalculable wealth, and they ought to be the nation's healthiest, happiest, most comfortable, and most independent citizens. But Australian Governments bind them in chains and then call upon them to produce more wheat. The people of this country have to learn that there is no royal road to prosperity. During the next year or two we are in for a

very rough time, a testing time. And, after all, there is no test like adversity, either for an individual, a party, or a nation. It is the supreme test of character. And we come of a race of men that have always stood up well when put against difficulty. We have a wonderful country, and we have men who will be prepared to face the facts of the position if they are properly put before them. In my opinion we also have a very capable Government, and a Leader of the Opposition who would be a credit to any Parliament of the Empire. I feel I am voicing the wish of all on this side when I hope he will be long spared to occupy that high and honourable position. The Prime Minister of Australia recently said there were dark clouds hovering over Australia. And he went on to refer to Australia's wonderful recuperative powers. I have heard similar remarks about Australia's wonderful recuperative powers on the opposite side; in fact, "recuperative" seems to have taken the place of that good old word "potentialities." The Prime Minister referred to Australia's wonderful recuperative powers, which simply means that it is to the men and women of the country districts that he and others are looking to make Australia's prospects bright. The secondary industries do not recuperate worth one cent. It is to the men and women of the country districts that the Prime Minister is looking, because they are laying broad and deep the only foundations on which can be built up a really prosperous community. Their work, however, can be helped or hampered by wise or foolish legislation, and it is being hampered to-day by foolish legislation. I appeal to members on both sides of the House to try to lift the burden now on the backs of the primary producers, so as to enable them to give that increased production which is so vital to Australia's needs to-day.

**MR. RICHARDSON** (Subiaco) [8.20]: At the outset I desire to join with other members in tendering to you, Sir, my congratulations on your elevation to the Speakership. I know you will fill the position with dignity and that you will have the support of the whole of the members of the House. I desire, also, to take this opportunity to thank members for having elected me Chairman of Committees. I can only promise them that I shall try to emulate

my predecessor, the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey). I do not intend to-night to enter into any controversial matter, because I feel that, occupying an official position, I should not be justified in doing so. But there are one or two matters which have been discussed in the House, and which I consider of very great importance indeed. And so I intend to refer to them as I go along. It appears to me the policy for Western Australia, and indeed for the whole of Australia, has been laid down for us. I think it is the first time in the history of Australia that we have a uniform policy throughout all the Australian Parliaments.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Who laid it down?

Mr. RICHARDSON: The latest Premiers' Conference has laid down a policy which says we must balance the ledger and that we must spend nothing except on reproductive works. And the Premiers of this and the other States, together with the Prime Minister, have bound themselves to that policy. As I said in the beginning, I do not propose to enter upon any subject of a controversial nature. May I add that neither am I going to answer interjections. So interjections will be entirely lost upon me. The two great problems with which we are confronted to-day are finance and unemployment, the one being dependent entirely on the other. If the Government of the State can secure sufficient money, then I feel sure their policy will give employment to those out of work to-day. But until the Budget is brought down, neither I nor any other member can discuss that problem with any definite security, for we do not really know what the Government propose to do. Probably I should not have spoken to-night had not the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) brought into the discussion something which I think is of the greatest importance, not only to Western Australia, but to Australia. I refer to what he described as the extremists of the Labour Party and their cry of repudiation of our war debts. The hon. member is to be commended for having brought the subject before Parliament. It is generally asked, why do not the Labour Party keep the extremists out of their ranks. I am going to say it is not alone the Labour Party's job, but it is our job as well, to cut down the following which the Communists in Australia are gaining. It may be said



that the Labour Party in New South Wales have turned down the idea of repudiation. I was very glad the other night to hear the hon. member's denunciation of that cry for repudiation, and his declaration that he spoke for the Labour Party of Western Australia. I am sure he deserves great credit for his outspokenness on that subject. Notwithstanding that the Labour Party in New South Wales have turned down the proposed repudiation of war debts, we know that once a movement of that sort gets going it is likely to permeate the whole of Australia, and permeate it the more rapidly when we have distressful conditions such as are evident to-day. The man on the lower rung of the ladder who finds himself in harrowing conditions, seizes at any straw that will keep him from drowning, and enables him to float along in the stream of life. My object in speaking to-night was not to criticise anything the member for South Fremantle said, but to add something to the information he gave us. Whilst I think his comment on the British Government was somewhat drastic, probably I shall be able to throw some further light upon the question, for I want the people of Western Australia to know exactly what happened in regard to the war debts of other nations and the debts of Australia. It is a considerable time since the war started, and it is impossible at this stage to recall the feelings of the people in Australia during the war period. We would have no difficulty whatever in commending the action of the British Government if only we could regain the atmosphere that prevailed in Australia during the years 1914-18. It has been said that the Australian troops fought for Great Britain. Nothing of the sort. Or rather, they fought for Great Britain, certainly, but they fought for Australia as well. We were an integral part of the British Empire, and we all realised that Australia was in serious danger. If only we could bring back to-day that atmosphere, that feeling which permeated the whole of Australia at the time, we could understand the action of Great Britain in alleviating the war debts of her European Allies. It is well known that her European Allies came out of the war absolutely bankrupt. It is known that the war could not have been continued had it not been that Great Britain loaned them capital to carry them on. Because of that, we were able

to win the war. If Great Britain had not made her funds available to her Allies, we certainly would have lost the war, and God only knows what would have happened to Australia. We would have had to pay heavy indemnities and in all probability Germany would have taken over Australia as one of the plums of success. What I want to point out is that whilst we may compare Australia's war debts with the debts owed by the Allies at the termination of the war, we were in a position entirely different from theirs. The conditions in Australia were very much better than the conditions in the countries of our European Allies. The territories of the Allies had been devastated, and their commerce was absolutely ruined. As I said before, those Allies were entirely bankrupt, and Great Britain found it was impossible to demand the return of the whole of the moneys she had loaned to them. Whilst Great Britain was most generous to her Allies, she could only demand what she knew they were able to pay. So a large part of the Allies' debts to Britain was written off. The two main funding agreements were with France and Italy. In the one case Great Britain wrote off four-fifths of the debt, and in the other she wrote off five-sixths of the debt, because it was impossible for those nations, devastated as they were, having lost their trade and commerce, to pay those debts. Further than that, they realised that, after all, Great Britain owed something to them. Those Allies had fought side by side with the British troops, and had it not been for those Allies Great Britain would have been conquered. Whilst it was a tremendous amount of money for Great Britain to lose, at the same time such arrangements have been made that the loss does not fall too heavily on the Old Country at the present time. France, since 1926, has paid from £4,000,000 to £10,000,000 per year to Great Britain, and the payments have now been raised to £12,500,000 a year. From 1957 to 1979 France will be paying £14,000,000 a year. That means that the whole debt which remains to be paid will extend over a period of 62 years. By agreement, Italy will make 62 annual payments of £4,500,000 a year. The net result of the whole of the funding of those war debts is that Great Britain, who is now paying £30,000,000 a year, but later will be paying £38,000,000 a year, will have received just one-half of that amount

from the Allies. So her burden will not press too heavily upon her people. Those payments are extended over a considerable period. It may be news to some members, who are inclined to be pessimistic because we are in financial difficulties, that the war cost Australia £750,000,000. It is an enormous sum for a young country. But here is where Australia showed what she could do. Of that amount all but about £282,000,000 was paid out of revenue. We can hardly visualise that so great an amount could have been paid out of revenue. The rest of the money was raised by loans internally, excepting a sum of £92,196,000, which was owing to Great Britain for the maintenance of our troops abroad and for war supplies. That is the war debt we owe to Great Britain to-day. During the time our troops were away Great Britain undertook to provide their pay and war supplies, and at the end funded the debt and made it payable over a period of 35 years. Those were fairly good terms. It has been said that Great Britain is charging Australia a greater percentage than she is paying for the money. I deny that. The question was raised in the Federal Parliament in 1927. The then Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce, stated that the interest on Britain's war debts averaged 3 to 3½ per cent. That statement went home to the Old Country, and the British Treasury replied that the loan moneys for funding the Australian debt had been borrowed at a little over 5 per cent., and that 5 per cent. had to be paid until the debt was liquidated. Australia is paying Britain for her war debt £4 18s. per cent., and on top of that we are paying a little over 1 per cent. as sinking fund. Comparisons have also been made between the other Dominions and Australia. I wish to show that other Dominions were treated in exactly the same way as Australia was treated. It was said the other night—and I can see how the confusion arose in the mind of the member for South Fremantle—that the troops from Canada immediately on boarding the transports, were paid by the British Government. That statement is entirely wrong and has been refuted by the British Government. What happened was this: the Canadian troops went into the war the same as the Australian troops, but Great Britain bought a tremendous quantity of munitions from Canada and thereby set up a debit in Canada. Therefore

the war debt owing by Canada appears to be very much less than that of Australia. I do not know the total cost of the war to Canada, but its war debt to Britain is £47,000,000. The relative smallness of Canada's debt is accounted for by the fact that that country supplied great quantities of munitions to Britain, and Britain had a debit in Canada which reduced the debt to Britain. It has been said that privileges likewise were granted to South Africa. Some of the expense of the campaign in France incurred by the South African troops was paid for by the British Government, but the reason for it was that South Africa paid for the whole of the campaign in West Africa, and therefore was unable to pay the whole of the cost of its troops in France. Consequently the accounts that have reached us from the other States and that are being placed before the people by the Communists are entirely wrong. Australia received the same treatment as did all the other Dominions. We should be extremely careful to understand the position because it will probably be made a burning question. The Communists have a greater hold on Australia, I regret to say, than a good many people imagine. I know that the Labour Party have trouble with them. There are Communists not only in the Labour Party, but I believe some are also to be found in the Nationalist Party.

Mr. Panton: There are not too many in the Labour Party.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Labour is continually trying to turn them out.

Mr. Panton: Not trying, but doing it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We should endeavour at all times to put the Communists in their proper place. When it is stated, as it has been stated in Sydney, that Great Britain should give Australia better treatment, I say that on the facts and figures Great Britain has treated us generously, and for that reason we should be exceedingly careful not to deny our obligations to Britain. I do not believe that the people of Australia would for a moment countenance the repudiation of any debt. I believe the heart of Australia is too sound for that, and I have no fear of its occurring. As the member for South Fremantle pointed out, whenever an election is pending, if there is any distress in the land, the Communists try to create distrust which naturally causes confusion. That

is what they are aiming at to-day. Let me now touch on the question of wheat and wool, which also was raised by the member for South Fremantle. I do not know whether the hon. member's figures were correct when he said that the British Government made £300,000,000 out of Australian wheat and wool.

The Minister for Works: Why did not you get the figures?

Mr. RICHARDSON: There was difficulty in getting them. Assuming that the British Government made £300,000,000 profit—

The Minister for Works: That is nonsense.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If they made that profit, they made it for the Australian growers, because the agreement with the British Government was to return one-half of the profits to the Australian growers. I well remember the time when negotiations were taking place with the British Government regarding our wheat and wool. I do not think there was a man in Australia who did not declare that we had made a wonderful bargain. The arrangement regarding our wheat was that the British Government should buy 1,000,000 tons at 5s. per bushel flat rate, and pay spot cash for it. The British Government took all risks. We know that thousands of tons of wheat went to waste, because shipping was not available to transport it to England, and because weevils and mice, for some unaccountable reason, were bad throughout Australia during those years. Consequently, a tremendous quantity of wheat was lost. It was only the fact of the American wheat crop failing that rushed up the price of wheat during those years. The British Government took all the risks and held the wheat for years, while our growers reaped the advantage of 5s. a bushel cash. We cannot say that the British Government have treated us badly. During the years 1921-26 Bawra distributed approximately £210,000,000 to the woolgrowers of Australia. Now members will realise the benefits derived from those transactions between the British and the Commonwealth Governments. Hence, there should be no thought of repudiation. On the other hand, if it were at all possible, we should still further assist Great Britain. We know perfectly well that the British people have been in serious difficulties ever since the war. To-day they are

confronted with very serious difficulties because they came to the assistance of their Allies, and have been generous to them, as well as to Australia and to the other Dominions. My reason for speaking to-night was to endeavour to interest members in this question, so that they might be in a position to refute the statements that are being circulated, and discourage any thought of repudiation, at least on the part of Western Australia.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mount Hawthorn) [8.42]: I have already extended my felicitations to you, Mr. Speaker, and I now have to turn to the Government and to the new members. When I entered this Chamber some six years ago, I said that I experienced difficulty in placing members opposite. At that time the Country Party had been split into two, and it was difficult to see where they had their members parked at that time on the Opposition side of the House. I suggested that the division was due to their association with that renowned agrarian, Sir James Mitchell, who had succeeded in making two Country Parties grow where only one grew before. It seems to me that since that time the Country Party have become consolidated, that they have lost their identity, and that we now have government of the country by a combine. The present Government will go down as the combine Government—

The Minister for Lands: They will not go down at all.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I mean that they will go down in history. I should say that the Nationalists, being associated with the Country Party, are engaged, as should be the case, in cultivating the Treasury benches to the combine.

The Minister for Works: We use the combine to sow our wheat, and it is very successful.

Mr. Angelo: You will find it a turbine that will go ahead well.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Although there has been a good deal of comment upon the time said to be wasted on the Address-in-reply, on this occasion at any rate it can be claimed that members certainly have stated the case for their districts in a better manner than is possible by people who merely tour a district. We get an idea of the industries

that are carried on in outback places, the difficulties with which those industries are associated, and the conditions under which people connected with them live. I have certainly received information and instructions which are very essential, since we are here to deal with the important question of conducting industries in this country. I approach with some temerity a question which has been over-discussed, that is, the very rash promise made by the Premier at the last elections. I know when a politician of the experience of Sir James Mitchell makes such a promise he must have a precedent to follow. I have discovered one. Some time ago an election was held for the President of the Savage Club in London. A very wily gentleman, a member of that club, advanced himself for the position. This was his policy. He said, "Meals at this club at present are 1s. 4d.; if elected I promise they shall be reduced to 1s." On that platform he was elected. Nothing was done in respect to the price of meals. Members of the club then got around the president and inquired whether anything was going to be done. They said, "You definitely promised that if elected the price of meals would be reduced to 1s." He said, "I believe I did say that, but was it not a bobby-dazzler election cry?" There is, therefore, a precedent for the Premier. The other man got away with it. He became the president of the club, and I suppose the members forgot all about the promise of a cheaper meal. Although the Premier has been unsuccessful so far in finding work for the unemployed, they can take this comfort to themselves that, at any rate, they found a particularly good job for the Premier. Things, therefore, have balanced up.

The Minister for Works: It is not too good a job in these days.

The Attorney General: Would you like to swap jobs with him?

Mr. MILLINGTON: The job is of his seeking. Many congratulations have been extended to the Government. I extend them myself in the same direction.

The Minister for Works: Extend them to the country.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I look upon each member of the Government as my friend. The only differences between us are due to their antique and somewhat eccentric ideas of politics. Beyond that we are perfectly good friends. I have always received a

very fair deal from Ministers, and I am determined not to quarrel with any of them. I promise, too, that, in respect of this debate, the fabric of which is somewhat frayed, I shall not endeavour to touch upon every subject which is allowed at this time. My endeavour will be to avoid as many subjects as possible, but to deal with one or two which have not been fully debated, but which are of sufficient importance even now to warrant further discussion. I shall not, for instance, go further into the financial position. This has already been fully dealt with. Phases of the question have been brought forward that will be of use to us. We in Western Australia shall be able to weather the storm. I do not yet see how our difficulties are to be overcome immediately, nor that anyone has a remedy that will have rapid effect upon the position. I think so much of Western Australia, and its people, that I believe they will eventually get over the difficulty. Considering the manner in which all the questions have been dealt with I shall confine myself to what I consider the most important thing for Western Australia, namely, our industries. I have been interested in anything that has been said during the debate to show how our industries, both primary and secondary, can be assisted and extended. We have always made vigorous efforts to speed up production. Anyone who wishes to appeal to the imagination of the people must have some big scheme to promote or force settlement at a more rapid rate. The inventive minds of members enable them to advance their own districts as well as those which warrant particular attention. I do not see the ambassador for the South-West in his place, but I find that even members from the North-West have ideas of how the Government can assist their districts and the industries therein. A good deal of the difficulties that exist not only in this State but in other parts of Australia has arisen over the attempt unduly to speed up development in a given direction.

The Attorney General: More haste, less speed.

Mr. MILLINGTON: In the past it was possible to develop our wheat areas under favourable conditions, and the speeding up process turned out to be warranted. On that occasion a great deal was left to the individual. A lot was said about those who settled the wheat districts, but my experi-

ence is that most of the credit is due to the class of man who was responsible for their development. He did not ask for very much. For the money he received he gave more than value, not less. The assistance given by the Government in that matter was therefore warranted, for the venture turned out a success. The pioneers of those districts went through very trying times. Because of the success that followed, it was assumed that in other districts, and dealing with an entirely different class of people, many totally inexperienced for the work, the same thing could be done, and another industry for which there was not so sure a market or for whose products there was not so great a demand could with equal success be set upon its feet. I refer to the group settlement scheme. There is a disposition to give credit for the work done under that scheme. The extension of the dairy industry was referred to. Although I am very pleased to know that butter production is increasing and that the industry is progressing very satisfactorily, we are not justified in refraining from examining the position. I am afraid that the butter produced by the group settlers will have cost considerably more than the money received for it. In such circumstances any industry can flourish anywhere for a brief space of time. I cannot think that more than two or three members of the Government are enthusiastic about the scheme, and I hope they will be very careful before they extend it, as was suggested.

The Minister for Lands: Who has suggested an extension?

Mr. MILLINGTON: It is suggested that it should be extended to the Nornalup district.

The Minister for Lands: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. MILLINGTON: There is great difficulty in finding money for any purpose, particularly for one of that nature. Many years must pass before there is any prospect of returns from that district. The clearing in that country is most costly and difficult, and it will take some time to establish the pastures. Moreover, it will be difficult to secure the requisite stock for the land when it is cleared and opened up.

The Minister for Lands: How much will it cost?

Mr. MILLINGTON: This is not a cross-examination.

The Minister for Lands: You seem to know a lot about it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Although the Government bench is comprised largely of members of the legal profession, I refuse to be cross-examined. A difficulty surrounds the group settlements and the possible extension of the dairying industry. The industry is certainly established and butter factories are growing up. I am sure, however, the Minister for Lands will agree with me that it will be very difficult to obtain suitable dairy stock for the pastures that are laid down. Arrangements have been made in the past for the importation of stock from the Eastern States, but it is no easy task to get suitable cattle. When the animals arrive here they require to become acclimatised. If the industry is to be successful, any sort of stock will not suffice. If anyone thinks the dairying industry can be established with any kind of cattle he had better disabuse his mind of the idea. Probably no one will make a fortune out of dairying, although there is a living in it if carried on along proper lines. It is a rare thing in this State to find a dairy herd with which it is possible to be satisfied. Our work in the immediate future, therefore, is to build up dairy herds that will make it possible for the industry to progress along commercial lines. The member for Greenough (Mr. Patrick) objects to experts lecturing the farmers and other primary producers as to how industries should be carried on. He suggests that we do not apply the same principle to secondary industries. If Western Australia neglects the opportunity to modernise all its industries, both primary and secondary, we shall very soon be superseded by those countries that take the other view. I am prepared to give full credit to those who have already done so well. I know the sacrifices that have been entailed in the course of building up industry. The credit, however, is not due entirely to those who are actually engaged in primary production. I think it was the Minister for Works who said that were it not for the farmers we should have grass growing in the city streets. I would retort that were it not for the manufacturer we should have trees growing on many of our farms. The additional production that is taking place on our farms, and the fact that our farmers

themselves are becoming amazingly more productive than was the case, are due not so much to the effort of the farmer himself, but to the scientist and the manufacturer having made it possible for the farmer, and the farm itself, to be more productive per man than was the case heretofore. So that, after all, it means that the despised city person and the despised expert—some exception, I believe, has been taken to the expert—have done more for farming than is generally realised. A matter of vast importance to Western Australia is the application of superphosphate. Superphosphate was a discovery of the scientist. I believe the first superphosphate—manufactured not as we have it to-day, but a compound of bonedust and phosphate made in the laboratory—cost about 1s. per ounce. It was left to the manufacturer to bring this down to a commercial basis, so that the product could be put to practical use. Now superphosphate is sold at about £5 per ton. What that means to Western Australia is incalculable. Not only has it vastly increased production in the favoured areas, but it has brought within the realm of productivity enormous areas that otherwise would not be cultivated for wheat-growing at any rate. The same thing holds good as regards the modernising of farming methods by the introduction of machinery. Therefore, it can be said that there is no antagonism between the secondary and the primary industries. I have always considered it in bad taste to suggest that there is any antagonism between our primary and our secondary industries. Certainly there is no State in Australia—and, as we are well up to date, it can be said that there is no country in the world—that has done more to encourage primary production than has Western Australia, or that has given better terms to those engaged in primary production. It is well, too, that during the years when it was possible for the State to provide loan funds, money was wisely expended through the Agricultural Bank for the extension of the agricultural industry. I say to the Country Party particularly, however, that care will henceforth have to be exercised that the Agricultural Bank, originally established and conducted on reasonably sound lines, does not become burdened with an entirely different class of asset in the group settlements which are being handed over to the institution.

Mr. Kenneally: Liability, rather.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The group settlements are certainly a serious liability. It is highly important that the Agricultural Bank should be conducted on reasonably sound business lines. Now the groups are being handed over, and will become a responsibility of the Agricultural Bank. I shall be satisfied if I can have an assurance that the Managing Director of the Agricultural Bank will be given full discretion as to what liabilities he takes over.

The Attorney General: He will have the same discretion as he has always had; in fact, more than he had under the previous Government.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I do not know that. During the time I was associated with the Lands Department I certainly resisted any attempt to water down the assets of the institution. There is always a disposition on the part of the agriculturist to suggest that he should be advanced money on, in plain language, shoddy security. When it was suggested that farmers should receive advances for the purpose of putting in crops on unfallowed land, or on land cultivated under wrong and unsuitable conditions, I resisted the proposal. There is often an attempt on the part of the farmer who is in trouble to get the bank to accept his liability. If the bank accepted it, the security would depreciate in no time. Now that the group settlements, more or less in the experimental stage, are being handed over to the Agricultural Bank, the farmers themselves should see that the securities of the institution are not considerably depreciated. As regards primary production, I trust that the Western Australian farmer has not reached that pleasant stage when he is satisfied with the manner in which the industry is being conducted. I should say rather that the best agriculturists of this country are those who are not satisfied. Very fine work indeed has been done by the Agricultural Bank, and work of enormous importance to Western Australia has been accomplished by the establishment of experimental farms in key positions throughout the State. Although these are times of economy, it would be false economy to suggest that the farms have outlived their usefulness, and that there is not the same necessity for them to-day as there was in times past. I hope they will be preserved as experiment-

ing farms, and not be turned into commercial farms, from which aspect they would be useless. The best farmers in Western Australia use those farms for their own experiments. There are certain things they want demonstrated, and they can have them demonstrated on those farms. And similarly with other branches of the Agricultural Department. I believe they are reasonably up to date, bearing in mind the amount of money that has been available for the purposes of the department. The advice given by the department and the experiments conducted by the State farms are responsible for placing wheat growing and other forms of agriculture on their present sound basis. With respect to secondary industries, although Western Australia is always boomed as a country particularly suited for agriculture, I presume that the people and the country of Western Australia are just as well fitted to conduct secondary industries. Whether we like it or not, the established policy of Australia is that of practically prohibitive protection on certain lines of goods. Although there is much discussion to-day of Western Australia's disabilities, the proper thing for us to do is to turn our attention to such abilities as we possess. Surely we do not intend to be always whining about this country's disabilities and disadvantages. It is far more suitable to turn our attention to the cultivation of the abilities this State has for keeping its population. I do not suggest that we should slow down in primary production, for which our State is noted; but if we are to maintain our present industries, it will be necessary to give special attention to those of them that are described as secondary. Although the State recently may have slipped somewhat, statistics show that we have 21,000 people engaged in secondary industries here. That is a highly important fact. Speaking from memory, the value of the output of our secondary industries is about £17,000,000. Thus our secondary industries to-day are far from negligible. During recent months, owing partly to the depression and partly to the fact that the Western Australian community has not its former buying capacity, those industries have slackened off, and there have been many dismissals from factories. We must turn our attention to that phase of the situation. Here is a case in which we are slipping back. The question is, shall we

fall into line with the policy of Australia, which is for the time being to import less and to manufacture more within the borders of the Commonwealth? Undoubtedly the Eastern States are making arrangements to extend and increase their manufactures. Then, if Western Australia is to be even with the other States, if, in a homely phrase, we are to keep our end up, we shall have to direct special attention to local manufactures. In this respect the only market that we can control is our local market. The Eastern States manufacture not only their requirements, but also for what I presume they call the backward State of Western Australia. This should not be a backward State. Ways and means can be devised of stimulating industry in this country so that we shall be able to manufacture our own requirements.

The Attorney General: Would you indicate what ways and means?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I do not suggest that we are going to get to the stage of exporting, but I do suggest that we can at least control our own market, and in many directions—specific instances have already been given—manufacture our own requirements.

The Attorney General: But how are we to stimulate the manufactures?

Mr. MILLINGTON: We shall have to stimulate them by buying goods of our own manufacture. If the hon. gentleman thinks it is not worth while—

The Attorney General: Certainly it is.

Mr. MILLINGTON: If the hon. gentleman thinks it a payable proposition to buy what is made in the Eastern States and leave our own products in the factory—

The Attorney General: But you were talking about governmental stimulation, were you not?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I was not speaking only of the Government. I said that I proposed to discuss means whereby we could revive the industries of this State. The Government are only, in a way, fostering, or engaged in, primary production. So it should be with respect to secondary industries. The Government can play a part in stimulating secondary industries. I do not ask the present Government to enter to a greater extent into manufacturing so far as secondary industries are concerned, but I do suggest that there are ways and means by which the Government can assist. If this doctrine had been preached in times past,

notice would have been taken of it. The question is whether Western Australia's position is sufficiently desperate to induce the people to make sacrifices in order to revive our industries.

Mr. Kenneally: Or to hold what industries we have.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Or to hold such industries as we have. I used the word "revive" because our secondary industries are in a highly doubtful condition to-day. Some of them are extremely sick, if not dying. Therefore I consider that we have no choice. When one speaks to people on this subject, they reply, "We are going to buy in the cheapest market, and exercise our own choice with regard to anything we require." Their doing so means that they spend their money where they like, and that, as a result, in many instances they are out of work owing to the condition of local industries, and thus have no money to spend. In some industries half the employees are out of work, and the other half are paying fairly heavy levies, as instanced by the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), to sustain their workless comrades. Therefore sacrifices must be made anyhow. There is no choice whatever about that. Now, I entertain a rooted objection to making any needless sacrifice. All must be prepared to make sacrifices if that is to be effective. If I were asked what was required of the people of Western Australia, I should say that I know they are sympathetic. I acknowledge that if this does not solve the problem of unemployment, it does to a certain extent deal with the question from a local point of view, and will have an immediate effect, particularly if the people develop parochialism, or patriotism, call it what we please, that will induce them to accord preference to articles grown or manufactured in Western Australia. If that is not done, then Western Australia will continue on as in the past. We import from the Eastern States goods valued at about £10,000,000 per annum. Many of the lines imported could be manufactured in this State, and would be manufactured if everyone demanded local goods. As a means towards that end, there has been formed what is known as the Western Australian Products League, the object of which is to stimulate primary and secondary production. In addition to advertisements in the Press, much has been done to direct attention to what is manufactured in Western

Australia. Then there will be the necessity for a certain amount of organising, and the league has asked the Government to assist in that direction. I am sure the Government will assist the league in the work of organising various forces that afford a field for operations. We shall have to advertise our goods widely, and that in itself will need a certain amount of organising. All those forces that should be effective must be harnessed and utilised in order that the doctrine may be promulgated. I do not know of any organisation in Western Australia that should not be interested in this topic, nor do I know of any business that should not be anxious to promote the manufacture and sale of Western Australian goods. The task of advertising and organising such a scheme should be shared by the Government, local governing bodies and all organisations having any sphere of influence at all. The Chief Secretary has agreed that the league may approach the Education Department in furtherance of its objects. Good work could be done in our schools. The doctrine of using locally-manufactured goods is eminently suitable for inclusion in our school curriculum. Youngsters who are at school to-day fitting themselves for some vocation in life, should be interested in a movement that seeks to provide vocations for them.

The Minister for Lands: Not only that; most of them do the shopping as well.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Government have granted assistance to that extent so far. In addition, the league approached the annual conference of school teachers. I do not know of any body of men having a wider influence than the teachers, not only in the schools, but as citizens in the various centres where they are stationed. We all know that a school teacher is a social force, and has a good deal to do with the moulding of public opinion. I understand that the Minister who has been given control of the Department of Industries, is prepared to make available the services of an officer to assist in organising the various forces throughout the State, including trading associations, Government bodies, public bodies, co-operative organisations and many others. By that means we shall be able to secure the co-operation of all the people. Apart from these aspects, those that we really require, and who will really count, are the buyers, who are mostly women. They will be influenced



by the fact that not only are there so many unemployed at present, but the spectre of additional unemployment will ever be present. Women must surely realise that unless industry can be stimulated in Western Australia unemployment must extend. Although in former days little interest was taken in the objective of the league, the desperate conditions that obtain now must force people to agree to some sacrifices so that industry may be stimulated. If buyers would insist upon Western Australian articles being supplied, traders would very soon fall into line and then, instead of Western Australian goods being last on the list, they would be accorded preference. That is the doctrine that has to be preached throughout Western Australia. The primary industries are also associated with this scheme. In days gone by, efforts made to utilise our bi-products invariably met with ill-success. We found it impossible successfully to establish factories in Western Australia. That was primarily because they could not compete against dumping from the Eastern States. I regard dumping as a normal condition following upon the successful establishment of an industry. It means that it pays manufacturers in the Eastern States to overproduce so as to keep their organisation going, and, in those circumstances, they look around for some backward State in which they can dispose of their surplus goods.

The Attorney-General: Are we not dumping, ourselves?

Mr. MILLINGTON: We had a jam factory in Western Australia, but the effect of dumping from the East was that the factory went out of existence.

The Attorney-General: But are we not dumping our dried fruits?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I do not know that we are. I know that at one time efforts were made to dump dried fruits into Australia, and the industry had to be highly protected in order to prevent that being done. I am speaking, however, regarding our competition with the Eastern States. It is our business to look after the interests of our own State, and we can trust Victoria and other States to look after themselves. So far as I am aware—I am subject to correction—the Federal anti-dumping laws, or regulations, are ineffective and futile. Even so, it would still be possible, should the people of Western Australia

be sufficiently determined and realise the position, successfully to establish industries in the State that failed in the past. That would be of advantage to our primary industries because associated bi-products would have an outlet in our factories. That cannot be done unless the buyers insist on giving preference to our locally-manufactured goods. First of all, we must have a definition of what dumping really is. I should say that dumping arises when any article is sold in Western Australia at less than the price charged in the State of origin. We are perfectly justified in those circumstances in saying that Western Australia has been used by Eastern manufacturers as a dumping ground. But should our people give preference to our own commodities, we will not then depend upon a law that is ineffective, but upon the effective law of self-preservation. Unless Western Australians are prepared to adopt that attitude, there is no possible hope of building up new industries and those that we have will inevitably go to the wall. I had not intended speaking this evening, particularly at this late hour, had it not been for my desire to deal with a question that I regard as of particular importance. We hear a lot about our disabilities. We may continue to do so; we may go cap in hand to the Federal Government and ask that the Eastern States shall do this or that; we may even contend that our difficulties would be overcome if we were separated from the Eastern States. After all that is done, our people will still have to depend upon our own primary and secondary industries; and if we cannot develop them, we will have to admit to failure. I contend, therefore, that the important thing is that our people shall foster their own industries, that they shall carry them on along modern lines and take advantage of modern principles of organisation and science in the conduct of those industries. That is the job before us. People can talk as much as they like but the only way out of our difficulties is by work. We cannot talk ourselves out of our present position. If there is a proper spirit of co-operation evidenced by the people of Western Australia then the natural advantages that Western Australia provides in respect to many industries will leave no doubt as to the brightness of our future. We shall not achieve that end, however, merely by drawing attention to the disabilities from which we suffer, by stress-

ing our many disadvantages, and so on. We can compete with industry in the Eastern States if our people will see to it that they accord preference to our local products. The position to-day is sufficiently desperate to warrant us in demanding that the people shall do this in their own interests. If we can attain that objective, we shall have advanced a long way towards restoring prosperity. If we cannot do so, then Western Australia will continue to suffer as she has in the past, but to a greater degree. That is my reason for continuing the debate at this late hour. I have not touched on many questions that have been discussed. Finally I say that the salvation of the people of Western Australia lies in carrying on our primary industries with due regard to modern conditions and developments, and in fostering our secondary industries by the adoption of methods I have suggested. Encouragement is necessary by means of preference extended to locally-manufactured goods by our own people. If that is done, there is indeed a bright prospect ahead of Western Australia. If that is not done, I know of no other means by which we can recover our former prosperity and face the keen competition that exists to-day.

**MR. CORBOY** (Yalgarn-Coolgardie) [9.28]: May I join with other members in offering you, Sir, my sincere congratulations upon your elevation to the high and honourable office of Speaker of this House. I have no doubt that during the next three years—

Mr. Kenneally: Not so long.

Mr. CORBOY: Then during the time that you occupy that position, Mr. Speaker, no doubt we shall have the same harmonious relations existing as before between hon. members, and shall have the benefit of your guiding influence.

The Minister for Works: Why for only three years?

Mr. CORBOY: The member for East Perth (Mr. Kenneally) told me it would not be for so long a period, and I hope he is right. I do not mean to say, Mr. Speaker, that I do not desire you to occupy that position, and to see you out of the Chair. I meant I would like to see the Government out of office. At this stage of the debate, I do not wish to speak at any great length, and shall touch upon one or two subjects only. Undoubtedly the burning question to-

day, which is exercising the minds of everyone who thinks seriously of the welfare of the State, is the financial position and the so-called depression that has inevitably followed in the wake of the restrictions placed upon our credit. There is no doubt the depression exists. We have had statements, starting off some time ago, shall I say with a sort of half-warnings, and gradually warming up to the stage where we have some blunt speaking, particularly from overseas visitors. And it is advisable that we should all take some cognisance of the fact that we are facing a very difficult position, and try to effect some remedy for that position. Not only is there no doubt that a depression exists, and that our credit overseas is restricted but may I say that possibly we shall find that the Government will be further handicapped in directions over which we have practically no control. For instance, it is quite possible that during the current financial year, as the result of the depression, trade will be restricted to such an extent that the Government will find their revenues, particularly from income tax, materially reduced. So, while we have to face the position financially from overseas, we may also find that we have an extremely difficult position in regard to our ordinary revenues at home. Only to-day I was discussing the position with the managing director of one of the biggest businesses in Western Australia. He said that, so far as he could judge, his company would have to pay no income tax whatever this year, that the only way to effect a clearance of their stocks would be to sell them off at cost, or even less. And that is a firm which has materially contributed to the income tax revenues of this State. Now it seems likely there will be no revenue whatever from them this year. So that sort of thing may prove to be a material factor in the finances of the State. I mention it in passing merely to show that we may find other difficulties accruing as we go on. I do not for a moment desire to repeat the depressing style of talk which has been in evidence for some few weeks amongst many of the leading men of this country, for I have come to the conclusion from the one or two personal experiences I have had that all this continual talk, this depressing talk of depression, is having a very harmful effect indeed on the employment of the people of this country.

Let me quote a little instance to show what is happening. I know a man who intended to make certain additions to his private residence. He went to the length of having plans drawn and tenders called. The lowest tender received was for £340. In the meantime there came all this talk of depression and financial chaos and breakdown. The result was that man, who could well afford to carry out those additions, decided not to go on with them, and so the equivalent of at least six months' employment for one man was taken away. The would-be employer was scared out of supplying that employment by the talk that has been going on. Whilst we should all realise the position and do our utmost to provide a remedy for it, I do not think we are accomplishing anything except an aggravation of the position by continually crying stinking fish. There is no doubt the little illustration I have quoted is merely a straw showing which way the wind is blowing. There is, as the result of over-indulgence in talk of that sort, a restriction in the avenues of employment for our people. That statement brings up the question of unemployment. I am not anxious to belabour the Government with the whip for their statements at the hustings. In my opinion the existing position is serious enough to warrant dropping anything in the nature of carping criticism. But the point is that during the elections the Leader of the Government, backed up by a majority of his supporters—I did not hear one of them dissociate himself from his Leader's statements, although they all realised even then that he was wrong and could not carry out his promises—assured the people of the country that they could and would absorb the whole of the unemployed within a fortnight of assuming office. Considerably more than a fortnight has elapsed since they assumed office, yet unemployment has not been abolished by the advent of the Government. What are the intentions of the Government? Do they propose to abolish unemployment by reducing the standard of living to such an extent that they will be able to employ two men where they are employing one to-day? Is that the intention of the Government? Are their proposals such that for the same money expended on public works, on the construction of railways, on the building of roads or other public activities—is it their intention so to reduce the

standard of the workers of this country that they will be able to employ the unemployed for the same cost as is involved in the employment of the men at present working? It is important that we should know it. The Government would be doing what is merely their duty if they were honest and explained to the country what their intentions are in that regard. There has been nothing added to the Premier's statement that he would absorb all the unemployed on taking office. He has made no subsequent statement to indicate to us how he intends to absorb them in view of the conditions which he found to exist when he assumed office, and which he says he did not previously think existed. It is important that we should have some statement in that regard. So I say that to some extent at any rate what we want from the Government is a leader who will at least take the people into his confidence. Might I digress—and I think it is the first time during the whole period I have been in this Parliament that I have referred to any war experience of my own—might I digress to the extent of explaining what happened in that regard during the time I was serving at the Front? Some of my friends on the Government side of the House can bear out what I am going to say. For the first portion of the war it was the policy of the High Command to keep everybody they possibly could in ignorance of what their objectives were, what their plans were, except as to the particular little thing one had to do himself. Things were not going very successfully, and suddenly that policy was changed to one under which everybody, down to the very privates in the ranks, had thoroughly explained to him what the High Command's objectives were, and what was expected of each. Even although that explanation involved telling him that it meant almost certain death, he was told. The result was eminently successful, and everybody carried out his duties with enthusiasm. In this country at the present time it would be worth while trying the experiment of taking the people into the confidence of the Government and telling them exactly how serious the position is, so ensuring the willing co-operation of every individual in the community. Such an experiment would be well worth trying. If one may read between the lines, the rank and file members of Parliament have not been taken into the

confidence of the Governments of Australia in this matter. We are not told anything at all about it, as the member for Hannans remarks. That is the only conclusion a floor member of the House can come to if he has sufficient nous to read between the lines of the statements made. We are almost told in so many words that it is too dangerous to let us know just how bad things are. When they ask us for sacrifice, and ask the people of the State for sacrifice to get the country out of a difficulty at least the people are entitled to know what the sacrifices are for. If the Government are sincere in saying it is necessary for all to make sacrifices, that it is necessary to have the co-operation of everyone, then at least everyone should be told why. Up to date that has not been done. We are as good as told that we have had only a hint as to how serious the position is. I say let us be candid and honest one with the other. I sincerely hope, whether or not it comes from a member of the present Government, that if the position is as hinted, someone will arise strong enough and honest enough to tell the people candidly exactly how things are. It is of no use admitting that the position is bad: it is no good saying we believe the statements that have been made, that Australia is passing through a crisis equally as bad as that which resulted in what is known as the Victoria land boom and burst: it is no good admitting that unless we have some suggestion or thoughts on how to remedy it. So far as one can judge from the actions of Governments consisting of parties similar to those composing this Government, and so far as one can judge from the actions of this Government to-day outside of Parliament, their actions in going to the Arbitration Court, and their administrative capacity in the Railway Department and elsewhere, they have been stampeded by the newspapers and employers of this country into adopting the good old conservative remedy of lowering the standard of living of the workers of the State. That appears to be the only solution of the position in the minds of the Government and of similar Governments elsewhere in Australia. It is somewhat amusing to notice the daily reference in the leading article columns of the "West Australian" to the desirability of reducing the salaries of members of Parliament and, through that means of course, eventually lowering the standard of all wage earners in this country: while that paper

itself still maintains the advertising rates and the subscription rates that were imposed in war time owing to the high cost of news print. There has been no attempt on the part of that newspaper to revert to pre-war prices or anything like them. Yet we have its daily lecture to this Government that they must effect reductions, starting with members of Parliament and working down through the body politic.

Mr. Munsie: And it is paying a 12½ per cent. dividend each half-year.

The Minister for Works: What! 25 per cent. per annum?

Mr. Munsie: Yes.

Member: "The Worker" cannot pay that.

Mr. CORBOY: Which merely proves that "The Worker" is honest.

The Minister for Railways: It is not. I happen to be a shareholder, yet I have never had a balance sheet.

Mr. CORBOY: Perhaps your shares have been forfeited for the non-payment of calls, or something of the sort. Perhaps the people associated with the "Worker" have lost track of the hon. member's whereabouts during the last few years. He has shifted his place of residence politically so frequently that it is quite possible they have lost track of him.

The Minister for Railways: I am the best subject the "Worker" has got. I should receive a commission on its sales.

Mr. CORBOY: If one can judge from the actions of the Government particularly outside the House, they undoubtedly have an evident desire to adopt that good old conservative remedy of lowering the standard of living of the workers. That is to be the only solution. I say the workers are quite justified in kicking while other things remain untouched. If the people were taken into the confidence of the Government and told the real position and could be shown that sacrifices were necessary, I have no doubt whatever they would be willing to make those sacrifices. So far that has not been done, and we cannot expect the workers tamely to submit to a reduction of the standard of living for themselves and their families while the State continues to permit luxuries to be indulged in.

Mr. Angelo: Do you think the shearers are aware that the pastoralists are getting only half of what they got formerly?

Mr. CORBOY: When wool was high the shearers did not get a cut out of it, but in

the first year of low prices the pastoralist is squealing.

Mr. Angelo: In the first year?

Mr. CORBOY: The first year.

Mr. Angelo: I am afraid you are behind the times. He did not get too much last year.

Mr. CORBOY: And he did not show too much of a loss either.

Mr. Angelo: And it was on what he got last year that the court reduced the rate.

Mr. CORBOY: The pastoralist's claim for consideration will not bear too much examination when one considers the habits of the majority in expending their profits.

The Minister for Railways interjected.

Mr. CORBOY: To some extent it is an instance of living in glass houses, but the pastoralist is one of the most fortunate of all sections of the community and should have been one of the last to squeal. The people of this State, after all, are like a household. We have so much income and we have to live on it or go into debt. We are told that for years past we have been going into debt rapidly and that in future we have to live within our income. That may be true. It may be wise that we should live within our income. Let us assume that as a family we have been receiving an income of £4 10s. and living at the rate of £5 10s. We have to cut out the extra £1 of expenditure that we have been borrowing in the past. Before we attempt to touch the breakfast table, we should cut out luxuries. No attempt is being made to do that. I admit that a majority of what we term the luxuries of the people are not controlled by the State Parliament, but some of them are. So far as I can see, there is no attempt on the part of the Government to interfere with the luxury side of our existence, because possibly it represents to a great extent vested interests.

The Minister for Lands: Give us a chance.

Mr. CORBOY: I am willing to give the Minister a chance.

Mr. Angelo: What do you mean by luxuries?

Mr. CORBOY: I intend to mention some of them. The hon. member does not look as if he has missed many of them.

Mr. Angelo: I get only the necessities.

Mr. CORBOY: Apparently the necessities do the hon. member as much good as the luxuries would do me.

Mr. Angelo: I am prepared to make a sacrifice.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not know that the hon. member would be very seriously affected. Before we touch the breakfast tables of the workers we should deal with the wasteful expenditure that continues week after week and is not essential to the productive life of the community.

Mr. Angelo: Tell us what it is.

Mr. CORBOY: Racing is one of the luxuries. I shall probably be called a wows-er for mentioning it, but in Australia we are maintaining a huge army of men who year in and year out live on racing. Their whole time is devoted to watching the racing of horses to see which will get past the post first.

Mr. Angelo: Who goes to the races most, those you call capitalists or others?

Mr. CORBOY: The majority of a racing crowd are probably wage-earners.

Mr. Willecock: I do not think so. You cannot have been there lately.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not go to races once in 12 months.

Mr. Hegney: The best of society go to the races.

Mr. CORBOY: I agree: I said the workers.

The Minister for Railways: You have become a killjoy, have you not?

Mr. CORBOY: Not at all. The Minister knows me well enough to refrain from accusing me of that.

Mr. Angelo: I agree that racing is a luxury, but you say members on this side are keeping it going.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not say that, but I suggest it is one luxury over which the State Government have control. While I do not suggest the abolition of racing—I have no desire to deny the people a reasonable amount of legitimate pleasure—surely in a period of stress such as this there should be some curtailment of such luxuries. As I have said, a majority of the luxuries are not controlled by the State Government.

The Minister for Railways: You will not cut out bowls, will you? It is the only strenuous game I have ever engaged in.

Mr. Angelo: That is an old man's game.

Mr. CORBOY: If the Minister had taken to golf he would never have learnt the last hole on the course. There must be an immense drain on the country in providing the profits on the enormous sums invested in the motion picture industry from America. In Perth during the last few years consider-

able sums have been expended on two theatres, at any rate, controlled by American interests. Week after week there is a continual drain, running into figures that are astounding, for the production of American films. One film that ran for five weeks a few months ago contributed no less than £600 a week rent to the American company that produced it. In other words, £100 a day went out of Perth for rent for one picture produced by an American company. That gives some idea of what a drain pictures must be on Australia. In my opinion the country is overstocked with motor cars used purely for pleasure. I have no objection whatever to the motor vehicle used as an up-to-date means of transport for legitimate business. It has become absolutely essential to the efficient carrying on of business. That applies to motor lorries as well as to motor cars. In Australia, however, there is an immense number of motor vehicles maintained purely for pleasure. The original purchase cost, until recently at any rate, invariably went out of Australia, and once a car is purchased it becomes a continual drain on the owner for the purchase of the necessary petrol, oils, etc., to keep it running. There are many other luxuries one could mention.

Mr. Angelo: Motors make a tremendous amount of employment for garage people.

Mr. CORBOY: The people employed in the industry could be much better employed if the money devoted to the purchase of motors were used for the establishment of factories in order to produce our own requirements here.

Mr. Angelo: I agree with that.

The Minister for Railways: And then you get advocates of the use of buses and taxis which use imported material and run in competition with the railways which use local material.

Hon. P. Collier: We have "joy-riders" ourselves by motor cars into this trouble largely.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not suggest that by any means.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a fact; we are motor car mad.

Mr. Angelo: We are "internally combusted."

The Minister for Railways: You speak for yourself.

Mr. CORBOY: If we can believe what we are told about Australia's present position,

it is no credit to the country that we are the third highest owners of motors in the world. There, at any rate, we are encouraging and enjoying a luxury. There are other phases I should like to touch on to show the trend of my thoughts. There are many companies in the Commonwealth whose operations have a material bearing on the well-being of every member of the community. Shipping companies are carrying produce from one State to the other. Their charges for carrying sugar from Queensland affect every member of the community. We are told that many companies, shipping and other—I do not wish to specify shipping companies particularly—are having a bad time because they can pay only four, five or six per cent. dividends, and have been able to pay only five or six per cent. during the last year or two.

The Minister for Lands: That is more than the State service is paying.

Mr. CORBOY: Probably it is, but the privately-owned ships would not provide the service to the North-West and South coasts that the State ships do at anything like the same cost. What the State is losing on its shipping service—

Mr. Angelo: It is not losing now.

Mr. CORBOY: Assuming that it is losing, we are gaining by reason of the maintenance of production in those parts of the State served by its ships. I am not very sympathetic with the member for Gascoyne, because he is common with various other members of the House will condemn State trading concerns excepting the one that happens to affect his own little hamlet. That one must not be touched.

Mr. Angelo: It is not a trading concern.

Hon. P. Collier: Ships are a trading utility.

Mr. Angelo: No, a developmental utility.

Mr. CORBOY: Some eight years ago I remember the then member for Sussex indulging in a two hours denunciation of State trading concerns, and then he wound up with a plea for the extension of the State butter factory at Busselton. We were asked to abolish all the other State trading concerns but to keep the butter factory at Busselton going. That has been the attitude of members opposite to the question of State trading concerns. Wipe out the lot except the one that affects the individual's own little district.

The Attorney General: Do not generalise too much.

Hon. P. Collier: There are one or two of them who are whole-hearted about the matter.

Mr. CORBOY: Only one or two are in that condition.

The Minister for Railways: There do not happen to be any in their electorates.

Hon. P. Collier: No.

Mr. CORBOY: While the apparent dividends of many of these companies may be small, actually they are large. For a long period they have had prosperous years. In order to refrain from disclosing the profits they have earned, and the dividends they could pay, they have resorted to the practice of watering their stock. In some instances the stock has been watered by hundreds per cent., and the dividends of from 4 per cent. to 6 per cent. are paid on the watered stock as well as on the original subscribed capital. We cannot expect those of the working people who think to swallow without a protest a reduction in the standard of living, whilst we make no attempt to remedy the luxurious side of our national existence, or to deal with people who are paying dividends on watered stock. It is grossly unfair to expect the workers to accept a lower standard of living in the circumstances. Apparently the Government have no other thought in mind than to lower the standard of living to enable them to absorb more men on Government work at the same costs they are now incurring. Before sitting down I wish to make a special plea to the Government. I want them to give every consideration to the man on whom a considerable portion of this burden will fall. I refer to the man outback, to whom the Government has already shown a willingness to extend some consideration. I would include those who are engaged in wheat growing, mining, or any other primary industry. They should have reasonable consideration in the distribution of such funds as are available. A few days ago I had the pleasure, as a settler in the bush, of meeting the Minister for Lands in my private capacity rather than as a fellow-member of his in this Chamber. It was encouraging to know he had taken the opportunity to get out as early as possible to those distant places and see what we were doing. I plead with the Government to do their ut-

most to provide essentials for those who are pioneering the country, either by growing wheat or looking for gold on the fields. One could place under three or four headings the absolute essentials. One of these is water. May I remind the Government, as I have reminded previous Governments, that an extension of the goldfields water scheme into my electorate in particular is long overdue. The settlers are greatly handicapped, as the Minister knows, by the fact that they have long passed the stage when they can carry stock, and yet they cannot do so because of the lack of water. They have been discouraged from providing their own water supplies by the belief that the Government would in the near future extend the goldfields main to their properties. Such an extension is a much sounder proposition than the construction of a number of small dams. They have also been discouraged from spending agricultural money in providing their own water facilities because of the probability of this extension being made. This position has lasted for eight years, and has been a great handicap to the development of the district. I would also appeal for a little more co-operation between Government Departments in dealing with these questions. At Durack, in my electorate, a big Government dam was put down at considerable cost. The settlers within a 20-mile radius were rated at amounts ranging from 10d. per acre, for those who were living close by, to 2d. an acre for those who were on the outside fringe. The settlers were notified that the dam belonged to the Railway Department. This department reserves the right to refuse water at any time. In the middle of summer when private supplies have failed the department will be able to say to those who have paid the rate of 10d. an acre, "We want to conserve this water for locomotive purposes, and you cannot have it." If the dam belongs to the Railway Department, and the officials can be the arbiters to say whether the water can be used or not, it is grossly unfair to inflict this rate upon the settlers. It shows there is not the co-ordination between departments that ought to exist. It is essential that something should also be done for some of our roads. May I take this opportunity of telling you, Mr. Speaker, that my statement to the Minister for Land at Lake King the other day has come true. The railway crossing at Lake King was

completed last Saturday, but immediately after we had 41 points of rain and the road was washed away by Sunday morning. I told you, sir, at the time that the authorities were not making a real road of it.

Mr. Kenneally: It is a case of perpetual motion.

Mr. CORBOY: It looks like that.

Mr. Raphael: Another example of the Main Roads Board's operations.

Mr. CORBOY: An interjection like that is all right except that the hon. member does not understand the position up there.

Mr. Raphael: I understand how a great many roads have been made at a cost of thousands of pounds.

Mr. CORBOY: If the hon. member saw the difficulties the engineers have had to contend with, he would have a better appreciation of all that has been attempted.

Mr. Raphael: Is it anything like the Prince's Highway on the road to Mandurah?

Mr. CORBOY: Something will have to be done in this matter. I know that you, Mr. Speaker, are well acquainted with it, as is the Minister. It is a very important question to the settlers in a locality of that kind. They live many miles from a railway, more than double the distance they should be called upon to cart their produce, and they should at least have roads fit to carry it. I appeal to the Government to give earnest consideration to the provision of better feeder roads, especially for those who are a long way from the railway. It is also time something like a decent road through to Kalgoorlie was constructed. The first half of the work to Merredin has been almost completed. I am not asking that anything very special should be done.

Mr. Angelo: Is that a road running parallel to the railway?

The Minister for Railways: It should go to Carnarvon first, and then come back again.

Mr. CORBOY: It is an essential road, one of the main arteries of the State. I would suggest to the Premier that instead of constructing anything like a Prince's Highway, the Main Roads Board should gazette those particular distances of the road that it is necessary to fix up as a main road. That is, where there exists a patch of, say, five chains—as one finds, for instance, at Walgoolan—beside the siding badly chopped up through wheat carting and so forth, those five

chains should be gazetted a main road and fixed up by the Main Roads Board. Then the road would be practicable from one end to the other. In order to give access, it is necessary that some money should be spent on that road between Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. This section is in a shocking state, and the railway is not available in any large measure to those people, who are practically suburban residents of the metropolis of Kalgoorlie. Some consideration should be given there. In connection with railway facilities, too—a matter of great importance to the man out back—I hope that during the present session the Government will find it convenient to authorise the construction of the railway which is required from Southern Cross southwards in order to serve the settlers placed on the dusted miners' area, and other settlers to the south of Southern Cross. Those people have done extremely good work. They have played the game. Now that they have reached the stage of active production, they cannot carry on economically unless they are given proper railway facilities. I hope that subject will be given earnest consideration by the Government during the present session. As regards mining, too, it is difficult to know just how far the State can go. We all felt it a blow when the Prime Minister announced that he was unable, for the present at any rate, to countenance any form of bonus on the production of gold.

The Minister for Railways: The Prime Minister did not say that.

Mr. CORBOY: I understood he did. At any rate, the industry is one which in our present situation would be materially helpful if only it were flourishing. Unfortunately it is not quite so flourishing as we should like to see it. I give the Minister for Mines credit for being anxious to do the best he can, but I do ask him to be especially pressing on the Treasurer in behalf of goldmining. Means are available to the Government of assisting in that direction which are not available to the private individual, or not normally available to him. A more active policy of boring, deep boring particularly, might be pursued in testing some of the fields which were not worked out but were overshadowed by other fields more prominent at the time, and which have since proved not profitable to work, so far as is known at any rate, because of high costs.



Deep boring would test those fields out thoroughly, and show whether it would pay to open them up. I suggest that the Minister for Mines should do his best to secure from the Treasury as much money as possible for that purpose. Undoubtedly, if we can effect the revival of even one reasonably decent field in the goldmining areas, it will have a material effect on the well-being of the whole community of Western Australia. In the old Yilgarn or Southern Cross area, as distinguished from the Coolgardie area, little real work has ever been done, because just when Yilgarn might have got its opportunity through the introduction of British capital, the Golden Mile was discovered and naturally quite overshadowed those other smaller fields, with the result that capital was not available for their proper development. But I am satisfied—and so are most of the old mining men with whom one talks, men of experience—that there is a great deal of wealth still to be won from the ground in those fields. I appeal to the Minister to do everything possible, so far as the Government are concerned, towards thoroughly testing out those fields and, if possible, showing private enterprise where it can invest money with a reasonable chance of payable returns. Also I would appeal to the Minister to continue to do everything possible to foster prospecting. It would be a godsend to this country if a really good field were discovered. Assistance to prospectors, particularly the old prospectors who have been on the goldfields for many years, represents money well invested. Indeed, what the Government give to the prospector to-day is not much—a few shillings per week for stores over three or six months. After that it is usually found that the Government cannot carry him any longer. Unfortunately we have had the experience recently of the money available for assistance to prospectors giving out before the end of the financial year, owing to the fact that the Mines Department, under the late Minister, were administering the assistance as sympathetically to the prospector. The amount granted for the purpose is not large, and I do hope that during the current 12 months the Treasurer will not find it necessary at any stage of the period to cut out assistance to prospectors.

The Premier: I am prospecting for money to assist this other prospecting.

Mr. CORBOY: I quite realise the Treasurer's difficulty, but I do suggest that this is a small item for which perhaps money could be found even if it could not be found for big items. Moreover it is a good investment, because if by lucky chance a reasonably decent field should be discovered, the benefit to the State would be immense. While on that subject, may I take the opportunity of a passing word with the Minister to secure some co-ordination between Government departments. Recently I had to fix up a case where the Mines Department had granted the necessary assistance to two old prospectors to go out into an area of country which they knew pretty well, in which they knew where to look for gold. These two chaps, perfectly legitimate prospectors, after securing their assistance from the State, found the utmost difficulty in getting out of Perth because the Labour Bureau would not give them the necessary rail warrants. They had obtained the necessary assistance from the Mines Department, and it was merely a matter of £3 in the way of railway tickets to enable them to use the trucker they were getting from the Mines Department. I had a good deal of difficulty in obtaining for them the necessary rail warrants. I have nothing further to say on parochial matters, except that I am fortunate in being able to give the Premier and the House the assurance that the season, so far as the Yilgarn wheat growers are concerned, is apparently assured. They look like at least repeating, if not bettering, their wonderful record of 1927. They then established a State record of 18 bushels average for 66,000 acres of crop. This year the crops certainly look better than they did in 1927. I am hopeful, in fact I am sure, that the Yilgarn wheat growers will be able to return a yield at least equal to that obtained in 1927. Unfortunately the intervening years have been bad, and it will need this good season to pay up the debts of the settlers. Then they will need another good season to get something for themselves. One reason for the especially good season in the Yilgarn district this year is the adoption by the Agricultural Bank of the policy of making advances for fallow. That district was the foundation of the No. 2 Zone as regards the fallowing policy. The Yilgarn growers this year have definitely shown that fallowing is the right

policy. I urge that where the Agricultural Bank has given a settler advances for two years' fallowing and proposes to continue it no longer, he should be afforded a third year. It must be borne in mind that at least 90 per cent. of the Yilgarn settlers will need this good crop to pay up their old liabilities, and the policy of fallowing in that area in No. 2 Zone should not be allowed to lapse now for the want of the necessary finance. I am sure that if the advance is continued in necessitous cases for the third year, there will be no objection on the settlers' part to the department taking a lien over the resultant crops to get their money back. Surely to goodness they will get 5s. per acre back on the fallowed crops. I do appeal to the Government to give that matter earnest consideration, because I understand that it is intended to make the advance only for two years. If it is continued for another year, I am sure it will have a material bearing on the future success of the settlers. Let me conclude by again appealing to the Government to take the people of this country into their confidence fully as regards the difficulties we are facing, and to realise that, after all, the workers of this country are justified in thinking that the Government should not expect them to accept a lower standard of living without taking them into their confidence and without imposing the burden elsewhere where it can be better borne.

**MR. MUNSIE** (Hannans) [10.20]: It is not my intention to discuss matters generally, in accordance with the usual custom on the Address-in-reply. I recognise that the most important matter for discussion in Australia to-day relates to finance and that can be done more fittingly in a week or two, when the Budget is under discussion.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

**Mr. MUNSIE**: There are two matters I wish to deal with. I embrace the present opportunity as the only one afforded a private member to raise complaints on the floor of the House. There are two complaints I wish to ventilate, and both have reference to one Minister—the Minister for Railways and Mines. I am not raising the complaint without having first of all exhausted every avenue I could employ to get satisfaction from the Minister himself, but I have failed to get it. I believe economy is necessary in many directions, but I claim that if there

is one avenue respecting which the Government should be chary of effecting a saving, it is in respect of those unfortunates who are being debarred from further working in our mines. I shall not mention any names; I have spoken to the Minister regarding the matter. The Miners' Phthisis Act, as it stands, contains provisions of such a description that I am convinced the Minister has violated that legislation. Section 9 of that Act is definite in setting out that when a miner is prohibited from working on a mine, it shall be the duty of the department to pay him the ruling rate of wages prescribed by the Arbitration Court award for the job in respect of which he was debarred. That course has been followed ever since the Act was proclaimed.

The Minister for Mines: No, it has not.

**Mr. MUNSIE**: Yes, it has.

The Minister for Mines: Not at all.

**Mr. MUNSIE**: I admit the Minister has been in office for three months, but I defy the Minister to mention one case prior to his assumption of office as Minister for Mines, since the Act was proclaimed, in which a man did not receive the ruling rate of wage until such time as a doctor had again examined him and certified the man's fitness or otherwise for work. There is no such case that the Minister can mention under the regime of any other Minister, except his own. The Act is specific on the point and when a doctor has re-examined a man and declared him fit for light work, it then becomes the duty of the Government, and of the Mines Department in particular, to find light work for that individual. If that cannot be done, the man must be paid full wages until such time as they do so. In most instances that course has been followed, until quite recently. The facts are these: An individual was certified as able to do light work. He came to Perth and approached the chairman of the Miners' Phthisis Board and pleaded with him to agree that, irrespective of what the doctor may have said regarding his condition, the man himself was not sufficiently fit to do light work. The chairman of the board rightly told him that he could not accept such a proposal. The man offered to accept the half-wages he was entitled to under the compensation scheme, in accordance with the provisions made for a man declared unfit for work or as totally incapacitated. The chairman very properly told him that he could not apply those conditions

and that if the doctor had declared him fit to do light work, he would have to comply with that decision. There are about 40 of these men engaged at the Zoological Gardens under the Parks and Gardens Board or in similar positions. The men are paid the Arbitration Court award rate for the district in which they operate. With regard to the man whose case I am dealing with, I agree that the board, or the Minister himself, would be wrong if any attempt were made to override the decision of the medical officer. Finally, a job in the country was selected for the man at £2 9s. per week, which is just half the wages he was receiving formerly when working on the mines. That represents a breach of the Act. The Government are in duty bound to pay proper award wages. The man did not complain about the work he was asked to do because, in fact, there was nothing to do. The Railway Department had actually been paying 10s. a week to a local resident to do the job and therefore the man had nothing whatever to do.

Mr. Marshall: Do you say he was sent to a job on which he had nothing to do?

Mr. MUNSIE: Exactly. His job was to hold a key. When the man asked the chairman of the board what the job was, the chairman told him to go to the Railway Department for instructions. He did so and was told that his duty would be to open and close two gates at a siding, and to look after the key used for the purpose of locking up a small shed at the siding. When settlers required their goods from the shed, they had to go to the man for the key, and it was his duty to see that the settlers took the goods they required and then to lock up the shed again. When the man arrived at the siding, however, he found that there was one gate only; it had been propped up and had not been shut for over two years. That is what the man, who had been paid to do the work formerly, was able to inform him. As to the other gate that was supposed to be there, he found there was none, and there never had been one.

The Minister for Mines: Well, we will put one there.

Mr. Marshall: That will rectify an anomaly.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes. The man was sent there and told he must accept the job, or receive no compensation at all. I do not care what the job may have been. I am not

fighting the case individually for this particular man, but because of the principle at stake. It means that if this case goes by the board and the department gets away with it, and it is legal for that to be done, and if the department can demand that a man shall take a job irrespective of what it may be, compel him to do the work, be it what it may, for which he will receive merely the sustenance rate he is entitled to under the Act, then what is going to happen to the 40 odd men we have working for the Gardens Board to-day, or the 43 men out prospecting to-day who are prohibited from following their ordinary vocation as miners because they have been found to be suffering from tuberculosis? There is something wrong again even in the conditions suggested by the board itself and by the Minister. This man protested against going up there, but eventually accepted the post under protest. He came and saw me. I told him he was wrong in endeavouring to get placed as a totally incapacitated man. I said "The board cannot do it, they would be wrong if they did. If the doctor certifies that you are able to work you have to accept the job, irrespective of what the job may be. The Government are bound to pay you the basic wage for it." They sent this man up there and told him he was to get £2 9s. per week. He is not even getting that. The pay he received for the first fortnight was £4 17s., whereas it should have been £4 18s. or £2 9s. per week. His second fortnight started on the 22nd August and ended on the 4th November. For that fortnight he got £3 12s. or £1 16s. per week.

Hon. P. Collier: That must have been because there was only one gate to close, instead of two.

Mr. MUNSIE: Possibly so. I am not arguing from the point of view of this individual worker. Any number of those poor unfortunates are being paid wages for work being done at the Zoo or at Crawley or other places. Certainly they are not capable of doing a fair day's work; but while the doctor certifies that they are able to work, there is no question about it they must be paid the ruling rate of wage. Why pick this individual and send him to another job? Yet it is not singular. I know of cases which I fixed up while I was in office, or rather the board fixed them up. There are many other cases on all fours with this, but in every other

case the board is making up the difference between the amount paid by the employer and the basic wage. We have two cases in Perth; one in which the employer had a job worth only 30s. per week. Was it not better for the department to say, "We will accept that 30s., collect it, and make up the difference between that amount and the basic wage?" There are two cases in Perth of which I know where the employer pays only 30s. per week and the Miners' Phthisis Board are finding the balance, which the Act says they are entitled to do. But in this case the man's wages have been reduced to £3 12s. per fortnight. I think it must be a mistake. I do not think it was the intention of the board to pay anything less than the £2 9s. per week which that man was sent there to get.

The Minister for Mines: How long is it since you have known of that.

Mr. MUNSIE: Only since last night.

The Minister for Mines: And all to-day has gone. It might have been reported earlier.

Mr. MUNSIE: That does not alter the case. I do not care whether it is £3 12s. per fortnight or £4 18s. per fortnight. I am here to protest as much against the £4 18s. as against the £3 12s. Both instances violate the spirit and the letter of the Act. The man must be paid the ruling rate of wage for the district.

Mr. Sampson: Did you ask the Minister for an explanation?

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, and the only explanation given was that which I outlined at the beginning of my speech. The chairman of the board told me the matter was not finalised. The man was instructed to go to the railway station next morning, get his pass, go up country and accept the job, which he had to take at £2 9s. per week. He protested against it. When I saw the chairman of the board he said the matter had not been finalised. Later that day I had to see the Minister on another subject. When we had finished I brought this case before him, and he sent for the chairman of the board to explain exactly what had happened. The explanation proved to be just what I have given to members. The man had asked to be placed on the compensation half rate and allowed to do nothing, to go just where he liked. The reply I got after discussing it with the

Minister was that the man was only getting what he had asked for. I told the Minister then I thought it would be foolish if he insisted upon that. Evidently he is insisting upon it, because the reply received to-day from the chairman of the board, dated the 5th of this month, reads as follows:—

I am in receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo requesting that you be paid the basic wage of £4 5s. per week for the position of caretaker at a railway siding, or removed from the district. In reply I have to inform you that the matter has been considered by the board, and in view of the exceptionally light nature of the duties the Board considers the remuneration you are receiving as reasonable for the work. I am therefore directed by the Minister to inform you that he regrets your request cannot be acceded to.

That is forming a precedent in respect of payments under the Miners' Phthisis Act which has never been attempted in this State before. I should be lacking in my duty if I did not protest when I see the thin edge of the wedge being inserted. I recognise that this year there will be a considerably larger number of men prohibited from working on the mines than those prohibited last year. That being so, I am only doing what is just in the interests of those men when I protest against their being treated as this man is being treated. If this case is going to stand, the Government could turn round to-morrow and simply say to all those working for the Gardens Board or over at the Zoo—because the Zoo authorities did pay for a considerable time and I believe still are paying 6s. per week to these men—the Government could turn round and say, "You have to accept that job at half wages. There is a job for you. We will collect the 6s. and you can work at half wages." The Railway Department are paying 10s. per week to this man and the Miners' Phthisis Board are collecting the 10s. The man is not getting the 10s. which the Railway Department are paying, the Government are paying him only £1 16s. I protest against that sort of thing, and I hope the Minister will be able to give some satisfactory explanation why the man is being asked to work for less than the basic wage when the doctor certified him fit to do light work.

Mr. Marshall: The basic wage has nothing to do with him. It is the ruling rate of the district.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Act requires the payment of the ruling rate of the district until the doctor certifies that he is no longer able to follow any occupation. The basic rate in the district where the man is working is £4 5s. a week, and he is entitled to that, even though the department he is supposed to work for pays only 10s. a week for the job. It is the duty of the phthisis board to make up the difference. The other case affects the removal from the Miners' Phthisis Board of the workmen's inspector at Kalgoorlie. I know the Minister will say the removal was not made by him, but that he accepted the inspector's resignation. I have a copy of the letter sent by the workmen's inspector to the Minister, and a copy of the letter sent in reply. I wrote to the Minister on this matter and received a reply that it could not be considered. That is what I expected. There may be something more in this case than appears at first sight. It was said that the workmen's inspector was getting £100 a year for his services on the board.

The Minister for Mines: Who gave it to him?

Mr. MUNSIE: The member for Mt. Magnet, when Minister for Mines.

The Minister for Mines: It was not a recommendation of the department; it was simply a Ministerial act.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, because the board had to be created. The department recommended what the chairman should get. The Government decided that a public servant should be chairman of the board, and Mr. D'Arcy was appointed. In my opinion Mr. D'Arcy is not getting a fair deal. He did not get a fair deal when I was Minister for Mines or during the term of my predecessor. We could not get it for him from the Public Service Commissioner. I did my best to get the Public Service Commissioner to relent, but he refused. I still say that D'Arcy is not getting a fair deal. There is not a public servant in the State who is administering so large a sum of money as economically as he is doing, and yet the Public Service Commissioner point blank refused to recognise him as other than a temporary appointment.

The Minister for Mines: Of whom are you speaking?

Mr. MUNSIE: Of Mr. D'Arcy, the chairman of the board. The Government also decided that there should be a medical man

on the board, and Dr. Mitchell was appointed. Was there anything wrong with that? To complete the board we recognised that the men employed in the chief mining centre should have representation, and we accepted their recommendation of the workmen's inspector, Mr. Darcey. It was arranged that he should be paid £100 a year for his work. He received a letter on the 2nd of the month stating that his salary would be reduced by 50 per cent. from the 1st of the month. That was not fair, and he protested against it.

The Minister for Mines: He did not protest when they started his salary and gave him notice of it about a month afterwards.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am aware of that. I backed up Darcey's protest against the reduction and said that, instead of his work being purely formal, it had doubled since his appointment. When he was first appointed he had to interview and take particulars from the men withdrawn from the mines. Now, in addition to doing that, he is responsible for 43 men who are prospecting whom he has to interview, and in connection with whom he has to attend to the necessary correspondence, and he is also responsible for five men engaged in eradicating Bathurst burr. Yet it is contended that his work is now purely formal.

The Attorney General: Has he any other duties?

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, he is the workmen's inspector.

The Attorney General: Then this is an extra job?

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, and he receives extra remuneration for doing the additional work.

The Attorney General: And the extra remuneration was cut down.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, it was cut down by 50 per cent. The Minister said it was some time after that when the man complained. Mr. Darcey has known the Minister longer than I have.

The Minister for Mines: I have nothing to say against him.

Mr. MUNSIE: When he had heard from the department he wrote to me as the ex-Minister for Mines who had been in charge of the department, and because I was also member for the district. I then wrote to the Minister, but some time elapsed before I received a reply. Before that reply came a second letter was sent by the department

to Mr. Darcey, who replied to it. The Minister said a long time elapsed between letters. I always think the Mines Department is as efficient and up to date as any other in the service.

Mr. Marshall: Too right.

Mr. MUNSIE: I have never known any reply from the Mines Department to be expedited as was the reply to Mr. Darcey's last letter. His communication was dated the 11th, and reached Perth on the morning of the 13th, having been posted on the 12th. On the day on which the letter was received a reply was despatched to Mr. Darcey dispensing with his services.

Hon. P. Collier: An up-to-date department.

Mr. MUNSIE: There was no question about the efficiency of the department in that respect.

The Minister for Mines: Who sent the letter?

Mr. MUNSIE: The Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. Calanchini, who also signed the other letters. I do not know whether the Minister has seen this particular communication; at any rate he has received my letter of protest relating to it. I told Mr. Darcey when I saw his letter that he was foolish to include the final paragraph. The Minister knows positively from his long acquaintance with Mr. Darcey that the last paragraph was not intended to be taken literally. Mr. Darcey asked for a review of the case, pointing out the work he had been doing and the extra work that had been placed upon him. He then concluded by saying he respectfully requested that the matter of the reduction of his allowance as a member of the Miners' Phthisis Board be reconsidered as he was not prepared to carry on at the reduced salary.

The Minister for Mines: Surely that is a resignation.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister jumps at it because his reply indicates that.

Hon. P. Collier: He jumped at it as a resignation.

Mr. MUNSIE: But he knows it was not a resignation. Had it not been for an old score between them, it would never have been accepted as a resignation. The paragraph reads—

I therefore respectfully request that the matter of the reduction of my allowance as a member of the Miners' Phthisis Board be reconsidered, as I am not prepared to continue under a reduction.

Mr. Sampson: Read the rest of it.

Mr. MUNSIE: That is all.

Mr. Sampson: It is different from what you read just now.

The Minister for Mines: What did you do with the electoral officer, Mr. Cooke? He sent exactly the same sort of letter to your Government and you accepted his resignation.

Hon. P. Collier: It was nothing of the kind.

The Minister for Mines: You took him at his word.

Mr. MUNSIE: That was a definite resignation, and signed as such, but Mr. Darcey did not send in his resignation.

The Attorney General: It can be construed into meaning that.

Mr. MUNSIE: Why would a man write a letter covering a whole sheet of foolscap pleading with the Government to reconsider their decision and giving reasons why they should do so, and then end up by saying he was not prepared to carry on at a reduced rate?

Mr. Corboy: The letter is badly expressed, but clearly he did not mean to resign.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister knows that, but sent the following reply—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication dated the 11th inst., and in reply to inform you that I am instructed by the Hon. the Minister to inform you that he is unable to reconsider the question of the remuneration paid to you as a member of the Miners' Phthisis Board. Your intimation in the concluding paragraph of your letter that you are not prepared to carry on at the reduced salary is accepted, and your services in that capacity will not be required after the 21st inst. Other arrangements will be made for the carrying on the work after that date. I desire to thank you for the attention which you have given to this work in the past. (Sgd.) M. J. Calanchini.

The department received Mr. Darcey's letter on the morning of the 13th. It could not have reached Perth earlier than 9.45 a.m., and would not be delivered before 11 o'clock, and yet on the same day the reply goes back to Mr. Darcey. It shows how much consideration was given to a foolscap, type-written sheet.

Hon. P. Collier: It was evidently a slack day in the department.

Mr. MUNSIE: On the same day and within a couple of minutes, this reply is sent back to Darcey. The department has not treated him fairly. I understand from cor-

respondence I have seen and the regulations that have been tabled that the Government do not intend to continue the two workmen's inspectors in the Eastern Goldfields district. One of the men has unfortunately been prohibited from going down the mines as he has been discovered to be suffering from tuberculosis. The Government, however, are not going to appoint another man. The regulations to which I have referred alter the districts of the north-east Coolgardie inspector and the Eastern Goldfields inspector. Because of the running about he had to do, Mr. Darcey, who was a member of the Phthisis Board, was supplied with a motor car. The Minister has taken the vehicle from him and handed it to one of the Government inspectors. How is a workmen's inspector going to travel the district without a car? Are the Government prepared to pay him a travelling allowance or give him a pass on the railways?

The Minister for Mines: You know I have amended the regulations.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes.

The Minister for Mines: Not much travelling will require to be done now.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not know how a workmen's inspector at Leonora is going to reach Dundas without travelling. One place is about 140 miles south of Kalgoorlie and the other is 228 miles to the north.

The Minister for Mines: You do not suggest he is going to Dundas, do you?

Mr. MUNSIE: Your regulations say so.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister has not read them. He says that Leonora, Mt. Magnet, Menzies, Broad Arrow, Coolgardie and Dundas shall be under the one inspector. How is a man to get from Leonora to Dundas, seeing that both places are in the one district, without doing a certain amount of travelling?

The Minister for Works: Is there not a train running there.

Mr. MUNSIE: There is a train once a week from Coolgardie to Dundas, and I think there are two trains a week to Kalgoorlie. Outside that, there is travelling around the district. Workmen's inspectors were appointed for the purpose of giving them opportunities to inspect independently of the Government inspectors the workings of mines. The workmen's inspectors carry out

the same duties as Government inspectors in inspecting prospecting shows.

The Minister for Mines: No. I have amended that regulation, and they do not inspect any mines employing less than 10 men. You altered it, I know, in order to make more work.

Mr. MUNSIE: There is a good deal of travelling to do, and I want to know how the workmen's inspector in question is to travel unless he has some means of locomotion. The Gwalia inspector has never had a car. Will the Minister let me know later whether under the altered regulations the workmen's inspectors are to be confined to the mines in Kalgoorlie and Boulder and not permitted to go to Mt. Margaret? Will he also let me know what arrangements he proposes to make for the Leonora man to get to Dundas, whether he has a travelling allowance or not? The other workmen's inspector on the Murchison is stationed at Meekatharra, and he also has to go to Wiluna and as far as Northampton. Is he to be provided with a car? The Leonora man never had a car simply because his duties for a number of years were confined to the Gwalia mine. Only in some special cases did he hire a motor, or go out with the district inspector in his car.

Mr. Marshall: The Murchison workmen's inspector has lost his car, too.

The Minister for Mines: It is not lost. We know where it is.

Mr. MUNSIE: I shall not stress any other point. Finance can be argued better on the Estimates than on the Address-in-reply. However, I would have no chance of dealing with these two matters on the Estimates. Even were the case otherwise, that would be rather too late a stage. My desire was to deal with them as early as possible. I hope the Minister will reconsider his decision with regard to paying £3 16s. per fortnight to a man who is entitled, under the Act, to £4 5s. per week. I hope the Minister will not create a precedent in the case of these unfortunates, but will pay them what they are entitled to receive. I urge him also to reconsider his other decision even at this late hour. He must have someone to look after the interests which Mr. Darcey looked after before he was put off. Mr. Darcey did good, useful work in the interests of the board, and also in the interests

of the State, with regard to a huge sum of money—last year it amounted to £43,000. In any case, Mr. Darcey came to Perth to talk to the men down here. Because of knowing almost all of them, he was able to settle many little grievances and difficulties that even the chairman of the board was unable to settle. In my opinion the Minister acted unwisely in the interests of the board, of the men, and of the Government, in dispensing with Mr. Darcey's services. I hope the hon. gentleman will reconsider both his decisions, and substitute favourable compromises.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. J. Seaddan—Maylands) [11.5]: I had no intention of speaking on the Address-in-reply until the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) made certain complaints as to the administration of the Mines Department, over which I have control for the time being. Before proceeding to answer the hon. member, may I be permitted to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on attaining your high office. I think I have known you personally longer than any other member of the Chamber has known you. I was acquainted with you before you came to Western Australia. I am aware of the very prominent part you have played in the public life of this State.

Hon. P. Collier: The Speaker and I went to the same school.

The **MINISTER FOR MINES**: But the Leader of the Opposition did not make quite as good use of his schooling as his Honour the Speaker did. I appreciate the kindly references to myself made by the Leader of the Opposition. He alluded to the fact that I went out with the Government, and came back again with the Government. He suggested that this might be a matter of good fortune or of good judgment. If I may be permitted to decide the matter for myself, I will say that it was good judgment both on my part and on that of the electors of Maylands.

Mr. Panton: It was a bad job for the country.

The **MINISTER FOR MINES**: At the present time I am not much concerned about what may be called party differences. I am concerned about the conditions under which the people of this country have to exist, owing not to any fault of their own, or to any fault in the possi-

bilities of the State, but owing largely to circumstances over which we have no control. I know it is a common practice to blame the other party for any faults that arise. It is the prerogative, I suppose, of our friends opposite to take advantage during the next two or three years of urging whatever they may be able to urge against the Government, for the purpose of bringing about the downfall of the Ministry. It is not their duty, naturally, to say anything likely to make the Government more stable. The public, however, are well enough educated in party politics to know that even utterances in this Chamber sometimes require sifting. All I can tell hon. members opposite is that although we may not see eye to eye in every matter, I believe we can travel a long way together on a road that will lead the State to prosperity. I hope, therefore, that though they may criticise, their criticism will be helpful. If it is not helpful, we can well afford to disregard it. I happen to be called at the moment the Minister controlling unemployment. I do not know whether that is going to be a perpetual name for my particular office. I hope it will not prove so. I hope the office will soon disappear. All I wish to say about it at this stage is that no person in his sane senses would suggest that the present Government, who have been in office only since April of this year, can be charged with responsibility for the unemployment that unhappily exists in Western Australia at present. If the Government had attempted at the moment of taking office to employ all the men out of work, they would not have prevented what unfortunately occurred in many industries—temporary closing down, or in some cases almost permanent closing down, with the result of throwing additional men on the labour market. We did, however, adopt a slightly different attitude in dealing with unemployment. I have consistently held the view that the problem of unemployment is too difficult for me to solve. I am afraid it is too difficult even for economists to solve. Varying opinions have been expressed in this Chamber with regard to unemployment. On the one hand it is said that unemployment exists in what are termed rich countries as well as in poor countries. As a matter of fact, statistics generally show that there is more unemployment in rich countries than in poor countries. I do not know why it should



be so, but it is so. Again, we are told that unemployment is due to the fact that one country is a borrowing country and another a lending country. But unemployment exists in both classes of countries. It is a problem over which we can waste a lot of our time in trying to solve it. I prefer to deal with it just as we know it. I suggest that we should try, if we can, somewhat to ease the position temporarily, in the hope of the community eventually recuperating to such an extent that the problem will disappear entirely. In the meantime I recognise that what the Opposition said so much about in 1922 really represents the position, and that it is the function of the Government to at least feed their citizens, and not allow them to starve. I want to point out to Opposition members, however, that that it not a function that falls to but one particular brand of Government, but to all Governments alike. It is not the duty of a member of Parliament to say that such a task is the function of the Government, and to stress that point while he is sitting in Opposition, and then, the Opposition having taken charge of the Treasury bench, to say it is no longer the responsibility of Government to do anything of the sort. I remember an instance in 1922 when there was little or no unemployment compared with what has existed during the last 12 months. In 1929-30 full sustenance has been paid to the unemployed, but that did not apply in 1922. Yet we had the spectacle of some members now sitting on the Opposition benches, but recently having left the Treasury bench, saying in 1922 that it was not only the function of the Government to find work for their citizens, but if they were not able to do so, it was their bounden duty to find sustenance and pay the basic wage ruling in the State during the time the men were idle.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Mr. McCallum, the member for South Fremantle, at the 1922 Labour Congress.

Hon. P. Collier: And pay the basic rate of wages?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. It is just as well to remember that.

Mr. Pantou: Were you at that conference?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will not ask Opposition members to take my word for it. I presume they will not deny that what

I have in my possession is a copy of the official report of the proceedings of the Fifth General Council of the Western Australian Branch of the Australian Labour Party (11th Labour Congress), held at the Protestant Hall, Perth, in June, 1922. On page 20 there appears a report of the proceedings relating to unemployment, and is headed in big type, "The Unemployed." It sets out—

On the opening day, Mr. A. McCallum, M.L.A., upon a suspension of Standing Orders, dealt with the unemployed crisis. He said the Government should find work or sustenance for unemployed.

Then he went on to talk about immigration, and wound up by moving—

In view of the widespread unemployment now existing throughout this State and the consequent distress and poverty prevailing, Congress calls upon the Federal and State Governments—

Both Nationalist Governments at the time—

—to issue immediate relief, and to see that every citizen is provided with work, and further records its decision that in the choice of land settlers, local residents should be given equality of terms and preference in selection.

At a later stage the report states—

Later, Mr. McCallum reported that the motion carried during the morning session had been presented by the deputation to the Acting Premier. The Acting Premier informed them that Cabinet was giving serious consideration to the unemployed situation. It was intended by the Government to put certain work in hand almost immediately, and meanwhile to continue giving relief to married men.

After the discussion in the morning it had been decided to appoint a committee, which consisted of Mrs. Hogarth and Messrs. A. McCallum and H. Millington, to act as a delegation to wait upon the Acting Premier, and to submit the motion to him. The matter was so urgent that it decided to wait on the Acting Premier there and then. The delegates saw him, and presented the report, which I have read. At a later stage of the Congress, Mr. McCallum submitted a further report, and the pamphlet contains the following:—

On behalf of the committee, Mr. A. McCallum submitted the following report:

That this Congress, having received representations from Kalgoorlie, Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Northam, Murchison, Collier, Fremantle, Midland Junction, and Perth, request that inquiries be made by a Government offi-

cial and representatives of Labour to ascertain the number of unemployed in each centre, and that Messrs. J. Hickey, M.L.C., and W. D. Johnson be Labour's representatives.

That the Government be called upon to provide work and immediate maintenance to all unemployed equivalent to the minimum wage until work is found.

That is pretty definite.

Mr. Hegney: What is wrong with that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member should ask his friends who have but recently left the Treasury bench.

Mr. Panton: It sounds like one of your old sentiments again.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I suppose so. But that was not all. There were also the following resolutions:—

That no further retrenchment be made by any Government department, and pending notices of dismissal be withdrawn.

That in mining centres provision be made for equipping prospecting parties.

That representations be made by the Government to mining companies to make available leases now partially worked for unlimited and more equitable tributing.

That opportunity be given the unemployed to take up land.

That in the event of the Government failing to effectively deal with the problem, Parliament be called together to deal with the position.

That was in 1922.

Mr. Kenneally: Your leader said there was no unemployment in 1922.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I ask the hon. member to take a dose of his own medicine! What I have been quoting represents the actual policy adopted by the Labour Congress.

Mr. Kenneally: But he said there was no unemployment then.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There was what Labour people called an "unemployment crisis" at the time. But what they designated as such was merely a ripple compared with the wave confronting us in 1930.

Mr. Kenneally: And it will be bigger if you remain in office.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Probably it will extend still further. We must realise the fact, irrespective of whose may have been the responsibility, that the position is with us and we must find a solution. We will not find it in expressing opinions that the Government in power have a responsibility that was not held equally in

turn by the former Government drawn from members of the Opposition.

Mr. Willcock: That is quite all right.

Hon. P. Collier: That was the attitude of your Leader before the election.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: What are the Opposition complaining about?

Hon. P. Collier: The complaint is not that there is not work for all, but that promises were made that there would be work for all.

Mr. Kenneally: Read what the Premier said.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Well, let us take that phase of it.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, that you would find work for all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and find sustenance for them too.

Opposition members interjected.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I ask you, Mr. Speaker, who is delivering the present speech? While others were speaking, I listened attentively and now it is my turn. Let me tell the Opposition members I will have my say, and that is definite.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, that is definite.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Statements were made by members now sitting on either side of the House.

Opposition members: That is not so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is not a member, not even the Premier and the ex-Premier, who knew that the position existing to-day would actually arise.

Hon. P. Collier: In all my speeches I said it would.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know that the Leader of the Opposition said the position would be harder. He knew there was trouble ahead, so did the Prime Minister and so did Mr. Theodore.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not denied.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And Mr. Theodore was returned to Parliament after making much more definite statements than those made by the Premier, about whom Opposition members have had so much to say. They do not have a word to say about Mr. Theodore's promises.

Hon. P. Collier: Well, what about it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The position is so serious that irrespective of what we may have said prior to the elections, we are forced to face the difficulty from a different angle to-day.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not what you said in April.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have said that previously.

Hon. P. Collier: We would have no cause for complaint if that was what you said in April.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If I were to turn up the evidence, I could quote what Opposition members promised regarding what would be done in the future.

Hon. P. Collier: You cannot find any promises by me.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not say that the Leader of the Opposition did make any such statements, but there was a campaign director for his party during elections and he made promises. There is no question about that. As a matter of fact, it is easy to draw attention to statements made by members now sitting in this Chamber. Those statements made before the elections were made, I daresay, in all good faith, but they must know now that what they suggested is impossible to accomplish.

Mr. Kennelly: You are a good apologist.

Hon. P. Collier: What were the promises?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some hon. members talked about what would be done if they were sitting on the Treasury bench. As a matter of fact, irrespective of what party may be in charge of the Treasury bench, at the present time, there could be no difference in the actual position.

Hon. P. Collier: I do not say there could.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is an admission I have been asking for.

Mr. Corboy: Prior to the election you said what would take place.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No.

Mr. Corboy: Your Leader did.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And I am sure that in talking as he did the Premier was perfectly sincere. I believe in time he will be able to do what he promised.

Mr. Wansbrough: He knew the actual state of affairs at that time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He did not.

Mr. Wansbrough: Of course he did.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If he did, I did not.

Mr. Wansbrough: The dogs were barking; it! What nonsense!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Let me say that quite a number of statements circulated during the election campaign did not do credit to those responsible for them.

Mr. Panton: I can give you a few that were made at Leederville.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And I can quote a few that were made at Leederville during a previous election. Some of the leaflets were used again at the last election without a change of any sort except the elimination of the word "Leederville" and the insertion of another name in lieu. But before the election campaign was completed some of those statements were having a very different influence from that contemplated by their author. They had been framed with a view to setting up a revulsion of feeling against me, whereas in the end they were causing a revulsion of feeling against their authors. I have already said that I had not proposed to speak on the Address-in-reply but for the remarks made by the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) who only a little while ago vacated the office I am now filling—that of Minister for Mines. As to the case mentioned by him, I say again I knew nothing of it until he brought it under my notice. Whatever action was taken, was taken without consultation with me by a board appointed by a previous Minister for Mines. That same board carried on during Mr. Munsie's term of office as Minister for Mines and, as I say, decided the case under review without reference to me. I knew nothing whatever of it until action was taken along the lines now complained of by the hon. member. When he brought the case to me that action had gone so far that I refused to interfere, on the ground that presumably the board had acted in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Munsie: I am told it was not so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The action complained of by the hon. member was taken by a board that the hon. member's Government created, and which he himself carried on. That action was taken without reference to me, so it cannot be said that I have been responsible for any breach of the Act that may have been committed. I can tell the hon. member now that I believe that action was in keeping with the true spirit and letter of the Act.

Hon. P. Collier: It was not in keeping with the letter of the Act, let alone the spirit.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I propose to have the matter submitted to the Attorney General for a decision on that point. If the Attorney General rules that the action is not in keeping with the spirit and letter of the Act, I will instruct the board to vary that action. It seems that the desires of the person concerned were not acceded to by the board.

Hon. P. Collier: That does not warrant a breach of the Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will ask the Attorney General to decide whether there has been a breach of the Act, and if so the board will be instructed accordingly. As to Mr. Darcey, the workmen's inspector, the story told by the hon. member was not the complete story. Mr. Darcey was not appointed as a representative of the A.W.U. through the A.W.U. submitting his name. He was appointed a workmen's inspector and received a salary of £7 5s. weekly. When that appointment was first made the then Minister for Mines (Mr. Troy) forwarded a minute to the Under Secretary to the effect that Cabinet had decided to appoint a board to administer the Miners' Phthisis Act, consisting of a departmental officer, a medical officer and a representative of the A.W.U. The minute concluded—

I desire that you make a recommendation as to the medical officer, and the officer to represent the Mines Department.

The Under Secretary for Mines made a recommendation, in the course of which he said that Dr. Atkinson agreed that Dr. Mitchell would be the most suitable appointee as the medical representative. The Under Secretary's recommendation continued as follows:—

I recommend that the full board be Mr. A. B. D'Arcy, of this department (Chairman), Mr. L. C. Darcey, at present workmen's inspector of mines, Kalgoolie, as representative of the A.W.U., and Dr. Mitchell as medical representative . . . . I do not think there is any necessity to relieve Mr. Darcey of his duties as workmen's inspector at the present juncture, as there is not so far enough work involved in connection with this board to keep him fully occupied. I would suggest, therefore, that matters remain as they are for the time being, and that he be paid an additional £50 per annum for his work in regard to the board. He receives at present £7 5s. per week,

equalling £377 per annum, and the additional amount I suggest would make his total emoluments £427 per annum.

Mr. Troy initialled that minute as approved, adding this—

But in view of the initial difficulties associated with this work, I suggest that Mr. Darcey's allowance be £100 per annum.

Therefore Mr. Darcey's salary was fixed, not on the recommendation of the department, but on Mr. Troy's personal decision.

Hon. P. Collier: I suppose the Minister should have no standing in the matter.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not say that, but Mr. Troy disagreed with the department's recommendation that the amount should be £50, and recommended that it be increased to £100 on the score that there were initial difficulties to be overcome. That was in 1926—four years ago. The result was that Mr. Darcey was appointed at £100, and so far as I know there have been no complaints of his work on that board. But later on, when I assumed office and began looking into the work of those sitting on boards, I noticed that this constituted an addition to Mr. Darcey's ordinary salary, and that he was receiving, not merely £100 as a member of the board, but was in receipt of a salary as workmen's inspector. So I decided that now the initial difficulties of the board had been overcome, the £50 first recommended by the department should be offered to him as a member of the board. He declined that, and so I regarded his letter—the concluding paragraph of which contained the definite statement that unless I was prepared to give him the £100 he had been receiving for his work on the board he would not continue—as an actual resignation, and accepted it. I do not know whether Mr. Darcey or his friends think they can bluff me, but if so they have not succeeded so far. As I say, I accepted Mr. Darcey's resignation as a member of the board. Now it seems that his work on that board, which was so important that he valued it at £100 per year, does not seem to be of much importance after all. It astounded me to learn that only a little while ago Mr. Darcey took his long-service leave. Following on that the member for Hannans, who has been making this complaint, was asked by the A.W.U. to put somebody in Mr. Darcey's place as a member of the board, be-

cause his work there was so important that the board could not function without him.

Mr. Munsie: No; what they asked me to do was to appoint another in his place as workmen's inspector.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Now I am beginning to learn something more. It seems it was urged that we should have both a deputy workmen's inspector and a deputy member of the board during Mr. Darcey's absence on long leave.

Mr. Munsie: No, the filling of his place on the board was never suggested.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Then apparently the hon. member himself considered it was necessary to have someone in Mr. Darcey's place.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the usual thing when a man goes on long leave.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not suggesting that it is not the usual thing, but there is nothing usual about this matter. What I am saying is that the hon. member who introduced the subject said the work was so important that it was worth £100, not £50 a year. I am trying to show that, only a few months since, the work was so important that Darcey was allowed to go on long service leave, and no one filled his place as a member of the board.

Mr. Munsie: Tell the House the whole truth as to why he took his long service leave. There was no doctor at the laboratory and no examinations were being made. You know that. Be fair!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I think I am stating the case fairly.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not evidence that there was nothing to do because you did not fill a man's place while he was on long service leave.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know that. I am stating the case fairly when I say that my predecessor allowed Darcey to take his long service leave as workmen's inspector, as well as a member of the board, and did not fill the position.

Mr. Munsie: Because no examinations were being made at the time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That was not the excuse the hon. member gave the A.W.U.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not an argument that there was no work to do.

The Attorney General: The Minister does not say there is no work; he says there is £50 worth of work, not £100 worth.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I say that £50 would cover the value of the work. As a matter of fact, I am now going to save that £50 also, because I am not going to appoint anybody in Darcey's stead. The board will carry on for the time being at any rate without a third member.

Mr. Munsie: The board will pay dearly for it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall take the risk of that. I am accepting the responsibility for trying out the new arrangement, anyhow.

Mr. Kenneally: We are not surprised at your cutting out the worker's representative on the board.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Let me refresh the memory of the member for Hannans. On the 4th February, 1930, he wrote to Mr. G. McKennay, Secretary of the Goldfields Branch, A.W.U., as follows:—

In reply to your suggestion that a workmen's inspector should be appointed to relieve Mr. Darcey during his absence on leave, in connection with his work on the Miners' Phthisis Board, I have made inquiries into this matter, and find that this cannot be arranged. Inspector Darcey made arrangements with Inspector Phoenix to attend to the miners' phthisis matters for him during the period he would be away. This is a reciprocal arrangement which Mr. Phoenix has with Inspector Darcey when he is absent from Kalgoorlie on other work. If anyone else is deputed to do the work, it would mean that Mr. Darcey would lose his allowance while on leave.

I ask the House if that is not a definite reference to Darcey as a member of the Miners' Phthisis Board, and not as a workmen's inspector.

Mr. Munsie: Read their letter to me. You said they made application to have Darcey's position as a member of the board filled. I say they did nothing of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I can only read the hon. member's reply to the union, because their letter is not on the file.

Mr. Munsie: You have a file on which it appears.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am prepared to lay the file on the Table after I have concluded my speech. Mr. McKennay, Secretary of the A.W.U., was definitely advised by the then Minister for Mines, the member for Hannans, that Darcey could not be relieved of his work on the Miners' Phthisis Board by appointing someone else

unless he lost his allowance. Mr. Darcey was not going to lose his allowance.

Mr. Munsie: I think he did good work for it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not deny that. The hon. member surely cannot complain on the score that he thought Darcey's work was worth £100 and I think it is worth only £50; or if I think we can do without his work altogether and save that money, surely I am entitled to my opinion, just as he is entitled to his. That is the only point. I wish to assure the hon. member that I have no old sore against Darcey, nor did I know that one existed. I have not the remotest idea of what he was referring to, and I think Mr. Darcey himself would deny that anything of the kind existed. I have dealt with the case merely as I would deal with it if it came before me for the first time to-morrow. Here was an opportunity to pay a man fair remuneration for the additional work he was performing. He was receiving a reasonable salary as workmen's inspector, and in the circumstances I was quite entitled to advise him of my intention to reduce the extra remuneration by £50 per annum. He wrote and said he would not accept the reduction. I was not prepared to reconsider the matter, and I accepted what I considered was his resignation. I do not propose to fill the vacancy on the board; the two members remaining can, I think, do the work quite as well. Regarding workmen's inspectors generally, I do not consider that the alteration of the regulation, made, I think, by the member for Mt. Magnet when he was Minister for Mines, was necessary. Surely it is not necessary that every mine, irrespective of the number of men engaged in it, should be inspected by a workmen's inspector. We have inspectors in the department—trained men who have undergone examination—and they are fully qualified to do the inspecting work in the mines. Workmen's inspectors are always regarded as being rather check inspectors. At one time they were known as check inspectors, and they were called in at the request of the union, a number of men or of any man if it was considered that the conditions were unhealthy from the viewpoint of sanitation, ventilation or safety in working. Eventually they were made workmen's inspectors, and they worked under regulations providing that they would inspect mines only

when ten or more men were employed. That would obviate the necessity of their travelling all over the country. The regulations were altered, with the result that each workmen's inspector was supplied with a motor car.

Mr. Munsie: No.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Well, all except the one at Leonora.

Mr. Munsie: No, two out of the four have cars.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Very well, two of them have cars, one in the Murchison and one in Kalgoorlie, and they run about just as they think fit. A good deal could be said on that point.

Hon. P. Collier: A good deal could be said in regard to all officers who have cars.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, we are trying to check that, too. The point is that when the regulation was amended to provide once more for the inspection of a mine only when it employed ten men or more, including contractors or tributers, the necessity did not exist for workmen's inspectors to move about the small fields. Where the danger mostly lies is in the big mines at Kalgoorlie, Leonora, Meekatharra and Wiluna. If it be necessary for them to travel for departmental purposes, arrangements have been made for the inspector of mines in the district to provide the means of transport. If they cannot make all the inspections they are expected to make, I ask members opposite to lodge a complaint. Meanwhile I am justified in withdrawing from workmen's inspectors the means of transport previously provided for them at the cost of the general taxpayer. Having said that much, let me add that I am afraid there will be a fair amount of criticism levelled against me during the next 12 months—I hope it will not last longer—because of the unfortunate position in which I find myself in having greatly to restrict expenditure under the Mining Development Act. The funds will not be available to enable us to do as much as we have done in the past. There was never enough money available to do all we thought ought to be done, but we could not do any more.

Mr. Panton: Do not make the men who are afflicted with miners' phthisis suffer the most. Let them be the last to suffer.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of that Act.

Hon. P. Collier: I think the hon. member was referring, not to that, but to assistance to prospectors.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have given an indication that members representing goldfields constituencies may expect a heavy falling-off in the money available for the development of mining during the next 12 months. No one regrets that more than I do. Still, I shall have to bear any criticism arising in consequence. The member for Hannans had to bear similar criticism for a period after informing the people that the vote was exhausted. I am afraid that the criticism that fell upon him will also fall on me. Whatever can be done with the funds available will, I hope, be done along the lines which can show the best results. I heard a suggestion the other day that the thing to do with the unemployed was to transport them in train loads to the goldfields and let them engage in prospecting there. I have never heard anything more absurd. If we have erred at all in the past it has been in the direction of excess generosity towards people who claimed to be prospectors, but had really nothing to back up their assertions.

Hon. P. Collier: There might be some advantage in the suggestion if a number of the Blackboy fellows wandered away and never came back again.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A few of them are talking about marching to Canberra. I would go a long way towards helping them in that direction if they would give an undertaking not to return. It is just as unpleasant to me to have to issue this warning as it is to others to hear it. We have not the money available and shall have to suffer from a shortage for some time to come. I am delighted to meet some of my old friends, who have been absent from this House for a period longer than I have. I am also delighted to meet those who are here but were not there when I went out of Parliament some years ago. I wish to congratulate the new members upon the speeches they have made on the Address-in-reply. I hope that although our efforts here may be strenuous, and the criticism severe, the friendships we make in politics will long remain. Although I may in the heat of de-

bate, as some members opposite are prone to do, say what may appear to be unkind things, I would assure the House that in my heart there is no intention to offend. I would ask members when criticising the Government departments and existing conditions generally to keep in mind what the existing conditions are, and to remember that these conditions appertain not only to Australia but throughout the Empire as well.

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

### BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1. Traffic Act Amendment.
2. Main Roads.
3. Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment.
4. Anatomy.

*House adjourned at 11.47 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 16th September, 1930.*

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

### BILL — ROMAN CATHOLIC NEW NORCIA CHURCH PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Country Water Supplies, and read a first time.

### RETURN—PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURE.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, ordered: That a return be laid on the Table showing—1, The expenditure for public works for the year ended 30th June, 1930, from