

I have endeavoured to cover what I considered to be the more important matters submitted, and if I have omitted to reply respecting any question a member considers to be of real importance, I will be only too glad to provide him with whatever information is available. I appreciate the way members listened to my remarks.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

On motion by the Chief Secretary resolved: That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [4.47]: I move:—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 15th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 27th August, 1942.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3).

WHEAT, GUARANTEED PRICE.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What is the guaranteed price fixed for the No. 5 Wheat Pool, free on rail port? 2, What are the charges debited against the wheat farmers from a 4½d. freight siding for handling charges, etc., on wheat acquired by the Commonwealth Government for this pool? 3, Can he advise whether the Minister for Commerce intends paying 2s. net on all wheat grown on licensed areas over the guaranteed price of 4s. for the first 3,000 bushels?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, There is no guaranteed price fixed for the No. 5 Wheat Pool (1941-42 season) free on rail port.

There was a guaranteed price of 3s. 10d. per bushel free on board bagged wheat basis for a maximum delivery for sale of 140 million bushels, but on the 15th May, 1942, the Minister for Commerce announced that since the receipts to that date were 153 million bushels, the guaranteed payment would be on the basis of about 3s. 6½d. a bushel on an f.o.b. bagged basis. 2, Since the handling of the No. 5 Pool (1941-42 season) is not yet complete, no figures are available for handling charges, etc., on wheat acquired by the Commonwealth Government for this pool. The charges to be debited against this pool for handling charges, etc., will not be known until the pool is finalised. 3, I have no information other than that which appeared in "The West Australian" on the 25th August, 1942, to the effect that the Minister for Commerce stated that an advance of 2s. net a bushel would be made against any farmer's production in excess of 3,000 bushels and that growers ultimately would receive the market realisation of such excess wheat less marketing costs.

HEALTH, VENEREAL DISEASE EFFECTS.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER asked the Minister for Health: What are all the diseases or after-effects directly or indirectly traceable to venereal diseases?

The **MINISTER** replied: The answer to the question is lengthy and consists of a list of diseases, the names of which are difficult to pronounce. I shall treat the answer as a return and place it on the Table of the House.

FLOUR AND BREAD.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health: 1, Is he aware that an old discarded stone mill has been resurrected and is being used to supply 100 per cent. stone-ground flour in the metropolitan area? 2, Is such wholemeal flour superior in health-giving qualities to that supplied in the average wholemeal loaf? 3, Are bakers free, if they so desire, to supply as wholemeal loaves what is actually plain flour with some bran thrown in? 4, Is there any special health value in the wheat germ, which it is alleged is often excluded from wholemeal loaves?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, Not if such bread is labelled as "Wholemeal Bread" or is supplied when wholemeal is demanded by the purchaser. 4, Wheat

germ which constitutes only 1.5 per cent. of the whole kernel is rich in vitamin "B" and minerals and contains some vitamin "A" and "E."

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Twelfth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MANN (Beverly) [2.19]: I desire to express regret at the absence of the Premier and my hope that he will soon be well again. During the last day or two prominence has been given in the Press to what the Prime Minister has designated the "Austerity Loan Campaign." I take it from the use of the word "austerity" that the expression serves to indicate the serious situation confronting Australia. Surely we must all realise how serious it really is. I wonder how we can go through a period of austerity when we observe in the political arena bickering in almost every possible direction. Whether the Labour Government now in control of Australia's destinies is doing excellent work or not is for the people themselves to say; but I notice that the moment members of the Opposition criticise its actions, there is friction even amongst themselves. Recently the Prime Minister went to the extent of threatening to hold a general election. Should the people be hurled into the midst of a Federal election it will be to the everlasting disgrace of Australia.

We are at present facing one of the most critical periods the country has ever known, and we have before us the issue being fought out in the Solomon Islands. No one knows from day to day whether or when Australia will be invaded. Surely everyone must appreciate how serious the situation is! If there is to be a period of austerity throughout the Commonwealth, let Federal politicians themselves bring peace to the country and cease the bickering that is still going on. Do they not realise that the actions of politicians themselves tend to cause discontent and trouble among the people? I have had many years of experience in this Chamber and we all know that it is a remarkably peaceful House. When we read of the conditions that have prevailed in the Commonwealth Parliament ever since the outbreak of war, we can only be sickened at the constant exhibition of political bickering that still continues there. It must have the effect of retarding Australia's war effort. It is no wonder the average Aus-

tralian despises politicians! And yet there is talk of an election! The people are inclined to condemn politicians, and they have every reason for doing so because the politicians have given cause for distrust.

Why is it that in Australia we cannot have a coalition Government? In other parts of the world politics have been dropped for the time being and a united Government has been formed to carry on the war effort. Surely Australians are big enough to adopt a similar course! Under existing conditions an election, State or Federal, would be entirely wrong. In my opinion we have no right whatever to countenance a general election in this State. I would like to see a coalition Government occupying the Treasury Bench, representative of all shades of political opinion in this House. If the Opposition had been critical instead of endeavouring to help the Government ever since the outbreak of war, there would possibly have been some bickering in this Chamber; but that has not been the position. I think a tribute can be paid to the Opposition as a whole, while at the same time credit can be given to the Government for many steps it has taken. I certainly think we should have a coalition Government, and there should be no general election for the duration of the war.

I voice the opinion of a majority of my electors. I know that if the question of politics and politicians is mentioned, there are plenty of people in my constituency who say that they are sick and tired of both—but they except me. At any rate, I advance the suggestion that there should be no election during the war period and that a composite Government should be placed on the Treasury Bench so that all sections of the House may assist in the war effort. How long this House will endure as a section of the State Parliament remains to be seen, but I hope the day will never dawn when Australia will have unification with one Government only in control. Unification! We see what is happening today because of Western Australia's long distance from the East, with a Prime Minister who, our people are told, can help this State. But what has he done for us? For some unknown reason, every man from Western Australia who enters Federal politics forgets the State that has given him his political birth. If we were forced to

abolish this Parliament, there would of course be unification.

Mr. North: There has not been unification in Canada.

Mr. MANN: No.

Mr. North: How is that?

Mr. MANN: I sincerely hope, for the benefit of Western Australia, that this Parliament will remain. If there is to be an alteration after the war, there will have to be a new Constitution for the benefit of Australia generally. We are too big for unification; we are too far from the Eastern States to be swallowed entirely by the Eastern States.

Mr. Marshall: You need not worry about this Parliament.

Mr. MANN: It appears that no attempt will be made to form a Coalition Government until the Labour Party and the Opposition are forced by Communism to come together. Australia is in danger of becoming a communistic country. Communist propaganda is spreading every day, and people who have no leaning towards Communism will probably yet find themselves forced to accept a coalition Government for the protection of Australia. Undoubtedly the man who can talk well over the air has a great effect on many people.

Mr. Needham: Will you help the Labour Party to fight Communism?

Mr. MANN: Any Labour organisation must realise that Communism is here. It exists in Australia, and the Labour Party will have its hands full to keep its own organisation free from Communism. The seed has been sown, and will grow. Party politics may be all right, but in every organisation extreme ideas are met with. I am sure that no man in this Chamber desires to see Communism established in Australia. Nevertheless, I have met among military people and University students many young men who have a great idea that Australia is the only nation on earth, and we hear them cry, "Down with Britain!" Recently I was talking in an hotel with a University student, who expressed the view that England had been a curse to Australia and had retarded Australian development. Let that seed grow in Australia today, and it will wreck us. We are still part and parcel, and I trust we shall remain part and parcel, of the British Empire. Young men, however, hold the idea I have mentioned on the subject of the government of Australia; and I wonder what the result will be.

Britain has fought in this war as no other nation has fought. Moreover, what right have we to talk about a second front? In Australia today there are thousands upon thousands of men who have not yet fought in this war at all. The exceptions are the men who fought in the countries lying north of Australia, and of course the men in Libya. What right have we, I repeat, to talk about a second front? Are we an authority on military matters? Have we a right to tell Britain what to do? Are we qualified to lay down where the second front shall be? That is the job of the heads of the Army. I am sorry to hear so many of the young men of today expressing dissatisfaction with the British Empire.

The Minister for Mines: You must mix with a bad lot!

Mr. MANN: Wandering through life I meet a large variety of men, and I have the habit, possibly a bad habit, of getting into arguments, which I enjoy, and then these things come out. If Australia is now to be a nation on its own, God help us! As soon as Australia is in danger, we cry out for help. If Australia is to be developed, we must do that by increasing our population. No longer, when the war is over, shall we be able to close our doors to immigration, able to say who shall enter Australia. We must have population to hold this country. Without a great increase in population we shall not hold it. We are not going to continue to live as we have lived in the past. The United States of America began their development by throwing the doors of their country wide open to immigrants. We must alter our immigration policy, or there will be no White Australia in a few years after this war is over.

The Minister for Mines: My belief is that Australia will prove to be the hub of the British Commonwealth.

Mr. MANN: Now as to the control of liquor! We are not carrying out the Prime Minister's wishes regarding the control of liquor sales here. Whenever that question is raised in this Parliament, it seems to create a strange position. It appears that members object to liquor control. Are we afraid of control of liquor? We hear talk about the drunkenness in our cities. If we adopted a wise policy of liquor control, every man would be entitled to his beer; every man labouring in a factory would be able to obtain a pot of beer after 6 o'clock, which he cannot do now. In hotel lounges we see

numbers of what are called lounge lizards, among them females, drinking all the afternoon.

What I am more concerned about is the bottled-liquor trade. Let us take some definite steps in that connection. The Press has recently published instances in which men have been fined for sly-grogging. That is rampant in this State. I know of an American who took a taxi with a friend and found the boot of the vehicle full of bottled liquor. Again, I know of four American sailors who boarded a train while fairly drunk. They had bottled beer with them, and kept up their carouse. At one refreshment station, these four sailors obtained 28 bottles of beer. Other men on board the train could not purchase any beer, so these four Americans had a plentiful supply of liquor while the other men had none. Let the State Government decide to prohibit the sale of all bottled liquor.

The Minister for Justice: But the American boys are quite decent.

Mr. MANN: Yes. Still, the position on that train was that these Americans had liquor while our own boys had none. Why do we not control the bottled-liquor trade? What now happens is that although hotels are closed at 6 o'clock, any man who resides in a hotel can take a bottle of beer to his bedroom. He certainly can do that. The solution of the liquor question depends on the control of bottled stuff far more than on the control of the other. However, we do not seem disposed to tackle the question at all. We appear to be afraid to do so. The hotels should be allowed to remain open till a later hour so that the working man may have his drink, which he is denied today. The man who finishes work at 5.30 or 6 o'clock is entitled to a drink, and will need it at the end of a long day's work in the summer months that are before us. At present there is considerable sly-grog selling, liquor being sold at 2s. 6d. a bottle. The Government should face up to the question. I am not a wowser but I deplore what is going on today. We are all aware of the position, but do not appear to have the courage of our convictions and will not take the matter in hand. It seems to be a problem we are afraid to touch; I do not know for what reason. Perhaps we are afraid of losing votes! South Australia has faced the position and we should do the same.

I am sure that we will all support the austerity campaign launched by the Prime Minister. In this connection something ought to be done to control racing. Recently a deputation waited on the South Australian Premier asking that horse-racing should be continued, but he refused. Today men in all walks of life are being called upon to help their country, both in the Fighting Forces and in the Labour Corps, but one section of the community is entirely free from the obligation to serve. If we took a definite stand in regard to the control of racing, many more men would be available to serve their country in a more useful manner than at present.

Mr. Rodoreda: They are not free at all.

Mr. MANN: They are! There is no doubt about that. If racing were controlled, 3,000 additional men would be able to take their place in industry or in the Military Forces. There is something wrong when men engaged in racing are exempt from serving their country, while men from the farming areas who are required to develop the country are called up. It is wrong that men whose work is of no use at all to the war effort should be exempt from the call-up. Regarding post-war problems I do not know whether we shall have a new world, as the member for Murchison says. No one knows what will happen after the war.

Mr. Marshall: I did not say it would be a new world.

Mr. MANN: I would like to see a committee formed to investigate post-war problems and particularly land settlement. It is important that consideration be given to the possibility of placing returned men on the land, because foodstuffs will be required when the war is over. I am a soldier settler myself, and have no desire to see men placed on heavily capitalised properties such as mine, on which there is a capitalisation of £5,000. I know what it is like to handle such a property. I have not got on top yet and never will. We do not want that sort of thing to happen again. I know that past and present Governments have been generous to returned men, but those men have incurred debts they will never be able to pay. Such a weakness should not be allowed to creep into the system a second time.

Our job as Parliamentarians is to help in these matters. Let this House appoint a committee to go thoroughly into the question of repatriating our men on the land. Many

men will want to take up farming again, and they are entitled to the right to live decently and not under the conditions that prevail today. I hope the Deputy Premier will consider the matter, because so far no attempt is being made to meet post-war problems. The men who have gone away to fight are entitled to every possible consideration, and as far as I am concerned they will get it. I know what is likely to happen. Repurchased estates will fall into the hands of men with money who will resell them to returned soldiers, just as was the case after the last war. The Government should be wise and ensure that any property of value, that has been forfeited or abandoned, is held for returned men and not for profiteers to make money on.

What are we doing with regard to the canning of meat? I saw figures giving a comparison between what is occurring here and in the Eastern States. There is much talk about the development of primary industries, but a lower price is paid for primary products in this State than is paid in the other States. For instance, bacon pigs were selling at £6 4s. a head in the Eastern States, while the price in Western Australia was only £4 4s. We have a large area under stock today, but there is no dehydration plant as in the Eastern States and there is no canning of pork. Is it the Government's fault? Who is responsible for the fact that no move has been made to provide for the canning of these goods? I am aware that vegetables are canned, but the same should be done with our surplus stock, not only for the use of our soldiers but for export overseas at a later date.

The difficulty of securing farm labour is causing concern. It is now possible for boys of 16 and 17 in other occupations to earn 22s. 6d. a day, and if they have a truck to earn up to £3. One man I know drew £19 for a fortnight's work. How can farmers be expected to keep men on the land when wages like that are being paid? The only way to maintain the farming industry is for the Government to subsidise farm labour. Every industry on a so-called war basis has a war loading plus something else and something else again. High wages are being paid. Men engaged in a most essential industry, whose work is as important as that of the munitions maker and the soldier, are asked to work for a mere pittance. The farmer does not deny a man the right to

live and to earn a decent wage, but he has not the money to pay.

If the farmers are expected to remain on the land the Government must subsidise farm labour. Why should it not do so? Are not foodstuffs essential for the development of the country? A man cannot be expected to remain on a farm for £3 10s. a week when he knows that others are drawing 22s. 6d. a day with double pay on Sundays, or £9 a week. It is the greatest fallacy in the world. Highly inflated wages are being paid today in some industries, but there is one section of the community which has no war loading and is given no consideration whatever. Before long, if this situation continues, we shall find more men leaving their holdings. Coupled with the abandonment of farms will be the growth of the rabbit menace and farms will deteriorate. The whole State will suffer in proportion as its most important industry is increasingly forced to a lower level.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara): I propose to deal with a few matters of importance. I congratulate the many speakers who have preceded me upon their enlightening and forceful addresses. I hope the appropriate Ministers will take into account, if not all their statements, at least the more important ones and give us, in the near future, some informative explanations on the matters raised. The value of the Address-in-reply, which I always think is not highly important, will, of course otherwise be considerably decreased.

The first question I propose to raise deals with the defence of the north-western portion of this State. To those who have never travelled in the northern part of Western Australia, places like Broome, Derby, Wyndham and even Port Hedland seem very far away. I point out, however, that although Port Hedland in a direct line from Koepang is only 800 miles, it is just about as many miles from Perth. As a matter of fact, aeroplanes can travel to Perth from Broome, which is about 200 miles north of Port Hedland, in something like four hours. When one looks at the map and sees the relationship of our North-West ports to the Indian Ocean, one recognises the important relationship which the northern portion of this State bears to the defence of Australia as a whole. I stress the point that it is necessary for every consideration to be given

to the adequate defence of this section of our State. I am not a military strategist, and such people may consider that there will be no offensive launched on the western portion of our continent, but that the enemy will attack only on the East and North-East coasts. Up to date, however, in many instances the Japanese have done just the opposite to what we thought. If any landing is made on any portion of the North-West coast, the metropolitan area will be directly menaced, and the position will become very awkward.

I make these remarks because we have recently been told that owing to the vulnerability of Western Australia the black-out and brown-out lighting restrictions will continue. Furthermore, I know that just recently in the suburbs—and I would like to know later on from the Minister the reason for it—a census of the women and children was taken by the A.R.P. wardens under the direction of the military authorities, to ascertain the number in the metropolitan area. On the 15th April the Minister for Mines, in his capacity as Minister for Civil Defence, submitted to Parliament a report which appears on pages 2943 and 2944 of "Hansard." The report was submitted to him by Mr. Huelin, the Chief Evacuation Officer, on behalf of the Evacuation Committee which took certain evidence in Fremantle. I quote the following extract:—

The first work of the committee was to plan for the evacuation of certain so-called target areas. These have since been declared so that they are known to be certain small areas on the seaward side of the metropolitan area, contiguous to possible enemy targets. The population comprises nearly 10,000 people.

It might here be stressed that the decision of the War Council, announced after the last conference of the Prime Minister with the Premiers, was that, speaking generally, the public was to "stay put"; there was to be no question of mass evacuation, and the people from the so-called target areas would simply be evacuated to other portions of the metropolitan district.

In accordance with that policy, an officer of either the Civil Defence Department or the local governing authorities visited the homes in certain suburbs to ascertain the number of possible evacuees who could be billeted. Later, another officer visited the district in which I live, and he was working under the jurisdiction, I think, of the Perth City Council. He was sent to ascertain the accommodation that could be provided, and gave me to understand that it would be for

the purpose of billeting some thousands of American soldiers who were coming to the district. That occurred a few months ago, and now we find another census being taken on behalf of the Military Department to ascertain the number of women and children who may have to be evacuated. If any radical alteration has taken place since the 15th April last, this House is entitled to know about it. If the Minister is going to reply to any statements made by members I hope he will let us have some illumination on the point I have raised.

The Minister for Mines: There has been no alteration in the Civil Defence Council.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The position in regard to what is termed the Meekatharra-North-road is not too satisfactory today. I assure members that I am not raising these matters in a parochial spirit. It so happens that that road is of major importance to the defence of this country. Broome is North of my electorate, but the Meekatharra-North-road runs directly through the Pilbara electorate.

Mr. McDonald: It is a national necessity.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yes. I understand that the present commandant of Western Australia agrees that that is so. Unfortunately Port Hedland was bombed some few weeks ago, and as a result it is only reasonable to assume that in the future shipping will be more irregular than hitherto. Because the coast road from Geraldton, through Northampton and Carnarvon to Port Hedland and on to Wyndham, is most vulnerable, it is recognised that the only other way to get supplies to the North is from the rail-head at Meekatharra by way of the overland route through Nullagine and Marble Bar. If there were to be any troop movements or a shortage of supplies, such as occurred some few months ago in certain parts of that district on account of the abnormal rains—mails and trucks were hung up between Meekatharra and Marble Bar for a period of between nine and 10 weeks—the position would become serious.

When some of the stations were short of food, I made representations to the State Government and am thankful to the Minister for Lands and the Minister for the North-West for urging upon the Federal authorities the necessity to make this an all-weather road. The North-South road—that is the road from Darwin to Alice Springs and down into South Australian territory—was constructed under the

jurisdiction of the Military Department, and the co-operation of that department was forthcoming in connection with the construction of the East-West road. It is now of first importance that the Meekatharra-Marble Bar-road should be put in an all-weather condition. If the military authorities consider that it is not warranted—that is if the allied command consider it unwarranted—then, so that supplies may be sent to the civilian population in an emergency, or so that the population may be evacuated if necessary, the work is worth while, and should be carried out.

Mr. North: Could not the Loan Council do it?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I understand that the State Government has represented the position to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Defence.

The Minister for Lands: And to the war chiefs too, in person.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I would like to touch on another matter of interest to members. This subject is really of a Federal character, and is in connection with the rationing scheme in operation all through this State. When I recently visited the Pilbara electorate and went from Port Hedland to Marble Bar and outlying districts, I found that some people had no ration books. Men living 50 and 100 miles from the post office came in on their usual trip some time after the 15th June, and were told by the respective postmasters that their instructions were that they had to send the ration books back to Kalgoorlie because they had been unclaimed on the 15th June. I was there towards the end of July. Some of these men had not then received their ration books because the mails had been hung up and the books had gone to Kalgoorlie via Nullagine and Meekatharra, and would return by the same route. In addition to that, circumstances in those districts are different from elsewhere on account of the abnormal season. For some time past the position has been that even if the people received their ration books they could not obtain the commodities they required; and that is likely to be the position in the future.

The Minister for Lands: The native population is not affected.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: That is so. A commonsense point of view has been taken by the Department of Native Affairs, and the Commissioner submitted a proposal to the Commonwealth authorities. It was under-

stood in the first place that the native population would be supplied with ration books, and would have to apply to the divisional returning officer at Kalgoorlie. However, commonsense prevailed, and a reasonable system was introduced whereby the local protectors were able to issue clothing permits to enable the native to obtain his requirements. In this respect the natives have an advantage over the white population. I appreciate what the Minister for Lands, as Acting Premier, in conjunction with the Rationing Department, or the Federal Department of Supply, did in the face of great difficulties over a period of some months, and that was to get reasonable supplies to the people in the back country. In all the circumstances, after what I myself saw, I made representations to the Rationing Commission whilst it was in Perth and pointed out that, as it had seen fit to exempt the Northern Territory from the operations of the rationing scheme, such an arrangement should also apply to the North-West of this State. I also understand that the Acting Premier has made representations to the Minister and I believe the position will be altered. It is not a question of the people in the North wanting anything over and above what the people in the South obtain, but the conditions there are so different that it is impracticable to administer such a scheme.

Now I propose to touch on a rather contentious matter. The Government has seen fit to issue the requisite order making an alteration in the basic wage. I compliment the Government upon its action. I hold the opinion definitely that the Government would not have been worth its salt had it allowed the injustice to continue after an opportunity had been presented to rectify it. We must look at all the circumstances and consider exactly what the Government did. In 1930 when the National-Country Party Government was in office, it altered the Industrial Arbitration Act. It was able to do so by reason of its majority in both Houses. At that time the basic wage for the metropolitan area was £4 6s. a week. The arbitration Act passed by the Labour Government had provided for annual declarations, and in ordinary circumstances no amendment or alteration to the basic wage would have been made until the 1st of July, 1931. By a simple amendment the Government authorised the court to adjust the basic wage quar-

terly in accordance with the statistician's cost of living figures, and the basic wage was reduced by 8s. a week from the 3rd March, 1931. In those days I heard no talk of deflation.

Since the measure was passed, there have been no fewer than eight reductions, and the basic wage fell as low as £3 8s. per week. Still I heard no talk of deflation. On the 26th February last the Arbitration Court, in the exercise of its authority—and its decision was upheld by the Supreme Court—declined to increase the basic wage in accordance with the statistician's cost of living figures. This was the first time the President of the Arbitration Court had seen fit to do that. In his judgment, which I shall not deal with exhaustively, he pointed out that there was a tendency to inflation. I do not propose to debate that point. The appropriate National Security Regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth Government provided amongst other things for the limitation of profits to four per cent., the pegging of rates of remuneration, and the fixing of prices. It was considered that these three media, working in conjunction throughout the Commonwealth, would prevent any tendency in the direction of inflation. Western Australia was the only State which declined to give workers under industrial awards and determinations the benefit of the increased cost of living. The Court of Arbitration in Queensland, which usually granted increases yearly, decided that as prices were rising so rapidly the workers should receive the benefit quarterly, and the first quarterly adjustment dated from April of this year. The Government of Western Australia, by its action, has merely protected the workers to the extent of ensuring that their wages are brought into parity with the increased cost of living.

Had not the Government taken this course another anomaly would have been created. The goldfields comprise the greater portion of Western Australia and, in accordance with the cost of living figures, no adjustment of the basic wage was necessary there. The cost of living figures had not altered to the extent of 1s. or more, and so the basic wage remained stationary. Had the Government neglected to use its authority and increase the basic wage for workers in the metropolitan area and South-West Land Division, the workers on the goldfields and in other parts of the State would have been

on a higher standard. Although it may be said that the increase of 4s. 6d. a week means a lot to the employers, it means much more to the workers. Had the Arbitration Court adopted the usual practice and made the adjustment, there would have been no argument. The statement has been made that the Government over-rode the arbitration Act. It did nothing of the kind. Notice has been given for the introduction of a Bill to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act in order to substitute the word "shall" for the word "may." I have no faith in another place agreeing to the amendment. To ensure justice to the workers, the Government merely did the right thing.

The subject of post-war problems has been dealt with at length and I do not propose to enter into details, but I hope the Ministers in charge of departments that will bring them closely into touch with the settlement of demobilised soldiers will make a statement as to what is being done. I read in the Press a few days ago that the Commonwealth Minister for Social Services, Mr. Holloway, had said it was proposed to build homes to the number of 200,000. This work might be started before the war ends if the requisite tradesmen are available, but that is only one phase of the problem. Ministers could tell us what progress has been made and what co-operation exists between the Commonwealth and State authorities, and give any other information available.

I was struck by a statement made by the member for Murray-Wellington—a statement that gives members on this side of the House great encouragement. I have held the same idea for a long time and mentioned it on a previous occasion in this House. The hon. member said that if unlimited money could be found in time of war for the purposes of destruction, it should be found in time of peace. In making that reference, I do not think I have either varnished or twisted his statement in any way. It was a very logical statement. If any member 11 years ago had suggested in Parliament or from any public platform that Australia should find a million and a half a day for the purpose of alleviating unemployment, poverty and distress amongst the masses of the people, he would have been ridiculed from one end of the country to the other. Today there is no shortage of money; there must not be any shortage because we must carry on the war until victory is won.

More and more men and women are taking a deep and abiding interest in the social problems which confront us and which will be aggravated in the years to come when post-war matters are being considered. I do not believe that the people will again tolerate the hardships of unemployment and part-time work, and the degradation attending them. During 1931-35 the number of unemployed in Australia ranged between 300,000 and 400,000. Men were prepared to work on farms, in factories, on roads and other public works and do something in the interests of the country, but they were not permitted to do so. I have attended deputations to the Premier on behalf of the unemployed on numerous occasions and have been told that the Government could not find the money. I am aware that State Premiers have no control over the financial machine, but the Commonwealth Government has a certain amount of control at present, and if there is going to be a new order, these matters must be dealt with.

How small of all that human hearts endure
That part which laws, or kings can cause or cure.

What is money? Who controls it? Who makes it? Who destroys it? These are questions that will have to be answered, and the masses of the people will want a say as to what they are going to tolerate or not tolerate. Unless the Government controls and prevents the exploitation of the people by private individuals, all the talk about a new order and prosperity will be so much moonshine. I do not think the people will tolerate the old order or accept the principles enunciated by orthodox financiers—principles that have reduced pioneers of the pastoral industry to the position of caretakers for Dalgety and Co. and Elder, Smith and Co., principles that have reduced pioneer farmers to the position of serfs, principles that have kept the workers of Australia in a position of economic instability.

If the workers and others allow that state of affairs in future, they will stand anything. I am not saying anything against money being found for the purpose of carrying on the war but, if it can be found in unlimited millions for the purposes of destruction, though this be necessary for national and economic preservation, it must be found in future for the purposes of construction and for making this country the finest on God's green earth. I do not pro-

pose to discuss further the question of post-war problems because a committee has been set up to consider these matters, and something tangible may be expected from it in the near future so that, when the soldiers are demobilised, they will not be left to walk the streets in idleness. The member for Murray-Wellington said we should not talk depression but should talk in an optimistic strain. I agree with him. Where there are pitfalls and room for improvement—

Far lighter falls the blow that is foreseen.

If we take time by the forelock, we shall do better than by deferring action until the war has ended.

Let me now make a few references to the position indicated by several members as having arisen out of the resolution passed by Parliament last May, when the House unanimously resolved to protest against the uniform taxation proposals. Although I did not speak on that occasion, I protested against the proposals, because I did not agree with the way in which the Commonwealth Government proposed to take power unto itself, power that this and the other State Parliaments considered the Commonwealth had not authority to assume. The High Court of Australia has since ruled that the Commonwealth Parliament did have the constitutional right to impose uniform taxation, and consequently the position has altered somewhat. I believe that before such a radical alteration was made in the relationship of the States to the Commonwealth, a referendum should have been taken. A more desirable course, perhaps, would have been for the Premiers of the States and the Prime Minister to arrive at an amicable agreement under which the Commonwealth Government could get all the money it required for the prosecution of the war. We had the assurance of our Premier—who I hope will soon be with us again—that the States were only too willing to do all they could to co-operate with the Commonwealth, but nevertheless it appears that the Commonwealth was not prepared to accept the suggestions of the States. The position now is that the Commonwealth Government has, for the duration of the war and one year after, the right to impose a uniform tax. After the cessation of hostilities, serious consideration will have to be given by the State and Federal Parliaments to effecting economies in the government of

Australia, while assuring to the far-flung States a reasonable measure of representation.

In passing, we have been told by members on the opposite side of the Chamber that the Labour Party stands for unification. That is true; but, as the member for Perth remarked a few days ago, opinions differ as to the way in which unification can be implemented. For the benefit of members, I shall read the appropriate clauses in the constitution of the Australian Labour Party. They are—

3. Amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution—

(a) To invest the Commonwealth Parliament with unlimited legislative powers and authority to create (or re-order) States or Provinces with delegated powers. . . .

(d) To embody the principle of the Initiative—Referendum and Recall.

(e) To abolish the Senate.

10. Abolition of State Legislative Councils and State Governors.

I have been studying the events that led up to Federation. It appears that the Senate, which is composed of 36 members, was set up as a safeguard for the weaker States, so that these should not be imposed upon by the stronger States. The object was a good one, but when one examines the position to ascertain whether the Senate works to the satisfaction of the States, one finds that it has developed into a party House, although the member for Beverley said there should be coalitions and no parties. In the House of Representatives there are Labour and anti-Labour members. The anti-Labour members, whether from Queensland or Western Australia, see eye-to-eye with each other on many matters. I am of opinion that the Senate ought to be abolished, but representation in the lower House might be increased. I do not think Western Australia's representatives should number only five. What has been adopted as regards representation in this State Parliament might, with some measure of success, be also adopted in the Federal arena. That would mean an amendment of the Constitution, but the time is rapidly approaching when the people of Australia will demand some such alteration. For instance, the member for Nedlands represents 10,000 electors.

Hon. N. Keenan: Thirteen thousand!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The member for Kimberley, whose electors are spread over an area of some 2,000 miles, represents a far

smaller number. A similar position prevails in the agricultural areas. There the number is in the vicinity of 3,000.

Mr. Doney: No, it is not. If you are going to quote figures, you might get them approximately correct.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The figure is between 3,000 and 4,000. The point is that there is a difference in the basis of representation between the agricultural and the metropolitan areas. The same argument was used by the secessionists in this State when a movement was made for separation from the Commonwealth. About 50 per cent. of the population of Western Australia resides within 20 miles of Perth. It is unfortunate that that is so, but the same position prevails in every other capital city of Australia, except Brisbane. The Commonwealth is supreme in defence and other matters. It has supreme control of defence, customs, excise, currency, external relations, overseas and inter-State trade, immigration, posts, telegraphs and telephones, territories, quarantine, lighthouses and shipping, transcontinental-territorial railways, air transport and old age and invalid pensions. In addition, the Commonwealth has equal rights with the States in matters appertaining to justice, public health, taxation—in this sphere the Commonwealth now has greater power than have the States—public borrowing, banking, insurance, industrial arbitration, aborigines, companies, weights and measures, statistics, housing and fisheries.

Mr. Doney: You have gone too far.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: There is some duplication of Federal and State departments, and I question whether the public will tolerate it when peace returns. We have a Commonwealth Department of Works and a State Department of Works; a Commonwealth Taxation Department and a State Taxation Department, although these were amalgamated some time ago; and we have also a Commonwealth Electoral Department and a State Electoral Department. Much has been said about the sovereign rights of the people, but we have to consider what the rights of the sovereign people are. The people who elect us to this Chamber are the same people who elect members to the Federal Parliament. I am not suggesting that the Constitution of the Commonwealth be altered in one fell swoop, as that would spell the centralisation of administration in Canberra, the closing of this House of Parlia-

ment, and the appointment of some administrative heads in this State. I do not want members to be under that impression. Western Australia is far removed from the Federal capital; it is on the circumference of Australia.

There is room for a convention of representatives of the States and the Commonwealth to discuss problems affecting the States. I hope the time is not far distant when a serious attempt will be made to eliminate the Upper Houses of Parliament. Australia is over-governed. In what are termed the Upper Houses, we have 36 members in the Senate; 60 members in the Council in New South Wales; 30 in Victoria; 20 in South Australia; 30 in Western Australia and 18 in Tasmania. In Queensland the Legislative Council has been abolished, yet that State seems to have survived. There is therefore a total of 194 members in the Senate and the Legislative Councils of the various States. There are 411 members in the House of Representatives and in the Legislative Assemblies of Australia. I am not contending that costs would be reduced, but duplication would be avoided and we ought to get more economical administration. I believe that if the people of Western Australia, Tasmania and Queensland could be assured of ample safeguards under an amended Federal Constitution, an attempt to abolish the Upper Houses would be successful. I shall not go into details, but I believe it was on account of jealousies between Melbourne and Sydney that the railway gauge between New South Wales and South Australia was not standardised in the early days.

Victoria and South Australia were quite prepared in the early stages to fall into line, but New South Wales decided on the 5ft. 3in. gauge, and later changed its decision. There we have an exhibition of State jealousies. Australia has great advantages over Europe. Here we speak the same language and have the same customs. In Europe the peoples speak different languages, have different customs and different habits. Australia is therefore eminently suited to control by a central government, and my opinion is that the Commonwealth Parliament should be supreme. It was a good day for Australia when the Commonwealth was founded in 1901. I entertain no doubt whatever that the leaders of the secessionist movement in this State in 1932

were animated by sincere and lofty motives; but if a vote were taken on that matter today, I am of the opinion that a majority of our people would vote in favour of a unified Parliament.

Mr. Doney: What makes you believe that?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: That is my opinion, and I am entitled to express it.

Mr. Doney: I thought you had some reason for that opinion.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Some years ago there was a move in the Eastern States to cut up New South Wales into two States. The same move was started in Queensland. It was a New States movement. Dr. Earle Page was one of the ring-leaders. It was held that there was too much centralisation in Sydney, and that many people required to have a State all to themselves. Whilst Western Australia has many difficulties to contend with, if we were assured that all the circumstances and conditions under which we live would be taken into account, and this Parliament would be allowed to continue dealing with matters that would not interfere with the major questions that would belong to the Commonwealth Government, I think it would be agreed that this country would be better off in the long run. I am reminded of the words of Thomas Davis, who was trying to weld the Irish people together in the 18th Century—

We have no cause for you or yours

But friendship ready grasp.

And faith to stand by you and yours

Until our latest gasp.

To stand by you against all foes

However or whence they come

In traitor words or bribes or blows

From Berlin, France or Rome.

What matter though at different times

Our fathers tilled the sod,

What matter though at different shrines

We pray unto one God?

These words might well be considered in any attempt to bring about that state of brotherhood so necessary to Australia.

MR. THORN (Toodyay): Members on this side of the House will, I think, agree with the remarks of the member for Pilbara concerning post-war planning, and the necessity for finding money during peace-time as well as during war-time. We cannot start our post-war planning too soon. In spite of what some members think, I believe that our greatest outlet for post-war planning will

be found to be the land. I trust we shall profit by the mistakes that were made in our last land settlement scheme, and am confident that we will. Taking everything into consideration regarding industry, I feel we will again have to look to the land for the repatriation of our young men who will return from the war. I heard the member for Roebourne make some astounding statements in this House a few years ago. He said, "Why worry about the land at all? We do not want to worry about that. We can live on industry in this State."

Mr. Rodoreda: You never heard me say that.

Mr. THORN: I did hear the hon. member.

Mr. Rodoreda: Produce the evidence of that statement.

Mr. THORN: I will. What a statement for any member to make, seeing that the wealth of this State comes from the land! Fancy any member saying that we can live on industry! In effect the hon. member exclaims, "God help us if we are again to repatriate our young soldiers on the land." With the knowledge we have gained from our fairly costly experience surely we will plan better in the future in any land settlement scheme we undertake. We shall not meet with the failures we encountered in the past. We shall be planning to produce commodities required by this and other countries instead of commodities of which we are over-supplied today. All such matters come into a post-war plan. When we take them into consideration I see no reason why we should not succeed in settling the vast areas that we have available in this State.

Another matter that is exercising my mind relates to the education of our young people. Under the Civil Defence Regulations the school children are suffering hardships in many respects. The central schools have been closed, but I do not profess to know why. In many instances they are being made no use of. The fine State school at Midland Junction, which is occupied by only a few Army officials and others who are in some of the back rooms, has been standing empty for many months. The older children have been allotted to the Guildford State School and other schools nearby. Those who belong to the infants and junior classes are making their way out to the Swan districts in order to attend school. All through

this wet and cold winter these children, when unable to obtain conveyances, have tramped along the roads for a distance of two or two and a half miles to attend school.

The Minister for Mines: Do you say the State school at Midland Junction has been closed?

Mr. THORN: Yes, ever since the closing of schools took place. I appeal to the Government to consider the re-opening of that school. The children are split up in all directions, and of course the co-operation of the teachers has gone too. Apart from the educational point of view the children have also suffered as to their health.

Mr. McLarty: Why was the school closed?

Mr. THORN: I believe it was closed so that it might be used as a central casualty clearing station in the event of an air raid. Many of the officials were stampeded, I think, into making all kinds of unnecessary provisions. I would not like to see anything happen to the children through an air raid, but I contend that they can just as readily be knocked about where they now are as they would be if they were at the Midland Junction State school. We would probably receive sufficient warning to enable us to clear the schools in the event of the necessity arising.

The Minister for Mines: That, of course, cannot be guaranteed.

Mr. THORN: No. Some of these children attend school at the Middle Swan hall, a big draughty, cold building. Each day the buses come along and the children are piled into them as if they were sheep or cattle being put into a truck. I often wonder what would happen to the children if one of these buses caught fire and it was a question of getting them out in time.

Mr. J. Hegney: Many of the children are left behind to walk the full distance.

Mr. THORN: That is so. I had an experience the other evening, when rain was falling heavily. I was passing when one of the buses broke down. That was in front of Houghton's vineyard. Two sisters and some children from the convent were trudging along the road and I picked them up. I also met a teacher who had her arm around a sick child, and the rest of the children were tramping along towards Midland Junction like Brown's cows. Our buses are not under any sort of control. They are constantly breaking down and are very much over-

crowded. They are more of a menace than anything else to the travelling public.

I have appealed to the Premier of this State to put in a loop-line at the Pearce Aerodrome, and have made a similar appeal to the Commonwealth authorities. My idea is to prevent so many buses from unnecessarily using the road and burning imported fuel. Every day one sees a string of buses proceeding to the Pearce Aerodrome, and then transporting hundreds of airmen who have been granted leave, and subsequently taking them back again. If a loop-line could be run into Pearce, all those airmen could be transported by rail, and all the heavy road haulage between Fremantle and the aerodrome could be done away with. The Commanding Officer at Pearce asked me some time ago to endeavour to bring about this facility. Huge lorries go to and fro along the road between Fremantle and Pearce, whereas all that freight could be going by rail on the suggested loop-line. If we are sincere in our policy about the conservation of fuel we should adopt the means whereby we can save all that which is at present being used on this particular road transport.

Mr. Sampson: And also conserve rubber.

Mr. THORN: Yes, we can well consider that position. I hope the Government will look into the matter of re-opening some of our central schools and thereby overcome the present restrictions imposed upon our children.

I listened with interest to the remarks of the member for Pilbara on the question of uniform taxation. On this side of the House we were very satisfied and pleased with the action the Government took when it decided to oppose uniform taxation. We were entitled to be suspicious of what might happen to us if Western Australia was brought too much under the control of the Commonwealth Government. The hon. member said that the High Court had decided in favour of the Commonwealth Government. That is so. What astounds me, is the diversity of opinion found amongst legal men. The High Court, I take it, comprised on the occasion in question five of the highest legally trained men in the Commonwealth, men who were experts in constitutional matters and who had been called together to decide a constitutional question. Three of the judges decided that the Common-

wealth Government was right, and two decided that it was wrong. One would have thought that on a question of constitutional law the High Court Bench as a whole would have been unanimous in its decision one way or the other.

The Minister for Lands: It may be that three are wrong and two are right!

Mr. THORN: If that is an example of the kind of treatment we are likely to receive in other directions, I do not know what the future holds for us. In spite of the satisfaction derived by my colleagues and myself from the action of the Government in this matter, I point out that in the following week the Premier and one of his Ministers proceeded to the Eastern States to give away powers we already had regarding the control of the black-out precautions. That is all I am going to say about the matter.

Member: It is quite enough.

Mr. THORN: Yes. Whilst we were buoyed up in one direction in one week the following week we found the ground cut beneath our feet. Although we had some power to deal with the black-out conditions ourselves, members of the Government went to the Eastern States and asked the Commonwealth Government to take the responsibility off their shoulders.

The Minister for Mines: That is not correct, and you know it.

Mr. THORN: I know the Minister for Mines does not like to hear that statement.

The Minister for Mines: I do not like to hear a statement in which there is no truth.

Mr. THORN: It is true.

The Minister for Mines: On a point of order! I ask that the statement made by the hon. member be withdrawn. It is not the first time the statement has been made that I rushed across to the Eastern States. It is untrue. I was already in the Eastern States at the time.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the remark is offensive to the Minister, I must ask the member for Toodyay to withdraw it.

The Minister for Mines: It is certainly offensive to me. It is not true. I did not do anything of the sort.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the member for Toodyay will withdraw the statement.

Mr. THORN: I withdraw the statement, but I repeat that the Government had the power to deal with that matter and did not do so. The Government allowed the Com-

monwealth to take this power away from the State. I would like to raise a constitutional point on which, of course, I will bow to the will of the Speaker. On the notice paper there are two motions dealing with the lighting restrictions. A member who has given notice of one of the motions is absent from the State on urgent public business and the other hon. member, I am sorry to say, is laid aside and has been ordered to rest for two or three weeks. In those circumstances we are debarred from discussing the issue involved and the motions will, in all probability, lapse.

Mr. J. Hegney: Further notice of motion can be given.

Mr. THORN: Delay will be experienced and possibly notice will have to be given later on to restore the motions to the notice paper. The motions refer to an important question with which we have been most anxious to deal, seeing that people are being killed almost every night.

The Minister for Mines: You can give notice of motion to deal with the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the member for Toodyay discussing my ruling?

Mr. THORN: No. I am merely drawing attention to what I consider a weakness in our Standing Orders. I hope it will be possible to amend them so that we shall get over such difficulties in future. If I had any knowledge that a member on the Government side of the House was most anxious to discuss a certain matter, I could delay any such action by giving notice of motion to deal with the subject and the motion would accordingly appear on the notice paper. That would not be fair. I hope we shall amend our Standing Orders. Dealing now with another matter, I heard the member for East Perth say that we were a poor old Opposition.

Mr. J. Hegney: That was a reflection.

Mr. Doney: Did the member for East Perth say that?

Mr. THORN: I believe so and I do not raise any objection to the statement. I rather agree with him.

Mr. Hughes: Shame! I thought I was going to get a bite.

Mr. THORN: Certainly not, because I definitely agree with the hon. member. On the other hand, if we were to indulge in opposition these days we would be told we were retarding the nation's war effort.

Mr. Hughes: I do not agree with that contention. Who said that?

Mr. THORN: I do not agree with it either, but that is a catch cry of the Commonwealth Government. A similar contention was raised by the State Government when we were inclined to oppose certain actions. We were then told that we were hampering the war effort. At the same time, the Prime Minister has declared in public that "a healthy Opposition is the soul of democracy." Notwithstanding that Mr. Curtin made that statement, when he is confronted with opposition he squeals! He does not like it! He accuses his opponents of retarding the nation's war effort! Where are we? If we raise opposition, we are wrong; if we do not, we are still wrong.

Mr. Marshall: That is pretty right.

Mr. THORN: I am afraid that Governments today take undue advantage of the situation.

Mr. Marshall: A good Government could not possibly do that!

Mr. THORN: Every issue that is raised today, particularly in the Federal sphere, immediately brings forth the suggestion that no such course of criticism should be adopted, because it is against the war effort. Yet what do we find? The Commonwealth Government is today using the war situation for its own purposes and is embracing every opportunity to put its own policy into effect. Senator Keane frankly informed the Senate, "Of course we will use the present situation to the fullest extent to put into effect the policy for which we stand." The Commonwealth Government is actually doing it. Then we find appeals made to the people to subscribe to the war loan. The call goes out, "Subscribe, subscribe, subscribe! The Government and the nation are short of money." At the same time improved social amenities and increased services are being provided. I regard the improvements as long overdue. Child endowment should have been introduced concurrently with the inauguration of Federation. Had our mothers been helped from that period, our population today would probably have been much greater. In the present-day circumstances, however, the position is unbalanced. We have the spectacle of low wages and, until recently, no assistance for mothers.

I candidly admit that it is those on the lower rung of the financial ladder who bring

large families into the world, and in past years that section of the community has never received the assistance that should have been forthcoming. Today, however, I am concerned when I note the various social improvements—child endowment, widows' pensions, and so forth, all introduced at a time when the nation is at war! These improvements should have been inaugurated long ago—or else left until the cessation of hostilities. When continuous appeals are made to the people to subscribe to war loan after war loan and at the same time millions are being spent on increased social services and augmented payments here, there and everywhere, it is hard for the public to understand why the raising of so much money is necessary.

There is another matter to which I should allude—the cost of living. The price of commodities has a great bearing on that issue and we have Price Fixing Commissioners in each State. We hear much about the control of prices, yet, in my opinion, there is no such thing at all today. Storekeepers are doing just as they like and robbing the public as fast as they can. Salt has been imported from South Australia, although we have that commodity in abundance within our own State. I know one grocer who is operating in a very big way and charges 1½d. a lb. for salt. True, that is a small item; but where is our Price Fixing Commissioner? Here is an instance of a grocer charging what amounts to a 50 per cent. increase on the price of salt. This and such-like matters should be inquired into. It is by such actions that the cost of living is increased and the basic wage is forced up. If prices were really controlled, there would not be the increase in the cost of living or the opportunity for the Minister for Labour to take it into his own hands to increase the basic wage.

Mr. Marshall: What is the retail price of dried fruits?

Mr. THORN: The same as it has always been. There has been no increase.

Mr. Marshall: The price is still 1s. 8d. as usual!

Mr. THORN: I am glad the member for Murchison mentioned that point, because I can now reply to the member for East Perth

who dealt briefly with it. The fact is that the retail price of table raisins is uncontrolled. The Dried Fruits Board has nothing whatever to do with that matter, and probably the man who purchased the raisins did not pay one farthing more than 10d. a lb. to the grower and yet he charged the member for East Perth 1s. 8d. a lb.

Mr. Hughes: He saw a mug coming!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for East Perth is out of order in interjecting when out of his seat.

Mr. THORN: I have not much more to say except to draw attention to the point mentioned by the member for Beverley, who stressed the bickering that has been apparent in Australia and the inevitable introduction of politics into every discussion. Instead of Australia embarking upon a really national war effort and forgetting politics for the time being, there seems to be nothing but bickering in political circles. That does not help our war effort in the slightest degree. It is one of the reasons why the public is so critical of members of Parliament. At a time when the nation is confronted with a struggle for existence, it seems ludicrous that there can still be political bickering. "The West Australian" today lends point to what I say and such matters make people start thinking. The report showed that a telegram was read at a meeting held in the Paddington Town Hall purporting to come from the Prime Minister of Australia and congratulating his colleague, Eddie Ward, on his wonderful loyalty and his activities as a Cabinet Minister—yet the Prime Minister denied ever sending the telegram. What are we to believe? We find the Prime Minister denies ever sending a telegram to Mr. Ward!

The Minister for Works: No, it is alleged that he denied sending the telegram.

Mr. THORN: That is the sort of thing that is doing so much harm today. I trust we shall brush aside petty political differences, and form ourselves into one united national body to work for the successful conduct of the war.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.58 p.m.