

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 14th August, 1923.

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

QUESTION—EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION.

Railways Representation.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is the Commissioner for Railways represented on the Employers' Federation? 2, If so, by whom?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTIONS (2)—WATER SUPPLY, GOLDFIELDS.

Prices, Government's Intentions.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: Have the Government yet arrived at a decision concerning the request for a reduction in the prices charged for water on the Eastern Goldfields, and will the Premier make a statement indicating the intentions of the Government in the matter?

The PREMIER replied: Yes; subject to a satisfactory arrangement with the mine owners and also the approval of Parliament to the necessary financial proposals, a reduction in the price of water will be made. A statement indicating the intentions of the Government will be made as soon as possible.

Water Meters, Return.

Mr. LUTEY (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: When does he intend to lay on the Table of the House the return relating to water meters in the Kalgoorlie and metropolitan areas?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The return will be made available this week.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 9th August.

Mr. J. THOMSON (Claremont) [4.35]: Before dealing with migration, I wish to say a few words regarding my trip to the Old Land this year. The other day the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) stated in this Chamber that she could not understand my attitude in opposing the Premier's group settlement scheme. It was news to me that I opposed that scheme. Last year the Pre-

mier gave me credit for trying to assist him at Home.

The Premier: I give you credit for it this time, too.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I spent the whole of the recess this year in the Motherland, trying to advance Sir James Mitchell's group settlement scheme. I earned more than twice my salary and goodness knows what I have spent. I will tell the House what I did in Scotland.

The Minister for Agriculture: Your financial confession is bad for a Scotsman!

Mr. J. THOMSON: In every town and village of Scotland the name of our Premier, Sir James Mitchell, is known to-day; in every town and village, the names of Mr. Collier, as Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and of Mr. Angwin, as the Deputy Leader of that party, are well known. Thousands of pamphlets, copies of which I have at present, were issued at meetings in Scotland, and surely to goodness I should get some credit for doing something towards the advancement of settlement in this great State of ours! I am not opposed to group settlement. In fact, I think it is a splendid idea worthy of the man who conceived it—if properly carried out.

Mr. Underwood: That is the stuff Monger put up.

Mr. J. THOMSON: In addition to the money I spent out of my own pocket, there were four or five meetings at which Mr. G. W. Miles, M.L.C., took my place, as I could not attend. They were very large gatherings and no doubt, when speaking on the Address-in-reply in another place, Mr. Miles will have something to say about them. I carried my work further. I have here the leading newspaper published in South Africa, and the interview with me, which appears in that journal, was telegraphed to all the papers in South Africa. The headings to the interview were: "Turning Forests into Farms," "Where a Man with no Capital has a Chance," "Thirteen Hundred Migrants arrive every Month." The name of our Premier appears in big letters as well. In addition to this, when I was in the Old Country, a great deal of my time was taken up by contradicting statements published in the newspapers. Australia House did not seem to take any notice of them. The leading newspaper of the Labour Party in England is the London "Daily Herald." The Glasgow edition of that paper is much the better of the two. I say that, because the latter has the bigger circulation and employs better writers.

Hon. P. Collier: And, you would say, more intelligent readers.

Mr. J. THOMSON: If one boards a tram car in Glasgow, one can see seven out of ten people reading the Glasgow edition of the "Daily Herald." Not many people may be seen reading the London edition in England. Here is one of the things I had to contradict. The following headings appeared in big letters: "Immigration Ramp Disclosures," "Attempt to Gull down-and-out Victims," "Pitiful Experiences." In talking

about Western Australia one man goes on to say—

I have three sons out in Western Australia. They have never received a penny for the first six months. They are working 14 hours per day. They tell me it is not labour, but manslaughter.

That statement appeared in the "Daily Herald" of the 15th May last. In addition to contradicting such statements, my time was taken up in praising the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader. I praised the last two named so much that at one meeting a man asked me the question: "Do you belong to the Labour Party?" I replied: "I do not know yet, but I may after the next general election." As to migration, hon. members know my views as expressed in letters to the newspapers. I say we are not getting the proper type of immigrant in Western Australia.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Don't interrupt me, because I am serious on this question. I will read one expression of opinion in my possession—one out of many. A number of immigrants came out from the Old Country by the steamer "Berrimbi." One comment regarding them was as follows:—

Most of the migrants have been on the dole in England. Many are of low mentality and of poor physique. The welfare officer declared that the men were the sweepings of London streets.

That is only a mild expression of opinion. It comes from the welfare officer on board the "Berrimbi." I have travelled out in two or three steamers and I know there are some splendid fellows amongst the migrants, who will make good citizens. My idea regarding those who are coming out, however, is that they are not the type of men we want for the land. We want such men as those that came out with me on the "Ormonde" last year. On that boat were 1,000 third-class passengers. When we left Colombo I sent a wireless to the acting Premier, Mr. Colebatch, stating that I had two splendid groups of men and women who, after having heard me on the group settlement scheme, wanted to take up land under that scheme. They were paying their own passage to Queensland, but they had formed friendships on board the boat and would like to settle together. Mr. Colebatch's reply to me was that nobody could go on the land in Western Australia without 12 months' experience.

Hon. P. Collier: That has been altered.

Mr. J. THOMSON: All those men had been well used to farming. They were going to take up land in Queensland. They were of the type of settler which, in my opinion, we ought to have. In the Agent General's report it is shown that 6,000 men are registered in the Agricultural Department, Edinburgh. The British Government decided to settle a number of ex-service men on small holdings. At the request of the Agent Gen-

eral I went to Aberdeenshire and saw a few hundred of the thousand men settled there. They were dissatisfied with their lot. The holdings were too small and the men had a very hard struggle in making both ends meet. They had never heard about the group settlement scheme in Western Australia. They were delighted with it, and would have liked to come out. But how could they come out and work here at 25s. per week for 12 months, leaving their wives and children to starve in England? If the whole system were altered, and men and women could be sent straight on to the group settlements, it would be different.

Mr. Davies: They can go now.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Yes, but only a very small proportion of them. When I left London the State was advertising for 100 families per month for group settlement, and for 1,000 married men to come out and leave their wives at home. No decent man is going to leave his wife and family at such a distance to live on 25s. weekly for 12 months. Why not delay the whole thing until we are fixed up at this end? Then let us bring out the proper people. We could go to Ireland, North and South, or we could go to the North of England and get 6,000 good men with the like number of good women, to come out here for group settlement. Why not have a better system at this end, and get the people we want?

Mr. Underwood: That is, if we have the land for them to go on.

The Premier: There is plenty of land.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Those men I met coming out would have made splendid settlers. On the boat also were about 20 families from Lombardy, in Italy. They were going to Queensland to take up land. They were keen to land in Fremantle, and would have gone to the group settlements, where they would have made splendid settlers, and their descendants splendid Australians. I want to ask the Premier why he turned down the proposition that 50 University boys and young men should come out here and take up farms.

The Premier: I never heard of it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Those boys were sons of fairly wealthy people. All they wanted was that the boys should gain experience out here for 12 months, and that the Premier should then find them land to go upon. Every year 50 young men were to be sent out from the Universities. However, the Premier turned that down.

The Premier: I never heard of it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Then I want to ask him why he turned down the proposition of the Yorkshire men? Fifteen Yorkshire men wanted to come out here. Each of them had at least £1,500.

The Premier: I never heard of them, either.

Mr. J. THOMSON: They wanted to settle close together, although not in a group settlement, but the wire the Premier sent back to the Agent General was, "No land available for them." Just fancy such a message

from a State the size of ours! I should like the Premier to answer that question.

The Premier: I can answer it now. I never heard of them.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Well, that is what Sir James Connolly told us. He said your answer was that there was no land available for those men.

The Premier: What nonsense! We have 1,500 blocks ready now.

Mr. J. THOMSON: As for bringing out men with capital, my idea is that we should re-classify all the farms thrown back on the Agricultural Bank, survey the whole of the vacant land alongside railways, prepare maps, and advertise in the Old Country. Then we should get plenty of men with money. If we are to progress, something of this sort must be done. I am afraid the young men we are now bringing out will not stay in the country. They will earn a few pounds and then either go back Home or move across to the Eastern States. I am opposed to bringing out here under the immigration policy any single men or any men over 35 years of age. We can get thousands of the very sort we want.

Mr. Underwood: What do we want them for anyhow?

Mr. J. THOMSON: If the hon. member had travelled in the Far East, as I have, he would know what we want them for.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You mean the Near East.

Mr. Underwood: The Near East is Adelaide.

Mr. J. THOMSON: We want thousands of people, nay millions, and we could get thousands of the right sort without delay if only we were organised at this end.

Mr. J. H. Smith: How would you organise?

Mr. J. THOMSON: This is what I should do: To begin with, I should have our immigration officers in London placed under the control of our Agent General. We have there two splendid men, but they are under the control of the Commonwealth. In the second place, I should remove the foolish regulation prohibiting people from taking up land until they have been 12 months in the State.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not a regulation.

The Premier: Certainly not.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Well then, what is the explanation of Mr. Colebatch's wire to me that nobody could take up land until he had 12 months' experience in the State? If we were to have all that Esperance land discovered by the Minister for Agriculture surveyed and made ready, we could get plenty of men with capital to come out. I have spent a lot of time in the Old Country and I know, not only the class of people we can get, but the class that is coming out here. I know where we are going to land if we continue our present methods. I am here to stay. I am one of the fortunate people in this State. I could have retired 25 years ago and lived a life of ease. I have made money and I have spent money. I am spending it now, and when I am old enough to apply for the old age pension I shall be proud to do so. I mention these

things as proof of my intention to stay. I have the interests of the State at heart. We are not getting the right class of men, although we could get the right class in thousands if the scheme were organised.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you say that no effort is made by the immigration officers in England to get people from Ireland, Scotland and the north of England?

Mr. J. THOMSON: What I say is that a man cannot be expected to leave his wife and children to come out here to work. I have it on the authority of Mr. Thomas, one of the leaders of the Labour Party in England and Secretary of the Railwaymen's Union, that there are thousands of good men, experienced in farming, working on the English railways. They found the farm wages too low, and as they were men of more than average intelligence, they secured work on the railways.

Hon. P. Collier: We should be able to take those men.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Yes, but we cannot do so until the group settlements are made ready for them. We cannot ask a man to leave his wife and family, come out here and live on 25s. a week. Why not get the group settlements ready before the people are brought out?

Hon. P. Collier: That is a single man's job all right—25s. a week.

Mr. J. THOMSON: We do not want the single men. We are asked how we are going to manage about the harvest if single men are not brought out. We must have young men to cope with the harvest. I was born on a farm.

Mr. Clydesdale: To look at you, one would not think so.

Mr. J. THOMSON: As a boy I had to go out and assist at harvest time. The Australian boys of to-day could do the same thing.

The Minister for Agriculture: And milk the cows before breakfast?

Mr. J. THOMSON: The boys can do it. We do not want these men coming out here and, after a short stay in the country, presenting themselves for meal tickets or stowing away on boats returning to England. I have travelled with migrants and I know we are bringing out the wrong class of people. I say in all seriousness that if the elections were not at hand and if we had not to consider those red and blue lines on the map illustrating the new and the old electoral boundaries, I would resign to-morrow as a protest against the present policy of drift.

Hon. P. Collier: Well, move an amendment.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I had an amendment ready.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clydesdale: Then stand up to it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: When I look at the red and blue lines on the map in this Chamber—

Mr. Clydesdale: They frighten you.

Mr. Marshall: The red is the more objectionable.

Mr. J. THOMSON: It is the writing on the wall. When we begin to consider the red and blue lines I intend to move that the red lines be extended a little further, and that instead of 50 members we have only 30 members in this House, and that in another place, instead of 30 members—

Mr. McCallum: Have none?

Mr. J. THOMSON: We cannot do that, but we can reduce the number as low as possible; I shall suggest about 12. That is my reason for not moving an amendment to the address-in-reply.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not very convincing.

Mr. J. THOMSON: It should be.

Mr. Clydesdale: I think the screw has been put on you.

Mr. McCallum: Did Monger see your amendment?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Now that the hon. member has mentioned Mr. Monger, I realise that I was forgetting quite a lot of things.

Hon. P. Collier: You were forgetting that you belong to his party.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Mr. Monger's speech at the Primary Producers' Conference last week was a fine one.

Hon. P. Collier: In parts.

Mr. J. THOMSON: There was one defect, however; it contained no constructive ideas.

The Minister for Works: Be careful.

Mr. McCallum: You will not be endorsed by the party next year.

Mr. J. THOMSON: As one of the foundation members of the Country Party, I must admit that I do not like the way in which they have been trying during the last year or two to put the Premier out of office. Sir James Mitchell is the only man on this side of the House—

Mr. Underwood: That is worth his salt.

Mr. J. THOMSON: He is the only man who will be able to carry out this immigration policy, that is, granted he puts it on right lines. If the Premier would be guided by the advice of his best friends, all might yet be well, but I am afraid he will continue to drift until next year, and that then we shall find him on the other side of the House.

Mr. Munzie: You will find that all right.

Mr. J. THOMSON: And if he continues so to drift, I shall be proud to retain my seat on this side of the House, supporting a Labour Ministry. The report on prohibition in America by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) is a straightforward and honest report.

Mr. Underwood: Not biased.

Mr. J. THOMSON: But the hon. member is a man who could not see the other side of the picture.

Hon. P. Collier: Yet he is not biased?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Not so far as he could judge it. I have travelled through America many times. I travelled through before they had prohibition.

Hon. P. Collier: You have not been there since, of course?

Mr. J. THOMSON: When travelling through the prohibition States, I could al-

ways get a whisky and soda whenever I wanted it. Of course, I did not want one so very often. I stayed a month with some Scotch people in New Mexico, one of the prohibition States, and I could get liquor just the same as I can get it in Perth. Mr. Miles informs me that, during his visit last year, he could get anything he wanted in any State of America. If the member for Kanowna had gone down through Virginia and Maryland and the cotton growing States and had employed his eloquence to tell the people there of the land and opportunities offering in Western Australia, there would have been plenty of young men prepared to come here and take up land. If the land at Esperance had been surveyed, any number of young Americans would have been permitted to come here instead of going to Canada, and they would have made splendid settlers. Had the member for Kanowna done this, he would have done some good for his State. With all due respect to him, I am afraid his report will have about as much effect as would a report issued by the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) about a mothers' meeting in Sydney or Melbourne. I must make a few remarks about His Excellency the Governor. The present occupant of the office is the best Governor we have ever had in Western Australia. I had hoped that he would agree to serve another term of office, but I understand he does not intend to do so. It is time the Government made representations to the Imperial authorities to permit us to appoint our own Governors.

Hon. P. Collier: We should all have a chance then.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Chief Justice, acting as Lieutenant Governor during the absence of His Excellency, carried out the duties in a very satisfactory and able manner, and he should be our Governor. I am having a Bill drafted for presentation to Parliament this session that has for its object the cancelling, as from the date of the passing of the measure, of all pensions being paid to persons who leave the State.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. THOMSON: An ex-Chief Justice of Western Australia, who retired a good many years ago, is drawing a pension of £1,000 a year. Mr. Justice Rooth is drawing a pension of £850 a year and there are many other persons drawing lower pensions that have left the State. Is it fair to the primary producer or to the tradesman that this should be so? Ex-Chief Justice Parker sold his home and went to Melbourne to live, yet he is still drawing his pension from this State. I trust my Bill will receive the support of every member.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [5.14]: Before entering upon the debate on the Address-in-reply, I wish to comment upon assertions made by various people regarding the Royal Commission that inquired into the condition of soldier settlement. One gentleman said this Royal Commission was just a buffer between the Government and the soldier settlers;

it was composed of men who, with the possible exception of Colonel Denton, did not know the difference between bearded wheat and skinless barley; that this want of knowledge had resulted in want of sympathy, and that it was a pity the soldiers had not formed a political party when they came back; they would have got on better.

Mr. Richardson: Who made that statement?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: A man in the street.

Hon. P. Collier: A member in another place.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will tell the House later who made that statement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is going up for election next May.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The man who said that members of the Royal Commission knew nothing about wheat or barley presumed that he knew something himself. As a matter of fact he does know something about the growing of wheat. He knows enough about it to leave it alone, and was wise enough to get a soft "cushy" job as inspector under the Agricultural Bank, and then to go round and tell other people how to grow it. The man I am speaking of is Mr. J. Mills, M.L.C.

The Minister for Agriculture: A very "cushy" job, I am sure.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It was better than growing wheat. Why did he not grow it if he knew something about it? He knew too much about it. After he got out of that "cushy" job, he got into Parliament.

Capt. Carter: Did he ever make a success of growing wheat?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: He could not have done so, or he would not have given it up.

Capt. Carter: He tried, did he not?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know.

Mr. Wilson: And then he said we were buffers.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As to that, I will leave the report to speak for itself.

Mr. Wilson: Hear, hear!

Colonel Denton: Probably he did not read the report.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The position we have arrived at in Australia is that after legislating on top gear for the last 20 years we have really passed all the legislation we can think of. The only thing left now for parliamentarians and governments is wise administration. Mention has been made of the North-West. It is indeed a pleasure to go through my district. The season is good, the price of wool high, mining is improving almost everywhere, and everyone is in good temper and humour.

Capt. Carter: They have a good member.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Possibly that has something to do with it. I am not going to use that wretched phrase "everyone is smiling," but if any member desires to see a pleasant and contented people he should go through my district. All are doing reasonably well there. We have heard a good deal about closer settlement in the North-West. The member for Gascayne (Mr. Angelo) was try-

ing to point out the necessity for closer settlement when the Leader of the Opposition terjected that we could not get it there! I cause the pastoralists held the country for the next 40 years. Therein the hon. member was wrong. Pastoral leases will last for another 25 years only. The Leader of the Opposition was, therefore, wrong to the extent of years. I would ask any member to read the schedule of the Land Act giving titles to pastoral areas. They will find that the Government can resume a pastoral area for a purpose whatever. There is a full page of things for which a pastoral area in Western Australia can be resumed. So far as I know the pastoralists in my district have no desire to prevent closer settlement. Fully 80 per cent. of them would be only too pleased to assist any person in inducing closer settlement there.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you mean small pastoral holdings?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: Would they be willing have their leases cut into small holdings?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. The main reason why we should develop the North-West is from the point of view of defence. A first essential to development, however, is the finding of markets. At present we have no market for our meat. The member for Gascayne talked enough to get meatworks established in his district, but up to date these works have not turned a wheel, because there is no market for meat.

Mr. Angelo: The price is too good. Pastoralists are getting too big a price already but that will not last.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Furthermore, before a person can start on a large scale in that district he must first of all gain local knowledge. The hon. member said people had tried to grow bananas and peanuts in his district. I said the reason why people had failed to grow peanuts was that they had no expert to show them how to do so.

Mr. Angelo: Quite right.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Does he want two experts in order to grow three peanuts? If we want an expert to show us how to grow bananas? Were not bananas grown in New South Wales and Queensland before the word "expert" was put into our language? Were not bananas grown in Fiji before the people there knew anything about experts? The hon. member now says we cannot grow bananas at Carnarvon because the Government have not sent up an expert.

Mr. Angelo: Wheat was grown years ago without an expert, but it is grown much better now because of expert knowledge.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Did the early settlers in Australia throw down their swags and lie upon them until experts came along to show them how to make a living? Did the early pioneers of Western Australia lie on their blankets on Monument Hill until an expert came along? And yet the hon. member would tell us that people were not able to grow peanuts in his district because of the lack—

Mr. Angelo: Of expert knowledge.

Mr. UNDERWOOD:—of experts. Did the original prospectors who came to this State wait for an expert to tell them where to look for gold? The geologists were astray when they came to deal with Western Australian goldfields. They had to learn the local conditions, and it was the prospector who went out and taught them these things. Had Bailey and Ford and many others slept in their blankets until the geologists came along to tell them where to find the gold, it would be in the ground yet. Such is the case in regard to the North-West. It is different from any other part of the world. No expert that was ever born could tell us exactly what to do with it. So far as Carnarvon is concerned, a good supply of fresh water would do more to promote closer settlement than all the experts could do. An expert cannot place fresh water where none exists, any more than a geologist can put gold into reefs.

Mr. Angelo: Do you say there is no fresh water there?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do say so.

Mr. Angelo: Your opinion is not endorsed by many experts. I did not know you knew so much about water.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: An expert went to Carnarvon when the big boom was on. He came from the Agricultural Department, and is a man for whom I have some appreciation. His opinion was that the water is not there.

Mr. Angelo: Who is that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Clifford.

Mr. Angelo: A cadet who has never seen anything outside the South-West. You ought to speak of experts!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Now as to the disastrous disaster which occurred in connection with cotton growing at Derby. I want to go on further with these experts. At the time the Minister for Agriculture was sending a cotton expert to Derby, I advised him not to send anybody there. I gave the same advice to the Premier, and expressed the same opinion to this House. Still, the North-West Department, controlled by a Minister who had seen the North-West through a port-hole of a ship and the wind-screen of a motor car, decided to send men there to grow cotton.

The Minister for Agriculture: On whose advice? Tell me that.

Hon. P. Collier: The whole thing was a blunder.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If the Minister for Agriculture knows on whose advice it was done, I would like to have the information. All I know is that the men were sent up there by the Minister for Agriculture.

The Minister for Agriculture: They were not sent by the Minister for Agriculture at all. Don't make any mistake about that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They were sent on the advice of an expert from Queensland, Mr. Dan Jones, who said Derby was the best place he knew of. He gave no advice when to send the men. Let me give the history of the matter.

The Minister for Agriculture: I shall give the history of it before long.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Minister for Agriculture will have a lot of history to give before I finish.

The Minister for Agriculture: Don't talk about so-called experts, then.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The people I am going to talk about are not so-called experts. I am perfectly sure they are experts. Mr. Dan Jones said Derby was the best place he had seen. Straight away the Government rush in and send up men to grow cotton at Derby. They sent them there in November. Before the men could start work, they were into December. They had to get their tools. They were given unbroken horses. They had to clear the land, which is fairly thickly scrubbed. It was stated that each man had to get 20 acres cleared and cultivated and sown before the end of January. Before the men went I told the Minister that they ought not to have gone. They had only two months. They had to get acclimatised, and the climate of the North-West is not too favourable at that time of the year. They had to break in their horses, though I understand the police helped them with that. They had to erect their machinery, build houses, and sink wells. One well was 50 odd feet deep and another 70 odd feet deep. The men had to clear 20 acres and sow it. All these things in two months! That was the proposition put up to them. Then the Government send along experts. In fact, an expert was sent along with the men, an expert who was a clerk in the Agricultural Department. Next Mr. Evans went up in a flying machine and had a look at the North-West. Evans's statement was that the soil and the climate were not suitable for cotton growing, that there was no subsoil, that when it rained the soil was like a sieve, and retained no moisture to keep the plants going. Further, he said there were only local thunderstorms, which did not really cool the whole area like heavy general rains would do. He said the hot winds came off the dry land, which had not had rain, and burnt the plant at the surface. That is Evans's report. In point of fact, the cotton is growing there to-day.

Mr. Angelo: There are four tons of cotton coming down now.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: This is the expert Evans, the greatest cotton-growing expert in Australia! A man who was working there, who lost his time and his money there, told me that when the cotton got to the height Evans mentioned, six inches, there appeared a small insect, of about the size of the smallest pin we use. That insect in its thousands ate every leaf off the cotton plant, and as it ate the leaves off so it fattened. The insects were lying there in their thousands, almost as thick as a lead pencil, having fattened on the leaves of the cotton plant. Evans the expert, who saw all that, nevertheless gave us this imaginary stuff about the climate and the subsoil and lack of moisture killing the cotton plant. There are three or four members of Parliament who can say to-day that

they have seen the cotton growing at Derby. As soon as Evans told the men the things I have mentioned, they left their land and their tools and harness and building material to rot or to be eaten by white ants. Then, without any cultivation, without any more attention, uncultivated and unfertilised, with the weeds coming up, the cotton is there to-day.

The Minister for Agriculture: Profitable cotton growing!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know whether it is profitable or not. But it is absurd to think that we can send up new hands to clear land and sow it with cotton in two months, without any knowledge, without the necessary fertiliser and tillage. No country in the world can grow cotton under such conditions.

Hon. P. Collier: Moreover the land was like a spider's web with roots of the scrub.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is so. Now let me tell the House what has been told me by non-experts, by men who have lived in that country and know it. The country which Evans recommended for cotton growing—the blacksoil plains—is subject to flooding with brackish water from the sea when there is a big spring tide running into King Sound. That is the land which Evans recommended. So much for the expert.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are not too keen on experts.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not. I like practical experience. I will come to that directly.

The Minister for Works: Then you are an expert on experts.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have learnt a good deal by practical experience, and that is the only way a man can learn.

The Minister for Works: Well, that makes you expert.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No; the University makes one an expert. In Mr. Evans's report there is an extraordinary geographical mistake, or possibly it is a printer's error. Evans recommended the land to the north-west of Cape Leveque. Looking at the map one sees that there is no land north-west of Cape Leveque. The first land one strikes to the north-west of Cape Leveque is the western end of Java. Mr. Colebatch in his lecture spoke about North-West Kimberley. However, one cannot get north-west of a south-west coast line. The "West Australian," which also ought to know something about geography, followed up Evans in his statement about land north-west of Cape Leveque. He meant north-east. Apparently his knowledge of geography is as good as his knowledge of cotton growing in the North-West. Then we sent another expert to the North-West. Mr. Evans reported the presence of loop worm there. Australians have known loop worm all their lives. Further, Mr. Evans said there was a boll worm which had got out of the cotton at Broome into the wild hibiscus. He said we had the wrong cotton seed. Of course, the fact is, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, that the boll worm got out

of the wild hibiscus because of the cotton. The expert ordered half an acre of cotton to be destroyed because the boll worm had got out of the cotton into the wild hibiscus.

Hon. P. Collier: The Broome people were prepared to resist that. They were armed when we were there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then the Minister for Agriculture went East, and found that the boll worm was in Queensland. Since his return he has discovered that the boll worm is also in the Northern Territory. As a fact, there was never enough cotton grown in Broome to sew a button on with. Instead of the worm getting out of the cotton into the wild hibiscus, it came out of the wild hibiscus into the cotton. To possess that knowledge, one does not need to be an expert, but only an ordinary Australian citizen having some acquaintance with the worms there are in this country. I still believe that closer culture is possible in the North-West. But first of all we want to secure markets, and then we want to study the country. At present we are paying an expert from Queensland. As to this expert I say, if he is any good at all, let us give him a fair chance. In my opinion, no man living, no matter what his education may be, can know about the North-West: he has got to learn about the North-West in the North-West. Give him a chance; allow him to establish experimental farms; give him a man or two and give him two or three years to try to find out the right season to sow things, to try to discover the various insect pests that may appear in the crops and generally to find out the conditions in the North-West. Furthermore, I would say regarding the new appointment, keep the officer in the Agricultural Department.

The Minister for Agriculture: He will be there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Do not for Heaven's sake put him under the control of the North-West Department. I have a reason for saying that, and it is not only on account of the failure of the North-West Department. An agricultural expert must be permitted to deal with the Agricultural Department and any communication from him must go to the executive officer of that department. If you put the officer under the North-West Department, any communication he may make will have to go through the Commissioner for the North-West, and the Commissioner for the North-West will transfer the message to the Secretary for the North-West, and the Secretary for the North-West will pass it on to Mr. Sutton, the executive officer of the Agricultural Department, and then it will go back in the same way. Mr. Sutton will confer with the Secretary of the North-West Department, and the Secretary of the North-West Department will confer with the Commissioner for the North-West and so on. I hope that the expert will be placed under the direct control of the Agricultural Department and that the Minister will not allow him to be interfered with by the North-West Department.

The Minister for Agriculture: He is only an advisory officer.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: So long as he has reasonable intelligence, a knowledge of soils, good constitution and plenty of energy we should give him a chance. I will leave the North-West and touch on a matter that affects parents in this State—the finding of occupations for young Western Australians. The greatest difficulty parents experience to-day is to find employment for their boys. We have many good parents, and a large number of them are deluded parents, too, who take the advice of our Education Department and send their boys—I am not worrying about the girls—

Mrs. Cowan: You can leave them to me.

Mr. UNDERWOOD:—to school and keep them at school beyond the age at which they might be apprenticed. Go where we will in this State we find imported tradesmen and Australian labourers.

Mr. Munsie: With the exception of the professional men in mining.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We find that parents cannot get their boys apprenticed to any trade.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is, unfortunately, correct.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It only needs to be looked into to be put right. There are two or three things that can happen. There is the restriction of the number of boys to be employed. I speak with knowledge when I say that there are two or three trades—printing and tailoring amongst them—which were swamped by boys who were taught a small section, and in a year or two drove out the men. The position became such that it was necessary to make the provision that there should be only a certain number of apprentices to a given number of journeymen. Take the position of engineers. I do not know what it is to-day, but a few years ago we could have only one apprentice to five journeymen in the engineering trade. An apprentice had to serve five years, which meant that every apprentice at engineering had to remain at it for 30 years to produce another man to take his place. In engineering, and in boiler making also, quite a large number who qualify go to sea or go into the mines, or work in many jobs where only one or two men are required and where apprentices cannot be taken. Thus a man would have to be at the trade for 60 years before he could teach another to qualify so as to take his place. Mr. Somerville of the Arbitration Court went into the question and he put up a very good scheme, after having thought it over earnestly. His scheme was a good one for the boy, but it has worked out that under it the employers do not want apprentices.

Mr. Munsie: They will not have apprentices.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Therefore the scheme has failed. I am sure I am right when I say that there are thousands of parents in this State who are not so much worried about the wages that a boy earns as they are about having their boys turned out good tradesmen,

and when the boy has nobody to represent him, the unions leave him out to put up the men's wages. The employers say, "All right, we are not going to fight that; let it go." The result is that we have no apprentices. It has been suggested that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into this question. Generally speaking I am opposed to Royal Commissions, but in this case it is urgently necessary that the matter should be inquired into because there should be some body to look after the boys. I noticed in this morning's paper a paragraph about the A.W.U. and the amount of wages required to employ shed hands. The paragraph stated that boy shed hands were not mentioned. As a matter of fact boys are never mentioned, and I think that we parents should take a hand and see that our Australian boys are given a chance to become tradesmen and not to remain merely labourers to imported tradesmen. I next come to something of possibly more importance, the question of immigration. We have heard a great deal about this for some years. In my opinion the necessities for immigration are, in the first place, defence, and in the second place we have run over ourselves to some extent by providing facilities such as railways, jetties and other things over and above the power of our people to use. To bring people here would tend to assist in the defence of the country and to use the facilities I have referred to, and in that way relieve us to some extent of the interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of construction. On the subject of defence, I am not altogether hysterical, and I am under the impression that if we do not get any more people into this country, which we have held for nearly 150 years, we shall continue to hold it for possibly another 150 years. Again, so far as defence is concerned, we are not yet dead. Regarding the utilities I have quoted, we would be very pleased if we had more people to use them so as to relieve us to some extent of the burdens we are carrying. But if it becomes a burden to us to bring migrants here, I claim that we who are here are quite able to put our shoulders up and continue to make use of those utilities ourselves.

Mr. Davies: Conditions have changed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What conditions have changed?

Mr. Davies: The map of the world has altered.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will admit conditions have changed in Australia. We have been reading the speech made by the president of the Primary Producers' Association. I would not give prominence to that gentleman, except for the reason that he called his gathering the Producers' Parliament. That gentleman declares annually that his speech contains the policy of the country.

Hon. P. Collier: He is the Prime Minister of that Parliament.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: From what I know of him he is the Prime Minister of Western Australia.

Mr. J. H. Smith: A brainy man.

Hon. P. Collier: You are only a recent convert.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The president of this association declares in his famous speech—

Fully realising the advantages that will accrue to the State and indirectly to every landowner—

Mr. Munsie: That is the point, he owns a lot.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Again he says—

In addition to lessening our taxes it would cause a considerable appreciation in land values.

There is the primary producer!

Mr. Munsie: That is his main theme.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is coming to a contest between the Nationalists and the Country Party. The Nationalists have no desire for any great increase in land values. As a matter of fact, we Nationalists, from the Premier down, realise that high land costs are against production.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, they are not.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They are.

The Minister for Agriculture: They stimulate production.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am quite prepared to let that go. I contend that low land values stimulate production.

The Minister for Agriculture: They do not.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am prepared to accept the Country Party's policy that high land values promote production. That, we see, is the policy of the Country Party, namely to increase land values.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is your statement of fact.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I accept that statement of fact. They want migration, not only for defence and for the public utilities to be used, but they want it to secure an increase in the price of land—there spoke Mr. Monger, landowner and boss of all the Country Party! I am sorry there is no representative of the Ugly Men's Association in the Chamber at the moment. I agree it would be to our advantage to have more people in Western Australia. At the same time I have no desire to see Perth in a similar position to Melbourne or Sydney, where tens of thousands of people live in flats or live with three or four families in the one house. If it were not for defence and the using of our public utilities, we would be right as we are. We want additional population, however, and when looking for migrants we should look for the type that came here 70 years ago.

The Minister for Agriculture: Times have changed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and so have people. Nearly 70 years ago my mother came here in an immigrant ship with a number of other servant girls. For four months they were out of sight of land; they had no tinned milk and there was no cow aboard; there was no freezer in which to keep fresh meat, and there was no fruit aboard. I have read a lot about a man named Driver, who was

accustomed to writing at great length about food calories. He said we were not now building up as good a class of person as those of past generations. You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, the food calories the people got who came to Western Australia with my mother!

The Minister for Works: They had them all right, but did not call them anything.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not desire to talk about my family affairs, but it may interest members to know that my mother has about 100 direct descendants, she has not a false tooth in her head, and can read to-day without glasses. With all the food calories they talk about, can we get that class of person to-day? Are the descendants of those people going to pay for cotton wool to wrap these migrants in?

Mr. Mullany: Calories killed those people.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I appreciate very much the sentiment and thought that prompts the Ugly Men's Association in the work its members are doing. Generosity is a fine sentiment that can always be appreciated. At the same time, the Association was doing an injury to the State until portion of its activities came in for free discussion. Those "drives," undertaken in order to find positions for migrants, meant that in taking care of the latter, they were pushing young Western Australians out of work.

Hon. P. Collier: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Not a shadow of doubt. Although acting with good intentions, these officials did the State a real injury. Let members contrast the position of the migrants to-day with that of those who came to Western Australia 50 or 70 years ago. In those days there was no Ugly Men's Association, no New Settlers' League, nor yet any Government department to go to to be looked after. Migrants in those days had to take their chance with the rest of the people; any migrant who comes to Western Australia to-day must take his chance with the people already here.

Mr. A. Thomson: You should tell them that before they come here, if that is so.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not care what they are told—

The Minister for Works: You do not want them to be spoon fed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If migrants are satisfied with the hole they are in at Home, do not let them come here. If they come here and yet know a better hole, let them go to it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is all right, but they are influenced by what they are told.

Mr. Wilson: They are induced to come here.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then cut that part out.

The Minister for Agriculture: Where could they get a better hole?

Mr. Corboy: Then let them come here without any inducements.

The Colonial Secretary: The old settlers have not developed the country very much to the present.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We are not under any compliment to these people; we can pull through without migrants. They are not coming here to save us. We will give them a helping hand and do what we can for them if they come here, but they are not permanent settlers. They are not here to suit us. I admit that the Government have had some serious trouble regarding migration, and the Government have done their best to place grants. Although the President of the Primary Producers' Association said last year he was in favour of migration and edged his Association to that policy, this year he says he is still in favour of migration, but the policy is not being carried out right lines.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is a link for your platform.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have not got a platform to put it on. Mr. Menger said that migrants were wanted in Western Australia to increase the price of land and he intended the scheme thoroughly organised.

Mr. C. C. Maley: He wanted migrants to increase the work done on the land.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, he wants them to increase the value of land.

Mr. C. C. Maley: How much have you done to increase the value of land here?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There were columns of tripe from the President of the Primary Producers' Association, and one thing he said was—

A comprehensive scheme of immigration involving the spending of millions cannot be carried out successfully unless thorough organisation obtains, and this I maintain does not exist in this State. The Premier, as Minister for Lands, controls and directs from his Perth office the State immigration settlement policy, and is personally responsible for the scheme now being carried out.

Hon. P. Collier: What is wrong with that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: According to that, there are three Country Party Ministers who have no responsibility whatever.

Hon. P. Collier: Don't you read the "West Australian"?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I know all about this subject. These three Ministers have no responsibility and yet we have had an ultimatum from them that the Country Party intend at the next election to stand as a separate and distinct political entity.

Hon. P. Collier: They don't know where they are.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was a misunderstanding!

Hon. P. Collier: All is uncertain!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is no uncertainty about this, for it shows the poison gas they will put over us.

The Minister for Agriculture: Over whom?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Nationalists.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: What are you?

Hon. P. Collier: The right wing intends to clout the left wing.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The three Country Party Ministers accept no responsibility and anything that is wrong is to be laid at the doors of the Premier and the Nationalists.

Hon. P. Collier: And what is right belongs to the Country Party.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is the poison gas all right.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a new style of fifty-fifty.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Before tea I was speaking on the question of immigration. I pointed out some of the difficulties the original settlers, our parents, had when they were immigrants. They came to this country of their own volition. Put into Bairnsfather's words, they were looking for "a better 'ole." The difference to-day is most marked. I do not think the present system tends to produce better Australians. To-day we have all these associations looking after the migrants. We have the department in London going to more or less trouble to select them. Their passages are paid. On arrival here they are met by citizens' associations, by the Ugly Men's Association, by the New Settlers' League, and by the vigilance committee at the Trades Hall. Each of those associations is breathing into the migrants' ears "Codlin's the friend, not Short." My idea of a migrant is one who comes to the country as my parents did, of his own volition, finds it a good country, makes the best of it, and does well in it. Persons who cannot get on in such conditions are not likely to make the class of Australians that took Gallipoli or that stopped the German rush at Amiens. I was speaking also about the remarks of the president of the Primary Producers' Association in respect of the Premier. That gentleman was complaining, not that the immigration system was right, but that its administration was wrong, and that the fault lay with the Premier. I have had opportunity to look into the work done. I must confess that some of it is bad. Still, there has been considerable improvement; the system of working the group settlements and handling the migrants has greatly improved during the past year. Our friends opposite have complained of the wages paid to migrants. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) quoted the experience of a migrant who was landed in this country free of charge, was taken out to the head of the railway free of charge, and was provided with work. The complaint was that he had 17 miles to walk to his job.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He was not landed free of charge.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: My comment on his experience is "Poor fellow, did 'em do it." I have walked 700 miles looking for work. In Europe or anywhere else a man not able or willing to walk hundreds of miles looking for work is not much good; at all events, he

will not be much good in Australia, and he had better stop in the "hole" he is in, for this is not a better one. But although I have walked 700 miles looking for work, I may say I fared very well at the finish. Anybody not prepared to do that, had better stop where he is, and not charge us up with the expense of carrying him to Western Australia. This brings me to what I think is the most important position we, as members of Parliament, have arrived at. As I said previously, for the past 20 years we have been legislating on top gear. No man in Australia can conceive of any big legislation ahead of us. There is no big question which can divide opinion, such, for instance, as tax grants, or protection versus free trade. Those are all past. To-day administration is the great function of Australian Parliaments, Federal and State, and it will be so for many years to come, always remembering that as a Parliament we are endeavouring to govern people. I have read many constitutions and many systems, and I think the system of democracy, as worked out by the voice of the people through their representatives in Parliament, is the best the mind has yet conceived. But we seem to have worked that to a finish. No member of the House can suggest any improvement to our Constitution. Still, there seems to be a law of nature that we must be moving. It does not seem to matter much whether backwards or forwards, but move we must. We have arrived at adult suffrage, the voice of the people through their elected representatives. We do not seem to get any further.

Mr. Davies: What about elective ministries?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We have had that. We must still move backwards or forwards. I think we are going backwards, for we have reached the stage in drifting back where executives, or people appointed by a section of the community, are endeavouring to control those elected by the people. The Country Party, or the Primary Producers' Association, appear to be the leaders in this. As a Parliament we can only govern people by their respect for and confidence in us. There is another way to govern, namely, by force. Anybody who does anything to reduce the status of Parliament, or rob it of the respect and confidence of the people, is doing something derogatory to the interests of his country. When we find we have associations desiring to control those whom the people have elected, we know we are running on wrong lines. I am not going to say anything about the Labour Party; for the time being I have sufficient to deal with in the address delivered by the president of the Primary Producers' Association, who evidently dominates the Country Party and the members representing that party in the House.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is only your inference.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will read some extracts from the president's speech.

The Minister for Agriculture: Read the whole of it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is too long. I took him an hour and a half to deliver. He is one thing he said—

At one stage we certainly did think the two main sections of our movement were not functioning as we had reason to expect and that the absence of collaboration and co-operation between the Country Party and the executive was creating a breach which might lead to serious consequences. I am, however, pleased to be able to say I hope that danger is now past, and that I look forward in the future to full cordial co-operation (applause).

I have no doubt the Minister for Agriculture applauded that. The president's speech continues—

You need not fear that the executive of this association is trying to usurp the functions of the elected of the people; but on the other hand it will not hesitate to do so, with, and, when necessary, advise, members on matters which are calculated to affect our industries.

They will not hesitate to deal with them.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are putting a wrong interpretation on that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Exactly. In the English language "deal" has three meanings.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is that what you find wrong in the president's speech?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, I will come to the rest of it. "Deal" is a board, a bit of wood. Again, a magistrate has accused persons before him and he "deals" with them. The Labour Party in New South Wales quite recently have "dealt" with a few of their members. That is another meaning of the word "deal." There is still another meaning—"to deal" means to trade, to exchange.

The Colonial Secretary: What about a fourth?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Forty years ago a sandalwooder used to go out into the bush with his team and dray and bring in a load. He brought it into the storekeeper. The storekeeper took the sandalwood, gave him an old "Groper" a fifty of flour, a bit of salt pork and a gallon of rum and sent him on his way. That was a deal. What other meaning has the word "deal"? If Mr. Monger uses the word in the sense that a magistrate "deals" with an accused person, well, that is good. If he used it in the sense of making an exchange, it means—"We are prepared to give you political support in exchange for some political advantage to ourselves."

The Minister for Agriculture: That is a wrong interpretation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What interpretation does the Minister put upon it? I shall be glad to hear him give the fourth meaning "deal" when he speaks. If it has come a matter of dealing in the sense of an exchange for some advantage, there is being introduced into our politics one of the worst features of American politics. Tammany graft, all that is bad in American politics

is being introduced into the politics of Australia, and by whom? By the Country Party. The Minister for Agriculture: Go on quoting the speech.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I intend to. We have been treated to a most degrading exhibition in the appointment of the Federal Government. Fifteen members in a Parliament of 111—

The Minister for Agriculture: Not 111.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, including 36 senators; fifteen members out of 111—less than one-seventh of the total—by a device—

Hon. P. Collier: By a deal.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Quite so—by a deal, are able to assert who is to be Prime Minister of Australia, who are to be Ministers of the Cabinet and to dominate the policy of Australia. That is what occurred in Federal politics. When such things occur, the people are apt to lose their respect for Parliament, and once they lose their respect for Parliament, bad times are likely to follow. I shall quote further from the report of the speech by the president of the Primary Producers' Association, the president of the farmers' parliament, who takes precedence over Ministers in this House.

The Minister for Agriculture: In what way?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Monger said—

I think the consistent attitude of the Country Party since its creation proves its unselfishness and its willingness to co-operate with others in the interests of stable government.

Fancy saying that, after 15 out of 111 members of the Federal Parliament have sunk Australian politics into the most degrading position they have ever been in—bargaining, growling, huckstering for personal positions!

Hon. P. Collier: Of course the Nationalists were all parties to that bargaining, growling, and huckstering.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I shall give that in.

Hon. P. Collier: Both were sinners.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, both were sinners. Mr. Monger, in his address, added—

Even at the risk of reiteration, I want to again remind delegates it was the Country Party who brought about the defeat of the Labour Party, and it has been the Country Party who have kept them out of power since 1916.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not true.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not saying it is true; I do not want the hon. member to accuse me.

Capt. Carter: Monger says so; therefore it must be so.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Ministers and parliamentarians sit down under the guidance of an outsider and allow him to make these statements.

The Minister for Agriculture: You will get a bite if you keep going long enough.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Monger also dealt with that infamous conference as a result of which the Labour Government were put out of office. He did not enter altogether

into the bargaining carried on at that time, but there was a bargaining, and Mr. Monger was there during the bargaining.

Hon. P. Collier: He was the chief auctioneer.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Part of the bargain was that a commission should be appointed to inquire into the agricultural industry. It cost us £5,000.

Hon. P. Collier: It cost £10,000.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And the report is in the pigeon-holes now.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Esperance Northwards railway was considered to be unwarranted because it was said there was too much salt in the soil, but another commission was appointed at a cost of £4,000 or £5,000 to inquire whether there was salt in the soil. Those are some of the things that this leader, this outside leader, has done for Western Australia. I do not know how the Minister for Agriculture is going to get on with his leader, after having told us that he has found a new province at Esperance.

The Minister for Agriculture: I told you nothing of the sort.

Mr. Corboy: You did not deny it when the paper published it as coming from you.

The Minister for Agriculture: That I had said what?

Mr. Corboy: That you had discovered a new province.

The Minister for Agriculture: I did not say I had discovered it. That is your imagination.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Monger tells us how the coalition was formed, and how they put the Labour Government out; but there was another coalition after that.

The Minister for Agriculture: For whom are you apologising now?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not apologising for anyone. I wish to call attention to another agreement. When the Empire was in danger we held a meeting of all sections of Parliament and put up a proposition that we would drop party politics and party bias for the purpose of winning the war. The Country Party came into that and one of the undertakings was that members would represent the people who elected them, irrespective of any outside executives, cliques or organisations. The Country Party have forgotten the compact they then made with us. They now tell us they are going to stand—

The Minister for Agriculture: A compact made with whom?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: With us; I was one of them. They have forgotten all about the compact made with us when our very existence as a nation was in danger. They tell us now they are going to stand as a separate political entity.

Lieut.-Colonel Denton: About time, too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As a political entity the Country Party, who cannot win and have not won a single Senate seat, have not a stray dog's chance of ever controlling the affairs of Western Australia.

Lieut.-Colonel Denton: They are in the Government to-day.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: But so soon as the other half pull out, where are they? We are not going to allow ourselves to be had like that again. Their great and glorious president can never get a majority, but he and his party will do devious things in the way of being a horse of mullock between the two main political reefs in order to gain some enrichment from either side.

Lieut.-Colonel Denton: And you will be wrecked.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not wrecked yet.

Mr. Angelo: To which party do you belong now?

Hon. P. Collier: Evidently not to yours.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Leader of the Opposition has put the position clearly—the hon. member's (Mr. Angelo) was a marriage of convenience.

Hon. P. Collier: They have guarded against that in future. There are to be no more interlopers.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They have passed a motion that one cannot come in unless he has been a member since prior to the latest conference. There is some wisdom in that, but after all they have "snavelled" all they are likely to get from us. There are no more of us likely to cross over to the Country Party. They have stampeded all that are "stampede-able."

The Minister for Agriculture: They are never likely to have you.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Minister can get some plain speaking from me anyhow.

The Minister for Agriculture: And we shall give it back.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Good.

Mr. Clydesdale: How they love each other!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I well remember the voices of our opponents when I was in the Scaddan Government, and loudest amongst those opponents was Mr. Monger clamouring that Mr. McCallum was the power behind the throne. That was not much more than a bare assertion, but even allowing that it was true, McCallum had the decency and the good manners to remain behind the throne. Mr. Monger does not remain behind the throne. He comes out; he is the throne itself and Country Party members here are his offiders. I will read another extract from Mr. Monger's speech, showing how the Country Party follows other parties. He says—

It is extremely bad taste for a section of the metropolitan Press—

He means the "West Australian"—

to be continually giving the Premier credit for everything that is apparently well, and by inference casting blame on other Ministers in cases where affairs are not progressing satisfactorily. The continuous adulation of the Premier to the exclusion of fair recognition of the work done by other Ministers is, in my opinion, more likely to cause bitterness than a feeling of cordiality and esteem which is essential to the satis-

factory working of Governments composed of two parties.

If I were in the Ministry and the Premier was not treating me well, I would get out of it. I will say this for the "West Australian" they have more sense than to discredit any member of the Mitchell Ministry. I admit the adulation, but compare the "West Australian" with the vituperative abuse of the "Primary Producer," Monger's own paper.

Hon. P. Collier: Not a bad paper.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then imagine the leader of the Primary Producers' Parliament complaining about Press criticism!

Mr. Richardson: What did they say about you?

Lieut.-Col. Denton: They left him alone.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Many persons and many papers have said things about me, but no one has yet said anything to prevent me from winning my election.

Hon. P. Collier: It is too far away. It is not heard up there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: At this juncture every thinking man should do the best he can to maintain the democracy of Australia. To uphold the respect of this Parliament should be regarded as part and parcel of democracy. One of the principles of democracy is that members of this Parliament should carry out the duties their constituents sent them here to do. The Country Party have an executive. It is laid down in their rules—

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you belong to any association?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have my constituency. When any question arises it is laid down in the rules that the executive meet the members of Parliament.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: That is entirely wrong.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is in the rules. There shall be an equal number of the executive with the Parliamentary members. This means to say that those members of this House, under the aegis of the Primary Producers Association, are only half members.

The Minister for Agriculture: Absolute rubbish.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They are only 50 per cent. members, because they have an unelected person who has an equal voice with them. I think for the future they will be known as "fifty-percenters."

Mr. Richardson: Twin brothers.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: What are you?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am a full member. The Minister for Agriculture: More often full than otherwise.

Mr. Corboy: That is nasty and hurtful.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is all right. I am able to express my views whatever my condition may be. Each of the members of this Chamber who belongs to the Country Party, not as an offsider but an equal, is only a half member when he comes to deal with any political matters concerning primary production or the advancement of the State, which covers everything. One of the rules of democracy is that a member is responsible to the people who elect him, and to no one else. Could a woman vote for a Country

Party man? How much power has a woman in electing the other 50 per cent.? She has no vote at all.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: A democratic half.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: How much voice has the ordinary farm labourer in electing someone on the executive, who is going to be the associate member with the members of the Country Party? Who will elect them? We are going right over the head of democracy, which our forefathers and we, to a certain extent, fought for, and are allowing it to drift away because of an irresponsible person like Monger, and because there are some people who are prepared to be elected to Parliament, but have not the manliness to stand up and say that having been elected to Parliament they are responsible only to the people who elected them.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.7]: I have listened to various speakers during this debate.

The Minister for Agriculture: Full members or non-full members?

Mr. MARSHALL: I compliment the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) upon his strong indictment of the primary producers and their interference with responsible Government. I will leave them to work out their own salvation.

Hon. P. Collier: Their ruin!

Mr. MARSHALL: When they have done that properly they will find sufficient to engage their attention for a long time. I have read the Governor's Speech with interest.

Capt. Carter: Right through?

Mr. MARSHALL: Word for word, and figure for figure. It would have been a magnificent address, but that it is devoid of all substance, and, as the member for Claremont said, of constructive ideals. I do not know whether the people apply the Speech to the State in general, and think how it will affect it or how individuals are to fare under the administration of the Government. It is full of promises, as usual.

Mr. Mann: They are being put into execution.

Mr. MARSHALL: There does not appear to be much execution about it. The Speech says, "My advisers anticipate that continuous employment will be available for all labour offering."

Mr. Mann: You agree with that?

Mr. MARSHALL: That is one of the promises that will never be fulfilled.

The Colonial Secretary: That is where you are wrong.

Mr. MARSHALL: Who advises the Governor? I assume the Government advise the Governor. They put words into his mouth, and he reels them off like a parrot that has been taught to use certain words and make the house more cheerful thereby. Are the Government under the impression that they have provided continuous employment in the past for all the people?

The Colonial Secretary: Never go back; always go forward.

Capt. Carter: It is only a matter of comparison. They have done pretty well.

Mr. MARSHALL: For an indifferent Government they have excelled themselves. There is a great deal of unemployment during many periods of the year. The only outlook the people have is that it is contemplated by the advisers of the Governor that continuous employment will be provided for all labour offering. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) said that when people lost faith in Parliamentary Government there would be a disastrous time ahead. If there is to be unemployment in the future and the Government do not propose to do much more than they have done, a great section of the community will lose faith both in the Government and in Parliamentary regime. The Speech contemplates that everything will be happy and gay in the future, that because of the good rains sheep and cattle are looking well, that the price of wool is rather good, that the prospects of greater discoveries of gold are very promising, and it also contemplates that, at the expense of the taxpayers, every assistance will be given to private enterprise. What about that large section of the community which might well be considered from the State point of view? The Speech contains not a word about providing for the workers in the State, or their homes or any security of employment. The Government ask the people to have full faith in the Parliamentary regime, as being free and democratic. I can see nothing in the Governor's Speech that is not Conservative. The circumstances of the every day worker of this State are perfectly apparent to every member of this Chamber. During the recess some members regard it as a responsibility to foster organisation to provide homes for the workers. On the other hand the Government, instead of legislating to prevent exploitation of homes in the city, do nothing. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) drew a ghastly picture of the material used in the construction of a hospital at Katanning. That was about the length of his intelligence and the substance of his argument on the Address-in-reply. He went on to say that it would not be right to interfere with the drastic exploitation going on in the city, because it would bring about confusion with which the Government would never be able to cope. The time has long since gone by when the Government should have given effect to a resolution passed here for the establishment of a fair rents court. The wail of the people affected by rack renting is unlike in its effects to that of the Primary Producers' Association, who are able to bring pressure to bear on the Government. But the wail of the people is loudly heard in Perth, and I believe the same thing applies to the large towns of Western Australia. There is an absolute ramp of exploitation as to rents, which take from the worker the cash which he badly needs for feeding, clothing, and housing his family. If we walk closely within the sphere of life of these people, we discover other effects detrimental to the welfare

and progress of the State. The young people of to-day are none too eager to marry. The wretched picture which comes before him daily will make any broad-minded young man consider his position before taking on the responsibilities of matrimony.

The Minister for Agriculture: The trouble is that he gets too much to look at.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have a weakness for the opposite sex, and will not be too hard on women. The trouble is the cost of married life to-day.

Mr. Mullany: Not the girl?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, I would not like to imply that. The basic wage for the city is now about £3 12s. 6d. per week. The ordinary home provided by the landlords of this city costs 30s. of that amount to vanish immediately. Hon. members may regard the matter as a jest, but I am open to argue that no member of this Chamber is prepared to exchange his position for that of any man on the basic wage and continue to carry the obligations of married life. Imagine a married man, probably with a couple of children, trying to eke out an existence on £3 12s. 6d. per week. Yet the Government sit idly by and do nothing whatever. Not that I would advocate their doing anything which would inflict hardship on the other man. I am quite prepared to concede to him what is justly his. But action from the Government is long overdue towards granting the working community the same measure of justice as landlordism has been granted all through the piece. Young married people of to-day, rather than be subjected to the impositions of landlordism in the city in particular, are taking to the very undesirable life of rented rooms.

Mr. Lambert: Flats.

Mr. MARSHALL: Flats are the people who tolerate flats. On this occasion I have the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) with me. It does not augur well for the happiness of a married couple to start life in rented rooms.

Mrs. Cowan: Not if they can avoid it.

Mr. MARSHALL: How can they avoid it in existing circumstances? The only remedy is legislation to regulate rents, accompanied by a vigorous policy of erecting workers' homes.

Mrs. Cowan: First of all get the homes.

Mr. MARSHALL: And meantime permit the landlord to exploit the opportunity for ruck renting the people?

Mr. Lambert: The Government are spending money on providing homes for the immigrants, but will not spend it to provide homes for Australians.

Mr. Mann: Have an argument amongst yourselves about it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) should clean up the door step of the National Party before troubling himself about ours. The only peaceful member on the other side of the House is the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan).

Hon. P. Collier: That is because there is no other woman here.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not prepared to back up my Leader in that statement. Let me impress on the House that the lot of the workers, particularly in our cities, is becoming more difficult each year by reason of the fact that population is always increasing and thus offering to the landlord the opportunity of squeezing out higher and still higher rents. The same cause is jeopardising the moral system of our people by forcing married couples, many of them very young, into such conditions of existence that their prospects of a comfortable and prosperous married life are not as good as they would be if these couples had homes of their own. I endorse the remarks of the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) in this connection, and like him enter a protest against the lackadaisical attitude of the Government in giving the landlords carte blanche to exploit the workers to the full. Reverting to the Governor's Speech, I find that no provision is to be made this session for insurance of those people who cannot care for themselves, people who are the victims of circumstances, and are driven from pillar to post by the whims of employers. Their term of employment is insecure, and the pay for the only commodity they have to sell, their daily labour, is also left to the goodwill of the employer.

Mr. Mann: It is governed by an arbitration award, and you know that, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member gives great promise some day of knowing something.

Hon. P. Collier: In the distant future.

Mr. MARSHALL: Labour is like any other commodity when it is up for sale. Where there is an influx of labour, as here has been into this State during the last few years and particularly during the last 12 months, the battle for existence becomes keener, and the price of labour becomes reduced, irrespective of the Arbitration Court. Let me tell the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) that I could name some of his faithful supporters who at the present juncture are forcing some of their employees to sign a pay sheet at a reduced rate as compared with the rates awarded by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Mullany: You should name those employers.

Mr. Mann: If that is so, your duty is very plain.

Mr. MARSHALL: My duty here is to try to influence the Government so that they may fully understand the position of the people with whose walk in life I am familiar. I cannot as an individual violate economic or social or natural laws. The Government's policy of immigration at the present juncture is nothing more or less than a wage-smashing proposition.

Mr. Mann: That is not correct.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not say the Premier or his Ministers do it intentionally, but that effect is unavoidable. When the struggle for existence becomes keen between workers, then, irrespective of the Arbitration Court, the labourer will be paid according to the amount of labour offering.

Mr. Mullany: Will you name the people who are faking the pay sheets?

Mr. MARSHALL: No; but if the hon. member wants to know them, he can come round to me and I will give them to him. Two of them I can name for him, but not on the floor of this House.

Mr. Mullany: It is not fair to make a general charge.

Mr. MARSHALL: It may not be fair, but the only people who are suffering because of the Government's immigration policy are these particular people. Out of fear of unemployment, fear of not knowing where they will get their next meal, they agree to the suggestions of these particular scoundrels, and go behind an award of the court by signing receipts for more money than has actually been paid to them.

Mr. Mann: Are they male or female employees?

Mr. MARSHALL: Both; there is no argument regarding sex. Last session Parliament instructed the Government to introduce a system of State insurance. As with all other matters dealt with by way of resolution here, the Government merely let the resolution lapse into oblivion. The only resolutions which secure Government backing and force Ministers into activity are those passed by the Primary Producers' Association. These are the only resolutions the Government deem essential to give effect to. I do not blame the Government so very much for that, because politics, as I view it, mainly circled round the pivot of greed for portfolios. There is wrangling.

Mr. Mann: That does not disturb you.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) will be in it next. One cannot expect too much, however, because it is not the welfare of the State that the Government have at heart, but merely the lime-light and pay of Ministerial office.

The Minister for Agriculture: You will get fat on Ministerial pay when it comes to your turn.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of the members sitting on the cross benches, the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) in particular referred to the Queensland Government in eulogistic terms every five minutes or so.

Mr. Angelo: I mentioned them two or three times.

Mr. MARSHALL: When he desired to impress the House with the virtue of any policy he advocated, the member for Gascoyne generally introduced the phrases: "When I was in Queensland"; "The Queensland Government did this," and so on. The hon. member is well aware that the workers of Queensland have been protected by the Labour Government there against unemployment by means of a State insurance scheme.

Mr. Angelo: They are spending plenty of loan money in Queensland.

Hon. P. Collier: Don't talk about loan expenditure, seeing that last year our expenditure was the highest in the history of the State.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so.

Mr. Mann: Since when has an unemployment insurance scheme been in operation in Queensland?

Mr. MARSHALL: You will learn something yet! The member for Gascoyne has assured the House that the State insurance scheme in Queensland is working remarkably well. I do not think that hon. member would say, as the man in the street has the audacity to suggest only too often, that the scheme encourages loafers. Figures speak for themselves and statistics show that the State insurance scheme in Queensland is a monument to the intelligence, wisdom and ability of the Government there, these being characteristics the Western Australian Government are lacking in. This scheme affords a certain amount of security against unemployment, a happy position not enjoyed by the workers of this State where they often find it difficult to understand where they are regarding employment. Particularly in the metropolitan area is it no uncommon thing for a worker, believing he is enjoying constant employment, to be told on going to work in the morning that he can return home as his services are no longer required. I ask hon. members not to look at the position of the worker from the viewpoint of £400 a year and pickings.

The Minister for Agriculture: What pickings?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister's farm, for instance. There are pickings all through.

The Minister for Agriculture: My farm used to keep me once; now I have to keep it. Those are the pickings you refer to.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Minister's prospects are no brighter than he suggests, he will be in the bankruptcy court very soon, because he has only till March next to enjoy his present position. If he has no better prospects, he has my sympathy.

Mr. Angelo: That compensates.

The Minister for Agriculture: I will have your company and sympathy too.

Mr. Johnston: Down on the farm.

Mr. MARSHALL: At any rate, the Minister has an honest livelihood by virtue of his farming operations.

The Colonial Secretary: What is his present political position?

Mr. MARSHALL: It has a tendency towards the parasitical.

Mr. Angelo: That is a reflection upon Parliament.

Mr. MARSHALL: At any rate, hon. members seem to judge the position of the workers, particularly unskilled labourers, from their own point of view. There are few members sitting on the Government side of the House who rely solely upon their Parliamentary salaries for an existence. Almost without exception they have other avenues of income. The member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) shakes his head. Has he no other source of income?

Mr. J. Thomson: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: No wonder he lives at Claremont! It is so easy to look at the other man's position through one's own glass win-

dow; the result is that the working community is suffering. That class is not legislated for with the same regard as other sections of the community in a far better position. Parliament does not afford them equal protection and the lot of the working man is somewhat intolerable. Hon. members like to decry the so-called soap-box orators of the Esplanade. They contend that the convictions of those soap-box orators are not worthy of any citizen of Western Australia; that the State should legislate to prevent those people voicing their opinions in complaining against the present Administration, against Parliamentary actions and in discussing the possibilities ahead of the working community. All the soap-box orators who talk on the Esplanade can neither help nor do injury to the workers who, however, should have some security of tenure as regards employment. Unless something is done along these lines, Parliament will suffer from an upheaval one of these days more serious than is ever likely to arise from the speeches of the so-called soap-box orators. The other States of Australia have long since realised the necessity for introducing State insurance, establishing fair rents courts, and providing other reforms which are so essential to the well-being of the working community here. Country Party members, particularly when speaking on the Address-in-reply, paint a ghastly picture of the burdens that the primary producer has to bear.

Mr. Johnston: The president of the Primary Producers' Association praised Queensland.

Mr. MARSHALL: Is there any heavier load put on the shoulders of the struggling farmers than Monger, Murray, Shallicross and the rest of them? They are the greatest exploiters in Western Australia.

Mr. Johnston: They are the best friends the man on the land has.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then the man on the land has my deepest sympathy. The workers have common interests with the struggling primary producers, for each has to share the burden of carrying them. We find that competition has vanished from the commercial atmosphere; there is a remarkable understanding between importers and, in a great measure, between retailers. They have standardised prices of the imported article and of the locally manufactured article.

Mr. Mann: They have followed the lead of the unions.

Mr. MARSHALL: When they wanted intellectual guidance, they went to the Trades Hall to get it. The rent lords of Perth have never missed an opportunity to increase rents whenever possible. I do not blame them, for they are justified in doing it. The people I blame are the majority of the working class who tolerate the Government who protect the landlords.

Mrs. Cowan: You said they were not justified, but now you say you do not blame them.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member would do as they do, if she could.

Mrs. Cowan: Indeed, I would not.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then I am afraid the hon. member's parliamentary career will not be a long one.

Mrs. Cowan: I cannot help that.

Hon. P. Collier: That's another one out.

Mr. MARSHALL: In the suburbs, every 200 yards we see two or three butcher shops, six or seven ham and beef shops, four or five greengroceries—mostly in the possession of Hong Kong Chinamen—all with expensive out-fits constituting a drain on the primary producers. How long is this state of affairs to continue? It is easy for anyone with a small capital to open up a bit of a shop, although next door somebody is selling precisely the same commodity. He divides the patronage with his neighbour, and then between them they decide to increase the price. It is not uncommon to see bakers and butchers coming from Fremantle to Perth. Consider the over-lapping! Where, probably, one butcher and one baker would suffice a whole district, there are nine or ten or a dozen, all burdens on the workers. It is nearly time the Government regulated prices and put a limitation to the burden which the taxpayers are asked to carry.

Mrs. Cowan: It would not be workable.

Mr. MARSHALL: In the opinion of the hon. member, of course not.

Mrs. Cowan: We had the price-fixing Commission.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, we had a price-faking Commission.

Mr. Hughes: They were never there to fix prices, but merely to prevent increases.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member is wrong. I defy him to show that at any sitting the Commission failed to sanction a rise. A few evenings ago the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) declared that the farmer provided the wherewithal for everybody else to live upon. According to that hon. member no other section is entitled to live.

Mr. Angelo: Did he not say "primary producer"?

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, that is the farmer. Where is the distinction.

Mr. Angelo: There is the miner.

Mr. MARSHALL: At all events, the hon. member was quite incorrect, for the other units of society make it possible for the primary producer to be a primary producer. If the primary producer had to mine the coal, drive the railway locomotive, teach his children, and manufacture his farming implements, he would not be a primary producer at all. It seems to me the opportunity is rapidly approaching for the electors of Katanning to get a real representative in this House.

Mr. Davies: That is another member out. You had better have a go at Claremont now.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, after that hon. member's able speech this evening it would be unwise to wish him anything but success, especially since he contemplates sitting with Labour. I join with the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) in his protest against the neglect of the Government to relieve the position in respect of insurance, rent regula-

on and the distribution of the production of wealth; also their neglect to bring down legislation guaranteeing the worker some security of tenure. Members of Parliament have a security of three years. While at first blush it seems a long time, yet in my experience, it is passed very quickly. When I gaze upon the writing on the wall, I realise that the term has been all too short.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is no other one gone.

Mr. MARSHALL: No doubt the people of Western Australia, particularly those in remote areas, will be pleased to see set out in the Governor's Speech the splendid financial position of the State. From it we learn that the revenue for the year ended 30th June, 1923, was £7,207,402. Of course that is a mere nothing. It means merely that the Treasurer got an increase of £300,385 over the return of last year, while the expenditure was £7,612,843, or £26,399 less than that of the previous year. It is pathetic that so trifling an amount should be mentioned as a reduction in expenditure. If the Premier were to wake some morning and find his bank balance reduced to £26,000, probably he would issue an ultimatum to his good wife and family that in future the slogan of the household was to be "economy." Yet nobody seems to trouble about the State's financial position. The Premier gets money easily and spends it quickly. So great has the deficit grown that the figures, if printed sufficiently large, would extend right around the State. I believe there is in the platform of the primary producers' party a plank pledging economy.

Mr. Johnston: It is the main plank.

Mr. MARSHALL: By the attitude of Country Party members that plank has a flaw in it. The Governor's Speech tells us that the deficit on the year's transactions was £405,351, making an accumulated deficit to the end of the year of £5,910,966, or in round figures six millions. What do hon. members opposite think of it? Nobody seems to trouble about it. In fact, there seems to be a desire to hush it up.

Mr. Angelo: I wish we could hush it up.

Mr. MARSHALL: It would be far better if Country Party members made an effort to mop it up. Let me quote what the present Premier had to say to the present Minister for Mines when that gentleman was Premier and Treasurer. I am concerned, and I am honest in my concern. I did not preach from the public platform a policy of economy.

Mr. Pickering: What did you preach?

Mr. MARSHALL: A logical policy which I could honestly promise to fulfil.

Mr. A. Thomson: That was, provided you were lucky.

Mr. MARSHALL: The only unlucky people I know in this State are the electors of Katanning. I wish to show the consternation of the present Premier in 1915 when the present Minister for Mines was Treasurer of the State. I consider it my duty to reveal the hypocrisy of his attitude.

The Minister for Mines: Call it a misunderstanding.

Mr. MARSHALL: Now that the deficit has almost reached six millions, the Treasurer passes over it with a very slight reference. When it was very much less, he pretended to be greatly concerned about it. These are the words he used in speaking of the head of the Scaddan Government—

The Premier does not mind the growth of the deficit. It will be two millions before we are much older. While I thought it my duty to produce these figures relating to the finances, because the public ought to know where they stand, there is a silver lining to the cloud. We cannot stand idly by in face of the present situation. Something must be done. "Something" means economy and economy means more than lopping off a few pounds here and there from which no good can result.

What has the present Premier done? Where is all the business acumen that the electors of the State were promised years ago when the party at present in office desired to oust the Labour Government? In view of the statements made at that time by the present Premier, I question whether he was justified in appointing the present Minister for Mines as a member of his Cabinet. He said, referring to the Minister for Mines, "No doubt he has a strong personality." I am with the Premier there.

The Minister for Mines: I cannot stand slattery.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then he added, "But without doubt he lacks experience." In those days I was acquainted with the present Minister for Mines, and I was always puzzled to know what had deprived such a young man of his hair.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not be personal.

Mr. MARSHALL: Perhaps it was his desire to gain experience. His critic at that time added, "He has not the vaguest sense of responsibility. In the administration of the affairs of this country the Premier (Mr. Scaddan) has shown no sense of responsibility." Yet we find that same gentleman administering one of the biggest departments under the Mitchell Government. Again I ask what has happened to the extra £300,000 that the Treasurer has collected? Who is the spendthrift squandering the money that the primary producers and other taxpayers are finding to replenish the Treasury?

Mr. Johnston: That sounds like an echo of the past.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is time the echo reached this House. When a few hundred thousand pounds was being expended very economically by the Labour Government, the daily Press, the mouthpiece of capitalism, bawled loud and often, "Where has the money gone? Who has spent it?"

Mr. Mann: We were told it was in the pockets of the people.

Mr. MARSHALL: We find a keen desire on the part of the Government to hide from the people the fact that direct taxation is

being increased year by year. The Governor's Speech states—

The deficit for the year shows a decrease, compared with the previous year's operations, of £326,784, and it is anticipated that the improvement will continue.

Mr. Pickering: Is not the improvement continuing?

Mr. MARSHALL: From a primary producer's point of view it may be, but no sane individual would argue that way. The Treasury last year reaped over a quarter of a million more than in the year before, and the only saving was £26,000. We are told that the deficit has been reduced by £326,000. That is incorrect. Compared with the previous year there is no saving, because the Treasurer had £326,385 more money to spend, and he spent it nobly. I want the people to realise that the Treasurer has been continually increasing direct taxation ever since he has been in office.

Mr. Angelo: Do not forget that he let off 20,000 workers last year. Be thankful!

Mr. MARSHALL: The only individuals who have a hope of evading the Commissioner of Taxes are such as the member for Gascoyne. The opportunities are available to anyone in business to evade his just share of taxation.

Mr. Angelo: Come and tell me quietly how it is done.

Mr. MARSHALL: The worker has the employer on one side and the Commissioner of Taxes on the other, and his chance of evading payment of taxation is remote. I regret that a great number of business people take full advantage of the loopholes in the law to evade the payment of their just share.

Mr. Angelo: Let us have a word outside afterwards.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have no desire to intrigue with the hon. member because he would outclass me and my morals already are sufficiently corrupt. I wish to show how direct taxation has been increased since 1916. In 1916-17 the amount of direct taxation collected was £402,337; in 1917-18 it was £449,456.

Mr. Mann: What was the exemption?

Mr. MARSHALL: A generous and logical exemption introduced by the Labour Government.

Mr. Mann: But what was it?

Mr. MARSHALL: Not an exemption of exploitation and trickery such as it has been ever since the Labour Government left office. In 1918-19 the amount of direct taxation collected was £629,000 and in 1919-20 it was £844,000. So it has continued, until last year the increase over that of the previous year was £300,000. Where is the business acumen that the present Government promised to display? The electors were promised that if they returned the party now in power and kept out "Happy Jack," the salvation of the State would be assured.

Mr. Clydesdale: But they kept him in. That is where the mistake was made.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, he slipped in afterwards. The electors were promised that, they returned to power men of business acumen, there would be no need for any increase in taxation. They were told that if they put Mr. Frank Wilson in power, business men would flock around him and would save the financial position of the State. If members of the present Government are blessed with that business acumen, they must be overfloading with it because, judging by their performances, none of it has ever come out. The Speech continues—

The operations of the railways continued to show the improvement manifested in the previous year. The gross surplus was £675,517, leaving, after provision by the Treasury of interest (£766,000) and sinking fund (£126,000), a shortage of £216,488. This represents an improvement over 1922 of £214,310, and over 1920-21 of £378,379.

Ever since I have been a member of Parliament the Treasurer has blamed the railway system for the lion's share of the burden that is carried by the people. In his first Budget he held the railway system and the industrial upheavals responsible for the deficit. For the following year he laid the blame on the same shoulders. Last year, however, the railway system returned to the Treasury eight times more than it has done for years. Where can the Premier now find for the deficit? He had over a quarter of a million more money in revenue. Where is he going to cast the blame this time? Upon all our public utilities, in all those services that are rendered to the public by the Government increased charges have been imposed. A drastic has been the increase in rates and freights on the railways that the genuine producer of the State, who is trying to develop it, is suffering severely. By the genuine producer I mean the struggling farmer and the man out back who is toiling along, making a bold effort by his energy to improve his position in life. I do not speak of those who use the primary producer and who are holding up the industry by retaining possession of land which they never intend to develop and holding it only so long as they can get the price they require for it. They are not primary producers. My sympathies are with those who go out and produce in the outback centres. The treatment accorded to them is credit to the Government or to Parliament. Their lives are becoming intolerable. On the cross-benches there are members who profess to be the direct representatives of the primary producers.

Mr. Pickering: So they are.

Mr. MARSHALL: What has the Country Party done for the producers?

Mr. Pickering: What have they not done?

Mr. MARSHALL: All they have done this House—

Mr. Pickering: Is to work unceasingly.

Mr. MARSHALL: Is to take orders from the Primary Producers' Association. The only party that genuinely assisted the farmer was the Labour Party. That party created

the Seed Wheat Board, augmented the Industries Assistance Board, extended the operations of the Agricultural Bank, and passed all the legislation that spells progress and assistance to the farmers. I have often seen in the Press the expression "C.P." party. The initials must stand for "curious people." It seems to me that those who could elect such representatives must be curious people.

Mr. Pickering: What about the people who elected you?

Mr. MARSHALL: They showed good judgment, and picked a man who is doing his best to pass legislation that will assist them. They know that there is no executive behind him that is controlled by the financial exploiters of the State. We are all comfortable, and will probably remain so until next March. I am not prepared to forecast what will happen then, but I would be quite prepared to do the Rip Van Winkle act until then.

Mr. Angelo: Why are you so depressed?

Mr. MARSHALL: It depresses me to think that none of the members I see opposite will return to their seats.

Mr. Pickering: That would depress you.

Mr. Angelo: Would you wipe us all out?

Mr. MARSHALL: I wish I could tell the House about the people on the Murchison, who have to work for their living year in and year out. It has been said that the working man's life is full of adversity.

Mr. Pickering: What is a worker?

Mr. MARSHALL: He is not a primary producer's representative. The worker goes to work to get the money to buy the food to give him strength to go to work. That is his responsibility for twelve months. If he is lucky enough to win a prize in Tattersall's he may get out of that life. If not, he goes on year in and year out, until he reaches either the Wooroloo Sanatorium or the cemetery. Members, however, sit here and have the audacity to say that the worker enjoys good wages and is living under good conditions. The working man's life is not to be compared with the stock running on our pastoral leases. It is less tolerable than that of a Chinaman's horse. The horse is at least fed properly, but the worker cannot boast that he is either well clothed or well fed for an entire year. If ever I return to this planet I desire to come back as a Chinaman's horse. A horse lives on something members opposite are not entirely unacquainted with, green stuff. The Governor's Speech goes on to say—

You will be asked to grant temporary supplies, and at an early date the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be submitted to you. In view of the general activity, and the sound credit of the State, as evidenced by the recent successful loan flotation, no increases in taxation are proposed.

I can fancy the electors of the State dancing the light fantastic toe along the city walks when they read that.

Mr. Hughes: They would break their legs if they tried to do that in Perth.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not responsible for the faults of the city fathers. How happy the electors will be to know that no further taxation is proposed! I would not mind betting, if I could do so in this place, that if the State Government adhere to that intention the Federal Government will take advantage of the situation. It is not possible for either the State or Federal Governments to carry on a further 12 months in the present extravagant manner without increasing taxation in one way or another. If the electors of this State are prepared to shoulder the burden of a six million deficit, and show no hostility next March towards the present Government, I shall be greatly surprised. We well remember the hue and cry that was raised over the comparatively small deficit of the Labour Government, which spent over a million pounds in fostering the farming industry through droughts, and which administered the State through two trying years of war. The Press declared at the time that the State would soon end in the insolvency court if the Labour Government were permitted to continue in office. If the electors to-day are prepared to tolerate a six million deficit and return the present Government to power, when the Government have done nothing but heap burdens of taxation upon the people and increase charges in every way, I shall be prepared to shoulder my part of the responsibility with them and go on smiling. From time to time members representing mainly goldmining electorates have raised their voices in protest against the terrible burdens imposed on the mining industry. The Chambers of Mines are members of the Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. Pickering: No; associates.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then the Chambers of Mines are none too particular. The mining industry is prepared to carry its fair share of taxation.

Mr. Pickering: And that is all.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, that is all. No member would be justified in claiming that any industry should escape its fair share of taxation. But there is no other industry in this State now carrying the same proportion of taxation, direct and indirect, as the mining industry; and there is no other industry receiving fewer concessions from the Government. One might wish the extinction of the mining industry, because it has its unfavourable aspect. Indeed, observing the effects of the mining industry upon the community, one does not go into raptures over its success. The human pictures manufactured by our gold-mining industry are damning in the extreme. One need not go to Wooroloo Sanatorium to see some very ghastly sights which are products of the mining industry. However, we live in hopes that in the near future legislation of the kind introduced last session will overcome that terrible disability and that young men will again enter the mining industry as was the case in days of yore. Very wisely, young men have of late refused to follow in the footsteps of their fathers in the mining industry. In fact, neither father

nor mother has shown any desire latterly to see the son embark on an industry which lays young men low. With adequate legislative protection against that unfortunate side of mining, I hope the industry will in the future do as much for the State as it has done in the past, a point on which I need not dwell. But for the mining industry only one or two members of this Chamber would be residents of this State. I refer to the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) and the Premier. I know of no other "groppers" in the Chamber.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are plenty of them.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister for Agriculture is a fine specimen of a "groper." The gold-mining industry made it possible for this State to advance as it has done. That industry made it possible for Western Australia to develop the farming industry. The mining industry provided Western Australia with some of the finest and most heroic types of men the world has seen. The lure of the gold brought men from every white nation of the earth. We had the pick of the universe, and their progeny have been no disgrace to them. I speak for myself in that connection. I do not wish my argument to be misunderstood by members on the cross benches. I have no desire whatever to persecute people who are struggling on the land. I have some such people in my own electorate, among them returned soldiers who are struggling to make a success of small pastoral holdings. I consider that the Government should assist every man who is using his efforts to make good on the land, struggling mentally and physically to produce. But when a man has been so assisted by the State that he is able to paddle his own canoe, he should be compelled to rely on himself, and should not be permitted to ask for further concessions. In many parts of the State—I speak now more especially for the working fraternity in my electorate—there are men paying direct taxation and indirect taxation to assist wealthy wheat growers, some of them very wealthy men with motor cars, some of them residing in Perth. The workers are taxed to assist such farmers to receive concessions from the Government. When I argued in this direction previously, I was pleased to note that the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) to some extent agreed with me. The argument put up is, how can one discriminate between the struggling farmer and the successful farmer? I own that I cannot discriminate in my electorate, where there are wealthy squatters and very wealthy squatters, and poor squatters and very poor squatters.

Mr. Davies: Are there poor squatters?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, if the hon. member had slept on bags and dined on corned beef with three young soldiers settled 70 miles from Meekatharra, he would know about the conditions of some pastoralists in my electorate.

Mr. Davies: I understood squatters were always described as fat men.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) cannot be termed a fat man. I ask members on the cross benches, as representatives of primary producers, for once in the history of this Parliament to utilise their intellectual faculties to assist me to obtain for struggling settlers in my electorate some of the benefits which the electors of those hon. members enjoy.

Mr. Pickering: Let us have a conference.

Mr. MARSHALL: From recent inquiries I have learnt that a prospective settler in the South-West, if he can produce to the Railway Department a document showing that he proposes to take up land, is granted reduced railway rates on windmills, fencing wire, barbed wire, troughing, and other articles essential to the establishment of a home and a farm. Desiring to be fully conversant with the facts of the position, I inquired of my informant whether the pastoralists of this State enjoyed a similar advantage, and the reply was, "No, it does not apply in their case." I am not battling for the wealthy man who can afford to pay, but I am putting myself in the position of members on the cross benches. Being unable to discriminate, I wish to know why my struggling electors are not permitted to enjoy these privileges. The picture is unpaintable—I cannot paint it—of some soldiers who have been repatriated on small pastoral areas around Meekatharra.

Mr. Angelo: You should get the Country Party to assist you.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Country Party's assistance is no better than their mentality, I will do without it.

Mr. Angelo: We are here to assist the man on the land.

Mr. MARSHALL: The only man who gets consideration from cross bench members is the man on the land in St. George's-terrace. I wish the Government to inform me how it comes about that one section of struggling farmers are getting these concessions—quite justifiably, I admit—while men who have served their country in its hour of need, and who, by reason of having been repatriated 800 miles inland, are compelled to pay maximum rates of freight on every article which they require to develop their holdings and maintain themselves.

Mr. Angelo: You should see the Government about the matter. You will find them sympathetic.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then I will make this speech on the Address-in-reply a request to the Government, and thereby save Ministers any further intrusion from me. I trust the Government will grant the struggling settlers in my electorate the same concessions as are being granted to struggling settlers elsewhere.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are all for seeing the Government about everything.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is all very well for the Minister to adopt a different attitude in regard to this particular phase of the question.

The Minister for Agriculture: I am not adopting a different attitude.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is neither fair nor reasonable that one section of primary producers should receive a concession not given to other primary producers.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is applied generally.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not, and the Minister knows it. No concession regarding railway freights is granted to the people on pastoral holdings in the Murchison area, yet concessions are granted to settlers in the South-West provided they apply for assistance within the first six months of the occupancy of their holdings.

Mr. Johnston: Does not that apply to new settlers on pastoral lands?

Mr. MARSHALL: No.

Mr. Johnston: Then it ought to.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is my argument. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) should use his wonderful influence and magnetic personality to secure this concession from the Government. It has been stated often that centres of mining activity, being situated at long distances from the seat of government, invariably suffer whenever freights and charges are increased by the Railway or other departments. Practically all lines of any very considerable length terminate in mining districts, and any slight increase in charges materially affects the mining industry more than any other. Increased charges force up the cost of living and the cost of labour, and, in addition, the cost of mining requisites increases. Apart from indirect taxation, the mining industry carries a heavy burden of direct taxation. The time is rapidly approaching when it will be imperative for the Government to afford the mining industry appreciable relief. Members sitting on the Government side are invariably sympathetic and the Government are not failing in a desire for a revival of the industry. No rapid progress will be made, however, unless the Government reduce the taxation on the industry. While speculators and investors have taken a chance in past years, they are not disposed to participate in the mere gamble that mining has resolved itself into latterly. Two years ago I declared in the Chamber that certain individuals, by intrigue and deception, were doing a great injury to the industry. My prediction was confirmed by the member for Mount Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), who advocated the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the recent ramp at Sandstone. There are a number of people whose mining activities have made them prominent and given them great influence. They are men of repute and whenever a ramp is contemplated, some of these individuals, strange to say, are always in it.

Mr. Angelo: And they are men of repute.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not regard them as reputable individuals.

Mr. Angelo: You just now said they were men of repute.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are degrees of repute.

Mr. MARSHALL: These individuals trade on their influence in the mining industry and if the member for Mount Magnet goes further and seeks an inquiry into the Bullfinch and Hampton Plains ramps, as well as that at Sandstone, he will have my support. These individuals are no more than confidence tricksters and legalised robbers. The Government take no particular interest in the matter. At Sandstone recently a ramp was pulled off on the strength of a false prospectus. I do not speculate and therefore did not fall a victim. I know the facts. A syndicate at Meekatharra was formed to take over a mining proposition. A man of repute in the mining industry—he is an assayer by profession and a mining man of many years experience—was asked to examine the mine. He did so and inspected the proposition. He took the dimensions of the reef and noted the developmental work that had been carried out. He took samples and carried out his own assays. He recommended the syndicate to have nothing to do with the proposition. Another individual took the opportunity of floating a syndicate and reported good values there, although the assayer I have referred to denied the existence of them. The prospectus was falsified. The second individual lied to the public regarding the values he contended were there, and which, in fact, were not to be found on the mine. Time proved that the first assayer's report was the correct one.

The Minister for Agriculture: Was the reef there?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but not the values. This sort of thing is permitted by Parliament to-day. If a confidence trick man gets £5 from me, he is liable to imprisonment. These mining people, however, can produce false prospectuses and foist them upon the public and upon investors, and so induce them to speculate on the falsified statements. Until the investor finds he has been "sucked in," as they term it, he does not appreciate the position, but even then he has no redress. A perusal of "Hansard" will show that some years ago I advocated an amendment to our mining laws in the direction of prohibiting the flotation of any mine until such time as a responsible officer of the Mines Department had reported upon the property. If that course were adopted, it would give some protection to investors, who would then have some specific basis upon which their judgment could rest. I hope the member for Mount Magnet will succeed in securing the appointment of a Royal Commission with a view to blocking ramps that are worked all too frequently to the detriment of the mining industry. I wish to mention another matter of local application and I trust the Minister for Mines will give us some indication of the Government's determination to alter the procedure adopted in the past. The Colonial Secretary, too, is not free from criticism in this matter, which is rather difficult to deal with legally, although it is acting detrimentally to the mining industry. I had occasion to approach the Min-

ister for Mines regarding Asiatics who were permitted to secure Government contracts by tender at Wiluna. The Minister contended that the persons concerned were naturalised British subjects, in consequence of which he could not do anything. To quote the words of the Minister:

With regard to Mr. Verna, of Messrs. Verna & Mahood, it is reported that he is a naturalised British subject and by virtue of that naturalisation has been permitted to hold a gallion license under the Licensing Act.

I do not know where the Minister got his information, but it is wrong. Neither Verna nor Mahmood is a naturalised British subject. The Colonial Secretary endorsed his colleague's statement.

The Colonial Secretary: Then it must be right.

Mr. MARSHALL: Those men are not naturalised British subjects.

The Colonial Secretary: One is.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, he is not. They are both British subjects.

Mr. Davies: What, British-born?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; so is a Hong Kong Chow. If these Asiatics are to be permitted to compete with Australians, then by virtue of the fact that they live more economically, and ultimately desert with their stored treasure to their native land, whereas the Australian puts his profits into the mining industry and maintains a wife and family, the position is deplorable. If it is to continue it will only be necessary for Malays, Chinamen and coolies to wriggle into this State and they will find no difficulty whatever in ousting white people until the mining industry becomes defunct. It is unfair that our white people, while assisting prospectors, and rearing families, should have to compete with Asiatics who exist on a smell of dried fish and boiled rice, who have no family obligations, and who are to be allowed to secure that part of the taxpayers' money which is put into contract work. Of course it is a difficult matter to deal with, for these aliens are entitled to do whatever the British subject can do. However, the economic conditions make it impossible for the white man, and so I hope the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Mines will come to a mutual understanding before next March and instruct the departmental officers that only when there is no white tenderer shall an Asiatic be given a contract. The difficulty has only a local application at present, but it can become State-wide, and I hope the Government will take steps to preclude any possibility of its extension.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: I am glad you have wakened up.

Mr. MARSHALL: Some day the hon. member also will waken up. There is in the Governor's Speech a brief mention of prospecting. Not very much fault can be found with the Government's administration in this regard. There would be no necessity for Government assistance to gold prospecting if

the Government were disposed to give to the mining industry concessions at all comparable to those made to other industries. The Governor's Speech declares that boring for oil in the Kimberleys has been undertaken by two parties. The whole State is hung up by parties or companies or firms purporting to be prospecting for oil. From time to time members have protested against the abnormal size of areas granted to oil prospectors. The Minister for Mines in an able defence contended that Parliament desired that big areas should be granted to oil prospectors in order to induce companies to carry out prospecting. Now we find in the Governor's Speech that in the whole of the State only two parties are prospecting for oil. In view of that, I hope the Minister will introduce an amending Bill reducing the areas and making it possible for bona fide prospectors to do some practical work in respect of oil. Hon. members are never tired of eulogising the virtues of gold prospectors, praising them as the heroic pioneers of the State. That is perfectly justified. But when a prospector requires a little machinery for the pumping of water or the treating of his ore, the Government will not come to his rescue with a concession in point of railway freight. The prospector can go as far out as he likes, and sacrifice his health and physical strength, and when he has finished he can go to the Old Men's Home; but while he has strength, it is idle for him to look for any concession in respect of railway freight.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Do you say the mining industry gets no concession in railway freight?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do.

Mr. C. C. Maley: What about mining timber?

Mr. MARSHALL: It has to pay right up to the hilt.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Have a look at the rate book, and see for yourself.

Mr. MARSHALL: The freight was experimented with by the mine owners of the Murchison, and they had to turn it down.

Mr. C. C. Maley: I mean for timber grown in the State.

Mr. MARSHALL: They would not go outside the State for mining timber. The mine owners of the Murchison realised that there was no possible hope of relief.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Do they not go out of the State for any mining timber at all?

Mr. MARSHALL: Perhaps for a little construction work, but not for ordinary mining timber.

Mr. Chesson: They do not go out of the State for any timber.

Mr. MARSHALL: I had occasion to take some interest in this, but I was given to understand that all my labour would be in vain, that there were no railway freight concessions for prospectors. This attitude on the part of the Government is neither fair nor reasonable. The gold mining industry has done much for the State, and will do more if given reasonable treatment by the Government. I have here also some figures re-

specting the railway freights charged for the transportation of cattle and sheep. Since large numbers of sheep and cattle are reared in my electorate, I am justified in entering a protest against the exorbitant rates charged for the carriage of stock.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Are they not reared in every electorate?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know, but I know that some electorates rear a lot of goats.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Electorates such as the Murchison.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have seen more in the Irwin electorate. Consulting the rate book, one is astounded at the impositions placed on sheep and cattle. In 1914 a full truck-load of sheep from Meekatharra to Perth cost £10, whereas to-day the charge is £16 12s. Again, the actions of the Railway Department at times are unaccountable. A man was trucking cattle at Nannine, when some of them stampeded. He asked the station-master to detain one truck while he mustered the scattered cattle, his intention being to send them on by the following train. The railway authorities refused to allow the truck to remain, and so it was hauled away empty. That man was billed for the empty truck.

The Minister for Agriculture: There must have been some good reason for it. They do not do that sort of thing.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is mere red tape. The taxpayer in the country is becoming sick and tired of it. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is to some extent right when he says we have been legislating on top gear and will have no further need to legislate for a considerable time to come. This Parliament would do well to legislate no more, merely to go back over existing legislation and bring obsolete Acts into conformity with present day desires. If we did that it would occupy a great many years, but a benefit would be conferred upon the community. I wish to refer briefly to the Government's land settlement policy. Members on the cross-benches may profess to be amused, but I am of opinion that no member understands the Government's policy.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: Do not you understand it?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, and if the hon. member does, he must belong to the I.W.W., because he has not taken the trouble to explain it. I do not agree with the haphazard manner in which the Government are dealing with land settlement. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) put up a plausible tale the other night. I do not know whether he was serious, but he spoke about the settlement of the North-West with a few settlers scattered here and there producing a few commodities of different kinds, and no mention was made of the difficulty of marketing their produce. All he urged was that a line should be built.

Mr. Angelo: I was talking about wool when I mentioned the line.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is correct. The hon. member wanted to get a line through

some of those million acre monopolies on the plea of closer settlement. The railway policy is costing the State hundreds of thousands of pounds annually in consequence of people having been settled in remote parts without facilities for getting their produce to market.

Mr. Angelo: Unfortunately, what I advocated is not the policy of the Government. Their policy is confined to the South-West.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Government should refrain from sending settlers into remote parts of the State while land is available adjacent to existing railways. I do not approve of the policy of putting people on the land, then assisting them to clear it and finally providing them with facilities. Canada's policy should be taken as an example. I admit that private enterprise is responsible there, but a much better job is being made of it than is the case with any land settlement policy here.

Mr. Angelo: In Canada railways are first provided and settlement follows. That is what I am asking for here.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is correct. The railway is constructed; then the land is cleared, fenced, provided with a water supply and a house, after which the blocks are thrown open for selection. The position here is deplorable. Ours is not a land settlement policy. There is no doubt about the people being settled. They are "settled," inasmuch as they are unable to carry on, because of the lack of water supplies and the means of getting their produce to market. I hope the Government will declare exactly what their policy is. The Mitchell Government is supposed to be a "speed-up" Government, but very few Ministers or supporters are in their seats. If the public only knew what little interest the Government evince for the welfare of the State, as exemplified by their presence in the Chamber, there would be a change of Government next March. There are more members in attendance on the Opposition side. Visitors to the galleries must realise how indifferent are the Government to the welfare of the State.

The Colonial Secretary: We have their sympathy.

Mr. MARSHALL: It has been argued that the immigration policy is doing no harm, and that the newcomers are going on the land. Such arguments are merely hot air.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: We have had a lot of hot air from you to-night.

Mr. MARSHALL: On public works a big percentage of the men are migrants. We find physically fit young men advertising picture shows in the streets.

Mr. Pickering: Do you know how much money is available for clearing?

Lieut.-Col. Denton: He has not studied that.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is apparent to all broad-minded people that the immigration policy is a frost. Credit is due to the New Settlers' League for their work in trying to settle these people, but the effect of their work is to displace good Australians.

Mr. Pickering: Not in carrying those sandwich boards.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, because Australians would sooner leave the State than carry sandwich boards for a living. It is contended that the new people are cheap from an employer's point of view. Due to lack of experience they are very expensive to our industries. No labour is so economical as Australian labour.

Mr. Pickering: Quite so, but we want more of it.

Mr. MARSHALL: Never in the history of the State was there more unemployment or poverty than exists to-day. It is apparent everywhere. We see fine strapping young men—newcomers to the State—selling in the streets, boronia, matches, brass buttons and all sorts of rubbish. This is an absolute waste of good labour. Doubtless these men tell their friends in the old country how deplorable are the conditions here. It is a bad advertisement for Western Australia.

Mr. Pickering: They need not do that unless they like.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, they have the alternatives of stowing away on an outward bound steamer in the hope of getting back to the old country, or of parading their poverty to one of the charitable organisations. The scheme is rotten in the extreme. It is a good wage-smashing proposition and that is all.

Mr. Pickering: What do you suggest in its place?

Mr. MARSHALL: A wise, sound policy, which is beyond the Government.

Mr. Pickering: Then outline it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) referred to the marketing of fruit. I wonder what the Agent General and his staff are doing? The taxpayers are called upon to provide big sums of money annually to maintain the Agent General and his staff in London, and what are they getting for this money? According to statements made by the Premier, a great deal of the money expended on Agents General and High Commissioners is wasted. It appears to me that these officials merely go to England to feather their nests. When their term of office is over, they go into public life in England, having paved the way at the expense of the State. The Premier on his return from England last year said he was astounded to find that the people of the Old Country hardly knew that Western Australia was on the map. They had no conception that the gold and pearls they were wearing had been produced here. Their impression was that Western Australia was a vast desert populated by blacks. Why should the taxpayers be called upon to find huge sums of money annually to maintain in England a pack of parasites, who cannot let the people know that there is such a place as Western Australia on the map?

Mr. Pickering: That is why we are bringing them here—to teach them.

Mr. MARSHALL: The day may come when the electors will ask members opposite why—

The Minister for Agriculture: They will.

Mr. MARSHALL:—one section of the primary producers receives all the concessions from the Government and the other section receives nothing. All I want to do while I occupy a seat in this Chamber is to improve the means of livelihood of those who count, the toilers of the State, and to endeavour to leave this world better than I found it when I entered it.

On motion by Mr. Cunningham debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 15th August, 1923.

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

QUESTION—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, ADVANCES.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, What is the total amount advanced by the Government on the advice or recommendation of the Council of Industrial Development? 2, How much of the total advances has been repaid up to date? 3, What are the names of the firms or persons to whom advances have been made, and who have not repaid either in whole or in part? 4, From what source do the Government provide the money for making these advances?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, £9,352 18s. 6d. from General Loan Fund. 2, £1,650. 3, The Rowley Forests Products Company finally defaulted to the amount of £3,000. The remainder of the advances are current. 4, From General Loan Fund.

QUESTION—ARMADALE POUND, DROVING CHARGES.

Hon. G. POTTER asked the Minister for Education: 1, What is the total amount collected by the poundkeeper of the Armadale pound from 1st May, 1923, to 10th August, 1923? 2, Of the total amount collected, how