

quantity of goods which the reduced amount of money is capable of purchasing. The destitution now existing everywhere by reason of the policy of wage reduction means that if people do not give consideration to the solving of the problem in a different manner, this crisis will prove civilisation's swan song. The continuance of the existing civilisation is dependent upon the adoption of some reasonable system, upon getting away from old ideas and assimilating new ideas with regard to world management. We must have an opportunity of putting into practice new ideas regarding labour absorption, and a system under which manufacture shall be for use rather than for the profit which is eating into the vitals of the people. Unless that is done, I fear there is no hope for civilisation. If we do not give of our best to the study of the problem, we shall not deserve to win through. But Australia is a country practically self-contained, a country which, with judicious management, can furnish work for its people, a country which by proper conduct of its international relations can assist in solving world problems by international negotiation, thus inaugurating a new era of relationship between employer and employee. We can adopt such a system and such a policy, and thus there is no reason why Australians should not be in the line of thinkers co-operating with the thinkers of the Old World, prepared to discard old ideas and to adopt new ideas, so as to make due allowance for the machine age in which we are living and avoid the fatal error of trying to make that machine age a mere appendix to an age which has gone by.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 30th August, 1932.

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

QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS WATER SCHEME, CAPITAL COST.

Mr. PARKER asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the capital cost to date of the Goldfields Water Scheme? 2, How much of such capital was paid out of revenue from (a) the scheme, and (b) Consolidated Revenue?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Capital cost, provided from General Loan Fund, £3,821,958. 2, Answered by No. 1.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 25th August.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [4.39]: First of all, I desire to thank the Premier for the kindly expressions of welcome he addressed to me as a new member upon my entry to this House. I appreciated his remarks and I can assure hon. members I intend to be always just and impartial in all my deliberations. I think it behoves a new member to increase, as it were, the prestige of the House instead of pursuing a course of conduct calculated to decrease it. There is but one way in which one can achieve that objective, and that is to be at all times essentially fair. Although I do not feel quite at home in this Chamber at the present moment, I shall content myself with dealing, to the best of my ability, with local material affecting my far-flung electorate. The Esperance harbour is the most important subject affecting my constituency, and I should, perhaps, start with that as representing the real foundation for the life and progress of that part of the State. Not only the people in the Kanowna electorate, but also those in the State and in other parts of Australia, have appreciated the disabilities the people

I represent have suffered owing to the lack of necessary shipping facilities at Esperance. The grievances of my constituents are not new. As far back as 1900 the Eastern Goldfields Reform League declared—

In addition to denying us fair representation, over-taxing us, and diverting revenue and loans for the benefit of older-settled districts—

That, of course, refers to vested interests in the early days. I do not suppose it was considered wise in those days to have two ports under construction, although Esperance was a natural port and served the second greatest area in Western Australia. It has a more extensive hinterland than any other port in the State apart from Fremantle—

—the dominant majority on the coast have up to date refused to allow us the use of our wonderful natural harbour at Esperance. Vested interests have denied Esperance and its hinterland justice.

Esperance is the natural port for farmers and pastoralists as far down as Southern Cross, and as far north as Laverton, Leonora, and Lawlers. Surely they are entitled to their fair share of natural traffic, and I sincerely trust it will be conceded that the people in that part of the State should receive the distinct advantages that would accrue to them if they were able to participate in the traffic that should naturally flow through the port of Esperance. Especially would the farmers in the mallee districts benefit if the harbour were opened up. The freight on machinery would be reduced by more than 75 per cent., and a general reduction in the cost of living could be effected to the extent of not less than 10 per cent. Owing to the absence of shipping facilities at Esperance, our commercial traffic has to pass through Fremantle, thereby necessitating goods consigned to centres in the Eastern Goldfields districts travelling an extra 568 miles by sea and 129 miles by rail, the distance from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie being 387 miles. The nearer we get to Esperance, the greater, naturally, is the disadvantage, because of the extra rail-age the people have to pay on consignments. The railway and all other facilities have only aggravated the evil of the lack of interstate facilities. On the Loan Estimates for 1912 and 1926, the Government placed sums aggregating £52,000 for the purpose of improving the harbour. As far as I know, that money has never been spent and through effluxion of time it has long since lapsed.

We will have to get a bit more than that aggregate sum to provide the greater facilities now required. We are in touch with the whole of Australia, but what is the use of our railways, our godsheds and our Customs sheds and other facilities necessary to meet any expansion of trade? For the past three years the district has gone ahead by leaps and bounds. We have improved by anything from 100 per cent. to 150 per cent., and yet we are not making preparations for that expansion by improving the harbour facilities for the accommodation of shipping. It is very difficult to farm or produce without any encouragement. At any time the existing jetty may collapse. Those who have worked hard through the pioneering stages, suffering all the adversities involved in living so far away from the established centres, are not in any way encouraged. The old jetty groans and creaks in a lament that can be heard all over the town when a vessel comes alongside. We are at least entitled to a breakwater and berthing for two vessels. Esperance is one of the finest harbours in Australia. Within 4,000 feet from the shore we have a six-mile area giving a 60ft. depth of water. It is not necessary to have so great a depth as 60 feet, and I think we can get sufficient water for all practical purposes within 3,000 feet from the shore.

The Attorney General: Did you say you had six square miles?

Mr. NULSEN: Yes. During the Collier regime the former Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, one of the best harbour authorities in the British Empire, made a survey of the Esperance harbour. I understand that in his report he said there would be no difficulty in making Esperance a harbour of the first magnitude. I have not actually read that report, but I do know that Mr. Stileman's survey was most thorough and complete, for I saw the map myself. The provision of the necessary harbour facilities would mean that the people on the goldfields would receive their goods at a much lower rate than that which they have to pay to-day. The distance from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie is 387 miles, and from Esperance to Kalgoorlie 253 miles. This means a possible saving of 129 miles in railway freights, and of 568 miles in sea voyaging from the Eastern States. Taking to-day's railway freights as a basis of comparison, the provision of harbour facilities for interstate vessels at Esperance,

and the consequent effective use of the Esperance railway, would mean a saving of £1 11s. 8d., £2 1s. 9d. and £2 11s. 5d. per ton on first, second and third class goods respectively, and, of course, a greater saving for the Mallee. Also, it would enable wheat boats to come into Esperance and load to their full capacity. During the years 1930, 1931, and 1932 the calls have been confined to 20 ships per year, with the handling of a very limited tonnage of goods. I have no doubt about the ultimate future of the Mallee. During the last three years it has improved by at least 130 per cent. The people of Western Australia have not yet conceived the value of the Esperance sandplain, as it is called. It is going to be a wonderful asset to the State. I saw some of the heads of the co-operative bulk handling scheme and pointed out that Esperance was not included in that scheme, remarking that it seemed to me that unless the whole of the districts were included, the scheme would not be complete. I was definitely assured that the reason for the non-inclusion of Esperance in the scheme was the impossible condition of the jetty. They also told me the bulk handling scheme would be established in the district if the Government would adequately improve the jetty or provide some other means of getting rid of our produce. I feel sure that the members representing Fremantle, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany will not begrudge the port of Esperance what it is justly entitled to and what its people have been fighting for ever since 1900. I have here a report of serious import to Esperance. It reads—

The British shipowner, having intimated that he is not prepared to go to Esperance for the rate of freight set out in the Austral Charter Party as one of any two ports at which the vessel is to be loaded in Western Australia, suggests that some alternative must be found by the Government in order that the farmers of the Esperance district should not be penalised due to lack of harbour facilities and the isolated position. The total quantity of wheat received at the Esperance sidings was 568,326 bushels during the season 1931-32. This necessitated six vessels being sent to Esperance to carry the wheat. The difference in railages between shipping this wheat at Esperance and sending it to Fremantle would be £13,422 9s. 11d. on the present rail freight rate. The dearest siding in the Fremantle zone is 6d. per bushel for railage to the port of Fremantle. If the Government are unable to furnish better facilities at the port of Esperance, then the Railway Department

present the only other means of transporting the wheat to market, and it is reasonable to assume that the Government should advise the Commissioner of Railways to carry the wheat from Esperance sidings to Fremantle at an equal cost to that of the dearest siding in the Fremantle zone. The question of lightering the wheat to a vessel at Esperance cannot be considered on account of the high expense involved in regard to the purchase, maintenance and upkeep of such a plant, apart from the working costs entailed in regard to the employment of waterside labour. No alternative presents itself as a satisfactory solution of the position other than the construction of a breakwater and a deepwater jetty.

That is a serious matter for the people of the district. During the season 1931-32, the total quantity of wheat received at Esperance siding was 568,326 bushels. This necessitated six vessels being sent to Esperance to carry the wheat. The weight of the wheat was about 15,360 tons, averaging about 2,560 tons per boat. It will be seen that that is not very much for a boat to come in for, and put up with all the disadvantages associated with the existing jetty. On present rail freight, the difference in cost between shipping this wheat from Esperance and sending it to Fremantle is £13,422. The dearest wheat siding in the Fremantle zone is 6d. per bushel. So if we could not get ships to come in and take that wheat from Esperance, the farmers of the Esperance district would lose £13,422 9s. 11d. That would not be fair, since we have at Esperance one of the finest harbours in Australia, requiring only decent facilities for the export of our produce. If the Government are unable to instal improved facilities at Esperance, the Railway Department presents the only other means of transporting the wheat to market. It is reasonable to assume that in such event the Government would advise the Commissioner of Railways to carry the wheat from Esperance to Fremantle at the same cost as that associated with the dearest siding in the Fremantle zone. Even that would not be fair to the Esperance farmers. Clearly, to be fair, if the jetty were to collapse the Railway Department should carry the wheat to Fremantle at what it costs to take it to Esperance at the present time, which is 3½d. from Salmon Gums. If that were arranged, the farmers of the Esperance district would not be penalised because something had not been done which should have

been done many years ago. The lightering of the wheat at Esperance cannot be considered, because it would cost too much for the provision and maintenance of the working plant. There is no satisfactory solution of the difficulty, other than the construction of a breakwater and a deep water jetty at Esperance. I am told that the smallest sailing vessel visiting Esperance draws 24ft. 4ins. of water, and that the smallest steamers that call for wheat draw from 27ft. to 29ft. The deepest water we have at the Esperance jetty is 19ft. at the outer end and 16ft. 6ins. at the shore end. A vessel lying there can be loaded to 16ft. 6in. forward and 18ft. aft. On the jetty at present we can run only six trucks, the maximum weight being 8 tons. Those trucks are drawn by horses. So it will be seen that the methods in vogue down there are quite obsolete. This is by no means encouraging to those who have made great sacrifices in opening up and pioneering the country. Vessels cannot be made fast to the jetty, but can only be secured by cast-off mooring buoys. And if the sea be at all rough, the boat has to leave the jetty and go out for a while, coming in again after the sea has calmed down. So the conditions of the Esperance harbour are most difficult and the Government should give consideration to them as soon as possible. As I have said, we have down there one of the best harbours in the Commonwealth. Also we have the best climate in Australia. I have travelled all over the continent, right up through Queensland and visiting all the States, including Tasmania. I say that only the pick of the Tasmanian climate can compare with that of Esperance, which is one of the best in the world.

The Attorney General: What is the rainfall?

Mr. NULSEN: Between 26ins. and 30ins.

Hon. P. Collier: And the mean temperature is 80 degrees.

Mr. NULSEN: Esperance constitutes a delightful summer holiday resort with an excellent bathing beach. Consequently Esperance has everything to commend it, both as a port and as a seaside resort. It has goods sheds, railway, harbour and an excellent bathing beach, but the best use cannot be made of its natural facilities until other requisites are provided. I ask the Premier whether he will put sufficient money on the Estimates to enable a breakwater to be built and to provide accommodation to berth

two vessels. The people are justly entitled to the use of the harbour and, without those improvements, they cannot use it to advantage. Further, the people in the hinterland are moaning—and rightly so—because the cost of living for them is higher than it should be. Those people are producing real wealth—wheat and wool—and are doing their best for themselves and for the State. Seeing they are taxpayers, it behoves the Government to improve the harbour. The Esperance sandplain is truly prolific. This has been proved conclusively on all the holdings on the sandplain that have been worked to advantage. The pine forest holding proved beyond doubt that lupins, Tangier peas and clovers will grow in abundance. Mr. Holms, the former manager of the pine forest, has implicit faith in the sandplain. The people of Esperance and of the mallee were very disappointed indeed that the Government did not give the company a small advance to help them to carry on their experimental work for the benefit of the State. The country is not hard or expensive to clear; it is a matter of establishing experimental farms to determine the best methods, and the pine forest was of great advantage to the district. All the holdings on the sandplain that are being worked are proving very satisfactory. Mr. Spalding Smith's farm on the sandplain is doing wonderfully well. Two sons are working it and they can grow practically anything—clovers, lupins, Tangier peas, potatoes, onions and tomatoes. Mr. Fleming, Mr. Bow and others are also doing really good work on the sandplain. I do not know why that land has been called sandplain. The term seems to imply land that will not grow anything, but the Esperance sandplain is really prolific and gives returns beyond the conception of people who have not seen for themselves what it can grow. The unfortunate part is that Esperance is so distant from the capital. People do not visit the district, and do not know what it can produce. In the early days there was a traditional prejudice against the place. Some people seemed to think it would have been better for Western Australia if Esperance had not existed. If it were possible for members to visit the district, they would be able to appreciate the real value of the sandplain, which must prove a valuable asset to the State. I am satisfied that had the Esperance sandplain been located in the more

highly developed parts of the wheatbelt or grazing areas, it would now have been producing much real wealth for the country. I understand that the Southern Mallee Agricultural Society officials have sent invitations to Ministers and members to attend the show to be held on the 29th October. I hope that many members will make the trip. If they do, we shall be pleased to show them around the mallee country. The time will be limited and we shall not be able to show them as much as we would like, but we shall be able to show them the sandplain and enable them to realise its capabilities. Beset with many disadvantages, active settlement commenced in 1922 and, except for a portion of the northern section, was practically completed before the end of 1925. The Agricultural Bank policy during the early period consisted chiefly of advances for clearing and for constructing reservoirs. A little later advances were made for stock and machinery to the extent of £150 per settler. The yield during the first years were very disheartening, as the district average shows. I think it was $2\frac{1}{2}$ bushels per acre for many years. Further clearing and cropping resulted in additional discouraging results, and the older land presented a formidable problem owing to the growth of mallee suckers and the presence of roots. In 1923, previous to machinery loans being granted, the Agricultural Bank undertook the whole of the district cropping, the work being done with a fleet of tractors. The low yields and ridiculously prohibitive cost made the scheme a gigantic failure, to the detriment of the settlers' pockets and the good name of the district. I believe that half a dozen tractors were taken there and that some of the crops were put in as late as August. Many of the settlers were required to obtain certain makes and types of machinery. Seed and super were supplied by the bank, but owing to the lack of fallow and to inadequate machinery, the next year's crop was also a failure. It was several years before the farmers were able to fallow, and it was only after agitation that the trustees agreed to make advances for fallow. Since that concession was made, the district has gone ahead, but the over-capitalisation that resulted is very hard for the farmers to bear.

The Minister for Agriculture: Is not the State farm an example to the farmers?

Mr. NULSEN: I am referring to the years previous to the State farm being established there. Practical farmers who have visited the Esperance district say that the land generally compares very favourably with that in other wheat-growing areas of the State, but the land values, as classified, are ridiculous. The land values range chiefly from 8s. to 13s. per acre, according to locality. Practically all the land is classified first class. Farmers have pointed out errors that have been made in the classification of poison country, and I know that their contentions were correct. Even that land was classified first class at 13s. per acre. A thorough reclassification of the land is necessary. There is alkali in the mallee, as in other parts of the State, and consequently some blocks should be condemned and other blocks should be revalued. The land that will not grow wheat will grow excellent crops of oats and other fodders, especially Wimmera rye grass. Esperance is wonderful country for stock. Sheep and cattle thrive and attain heavy weight. A local butcher informed me that his stock attained extraordinary weight. Bullocks that a butcher in other parts would estimate at 500 lbs., would in the Esperance district scale 600 lbs. or more. The soil contains the constituents necessary for building cattle of big frames and large bones. For stock running, none of the country need be wasted. I venture to say that within a short space of time the Esperance district will be one of the leading mixed farming districts in the State. The State farm has proved of great assistance to the settlers. Mr. L. Senior, the manager, has been very obliging, and has given the farmers all the information and help possible. He knows his work and the farm has been a real asset to the district. Esperance was unfortunate in that it did not number many experienced farmers amongst the settlers. If an experienced farmer with capital went to the Lands Department inquiring for land, he was recommended to go to some other district. Consequently Esperance got mostly inexperienced men, though they proved to be willing and industrious. I care not what work a man undertakes, unless he has had experience, he makes a mess of it for a time. The Esperance settlers have paid for their experience, and they now compare favourably with the farmers in other parts of the State. The reason for my mentioning the disabili-

ties under which the settlers labour is to show that neither the farmers nor the district can be blamed entirely for the over-capitalisation. Further, farmers were compelled to clear land that is now condemned. This was due to lack of experience: the experts did not then understand the problems of the country. Practical experience has shown what country should be used and what should not. The policy in the early stages was absolutely wrong, and caused thousands of pounds to be wasted. The difficulties are greater in the southern mallee than in the northern mallee. The people in the southern mallee have a lateral forest to deal with containing millions of suckers. It is hard to grow wheat and suckers together. The stumps are very thick: I should say they would occupy one-third of the area. It is very unfair that the pioneer, who has worked hard and suffered many adversities, cannot have his property written down under the provisions of the Agricultural Bank Act. A stranger, however, can take up his block, and very often can have it written down in capital cost by more than half. Consideration should be given to the pioneer. The personal equation should count for a good deal in cases of this sort, and treatment should not be meted out to a newcomer that is withheld from the settler himself. I know there are failures, and that in certain instances it would not be wise to write down the value of the property. On the other hand, the pioneer may have proved himself to be a good man, but to have suffered through bad luck or bad advice. Such a man should not be deprived of his block, while a stranger is allowed to reap the benefit of his work and profit by the adversities the other man has suffered. The day is not far distant when there will have to be a writing down of the wheat holdings in the Esperance district. Not only will the Government have to write down interest and other debts that may be due to them, but business men, machinery merchants, storekeepers and others will have to do the same thing in order to put the farmers on a business basis. When a settler has been brought down to a business basis, he should be obliged to give way to someone else if he then makes a failure of his holding. In Esperance a board known as the Esperance Adjustment Board was formed. This con-

sists of four members, a representative of the Government in the Chief Inspector of the Agricultural Bank (Mr. Rogers), who is the able chairman of the board: a representative of Westralian Farmers Ltd., our biggest creditors in the district: a representative of the other creditors, including the storekeepers and machinery merchants; and a representative of the farmers themselves. The members of the board are local men with local interests. In consequence they have been able to consider the personal equation of the farmers, the work they have done, and the number of acres of fallow they have got ready for the coming year. If the position is satisfactory, consideration is given to the settlers' living expenses, after the payment of the first and second preferences. These preferences consist of registration fees, sustenance, carting, corn-sacks, insurance, oils, parts, and twine. After these have been met the farmer gets what is left. In many instances there has not been sufficient left to provide a living for the farmers. The chairman of the board was successful in securing £600 from the Finance and Development Board. This money was apportioned out to those who required help for the coming year. In all, 72 farmers paid their first and second preferences, 56 paid the first and second and part of the third, 16 paid the first and second and all the third preferences, 60 paid the first, second and third preferences and part of the fourth, and 19 paid all four preferences. Altogether 223 farmers came before the board. Bounties amounting to £3,790 were retained on behalf of the settlers for the purchase of stock, etc. The board has done extremely good work, and saved at least 60 per cent. of our farmers. It was really the saviour of the mallee country, and I certainly advocate that it should be retained. Last year an advance was made of £450, and of this £130 was repaid, so that the board cost the Government practically nothing. The Government have not received very much by way of interest, but as I have already shown many of the farmers paid a considerable portion of the fourth preferences. I think altogether £1,500 was paid in interest. The board should be retained, but not on the same basis. The farmers have financed themselves out of the proceeds of their holdings. They have, however, neglected to develop and improve their proper-

ties, owing to the price of wheat falling below the cost of production. The Government should, therefore, go to the assistance of the board. I think its success is largely due to the untiring efforts of the chairman, and I should also mention the close co-operation of his officers. I hope the Premier will be able to make available a sum of money to help those farmers who have done their best to help themselves, and have produced so much wealth in the way of wool and wheat. The wool production is increasing every year. Two or three years ago there were no more than about 1,000 sheep in the district, but to-day the number is certainly not less than 10,000. It is now only a matter of having more water conserved for the district to become a prominent stock area. There is no doubt about the pastures. Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the importance of wheat growing and sheep raising. The consolidation of existing settlements should be the dominant thought in the minds of all Governments and members of Parliament. I would urge that whatever money is made available for land settlement should be utilised principally in keeping existing settlers on their holdings. The gold-mining industry has provided the basis for our existence as a sovereign State. If our principal industries fail, Western Australia will soon become bankrupt. It is, therefore, imperative that every effort should be made to develop our industries. Gold-mining should be fostered in every possible way. To this end the local Parliament should do everything it can to have the gold bounty retained. Instead of restricting the assistance that is rendered to prospectors and gold miners generally, the Government should seek to help and encourage them in their task of assisting to build up the State. The pioneer prospector has been the backbone of Western Australia, and has helped to produce the wealth that made it. Any monetary assistance that is given in that direction remains in the State. It is far better to have men doing something to improve conditions generally, even if it costs a little more in the way of carting allowances or decreased crushing charges, for the expenditure will all be for the good of the State. The sandalwood industry is another which has been the means of much wealth being produced. There is, however, something wrong with it to-day. The price of this commodity is too high, and those who used to purchase it can no longer afford to do so. The royalty should be re-

duced to say £3, and, if necessary, to keep the industry going, the royalty should be done away with. It would be an advantage if people were able to put sandalwood on the open market in the same way that wheat and wool can be sold, namely, without any royalty being put upon it. The industry is dormant at present, but could be of great service to the State. The money earned by the sandalwood getter remains in the country for the production of further wealth. It goes back either into the production of more sandalwood or into the goldmining industry. We all remember how, in the early nineties, the gold-mining industry saved Western Australia, and we all know that if we could get plenty of gold it would save us, as a State, more quickly than anything else. It appears to me that owing to the isolation of my constituents, they have not received their fair share of money for roads. In my district there is a road which affects nearly every traveller from Coolgardie to Esperance. That road is in good condition as far as Salmon Gums; but from Salmon Gums to Red Lake the condition is only medium, and from Red Lake to Grass Patch the condition is such as to render the road almost impassable. Mr. McCallum travelled over that road not long ago, as also did Mr. Baxter; and I can assure the House that both gentlemen had a very rough trip. It was necessary to proceed very quietly indeed in order to be able to retain one's seat in the car. Repairs should be effected before the holiday traffic tries to reach Esperance by that road.

The Minister for Railways: Cannot those holiday makers travel by train?

Mr. NULSEN: Yes, when the train runs.

The Minister for Railways: It is running now.

Mr. NULSEN: But travellers do not always find it convenient to go by train.

Mr. McCallum: Once a traveller gets on the train, he does not know when he will arrive.

The Minister for Lands: Your Government built a great deal of that line.

Hon. P. Collier: The train runs only once a week.

Mr. NULSEN: The expenditure of a few thousand pounds would make that road a really good road. I may add that the road is used extensively during the summer months. The train service has not been satisfactory to holiday makers, but I learn that consideration has been given by the Government to that aspect, and that the

service is about to be improved so as to meet the requirements and serve the convenience of the public better than has been the case. On the question of wages, I understand the financial position in which the world finds itself; but low wages are detrimental to the world's welfare. The cutting-down of money spent in our own country must be detrimental. If the people are not given the necessary purchasing power, there is little or no use in producing goods. I am absolutely opposed to cutting wages wherever a cut is possible. I have studied the matter from a business point of view, being a business man myself. Low wages will not cure the present evils. The monetary system, as regards means of distribution, is unsatisfactory in view of the abundant production made possible by the great and increasing use of machinery in all countries. It is a crime against humanity that in all countries people should be facing unemployment, misery, and uncertainty as to the future. Seeing that the problem of production has been solved by the mechanisation of industry, it follows that the trouble lies in the failure of the distributing system to function effectively. All classes of commodities are available for sale in abundance; the markets are glutted; but the people lack the purchasing power necessary to enable them fully to satisfy essential human needs. Clearly, therefore, the essence of the problem is monetary in character. I fully realise that the balancing of budgets is merely a temporary expedient, and that it will get us nowhere. Our currency must be increased in accordance with the productivity of the country. The old system has failed miserably. Fifty years ago the problem was to feed and clothe our people; to-day the problem is to get rid of what we can produce in abundance. I compliment Mr. John Curtin on his able efforts to educate the people with regard to a badly-needed change in our monetary system. As State Parliaments exercise no control over monetary policy, there is little to be gained in further pursuing the subject at present. Suffice it to say that the people's power to purchase the world's commodities will have to be largely increased before there can be any great improvement in the economic condition of Western Australia and other countries. Seeing that we live in an age of plenty, controlled extravagance should be taking the place of thrift. The cost of production is consumption. Now

that the people have done their share and are still willing to continue working, it behoves the Government to see that they are adequately protected against the dangers of mal-nutrition and starvation; otherwise the health and virility of future generations will be dangerously undermined. I am glad that my first effort in this Chamber has been made. I hope that I have been fair. I know I have been parochial, because I have dealt chiefly with my own electorate, in place of giving consideration to the State as a whole. Still, I feel that my remarks have not been altogether parochial, because they largely apply to the entire State. The question of ports is absolutely essential, and should receive adequate consideration.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.37]: Realising that possibly this may be the last opportunity many members will have of speaking on an Address-in-reply—

Members: Oh!

Mr. Marshall: Speak for yourself.

Mr. J. H. SMITH:—I shall follow the lead of many of my parliamentary friends. It is, I consider, the duty of every member to urge on the Government and the House any suggestion tending to help the State over these troublous times. In the Governor's Speech there is not much of consequence. The Speech mentions the word "Electoral," and I am wondering whether it is in the Government's mind to propose a further redistribution of seats. Throughout Western Australia electoral anomalies exist; the Commissioners who laid down the existing boundaries did not make a very good job of it. I was in hopes that the Government would introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill for the purpose of giving more representation to the country and taking some away from the metropolitan area. To my mind, that is essential. I was also wondering whether the Government had it in mind to reduce the number of members in this Chamber. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) attended a meeting which dealt with such a proposal, originating from the Bunbury Municipal Council; and the movement spread through Western Australia like wildfire. Local governing bodies all over the State carried resolutions advocating reduction of members; but many of the public meetings which carried similar resolutions were but sparsely attended, though that fact was not mentioned in the Press. If the Government contemplate a

redistribution of seats, I suggest to them that they take away some of the existing representation from the metropolitan area, and not from country districts. I hold that there should be a reduction of the number of members in another place. Instead of having three members returned for each of the ten provinces, one member for each province would suffice. I favour such a reduction. Previously to the last general election, the Government made a great song about land settlement. In that matter they have not accomplished a great deal. I brought forward here a scheme to settle 4,000 or 5,000 people along our existing railways, but no one has been settled. On the subject of forest dedication, I mentioned that a thorough classification had not been made, but that with such a classification a thousand people could be settled along existing railways in the South-West, though some of the land would have to be repurchased. The truth of my words is being proved every month while Parliament sits, because each month we find the Minister for Forests lay on the Table notices of rededication. Mr. Camm, the Surveyor General, in a recent conversation with me said that if he could have his way he would, without touching lands dedicated to forestry, settle at least 1,000 people in three months on good agricultural lands.

The Minister for Railways: We could settle more than that number.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: To-day the chief worry is not the dedication of forest areas. I do not wish to take away from the Forests Department any good timber land dedicated to forestry purposes, but the trouble is that the Conservator controls the whole of the lands in the South-West. Before one acre of Crown land can be selected, the matter has to be referred to the Conservator of Forests. In the opinion of all people in the South-West, settlement there is being retarded by that system. Land settlement in the South-West cannot progress until certain powers of the Conservator are taken from him. Caesar was absolute over Rome, but the Conservator of Forests has even greater powers over the South-West. Let us have a fulfilment of the promise made by the present Premier and the present Deputy Premier on the hustings during the last general election, the promise to make all agricultural lands available for selection, irrespective of whether they were dedicated to forestry purposes. This the present

Premier and the present Deputy Premier undertook to do if they were placed in control. A change of Government took place, but no effort has been made to carry out that promise. I am still in hopes that something of the kind will be done by the Government before the life of this Assembly is at an end. I am pleased that the long-promised Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway is to be constructed, the Government having put on men at both ends to do the earthworks and clearing. I trust that this means the finalisation of a railway which a succession of Governments, over a term of years, has neglected to construct. I hope that the good work will be pushed on, and that within 12 or 18 months a locomotive will be hauling a train between Boyup Brook and Cranbrook. Another long-promised line, and one favourably reported upon by the Railway Advisory Board, is the railway from Manjimup to Mt. Barker. It must be in the Government's mind to build this line also, because they have just started clearing operations along the route from west of Mt. Barker towards Manjimup. That work is proceeding in the district where the trouble with regard to clearing occurred last week. A lot of country is being cleared along that route, about 45 miles from Mt. Barker. If the Government do not intend to have the railway constructed promptly, the clearing work in question is bad policy. There is no object in clearing land 45 miles from Mt. Barker when other land is available alongside existing railways. Therefore I infer that it must be the Government's intention to proceed with the construction of that line immediately. Construction between Pemberton and Northcliffe is now within five or six miles of Northcliffe township. That line also should have been completed years ago, in which case Northcliffe would be in a better position with regard to settlement. I wish the Government to give consideration to another settlement distant 15 miles from Northcliffe, and known as Westcliffe. The Westcliffe land I believe to be the finest agricultural land in the South-West. Mr. Troy, when Minister controlling group settlement, transferred settlers from Northcliffe to Westcliffe and it is on record that he declared the latter area to be the finest belt of country he had seen. Mr. Troy stated that if he were a young man it would be his ambition to take up land in that part of the State. I want the Government to

continue the good work that was then started and give the people there a substantial chance to earn their livelihood.

Mr. H. W. Mann: What would the length of line be?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Another 15 miles or so.

Mr. Wansbrough: It could be taken on to Nornalup.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I would not suggest that at the present time. The question of freights and fares and the discrimination shown to residents in the metropolitan area is a matter to which I desire to refer. The producers have always suffered at the hands of the Railway Department, and they are still suffering. Latterly the Commissioner has been trying to popularise the railways and break down competition. To do that he reduced fares in the metropolitan area, but he never gave a thought to the country areas. We are debited up with interest amounting to approximately a million annually, and that burden falls almost entirely on the producers. That should not be; the payment of that enormous sum should be spread over the whole of the community. Do not the big business people in the city receive a benefit from the railways that are run through every part of the State? Of course they do, and yet it is the people in the country, the producers, who have to carry the load. It is sufficient for the producers to have to carry the burden of present low prices without having that million tied around their necks. Not only are the producers compelled to pay that enormous amount of interest, but they are also debited up with the maintenance of the railways. If they were given some consideration it would make a wonderful difference to them in the direction of getting their produce to market. The producers could do without the railways, but if they were closed down for a week or two, what would the people in the city do? We in the country can live without them, but they cannot live without us. I wish to say a few words in support of what the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) remarked about the Bunbury harbour. In respect of the South-West that harbour is a great essential, and it is a rotten shame and criminal neglect on the part of every Government during the last 30 years that something has not been done to make better provision there for shipping. Half a million cases of fruit are being exported from the South-West this year and because

of the absence of facilities at Bunbury, it will be necessary to carry that fruit a distance of between 120 and 130 miles to Fremantle. A deputation from Bunbury waited on the Premier only a few weeks ago and asked that something should be done to assist the fruitgrowers and other producers of the South-West and the Premier promised to give the matter consideration. We want more than consideration; we want something done. Of course I realise that there is a shortage of money, and on that question I shall probably have something to say a little later on. Again I urge on the Minister for Railways the importance of providing trucks for perishable products. It has been necessary to send urgent telegrams to the Premier, the Minister for Railways and the Commissioner for Railways, stressing the need for promptly taking the fruit to Fremantle to be loaded for export. And it has been necessary also to point out that if we missed a particular boat, we missed the opportunity to export. It has happened that when trucks have been wanted they have been somewhere else. Again, it is impossible to send highly graded fruit from Bridgetown to Fremantle in open trucks. We require covered vans. The fruit exporting industry is growing every day, and we must have covered vans in which to take the fruit to the ship's side. If we were able to export from Bunbury, the distance would be merely a matter of about 60 miles. The fruit could then be loaded on the train at night and it would be in the ship's freezers the next morning. It has happened that it has suffered by having to remain on the wharf. Another subject—and to this I referred last year—is the re-grading of the railway from Donnybrook south. The work would be reproductive and would absorb a number of the unemployed. I do not suppose the total cost would be more than £40,000, an amount that would be saved in freights alone in the space of two or three years. With a revival in the timber industry, the outlay would soon be returned to the Railway Department. It must not be forgotten that the timber from the State Saw Mills has, in freight alone, contributed to the Railway Department no less a sum than £1,300,000. What a wonderful proposition then would the re-grading of this line prove! I commend this suggestion to the Minister for Railways mainly for the reason at this stage that it would provide work for many of the unemployed, in addition to which I claim it would be reproductive. I wish to

return to the old question of reforestation. I say without hesitation that money has been squandered by the Conservator of Forests in this direction. I know the Minister will not join issue with me, but I will have the opportunity of replying to him at a later stage. I reiterate that money is being continually squandered on reforestation, and in connection with the work being done now it will require an army of men at a later date to grub up the redgum suckers that come up from the nuts. Let me refer to Pemberton where 7,000 acres are going through the process of reforestation. It is now a question whether it is possible to reforest karri country. But what are they doing there? They are not carrying on the reforestation of karri; they are endeavouring to plant pines in the karri forest. I was in that district about three weeks ago, and I tell the Minister I am not speaking without my book. I had timber authorities with me. In that huge karri forest some thousands of pounds must have been already spent. The work was begun in the days of Mr. Lane Poole. What do we find there? There are karri logs and timber everywhere, and there are little pine suckers to be seen, some 2ft. and some 3ft. high, while others are just out of the ground, and all around these is bush scrub 8 and 10 feet high. The little pine suckers take some finding. The firebreak there is not more than 12 feet at the outside, and it only requires a fairly substantial blaze to go through the area and it will make such a sweep that not a pine will be left. What is being done is foolish; it is madness on the part of the individual responsible, no matter whether he be the Conservator or anybody else. He can have merely theoretical knowledge when he starts to plant pines in a karri forest. There are thousands of acres in this State where it is possible to plant pines without attempting to do so in a karri forest. The Peel Estate should be an ideal locality. At a place just out of Bridgetown known as Jor-nup, reforestation was carried on seven or eight years ago. The useless timber was taken out, but the seedlings were left. What was the result? A fire swept through the place and destroyed the whole of the area. The only thing to do is to run small fires through the bush every year when the seed will germinate. Another question I should like to ask is where is all the money coming from that is being expended in reforesta-

tion? It might be said that it is not costing the State anything, but that the Conservator is carrying it out from royalties he is receiving from the timber. That may be so, but to-day the timber industry is dead; no one is engaged in it. We have heard it said that the only primary industry that is thriving to-day in Western Australia is the gold industry. But we are assisting it with a bonus, and it also has the advantage of the exchange. It is only a little over 12 months since we were pleading for assistance for that industry because it was then in a dying state. Since then, however, on account of the high price of gold, the bonus and the premium, the industry has completely recovered, though we do not know when it may go back. But what about the timber industry which has contributed so much to the wealth of the State? The value of the timber exported is almost as great as that of the gold exported. The value of the timber that has been exported from Western Australia is 158 millions, and see what it has meant generally to the State, especially in freights collected by the Railway Department. The State Sawmills alone have paid the men that have been employed by that concern no less a sum than three millions sterling. Yet while we are booming the gold mining industry, and providing a bonus for wheat, we seem to be doing our utmost to kill the timber industry by charging a royalty of from 5s. to 15s. per load. The industry cannot afford to pay the royalties that are levied. Wipe out the royalties altogether and give the industry a chance to revive. As it is, the Government get what they can from the industry, demanding royalties out of all proportion. Millars' concessions have run out, or will terminate this year. Let the Government secure the activities of Millars again, so as to get the employees back to work. Formerly they employed, say, 5,000 men, and kept another 13,000 working in connection with the industry. Let the Government give the people some hope for the future by waiving royalties and getting the industry established once more. I claim it would be much better to do that; it would be in the interests of all concerned.

Mr. Marshall: Is the royalty charged on the timber, or is it charged in respect of the men who fall it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The royalty is charged on the timber, and ranges from 5s. to 15s. a load.

Miss Holman: Millars would not start their mills without any orders.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Let the Government waive the royalty and see what would happen.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: And give the benefit to whom?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Another injustice to the industry is the charge of 3s. 9d. for each load that goes over the wharf.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Why not take it off Millars?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not think that would do any good, in view of Millars' last balance sheet. At any rate, I am not speaking on behalf of Millars, but on behalf of an industry that has done a great deal for Western Australia. That industry should be helped to the extent I suggest.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Millars got enough out of the industry.

The Minister for Railways: They had a pretty good cut out of the industry for a long time.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: My word, they had.

Miss Holman: Millars have had all the profit out of the industry.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I attended a meeting the other day, and I was pleased to hear that it was not the Government's intention to call for tenders for the sale of the State Sawmills, which represent the one bright spot in connection with our trading concerns. Since the inception, the sawmills, which cost about £500,000, have shown a profit of over £700,000. In addition to that, the Government, after making that profit, still have the asset, in the shape of the mills and plant.

The Minister for Railways: The asset is the timber in the forest.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course, it is not.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: And you want to give it to Millars.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It did not cost the Government a penny to establish the forests. I referred to the cost of the sawmills and the profits made, when I mentioned the assets still being retained by the Government. Despite the financial results I have mentioned, the "West Australian" published the statement that the sawmills represented a bright feature and had shown a profit of £200,000, not £700,000, which was

nearer the correct figure. The sawmills have paid interest from the inception. I am glad, therefore, that the Government do not intend to call for tenders for the sale of that trading concern. Now I come to the question of unemployment. I listened with interest to the Leader of the Opposition and other members sitting on his side of the House when they dealt with the position regarding sustenance workers. I assure Opposition members that the milk of human kindness does not run in their veins alone. Every member, irrespective of where he sits in this Chamber, feels intensely regarding the position of men who are unemployed to-day. I join issue with the Government on this question. I expected that the Governor's Speech would embody some suggestions by the Government with regard to the future. I thought we would have some indication tending to show that we could look forward to men being placed back in full-time work. No such suggestion was made, and it is deplorable from the standpoint of statesmanship. I know the difficulty is not confined to the State Government, and that all Governments are handicapped. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) and some other members made out a splendid case for secession. I am wondering when the Government will introduce the Bill that will enable the people to voice their opinion regarding secession. We are rushing pell-mell towards unification. We shall continue to have unemployment rampant and our people unclothed, cold and hungry until we get down to fundamental facts and secure an alteration of the monetary system. There is food in plenty in the State. Never before was there so much production, and yet people are starving. Why? Through the progress of science and the advent of machinery, we have an abundance of everything we need. Each day finds some improved method installed. Yet the monetary system, which is a thousand years old, remains the same as ever. We are told we must not touch the banks or affect the interests of the moneylenders.

Mr. Marshall: They must be regarded as sacrosanct.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Those interests are not to be touched under any circumstances. The argument that applied during the war period, when I was opposed to conscription, applies with equal force to-day. In years

gone by I said "Yes, have conscription, but if you are to conscript the lifeblood of the country, you must conscript wealth as well." The same argument applies with equal force to-day. We are starving people, while money interests are passed by. The whole system must be altered. The Financial Agreement had a great effect on the finances of Western Australia and all the meetings of the Loan Council and other conferences have not done us any good.

Mr. Marshall: Not a bit.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We are frittering away everything that Western Australia holds most dear. What they desire is commandeered by the Federal Government, and unification is creeping ahead. It is degrading to think that the Premier of the State has to go cap in hand to the Federal Government asking for a few thousand pounds with which to carry on. The Federal Government say, "You ask for £1,000,000 on account of the disabilities Western Australia has suffered under Federation. We gave you £300,000. We will be extra kind to you now and give you £500,000."

Hon. J. C. Willcock: And then go cap in hand to the Commonwealth Bank to get it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We are providing work for men and expecting them to live on a miserable pittance of £2 9s. a week. I defy anyone to keep a family on such a meagre amount. We must arrive at some different arrangement. How can we arrive at it? I suggest that first of all we must clip the wings of the Commonwealth. Secondly, we can only arrive at a satisfactory arrangement when we have the advantage of the best brains available in this House, irrespective of party distinctions. I am going to speak about a national Government. I believe that the time is not far distant when public opinion will force us to form such a Government. Perhaps it will be when the next election is held. We must have a Government comprised of the best men available, and the Labour Party must assist.

Opposition members: No. They never will.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I believe that they will, despite what we have heard about the decisions of their organisations. Under existing circumstances, a large proportion of unionists cannot contribute to the fighting funds of the Labour Party.

Miss Holman: How do you know?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Because they have not the money. The result will be that the unions will be unable to contribute to party funds, and eventually the best brains on the Opposition side of the House—it may be very soon, too—will be ready to assist in forming a national Government, so that they can work for the betterment of Western Australia as a whole.

Mr. Kenneally: A glorious picture?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, and one that may eventually prove accurate.

Mr. Marshall: That is Utopian.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It may be a Utopian dream, but if we do not dream respecting the future, we may not be able to avoid a continuance of the spectacle we have to-day of thousands starving. I do not refer merely to the workers but to the farmers.

Mr. Marshall: Are farmers not workers?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course they are, and many of them are in a worse position than those who are working under sustenance conditions on the roads or the railways to-day. Farmers are being kept on their holdings with huge debts over their heads. Many have received notices of eviction and have no security of tenure. They are told they can remain on their farms and they are asked to produce more. They cannot be guaranteed more than 3s. a bushel, nor can they even be guaranteed a continuance of the wheat bonus. They are asked to continue production and the hope is expressed that in a few years' time they may get out of their difficulties. The whole position, to my mind, is impossible. I want to commend the Government for what they have done.

The Minister for Railways: What is that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I did not refer to the Minister, but to the Government. I commend them for their endeavour to remedy the position by providing work for as many as possible, but I regard the sustenance system as altogether wrong. I believe that people who receive that assistance should in return do something of a reproductive nature. I agree that much unproductive work has to be done. I know that the Minister in charge of unemployment relief has to do something for the unemployed in the city and has to provide work much of which is not reproductive at all. I believe the whole system is wrong and that men should be engaged upon clearing land for future production. Work could be carried out in

areas held by the Forests Department and on areas close to railways and roads. That work would be reproductive and I commend the suggestion to the Government. We are told that the names of 12,000 unemployed are on our books. Fortunately I have in my district between 70 and 80 people only who are on sustenance. The remainder went to Perth and have been sent out by the Government on sustenance work in various directions. Even so, many of the single men could not get sustenance work. I am concerned regarding the position of farmers' children. What about their boys whose ages range from 14 to 20 years? What about their girls? People on the land who get £3 a month for their cream—that amount would not keep body and soul together—cannot get any further assistance in respect of their boys and girls.

Miss Holman: The workers' boys get no sustenance.

Mr. Hegney: How would you get over the difficulty?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: By securing our own rights again and breaking the Federal bond. If we secured those rights, we would be able to borrow money. We could raise a loan in England where money is available at 2 per cent. We cannot do anything while bank interest rates range from 6 to 7 per cent. The only solution is to get a reduction to $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 per cent., or even less. Without that, we cannot get out of our difficulties.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Before tea I was discussing the question of a national Government, and saying I felt confident that at the next general election there would be many candidates going before the country in support of such a Government. I was twitted by my friends opposite with painting a Utopian picture. But I do honestly think the public of Western Australia in the near future will demand that party politics be set aside, and that those sent here shall do their best for the whole of the community, irrespective of party. I want to impress on the Government the utmost importance of having a referendum on the Secession question. It is apparent to all that something of the sort must be done, more especially after hearing the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) the other night as to the manner in which the Federal

Government are fleching away our State rights. And when we find Federal legislation overriding State legislation in regard to taxation, it is time every right-thinking person in Western Australia stood up and fought for his rights. I do not want this issue confused with any other. If the Government should bring down a Bill for the holding of the referendum at the next general election I will oppose it tooth and nail, because I contend that it must be treated as a separate subject. I want to compliment the Group Settlement Royal Commission on their work. Those three gentlemen did their job thoroughly and well, went into every detail of the comprehensive subject, and so gave of their best to this country. I am not to-night going to touch on their findings, because I understand that next week or the week after we shall have an opportunity to discuss them in their entirety. I say again that something has to be done to keep the people on the land, not only the woolgrower, but the wheatgrower also. It is very painful to see eviction notices going out to settlers through no fault of their own. Here I blame the Government for insisting that interest should be paid, when they know it is not possible, on the present prices of commodities, for the settlers to keep body and soul together, let alone pay interest. The Government will have to waive that interest for a number of years. Down in my district group settlement is in a deplorable condition. Many eviction notices are being sent out. In the House the other day I asked the Minister to agree to appoint an appeal board to deal with those notices, and in the meantime to prevent any more such notices going out and to supply the settlers concerned with any adverse reports made upon their work. But the Premier said, no, he could not agree. I can assure the House that if something be not done, and done quickly, there will not be one settler left on those holdings in two years' time. For what is one man's funeral to-day is another man's funeral to-morrow, and under existing conditions it is impossible for any settler to live, let alone pay his interest. However, we shall have opportunity to discuss all that when we come to the Royal Commission's report. Again I commend that Commission for the work they did and the recommendations they have sent in, which must do a vast amount of good, and possibly keep the settlers on their holdings. It is of no use sending out eviction notices to wheatgrowers, woolgrowers and group

and other settlers, because on the present prices it is impossible for them to keep body and soul together, let alone pay interest. I want to compliment the school teachers in my electorate on the wonderful work they are doing for the younger generation, the excellent education they are giving them in agriculture. One would think that some of the schools in my district were representing the Agricultural Department, giving as they do a great deal of attention to agricultural subjects. And this, not necessarily in school hours, but before and after school. I certainly commend the teachers for it. Then I would congratulate the Treasurer on what he has done in adverse circumstances. Everybody will give him credit for the magnificent manner in which he has kept down expenses. When we come to analyse his deficit of last year, we realise that of the total amount £600,000 went in exchange and roughly another £600,000 in sustenance. So the balance was not so very large a sum after all. But some other scheme will have to be evolved, so that we shall not be at the beck and call of the Federal Government. There is no State in Australia which has not defaulted. The other evening the Leader of the Opposition pointed out that practically every other State had defaulted, and was being kept going only by short-dated Treasury advances, without which they could not have met their obligations. But what is to happen when all that money has to be repaid? Why not alter the whole system? I am anxious to hear the member for Claremont (Mr. North) explain the Douglas credit system, for there seems to be a great deal in it. If it is something upon which we can build up our own credit, it will be of immense advantage to us. I do not see why we cannot have a national bank in Western Australia. Then if we should manage to get secession we could go to the Old Country and to the money lenders in other parts of the world and borrow money for our development work, and so put our people back into employment. But while we have 12,000 men on sustenance, and thousands of boys and girls of from 14 to 20 years of age who cannot get sustenance, what can be done? Yet something must be done, else we shall be wiped off the face of the earth. Let us default if we have to default, and let us then build up again. We cannot go on in the present circumstances. I believe the Government are doing their job to the best

of their financial resources. I believe the Minister for Works is trying to carry out his sustenance policy as well as possible. Some people complain about the money it is costing for the irrigation scheme. I agree that the cost has been too high, and I believe that when the time arrives there will have to be a great deal of writing-down of that scheme. But it has created employment. The Minister explained that by doing it with barrows it gave more employment. Of course it does. But the people concerned cannot be loaded up with that undue capitalisation, just as many of our primary industries cannot carry the capitalisation that is theirs to-day. Down the South-West we are rubbing along as well as possible in the adverse circumstances, but with butter fat and other commodities as low as they are, and with freight as high as possible, it is impossible for our people to be prosperous. Again I ask the Government to be more lenient, to cease the issue of eviction notices and to give to the settler some security of tenure. That is the bugbear, that those people have no security of tenure, and consequently no heart to go on with their work. Even the best of the settlers say it is of no use looking to the future, that John Jones, a battler, has gone, and it may be their own turn to-morrow. I urge the Government to appoint an appeal board immediately, and to give the settler concerned a copy of any adverse reports on his work.

MR. PANTON (Leederville) [7.42]: I regret that no Minister has seen fit to give us any of the information asked for by members on this side during the debate on the Supply Bill, and the current debate. Surely it is not expected of a member that he should rise in his place and seek information, and then be content without it. Whether the Ministers do not know what is going on, or do not care, or are not prepared to give any information to the House, the fact remains that no attempt has been made to answer our questions respecting unemployment. I myself raised the question about the unemployment board. I should like to know just what Ministers are going to do regarding that board. Those of us who, representing metropolitan seats, continually have to look for someone in authority to deal with these questions of unemployment are referred to this officer or that, or even to the board,

until eventually we find that practically the unemployment board is not in existence. As the result of my experience of the last 12 months, I am convinced that if the Minister is not prepared to take the responsibility himself, if he is going to delegate that responsibility to a board, then at least he should constitute a board of men not occupied in other positions in the public service. That is the difficulty to-day. With all due respect to the existing board, the chairman, Mr. Bennett, has more than enough to do as Government Statistician, and cannot possibly give the time to the board that is essential in the present circumstances. Mr. Pullen has been appointed to the important position of Chief Inspector in the South-West. Surely it is not to be thought that Mr. Pullen can give the necessary time to the work of the board and attend to his work in the South-West as well. If Cabinet is not prepared to allot a Minister to give the whole of his time to the work, but prefers to have a board, there are sufficient men who have acquired wide experience during the last 18 months or two years to constitute the board. It would be quite easy to select at least three good men, if the Government wish to delegate their responsibility, men who are not connected with any other section of the Civil Service. I suggest that this matter be given consideration. We should be given an opportunity to deal with somebody in authority. There is no use disguising the fact; we are the shuttlecock between the Minister or the board and the men. We, as representatives of the unemployed, should have the right to go to somebody in authority to get a definite decision on the matters that arise. At present we are buffeted from one place to another. It must be obvious to the Government that the present system of picking-up should be revised. The last 12 months, and more especially the last few months, must have made it clear that the present system is entirely unsuitable. I should like to know just what the system is. My experience of the picking-up of men for work in the country is that if 100 or 200 men are required, a certain number is allotted to each labour bureau, and the bureau officials simply take the cards in sequence, perhaps alphabetically, perhaps according to the time the men have been on sustenance. There is no attempt to pick up men who are suitable for the particular work in view. Ministers should realise that times have changed as

compared with a few years ago. Then, if a railway was to be started and 100 or 200 men were required, the only ones considered for the work were those who had been accustomed to that class of labour. It was easy to pick up the requisite number of men suitable for the work. Under existing conditions men who have been following all walks of life are registered. Many of them have done nothing but clerical work; they have never done a hard day's work, and when they are registered for sustenance, a clerk is as likely to be picked up for railway construction, clearing, or road-making work, as for anything else. Many of those men are 60 years of age, and it cannot be economical to pick up such men for work that they cannot possibly do. When a man has turned 60, it is too late to start training him as a timber hewer, railway construction worker or road maker. Yet elderly men are being picked up in scores for such work. Without entering into the merits or demerits of the dispute with the men who came from Mt. Barker, I am satisfied that anyone who has looked at them must realise that scores of them should never have been sent to do such work. If they were engaged for the next 10 years under piece-work or any other system, it would not be economical to utilise their services for the work. If it is merely a question of picking up men who are on sustenance and getting them off the sustenance roll, I can understand it, but if the Government desire to expend the money available on anything like an economical basis, they will have to alter the whole system of picking up. I can see no difficulty about altering the system. The occupation of every man registered for sustenance should be known. I know something of the system adopted by the Labour Bureau, where a card is kept for each man. Surely it would be easy to ascertain whether a man had been a bank clerk, an accountant, a construction worker, or a road-maker! When a particular job was contemplated, it would be a simple matter to pick up suitable men for it. I suggest that Ministers consider making an alteration. The other night I gave a few instances of the absurdities of picking up. Since then a man over 60 years of age who had been picked up, came to me to see what he could do. One look at the man showed that he was suffering from cancer in the upper lip. Yet he had been picked up for work

in the bush. I took him to Dr. Mackenzie, and that man is now in the Perth Hospital with a row of radium needles in his lip. Surely there are men who are sufficiently good judges of physique and who could be placed in the depots to decide, "That man is unsuitable for this particular work," or "That man seems suitable." What is the use of picking up the class of men who are now being engaged? The whole system is absurd. I wish to deal with the matter of relief committees. I have had a good deal of experience of them lately. During the last six months applications for relief have become greater, whether they be applications made to the Leederville Relief Committee, of which I am chairman, to the R.S.L. committee, of which I am a trustee, or to the Braille Society. I have no desire to be pessimistic, but I cannot believe that any improvement is likely to occur during the next six or 12 months. Up to about six months ago the people who had been unemployed for a considerable time possessed a certain amount of clothing. I will not say they had a surplus—they never have that—but they had a sufficiency of clothing to last them for a period. Those men, their wives and families have worn out those clothes and to-day have only what they stand in. My experience of a large number is that the clothes they stand in are not very good. For a considerable time, when we made a drive in a district to secure donations of clothing, we had no difficulty. Many people had surplus clothing and were prepared to give it to some one less fortunate than themselves. But the surplus has been worked out and I think I am right in saying that, during the next six or 12 months, the position will be worse than ever. I venture to say that the work of the relief committees will never be written, and therefore never be properly appreciated. There is need for co-ordination of the work of relief committees. To-day there are committees working in every district. In the greater metropolitan area there are no fewer than 32 relief committees at work, all of which are recognised by the Government or by the metropolitan council for the unemployed. In addition there are numerous other committees. The Ugliers have a central committee with branches in various suburbs; practically every church has a small relief committee, and there is no end of other committees outside of the charitable organisations that exist for this

definite purpose. My experience as chairman of the Leederville Relief Committee is that there is continual duplication. When an application is received, it is almost impossible to ascertain whether the person had been to some other committee and received assistance. We do not know whom to assist and whom to refuse. A man who is short of clothing and blankets will get assistance where he can, and with the limited amount of assistance that we are able to give, it is essential to have co-ordination between the committees. I can see no other way of securing co-ordination than for the Government to take the matter in hand. I do not mean that the Government should take charge of the relief committees at present operating; I do not think that would be in the best interests of those who obtain relief, or of the committees themselves, but I believe it should be possible to bring about co-ordination. The duplication that occurs is causing no end of trouble. The relief committees, I say without hesitation, are doing the bulk of the relief work. Anyone in distress goes first to the secretary or chairman of the local relief committee, and expects to receive assistance. There are several organisations which I would like to see co-ordinated. I have always given the Ugly Men full credit for their work, but the Ugly Men are at present working in the same districts as are the relief committees. I desire to see some co-ordination so that the Ugliers can work, not in opposition to, but in conjunction with the relief committees. Then there is the McNess Fund. I do not know how that is operated. I understand it is administered by the Premier's Department. It would be very interesting to know how it is administered, where the money is going and who is assisted by the fund. I am asking these questions so that we may know whether certain people are receiving sustenance from the McNess fund or from the Ugly Men's Association, or whether they are dependent solely on the meagre assistance we can afford from relief funds. Then there is the Lord Mayor's Fund. We see in the Press from time to time that certain amounts are added to that fund. I was under the impression that it represented contributions from the public for relief purposes, for use in cases of distress in the metropolitan area or somewhere else. I was interested to know where the money was going. Last Christmas a distribution was

made from that fund, and as chairman of the relief committee I thought we would receive our share. I found, however, that the money was given to the councillors for distribution in the various wards. The amount each councillor had the handling of was £30. I would have had no objection to that if a particular member of the City Council—Cr. Caddy—had been good enough or courteous enough to announce that he had this £30, and proposed to make a good fellow of himself by spending it in this or that direction. He could also have pointed out that there was no need for us to duplicate efforts in the same direction. We did not, however, know how that money was spent, and Mr. Taylor, the treasurer of the municipality, did not know either. The other day I was told that another small distribution was being made. I thought I would at once get into touch with the City Council with a view to obtaining some of it for our relief committee, but I found that the same councillor had picked it up the day before. On this occasion I do know what happened to the money. The councillor, instead of finding out whether our committee could use this money or not, went straight to Cecil Bros. and purchased 20 pairs of ladies' shoes. He did not know whether the men's wives needed shoes or not, but he went to the Labour Bureau where the sustenance men were and asked this or that man if he wanted a pair for his wife. In this way he distributed 13 pairs of shoes. He then realised there were eleven other men with wives, and that he had only seven pairs left. Those eleven men drew lots for the balance of the shoes. Apparently this is how the money drawn from the Lord Mayor's Fund is being distributed. It may be only a coincidence, but this particular councillor is a publicly declared opponent of mine for Leederville at the next election. If this gentleman wants to make a good fellow of himself in my electorate, he should adopt some other means than that of using money subscribed by the public for relief purposes.

Hon. P. Collier: On all other counts you will fight him fairly and squarely.

Mr. PANTON: I always fight fairly and squarely. If that councillor obtained another 50 pairs of shoes I could beat him out of sight. I detest the miserable, despicable underground tactics on the part of a man who hopes to be able to get into Parliament

on the back of the unemployed or their necessities. Such a man is not worthy of the name of a potential politician, let alone a politician in fact.

Hon. P. Collier: More particularly a man who did not go to the war.

Mr. PANTON: He can take it there will be a war before next March. I am not blaming the Lord Mayor. At Christmas time the committee forwarded an emphatic protest to Sir William Lathlain because of what had occurred, and we received back a typical letter which was equally emphatic. Neither do I blame the present Lord Mayor, because the money is handed to the councillors with a view to its being paid over to the relief committees. As a result of exhaustive inquiries, I learned that every other councillor gave the money to the relief committees and said, "Here is a certain amount of money from the Lord Mayor's Fund to assist you to carry on." The councillor to whom I have referred was not prepared to do that. I admit he may have had good grounds for his action. He may have thought that the member for Leederville was not sufficiently trustworthy to handle a few pounds. I am only one of a committee of 32 and have not even a vote. I drew up the constitution, and provided that the chairman should have no vote, so that no one would be able to say I was doing relief work for political gain. I am simply the chairman without a vote. This particular councillor is not prepared to trust a committee which is doing so much to relieve cases of distress.

Hon. P. Collier: He is one of those bouncers who have butted in.

Mr. PANTON: I now come to the question of the distribution of firewood. These may appear trivial matters, but they are of great importance to the people concerned. During the last few weeks, when the weather has been exceptionally cold and wet, many people have had no fires and very few blankets to keep them warm. Wood is scarce, and we are endeavouring to distribute it to the best of our ability. It is sent to us by the Government in trucks to Subiaco, and we have to cart it and distribute it. The instruction given is that this wood must be distributed only to sustenance workers or those in receipt of sustenance. That is altogether wrong. Those are not the only people who are in need of relief. There are scores of others who for various reasons are unable to get sustenance or sustenance work.

A man may have a son over 21, and a daughter who is bringing in a little over 21s. a week. That is equivalent to three persons on sustenance living in the one house, and the two who are not earning are, therefore, not eligible for this form of relief. Because a girl is earning 22s. 6d. a week, it cannot be contended that she can pay the rent and keep her father and brother in the necessities of life, and yet, because the father and brother are not receiving sustenance, according to the regulations we are not supposed to supply them with any firewood. I do not know that we bother too much about these regulations, but I do want the Government to look into the matter and I do want a Minister specially appointed to take control of the whole business. Take also the case of a widow with little children. She was receiving 27s. 6d. a week until lately. She has now been reduced to 10s. in cash, the balance being made up in orders upon tradespeople. She has rent to pay and she cannot get any firewood. She is therefore compelled to buy wood from a woodyard at a higher price than that at which we could supply it. In some cases we supply the wood for nothing, and in other cases merely for a nominal sum to pay the cost of petrol. We are not supposed to issue firewood to people in that position. When a relief committee is organised to relieve cases of distress, it is not the business of that committee to inquire whether a person is receiving sustenance or not. The only ground on which relief should be granted is that of distress. Dire necessity should be the governing factor. The Leederville committee are working along those lines, but we are continually being bombarded with regulations. The citizens who comprise the committee are getting tired of being told not to do this or that. They give up their time and they work voluntarily, and are doing their best to assist the Government. We exist entirely for the purpose of doing something for those people the Government are unable to assist. Instead of being harassed, the committees should be encouraged and allowed to use their own discretion.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think these committees are being harassed.

Mr. PANTON: I am telling members the kind of regulations we have to contend with.

The Minister for Lands: You say you do not take any notice of them.

Mr. PANTON: Some members of these committees think they ought to carry out the

regulations. They are not all like me, and do not want to throw them in the wastepaper basket and go on with the job. I am only the chairman of the Leederville committee and am often over-ruled. I merely want to assist in the carrying out of the job. I am sorry the Minister for Education is not present. Shortly after I was elected as member for Leederville, I introduced a deputation to the then Minister for Education, the member for Nedlands. We wanted two more rooms added to the infants' school at North Perth. The hon. member had the Chief Inspector of Schools with him, and had already heard that officer's views before we arrived. He told us he did not want to see us, was satisfied with the justice of our request, and said that the job would be done. But it is not yet done. For a number of years the department have been hiring the Town Hall and the Mayor's parlour, or what was known as such, at a rental of £3 a week. North Perth is an overgrown suburb. I understand that another hall is also being hired. For ordinary adults it is not far from the infants' school to these places, but it is altogether too great a distance for little ones to travel, especially in the wet and cold weather. There is no provision at any of these places for the drying of shoes or clothes, or for giving warmth to the children. Recently the present Minister for Education decided to push on with the work. Tenders were called, I understand, for brick buildings to complete the infants' school, and one was accepted.

The Minister for Lands: For two rooms.

Mr. PANTON: For the additional buildings required at the infants' school. I saw the name of the successful tenderer published in the "West Australian," so it must have been right. Now I understand that there is a dispute between the Education Department and, not the Treasurer, but a Treasury official. A couple of days ago a Treasury official and an inspector of the Education Department visited the school. The inspector said, "We want this to be a brick building. There is an ever-growing population here, and it is no use putting up any temporary wooden structure. We already have three or four temporary buildings." But the Treasury official said he would put up what he liked. The Treasury official obviously was running the show. I gather that the contract has been hung up, and that nothing is being done. Perhaps

the Minister for Works can tell us what is the position.

The Minister for Works: You have just said the matter has been taken out of my hands.

Mr. PANTON: Perhaps the Minister for Works will be able to state that he has shown a little backbone and has refused to let the Treasury official take the matter out of his hands. Are the Government going to run the Treasury officials, or are the Treasury officials going to run the Government? The point at issue just now is a Treasury official versus the Education Department. Where does the Minister stand in the business? The work is essential, and there will never be an opportunity of getting building done more cheaply.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Mr. PANTON: It would be absurd to empower any Treasury official to declare that a temporary wooden building will do for that locality. The parents' and citizens' association at North Perth is second to none in Western Australia. That association has spent considerable sums of money on the school buildings and the school grounds. Three weeks after the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) became Minister for Education, the association approached him on this subject, and it has been hammering on the door of the Education Department ever since. Now, a tender having been accepted, a Treasury official is found to be bigger mentally and physically than all the Cabinet. I hope some Minister will tell us how the Treasury official got all this power. If he has not got the power, then I hope the Government will insist upon the erection of a permanent building. Now I wish to deal with one other matter, affecting a very small section of the community. In this State there are ten blind soldiers. I believe that any member of this House will admit that of all wounds or injuries, blindness is one of the worst. I wish to pay a tribute to successive Governments for having done a good deal for these men. The blind soldiers have gold passes over the railways and tramways. Sir Thomas Coombe, when the free passes were decided upon, furnished the necessary funds for supplying them in gold. In this respect the blind soldiers are better circumstanced than members of Parliament, since the soldiers do not run the risk of losing their gold passes every three years. I repeat, there are only ten blind soldiers in Western

Australia; and they do not travel much. The stumbling-block at the moment is that one of them lives in Albany. Almost without exception these ten are married men, and the guide or escort is the wife. I have already made this appeal to the Premier, and it has been turned down. All I am asking is that a blind soldier's wife, in addition to himself, should be given a sleeper. Very little travelling is done by the blind soldiers resident in the metropolitan area. The one who lives in Albany comes to Perth twice a year. As he is not in a position to purchase a sleeper for his wife, she has to sit up all night. All departmental officers of any standing have the privilege of a free sleeper. The granting of this request will not set up any new precedent.

The Minister for Lands: Departmental officers' wives do not get free sleepers.

Mr. PANTON: I am speaking for the escorts of those ten blind soldiers. The reason why the request was turned down is contained in the following reply addressed to the honorary secretary of the Western Australian Blind Soldiers' Association:—

I am directed to acknowledge your letter of the 11th August, asking that the Hon. the Premier receive a deputation in connection with the granting of sleeper accommodation on the State railways to attendants of blind soldiers. The Premier feels that no good purpose can be served by receiving the deputation. As you are aware, the matter of providing passes, if there is any obligation, is one in which the Commonwealth Government is entirely responsible.

I entirely disagree with that view. The Commonwealth Government accept responsibility for pensions and various other things, but I think Western Australia has a little responsibility to those ten men in respect of the loss of their sight.

Notwithstanding this, the State Government has endeavoured to ameliorate conditions by extending this courtesy, without remuneration, to incapacitated soldiers generally, and naturally and rightly it has accorded the greatest privilege to the blinded soldier. It is felt, however, that the concession has been extended as far as possible, as the provision of sleepers involves the department in actual cash payment to outside bodies for laundry work and other services, and it is regretted that, under these circumstances, the privilege cannot be extended any further.

Mr. J. I. Mann: Who signed that letter?

Mr. PANTON: The Secretary of the Premier's Department.

Hon. P. Collier: It comes from the Railway Department.

Mr. PANTON: No; it came from the Treasury. The Railway Department have nothing to do with this aspect. When they find free sleepers, they charge them up to the Treasury. The Treasury put up an argument that laundry work is involved. Twice a year this Albany soldier's escort would require two sheets and a couple of pillow slips.

The Minister for Lands: This is the first I have heard of the matter.

Mr. PANTON: I freely admit that. I would not be surprised if this was the first that the Cabinet, with the exception of the Premier, had heard of it. I suggest also that this is the place for the Cabinet to hear of it. I hope something will be done. I do not wish to put up any sob-stuff. However, having been associated with the blind soldiers ever since my return, I urge that the granting of this privilege will neither make nor break the State finances. I hope that the various questions I have put up will be answered by Cabinet or by some Minister. If Ministers are waiting to reply until everybody has finished, no doubt the eventual answers will be comprehensive. I hope the answers will be fuller than some of the answers given this afternoon—

“(1), Yes. (2), (3) and (4) answered by No. 1.” We want to know where we stand, what assistance the Government are prepared to give, and whether they intend to continue enforcing some of the stupid regulations gazetted. I especially ask the Government to try to find some proper method of picking men for the various jobs. Then the work will be done more economically, and there will certainly be less dissension among the men, than under the present system. Under the present system a number of men cannot work together without dissension. A man cannot go to the country to work at £1 14s. per week and maintain two houses on that wage, without dissension being caused. Old, decrepit men should not be sent to do work fit only for young, strong men. Boys should not be sent to chop wood which requires the strength of full-grown men. Let the men be given an opportunity to do the kind of work they are sent to do. If they must be sent into the country, let them have that opportunity. Then there will be less dissension, if not that contentment which we desire.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.28]: An outstanding feature of this debate has been the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. The hon. gentleman's remarks may be taken as having a definite bearing upon the question of secession. The Leader of the Opposition made it quite clear that he was dissatisfied with the way in which matters are trending in respect of the powers exercised by our Federal masters. Mr. Collier said he had thought that we were a sovereign Parliament with certain powers, and that the Commonwealth had restricted powers.

Mr. Marshall: We are a sovereign Parliament without sovereigns.

Mr. SAMPSON: We are a sovereign Parliament minus sovereign powers. It is clear that the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition have received widespread approval and endorsement. Unfortunately the position is rapidly approaching unification; and it is urgently necessary that the wise words uttered by the Leader of the Opposition, and strongly supplemented by the Premier, should be taken up, and that efforts should be made to bring the desire for secession to a head. I hope no effort will be spared to achieve that result. I believe that if we make up our minds to get secession, we shall get it. Where there is a will, there is a way. State rights are menaced and are being sacrificed. In the past we have been advised to stand together, as while the Commonwealth was progressing it would be unjust and inadvisable to do anything towards breaking the Federal bond. When things are bad we are told that as our difficulties are so widespread, this is not the time to cause dissension or to talk of secession. It does not matter which way things go, there is always an argument against secession. Common sense dictates that at the earliest possible moment we should get away from the Federal bondage so that we may have full local autonomy. If we reach that stage, then the State will be in a position to pay its way.

Mr. Hegney: Will that solve the unemployment problem?

Mr. SAMPSON: That is a separate matter, and I shall deal with it later. There has been, and still is, a terrific amount of overlapping of services. I will quote as an example, the Federal Health Department. The cost of salaries for the financial year 1930-31—the latest figures available—for central administration alone was £25,500.

while "contingencies" cost £2,000 and "miscellaneous services" about £10,500.

Mr. Marshall: But that expenditure covers all States.

Mr. SAMPSON: It was for central administration only.

The Minister for Lands: That means the central office at Canberra.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is what I have indicated. Regarding the operations of the Federal Health Department in Western Australia, the details show that the cost of salaries for officials here amounted to £7,900, while "contingencies" represented £6,000.

Mr. Corboy: Was not the bulk of that spent on miners' phthisis work?

Mr. SAMPSON: I can give the details.

The Minister for Lands: Much of the money was spent in other ways.

Mr. SAMPSON: The details of the expenditure show that it included the following:—Subscription to International Bureau of Public Health, and International Veterinary Bureau, £164; investigation of epidemic diseases, £104; investigation of industrial diseases, including miners' phthisis and lead poisoning, £372.

Mr. Marshall: That cannot be. There are hundreds of men in Kalgoorlie alone who received treatment.

Mr. SAMPSON: The items I have referred to are under the heading of "Miscellaneous."

Mr. Corboy: Probably that was sufficient to pay for the purchase of films for the X-ray plant.

Mr. SAMPSON: Other items include: Advancement of the study of tropical diseases, to be paid into trust fund, Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine Account, £1,700; tropical diseases, contribution to Imperial fund for investigation, £200; Tropical Diseases Bureau, contribution, £400; Eradication of hook-worm disease in Australia, £1,603.

Mr. Corboy: You will find, if you examine the position closely, that the bulk of the expenditure was in respect of miners' phthisis.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then there was £435 spent on the School of Public Health and Tropical Research. It may be that the salaries of the officers concerned were provided for in the £25,500 I have already referred to, but I cannot say. The figures I have quoted represent a tremendous expenditure

for small results, even though the amount totals approximately £10,000.

Mr. Corboy: If that money had been spent in dealing with thrips in the apple orchards, instead of human beings, you would have said it was all right.

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member is speaking without knowledge, and has given no consideration to the figures I have read. They are not mine, nor am I advancing them to discount the value of work done in connection with miners' phthisis. I am simply drawing attention to the tremendous amount of money expended in services overlapping those involving State expenditure.

Member: The State does not spend any money in dealing with miners' phthisis.

Mr. SAMPSON: I will give the hon. member some information from the Federal Auditor-General's report in regard to overlapping not only in connection with the Health Department but in other directions as well. If the State were in a position to undertake the work, I believe we could do it much more cheaply.

Mr. Kenneally: And render less service.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Federal Auditor-General in the course of his report, said—

Duplication and Overlapping of Services.—Opportunities still exist, in my opinion, for economies to be made under this head, especially as between the Commonwealth and States in departments dealing with health, scientific matters and research. While credit may be given to those responsible who desire to avoid duplication, there can be little doubt that much duplication occurs when independent authorities carry out investigations on related subjects. Many chemists, entomologists and analysts are employed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and in State Agricultural Departments, as well as in Commonwealth and State Health Departments, the overlapping of whose work in many phases seems quite unavoidable over a course of years, even if it does not occur at any given time.

Following that statement, the Auditor-General had something to say regarding the income tax and the importance of uniform laws—

Under present conditions, the States are, to an extent, dependent upon the Commonwealth for financial aid. In other words, the resources of the Commonwealth and of the States are pooled, the cost of which is borne by the same set of taxpayers. Uniform laws, not only in respect of income tax but of other taxes, to be collected by one tax-collecting authority, would reduce the great cost imposed on taxpayers in

the preparation of returns and would result in a more equitable charge upon the various taxpayers throughout Australia.

Last year I introduced a Bill, the object of which was to bring about uniformity in respect of treatment of donations for the relief of unemployment. I considered that some such provision was necessary, particularly in view of the circumstances in which we find ourselves in these times. Under the Federal taxation laws a deductible amount is allowed respecting donations for the relief of unemployment subject to the money being paid to a recognised committee. I considered that the inclusion of a similar section in our State legislation would have encouraged donations to assist the committees working to relieve unemployment. Unfortunately, for about nine days prior to the close of last session, I was ill, and unable to attend the House. I am not vain enough to believe that had I been here the Bill would have been agreed to. After I had moved the second reading of the Bill, it remained on the Notice Paper for many weeks without further progress being made. The Bill was not passed, but I believe that had effect been given to it, the position of many unemployment committees would have been improved considerably. I recommend the Government to give further consideration to legislation toward that end. Unfortunately I have not yet been able to secure approval for the introduction of an amending Bill.

Hon. A. McCallum: From whom were you to get that approval?

Hon. J. C. Willecock: You are a member of the Country Party now.

Hon. A. McCallum: Mr. Monger could give you permission.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: You are labouring under severe discipline now.

Hon. A. McCallum: Shall I go down and ask Mr. Monger if you can introduce it?

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member will embarrass me.

Hon. P. Collier: From whom were you to get your approval?

Mr. SAMPSON: Mr. Speaker—

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Yes, get away from the subject.

Hon. A. McCallum: I will write to Mr. Monger for you to-night.

Mr. SAMPSON: I want to refer to publications by the Federal authorities. I have in mind specifically a medical history to be compiled in two volumes which was approved by the Minister for Defence. One

volume only has been issued so far, and after a period of eight years, I find that £10,152 has been spent on the publication of that one volume, and the proceeds of sales represent £357 only. The cash selling price for the work is 21s.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the point?

Mr. SAMPSON: The Federal authorities appear to have an unlimited amount of money to spend in all sorts of directions. On this point, the Federal Auditor-General says that the public demand for the work is very limited and that the history should be much reduced in size. The detailed plan of the publication is in the opinion of the Auditor-General altogether too extensive and the cost of the work is far in excess of what circumstances justify. The Auditor-General proceeded—

Apparently only about 3,000 individuals have made purchases. It is clear, in any case, that little public interest is taken in the publication of the histories which, as time goes on, will be still less looked for or referred to. It may be expected that, if the present arrangements are carried out, the net cost to the Commonwealth for these histories will be not less than £100,000.

What I have quoted goes to show what extravagance and overlapping is apparent to-day. The expenditure of that money could be saved, especially if Western Australia becomes in reality a State with dominion status.

Hon. A. McCallum: Just exactly what does that mean?

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not know that I need say any more about that phase. Western Australia has suffered bitterly because of the extravagance of Federal expenditure.

Hon. P. Collier: Has your speech got anything to do with your personal interests?

Mr. SAMPSON: The point I make was clearly shown by the Leader of the Opposition, and the Premier supplemented his remarks. In the circumstances I do not know that any more need be said. I hope that every effort will be made to secure full local autonomy and that we shall be able to break the Federal bond that is proving such a hampering influence to-day. I wish to say a word about the retention of land for forestry and water catchment purposes. The position hitherto has been the adoption by successive Governments of a policy whereby orchards on certain brooks have been resumed. But always there have been one or more orchards left. That is the remarkable phase of the policy. I know of several

orchards that were resumed some years ago under this plan. The trees were pulled out and the owners, who received compensation, thereupon shifted further upstream, but were still on the same side of the brook. Their new orchards are progressing very well to-day. But picture the stupidity of a policy which permits such a thing! That position continues, and so far as I am aware no statement as to alteration of the policy has been made. All those resumptions took place some years ago, I think before the previous Government came in. At all events the position has never been put right by a statement from the responsible Minister. When a person desires to establish an orchard in a given district he frequently finds it extremely difficult, because the land suitable for orchard purposes is in many cases in a water catchment area or a forestry area. So the difficulty he has to face means a delay of many months before he can secure a block of land.

Hon. P. Collier: The hon. member knows all the particulars of all those cases and has been to the department about them. Why retail it all here?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is still difficult to obtain orchard land in certain districts. Not long ago a man desired to establish an apple orchard near Canning Mills.

Hon. P. Collier: But you have presented the case to the department.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have, yes, but the difficulty remains.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you hope to get redress here?

Mr. SAMPSON: Although Western Australia has established a reputation for the production of first-grade apples, those who desire to grow apples in the area referred to find themselves unable to secure the necessary land. I hope it will not be long before a reversal of policy is decided upon.

Hon. P. Collier: Go to the Minister about it.

Mr. SAMPSON: A matter of great interest to small farmers in the outer suburban area is the extension of electric cables so as to provide power for pumping water. On many occasions I have acknowledged with gratitude what was done in respect of a small district, Canning Vale. That extension was made, and what had previously been a comparatively hard-up community is to-day fairly well to do. There are many other suburban districts urgently requiring

current. Moreover, there are some people on sustenance to-day who, if they had electric current with which to operate their water pumps, would be able to grow sufficient good quality produce to enable them to live in comfort. Electric current is needed in many places in the hills, such as Glen Forrest, Mahogany Creek, Zamia, Parkerville, Maida Vale, Forrestfield, East Maddington, Roleystone, Bedfordale and other localities. Recently a very awkward position arose at Mundaring. The people there put up a petition for electric current and guaranteed that they would use a certain quantity. For some years past those people have continued to urge that electric current should be made available to them. Year after year the request of those people was denied them until, finally, private enterprise put in a small plant. But it is obvious that a plant for a relatively small district such as Mundaring, operated by private enterprise could never be profitable.

Mr. Marshall: What a charge to make against private enterprise!

Mr. SAMPSON: The provision of electric current is a responsibility of the Government, who through the Electricity Supply have a monopoly of that facility in outer suburban districts.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you seen the Minister about it?

Mr. SAMPSON: It has been discussed on various occasions.

Hon. P. Collier: But have you seen the Minister?

Mr. SAMPSON: Consideration by the Government should be given to the extension of electric current to those districts. It is impossible for it to be provided by any other authority, because, as I say, the Government have a monopoly in those districts. Providing that current would do something of a reproductive nature, and would be a definite gesture of prosperity. I am prepared to say it is a great pity the Government Electricity Supply is not in the hands of private enterprise; because if it were, growers in most of the districts I have in mind would get the current they so greatly need. Here is a peculiar thing: While the Government are unable to do what is asked, nevertheless they are advertising electric current at the Perth railway station, where posters point out the advantage of electricity, its economy, its usefulness, its adaptability and so on. In view

of this, it is delightfully ironic that those so earnest in their desire to secure current, and who are prepared to guarantee the department against loss, to endorse the titles of their land, nevertheless are unable to secure the extension of the current. The Government have set up this department of electricity, this utility, and it consistently fails to do what is needed. It would be a good thing if it were disposed of to private enterprise, when those who need water so much would be given an opportunity to make a living.

Hon. P. Collier: For goodness sake don't start electioneering here.

Mr. SAMPSON: The other night the Leader of the Opposition made a statement regarding commercial travellers.

Hon. P. Collier: I was not electioneering, anyhow.

Mr. SAMPSON: He was careful to point out that he did not refer to the traveller as a parasite, but that nevertheless the traveller was engaged in parasitical work. While the Leader of the Opposition was speaking I determined to take an opportunity to say a few words in reply to his remark.

Hon. P. Collier: Go ahead. I shall be pleased to hear you.

Mr. SAMPSON: Those travellers are generally known as ambassadors of trade. They carry to those in the farming districts news of the latest inventions, of plants, tools and requirements for the farmer's business.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the story they tell.

Mr. SAMPSON: They also take out news and particulars relating to wireless and motor cars and motor trucks, and the latest machinery for gold prospecting or whatever it may be. Those men do a great deal in respect of advertising. Without them there would not be as much progress made in the country as there is to-day. In 1914 I was in Egypt.

Hon. P. Collier: You passed through Egypt.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, I was there only a few hours, but it gave me an opportunity to confirm all I had read about the out-of-date implements used in that country. I saw for myself that the ploughs there are the same as were used before the time of Christ. In 1928 I was on the Continent and saw the very ancient implements used there. In one instance, there was an ox in one side of the harness and a woman in the other, and those

two were pulling the plough. In those countries the commercial traveller is comparatively unknown and consequently the people are not kept in touch with modern development.

Hon. P. Collier: Oh, what nonsense!

Mr. SAMPSON: The fellaheen in Egypt are using the same sort of implement as was used before the time of Christ.

Hon. P. Collier: And are still using it.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, but if commercial travellers had gone to Egypt—

Hon. P. Collier: They have been there.

Mr. SAMPSON: —they would have had up to date machinery, and would be enjoying a greater standard of comfort.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see anything in the Speech dealing with that subject.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am aware of that; it should have been in the Speech. It has a very important relation to the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. I would like the people of that country to enjoy the advantages we have.

Hon. P. Collier: Which people?

Mr. SAMPSON: If those people had had the same advantages, they would be enjoying a better standard of living.

Hon. P. Collier: Which people?

Mr. SAMPSON: The people in Egypt.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not discuss Egypt.

Mr. SAMPSON: Reverting to the commercial traveller in our land, I ask how could we respect the man if we did not respect his work? I believe that you, Mr. Speaker, would support me, if you were on the floor of the House. When the commercial traveller does his work, he is doing something to make progress possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better get back on to the track.

Mr. SAMPSON: It would be a good thing if more commercial travellers went out.

Hon. P. Collier: No, no!

Mr. SAMPSON: I believe that the more we learn about up to date machinery, the better able we are to compete with the rest of the world.

Hon. P. Collier: More parasitical occupations for the people to maintain.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is futile to say that we should not adopt modern machinery.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said that?

Mr. SAMPSON: It has been said time and time again.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said it? It was not said in this House.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have not stated that it was said by anyone in this House. It has been said in magazines; it is a common topic of conversation that the installation of machinery means putting men out of work.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said that?

Mr. SAMPSON: I realise that there is much truth in the statement.

Miss Holman: What is the remedy?

Hon. P. Collier: But who said it?

Mr. SAMPSON: We cannot sit back and refuse to instal modern machinery. We have to compete with other countries that are using it. California and other parts of the United States as well as Canada are using modern machinery for primary and secondary production, and we cannot do otherwise than use the best.

Hon. P. Collier: How you are beating the air! Who said so?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a common statement in magazines and newspapers.

Hon. P. Collier: Who said we are opposed to modern machinery?

Mr. Hegney: We want to reduce hours of labour because of the installation of machinery, and you are opposed to that.

Mr. SAMPSON: One other subject I wish to mention.

Miss Holman: Secession?

Mr. SAMPSON: No; I am sorry the hon. member was not in her seat earlier, as I would have appreciated her support. I have been pleased to note the progress made in the establishment of home and school project clubs, which are of great benefit to the State. The teachers who have taken up the work are deserving of the thanks of the community. There are boys in the South-West who, because of what they have learnt in those clubs, are capable of judging poultry, cattle and pigs. I hope the clubs will continue because the interest they engender in the boys at school means that they will be better able later on to undertake the work of stock farming. The clubs in existence include poultry, pig, calf and bee clubs. To a matter of world-wide interest I desire to refer—the financial outlook. Australia might have done better regarding the interest on overseas loans. I say that with a full realisation of the importance of maintaining our reputation as a nation. I believe that the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) made some enlightening remarks on the subject last session. In view of world-wide economic problems, including the low price of produce now as compared with the price when the loans were

raised, there should be a reconsideration of the interest rate. But there is another aspect, namely, the great difficulty Australia has to maintain her financial equilibrium under existing conditions. Many months have passed since Australia decided, by various financial emergency measures, to reduce the interest rate paid in Australia. What it did, it did well. Overseas interest charges, however, remain the same. The Motherland comprises a generous people, a people fair in business and honourable. I am of opinion that it required only that they should be asked in order for approval to be given. If that had been done, conversion at reasonable rates would at once have followed.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Were they not asked?

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not think they were.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Mr. Scullin asked them?

Hon. P. Collier: Do you think there is any sentiment in such business?

Mr. SAMPSON: I am sorry I cannot debate that question at this stage. I think there is more than sentiment in the proposal. From a business point of view it would pay our creditors overseas to make a reduction—

Hon. P. Collier: I think so, too.

Mr. SAMPSON: And thereby encourage the people of Australia to make still greater efforts to maintain the fair name and reputation enjoyed so long as we have been a nation.

Hon. P. Collier: But there is no sentiment in the business.

Mr. Marshall: Whether it is Yankee Doodle, Jack, Jew or Gentile, it is all the same to them.

Mr. SAMPSON: The main thing would be to get the reduction. Our position justifies the suggestion that there would be ready approval to the proposal. Sometimes by insisting upon the whole, greater difficulties arise.

Hon. P. Collier: It has been too long delayed.

Mr. SAMPSON: This country cannot free itself under the interest rates at present being paid. We have tremendous commitments, and I am surprised that something has not been done. If we are to get back to our former position, or anything approaching it, and if unemployment is to be reduced to any extent, this fair and proper thing must be done. We might well ask

whether the increasing number of unemployed are to continue in chains of destitution. That is what it means in many instances. I know a little of what is happening in the wheat districts and in the suburban areas. Many people are suffering very great privation.

Hon. P. Collier: What do you suggest as regards getting a reduction of interest rates overseas?

Mr. SAMPSON: I will make a suggestion. I am positive that neither the dole, nor sustenance, nor relief work of any description can restore men to a state of independence.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course not.

Mr. SAMPSON: At best it is an alleviation of a great difficulty, and a temporary alleviation at that.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the remedy?

Mr. SAMPSON: We must get the men back to work. It is easy to say that, but until it is done there can be no real advance.

Hon. P. Collier: How would you do it?

Mr. SAMPSON: I suggest it is the duty of the Premiers' Conference to take the matter up. I am optimistic enough to believe that a letter, even a cable, would have accomplished what was desired.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Ask the Attorney General, who was present at the conference.

The Attorney General: To whom would the cable be sent?

Mr. Raphael: Ned Kelly.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is not for me to suggest to a Minister the course to be pursued. I know that such a request must go through certain channels, but it would not be difficult to ascertain to whom it should be sent.

The Attorney General: We cannot find out the names of the 300,000 or 3,000,000 bondholders.

Mr. SAMPSON: We did the part in Australia quite well, and what we did met with universal approval. The whole of the English-speaking people, and I dare say the whole of the civilised world, applauded Australia for what it did. But Australia must give consideration to the other aspect or I question whether we shall be able to raise ourselves out of the financial morass.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you think Australia should not receive any consideration at all comparable with the consideration Great Britain has given to other countries.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am convinced that if the proposition were submitted, the whole

country would approve, and conversion at much reduced rates would be brought about. It is essential, if the commercial life of this country is to be maintained, that this be done.

Hon. P. Collier: Did you read this morning's paper which showed that our stocks were high? That is a great relief to those people in Australia who are starving! Of what use is it that their stocks should be high if they are starving?

Mr. SAMPSON: I understand the difficulties. Nevertheless I am sure this must be done. Mr. Bruce will discuss this matter in England. It is work that is long overdue, and should have been done long ago.

Hon. P. Collier: We have got to say we will not pay, because we cannot pay.

Mr. SAMPSON: If it is a case of cannot, something will be done. We shall never get back to prosperity by chipping weeds on the sidewalk. We have got to do some of the things to which I have referred to-night. Some of our small producers must receive the assistance they ask for.

Hon. P. Collier: Lots of people are starving.

Mr. SAMPSON: The people in the Home-land know the situation, and they need but the request to do that which they are asked to do.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Is that all you are going to do—ask?

Mr. SAMPSON: I am glad the Government have advertised certain State trading concerns as being for sale. I hope a good price will be obtained for them. The Government must get out of the trading ventures, and must give the people an opportunity to carry on the work of the country.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.17]: I have listened with interest to the debate. If there has been any somersaulting in the speeches that have been made, it has been on the part of the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson).

Mr. Kennecally: That is usual.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is not unusual. At one moment he was speaking of Government interference, and in almost the next breath was speaking of private enterprise, eulogising it as a virtuous system under which people could live happy and contented lives. To my mind private enterprise is the ruination of civilisation. The financial credit of the world is controlled by the financial magnates of the world. It has been controlled and owned by them for centuries. For 1932

years the world has suffered under this domination, and to-day is suffering more than it did 1932 years ago. I did not speak upon the Supply Bill, because I had decided to reserve myself for this debate. I have been surprised at the short speeches of members. It is usual during the last session of Parliament for members to voice at length grievances of a parochial character, because they must face the electors before another Parliament is called together. When we do re-assemble, I think there will be a great change in the personnel of this Chamber. Many members will have fallen by the way-side. This is not an optimistic note to strike, but I do fear that many members on the Government side of the House will have had their last opportunity, for the rest of their existence, of speaking to a motion of this character. The administration of the Government has, to say the least, been a failure. The tactics they have adopted have been contrary to those which warrant their being placed in the character of humanitarians. Many members opposite have claimed they have as much of the milk of human kindness as others. Actions speak louder than words and so I think I can level against them the accusation that they do not possess even a semblance of what is known as the milk of human kindness. They do not possess a particle of it. Right through this Parliament we have been called upon to pass legislation which at all times constituted an attack upon the standard of living of the masses of the people. We have passed measures which have brought the working people below the level of a coolie, in comparison with the requirements of the social life and the social necessities of the two sets of people. We have asked single men to work for 25s. 2d. a week.

Mr. Raphael: Minus deductions.

Mr. MARSHALL: Taxation deductions have been imposed by the present Government. We have asked married men to keep a wife and a family on a maximum income of £3 a week. Compare that with the coolies of Africa, India or Asia, and see who fares the best!

The Attorney General: Do you know any coolies who get £3 a week?

Mr. MARSHALL: No.

The Attorney General: Or £3 a month?

Mr. MARSHALL: I know more about coolie labour than does the Attorney General. I have had nine years' experience of

it, and laboured and lived in all the Asiatic continents.

The Attorney General: Why talk that sort of stuff?

Mr. MARSHALL: I am comparing the social standards of the different places. By comparison our people are worse off than the coolies.

Mr. Parker: You have shifted from Egypt and have now gone on to coolies.

Mr. MARSHALL: If there is one member who should remain quiet on the question of the standard of living, it is the Attorney General. The Minister was the outstanding figure at the Premiers' Conference 12 months ago. He was the only individual there who decided to extend the operations of the Financial Emergency Act to private enterprise. His own leader, by interjection, told him it was better for him that his own mess should be cleaned up, and that private enterprise should be left to clean up its own. He meant by that that private enterprise should go to the court created by Parliament for the adjustment of wages and conditions. The Attorney General was not satisfied with the departmental expenditure, or with what the other Premiers had decided, bad as it was. They were going to give the lead by reducing salaries in their own services, but the Attorney General went one better. In defiance of the Premiers' Plan he embodied in the Act a section giving private enterprise the right to pay 20 per cent. below the basic wage of the State.

The Attorney General: You are quite wrong.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know I am right.

The Attorney General: You are entirely wrong, as you usually are. I suggest you are spoiling your own case by overstating it.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Attorney General was the only one at the conference to advocate an interference with wages and conditions as they appertain in private enterprise.

The Attorney General: You are quite wrong.

Mr. Kenneally: The documents can prove it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have read his statements, and the Premier's advice to him, to leave the matter alone. In substance, I accuse the Attorney General of being the only individual at the conference to advocate the taking of authority over the standard of living as it applied to private industry.

When he came back to this State he had his way in Cabinet, and brought down a measure containing a special clause, which ultimately became law. There has been a great deal of controversy and difference of opinion as to the legal position created by this section of the Act, for which the Attorney General denies responsibility. Only recently the President of the State Arbitration Court spoke in bitter terms concerning the interference with the jurisdiction of that court. Mr. Justice Dwyer did not complain only about the Full Court's interference with the adjustment of wages and conditions. He made a statement which I should like to appear in "Hansard."

The Attorney General: It is already in "Hansard."

Mr. MARSHALL: It cannot appear too often, for its exposes the Attorney General and the Government. When giving the decision of the Court upon an application by the Bakers' Union for the cancellation or variation of an order, Mr. President Dwyer made strong reference to the recent decision of the State Full Court concerning the jurisdiction of the State Arbitration Court, and to the refusal of the Government to permit of an appeal to the High Court.

The Attorney General: You are wrong again.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am only reading the report of Mr. Justice Dwyer's statements.

Mr. Parker: You mean Mr. President Dwyer's statements?

Mr. MARSHALL: He is a Justice, and has the powers of a Justice. He is permanently appointed as President of the Arbitration Court. But he attacks the Government for their interference in the matter of the appeal. President Dwyer believes that if the matter had gone to the Federal High Court—

The Attorney General: Or the Privy Council.

Mr. MARSHALL: The point still holds good, that if the matter had gone on, the decision of the Full Court of this State would have been upset. Imagine the case over which all the trouble occurred. The sawmilling industry applied for variation of an award under the Financial Emergency Act. The employers wanted a reduction in the wages of mill hands.

The Attorney General: That is not what the President of the Arbitration Court was talking about.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is the origin of the trouble.

The Attorney General: It has nothing to do with the trouble.

Mr. MARSHALL: That statement of the president has nothing whatever to do with timber mills.

Miss Holman: The application by Millars Company included two bakers employed by them.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Attorney General knew a little more about industrial matters, he would not argue as he does. The sawmillers applied for a variation. Two bakers employed on the sawmills were members of the union. That is how the trouble arose.

The Attorney General: Go on.

Mr. MARSHALL: That was the origin of the trouble.

The Attorney General: That has nothing to do with the complaint of the president.

Mr. MARSHALL: But that was what caused the trouble to begin. Because those two bakers belonged to the Timber Workers' Union, and because the sawmilling employers got a reduction in the wages of their sawmill hands, including a couple of bakers, the reduction applied to the whole of the baking industry. Then the matter went to the Full Court.

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. A. McCallum: Certainly. The Full Court decided that that variation was to be a common rule.

The Attorney General: That is not what the question of the appeal was about.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have the full report of the matter here, and can read it all. The variation applying to sawmill employees applies also to the baking industry in the metropolitan area. Plainly, the Government are opposed to an appeal to a higher court because they are afraid that on appeal the union's contention would be upheld. The Attorney General himself will admit that he had not intended the Financial Emergency Act to apply in that manner.

The Attorney General: I am afraid I rather led you away by an interjection.

Mr. MARSHALL: No. I have been here longer than the hon. gentleman. By the time he is capable of drawing me off the track, he will do better in the legal profession. The member for Beverley (Mr. J. I. Mann) said that we had lived extravagantly. I attempted to draw from him what section of the community had lived extravagantly, thereby causing this financial trouble. How-

ever, I could get no reply from the hon. member. I then asked him whether the farmers had lived extravagantly. Possibly they have done so, but that is not my personal view. There may have been rash expenditure on the part of individual farmers, but farmers as a body have not been extravagant; nor have the woolgrowers, subject to individual exceptions. When other industries are examined, we can produce proof that no extravagance has taken place. The great mass of people who live on wages cannot possibly be extravagant, since all their wages and conditions are assessed to them by a legally constituted tribunal. The basic wage was laid down by the Arbitration Court; and the great majority of employees, even in days of prosperity, were obliged to live on that plane. So they could not live extravagantly. The items on which the basic wage is calculated number only from 14 to 16. They are the index figures which govern the adjustment of the basic wage. The most important necessities of life are mentioned, but incidental expenditure is not considered at all. Living on the basic wage, the great majority of our people necessarily live on the meanest possible amount, with marginal allowances for skill and so forth. Therefore I would like the member for Beverley to state who it was lived extravagantly. I can tell him, if he wishes to know, who thrive and who lived extravagantly. I have here figures to convince the hon. member that that applies to a section that has never yet been touched. If there was a period in the history of Western Australia when profits should have been checked, it was the war period. At that time patriotism was on everyone's lips. We were then supposed to make heavy sacrifices, as we are doing to-day. But "we" meant only one section, the section least able to bear sacrifices. That was ever so, and perhaps ever will be so. Here are some figures for the member for Beverley to digest. In 1914 the Associated Banks of the Commonwealth had a surplus of roughly £5,000,000 of assets over liabilities. In 1917, after three years of war, that surplus had increased to £26,000,000—increased about five times. Between 1917 and 1930 it increased to over £76,000,000. That profiteering went on while the manhood of this country was spilling its blood on foreign soil to defend the honour, we were told, of Belgian and French women—or for some other paltry excuse advanced to justify the shedding of human

blood. The increase did not stop there. Had it done so, there would have been less cause for criticism. But no doubt in the eyes of the bankers it would have been criminal to stop. Between 1914 and 1918, the four years of war, the accumulated reserves of the banks had risen from £13,000,000 to £33,000,000. An additional £20,000,000 had been piled up during the progress of the struggle. This is private enterprise. Where is the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson)? He wants to know what can be done for the farmers of Western Australia. Here is something he can do. He can attack the financial system of this country. If he wants to know where money can be found to alleviate distress in some degree, let him examine these figures taken from the banks' own records. In order to hide from the public the amount of profiteering that was practised, the bankers indulged in a further policy of trickery. During that period their share capital rose from £23,000,000 to £49,000,000, in round figures. This was done by taking some of the money which would otherwise have been put into reserve, and using it to issue bonus shares. For the purpose of hiding from the public the enormous reserves that were being built up, the bankers no doubt went into conference and said, "This is too glaring altogether. We shall spend so many thousand pounds in buying shares with our war-time profits." Upon those bonus shares the people of this country, like the people of every other country, have to find dividends. The policy used in Australia for financing the war was also used in the Old World. Upon the declaration of war, on the 4th August, 1914, practically every bank in the United Kingdom closed its doors. Naturally, it was impossible for the banks to continue operations upon a gold basis. So they closed their doors and held a conference. The Governments of the United Kingdom and the allied countries decided upon a Treasury note issue, so as to give the people notes without the banking of gold. What the Governments did to save the banks from disaster during the war period, should have been done to finance the countries; but of course the bankers would not tolerate that. It would not have suited them. There would have been no profits. Thus the legal tender of Governments was used to stimulate industry and keep business going as usual, used as a form of exploitation undetected by the peoples of the various countries. The

financing of the Great War is one of the greatest of scandals. There was trickery and profiteering; in Australia there was deliberate robbing of the people while they gave the pick of their manhood. Such a system should not have been permitted to continue for a day. Had the Premier of this State, when at conferences in Melbourne or Canberra, initiated a discussion regarding what might be done to secure a reduction of our liabilities overseas, instead of merely attacking working class standards, we might to-day find ourselves in a much improved position. No less than £55,000,000 has to be found by the taxpayers of the Commonwealth annually to pay interest on overseas loans, the bulk of which were raised during the war period. Had the Premier decided that some consideration should be given to that enormous interest obligation that we have to face every year, we might be in a much happier position to-day, and we would not be draining the Treasury to find the necessary funds to meet our commitments to overseas bondholders. The only man who took any action along the lines I suggest, was at that time attacked by the alleged statesmen of the Commonwealth and by the Press. He was classed as a repudiationist. He was the former Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Lang. Immediately he suggested we should attack the interest bill due to overseas bondholders, he was condemned on all sides. He was regarded as the scoundrel of the conference. I have come to the conclusion that it is not exactly what a man does that counts, but who the man is who does it. What Mr. Lang advocated two years ago when he suggested a reduction in our overseas interest liabilities, Mr. Bruce is delegated to do to-day. He is to negotiate for a reduction. Mr. Lang was a repudiationist when he suggested it; Mr. Bruce is a statesman because he is doing it two years later. If I had my way, not one shilling would be paid in interest in respect of any money borrowed for the purpose of prosecuting the Great War. No individual has a right to amass wealth at the expense of the sacrifice of human flesh. If it is right that a nation should demand my body, it should also demand the country's wealth. If I must give my child to make cannon-fodder, you, Sir, must give your money. The trickery and corruption that characterised the financing of the war led to the heaping up of obligations that con-

stitute the greatest part of our indebtedness to-day. I do not regard any man as a repudiationist who would ask that the position be reviewed having regard to the altered circumstances. Had the Premier given some heed to Mr. Lang's suggestions, we might now be enjoying better conditions. The trouble was that the wrong man suggested it, and at that time whatever Mr. Lang suggested, whether right or wrong, had to be wrong. The Premier has had 12 months' experience of the Plan he helped to draw up, and all the result that has been apparent so far is that the State is in a worse financial mire than ever before. The living standards of our people have been reduced to what is a disgrace to society. If this is the result of the system under which we have lived for 1,932 years, then the best thing we can do is to hand the land back to the savages and apologise to them for the position to which civilisation has reduced it. The present conditions would not do justice to the aborigines. Here we have women and children walking the streets, hungry, ill-clothed and ill-fed. Yet we are told that it is all right. We are told to abide yet another 12 months and that some day, somehow, something will come our way. We hear members of this Chamber claiming to be humanitarian in their outlook and to have a keen regard for the welfare of their fellow human beings. At the same time, our people are required to find annually £55,000,000 in order to make payments to people in respect of money that never really belonged to them. Originally it was the people's money that was lent to them and then borrowed back. We have to pay interest on that money and consider it honourable to do so. I would consider it dishonourable to accept that money, in the circumstances. Mr. Lang was a repudiationist because he advocated the suspension of interest payment overseas. Then those who opposed him and accused him of being a repudiationist, came back to Western Australia and introduced a measure providing for the reduction of interest on all loans raised from local bondholders. They called Mr. Lang a repudiationist because he advocated suspension of payment of interest overseas until the country was again prosperous and able to pay in full. Ministers in the present Government provided legislation to reduce interest rates on all internal loans, and smashed every contract they had with bondholders within the Commonwealth.

That action was regarded as statesmanlike, but Mr. Lang was a repudiationist although he did not go anything like so far. He desired to feed his people before paying overseas bondholders. That was true humanitarianism. On the other hand, the Government prefer to starve the people so that overseas commitments may be met and that the State may be honoured with the blessings of foreign Shylocks in consequence of our payments. The only difference between the Premier and Mr. Lang is that Mr. Lang said, "If I cannot pay, I won't." The Premier (Sir James Mitchell) says, "I will pay, but I cannot." Right throughout the conferences that have been held, every Premier has been careful to imply that the interest on our loans has been responsible for crushing us to our present condition. Nevertheless, the Premier returned to Perth a little while ago, and was quite pleased with his work because he had been able to place a large number of men in employment. He was successful in providing part-time employment at a little above sustenance rates, and that seemed to be satisfactory for the time being. While it is admitted that the earlier policy of borrowing money and spending it has been the cause of the State having to make such sacrifices to-day, the only remedy the Premier has of getting out of present-day difficulties is the borrowing of more money and again spending it. There has been no effort on the part of the Premier to secure a reduction of interest charges. As a matter of fact, the Attorney General said that a reduction of overseas interest was mooted at a Premiers' Conference. It was not merely a question of "mooting" when it came to a reduction in the standard of living. That was accomplished in confoundedly quick time. When it came to a question of attacking the interests of investors overseas, they immediately tightened up and simply "mooted" action. Every time a public man has the courage to attack money power, he is immediately attacked in turn by the Press, which is its mouthpiece. Money power owns and controls the Press, as it does banks and insurance companies. A few groups own the lot. Should a man take any such action as I have indicated, he is politically downed by the Press. The Premier of this State, practically by compulsion, had to hand over the State Savings Bank to the Federal Government. At that time everyone was fully sympathetic and ex-

pressed regret at the Premier having to part with an institution that was a great public utility, conducted on a profitable basis. Another bank in this State crashed—the Primary Producers' Bank. Some people lost practically all their savings in consequence. The bank was controlled by private enterprise, yet when the crash came everyone was sympathetic. It was controlled by an efficient board of management, and was efficiently managed. I do not know that the depositors have received their money back in full, nor do I think it likely that they will receive it all. Everyone was sympathetic regarding the fate of the two banks. On the other hand, because Mr. Lang had to close the State Savings Bank of New South Wales owing to pressure brought to bear by the Federal Government, he was regarded as a damned scoundrel. There is the difference, again. It is not a question of what is done, but who it is that does it. Anything can be sacrificed in the name of the National Party, but should such action have to be taken later on by the present Leader of the Opposition, how he will be attacked! We know what sympathy will be extended to him. Lately there has been introduced by the Minister for Works a new policy regarding private enterprise. I do not desire to be offensive, and if I say there is a substantial, well-organised move throughout the Commonwealth to reduce the standard of living of the masses, I hope the Government will not regard it as offensive. I can practically prove what I say to be right. Invariably when trouble arises in two States at one time, we find co-ordination in regard to administration that is remarkable. I intend to refer to a clause that the Minister for Works has included in all tenders for Government work. Private enterprise to-day is being asked to tender for Government work, and if a private person secures a tender, he has to employ men on sustenance at Government rates and under Government conditions.

The Minister for Works: Is that the clause?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but that is the policy of the Government. I propose to give an illustration of keen co-operation between the States in keeping the rate of wage down to sustenance level. What I want to show is, first of all, that the Minister for Works was wrong when he quoted New South Wales as being a State wherein the

sustenance standard was lower than in this State. The sustenance standard in New South Wales is higher than is ours. Only recently have we had trouble with the men on the Frankland River. I did not know it was going to come to a crisis, but long before the trouble arose I received a letter from a gentleman working there, and I got another letter on the day the trouble came to a head.

The Minister for Lands: Is that Smith's letter?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister must give notice of that question. Strange to say, they had trouble over in New South Wales, and I have here the policy set out by Mr. Dunningham, the Minister for Works in that State. This is what Mr. Dunningham does for the unemployed relief workers in New South Wales. He also specifies the amount they earn, to justify him in forcing them back to work. This is the way it is reported in the newspaper—

The Minister for Labour and Industry (Mr. J. M. Dunningham) was advised to-day that after commencing work, 40 of the 50 men employed on relief work at the Randwick section of the water and sewerage scheme, stopped work and informed the ganger that they would not resume work until they were paid award wages. The remaining men continued to work, but 18 of those in the adjoining section took similar action when apprised of the action taken by the 40 men.

On these facts being communicated from the board, Mr. Dunningham directed that the men be informed that their places would be filled by other workers through the State labour exchanges, and that those refusing employment would not be given food relief.

The same statement was made by the Minister in this State to those in trouble a few days ago.

The Minister for Lands: Well, it is quite right.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not saying anything about that, but I point out that it shows collusion and understanding. The report continues—

Later in the morning, Mr. Dunningham was advised by the officer-in-charge of the work that the men had decided to resume work. The Minister stated that in selecting men for this work, preference was given to those with six children or more, and for their employment they would be paid £3 15s. per week of 40 hours. Besides the payment of these wages, all fares incurred by workers to and from their places of employment in excess of

6d. per day or 2s. 6d. per week, were to be paid by the employer. For skilled workers an additional sum of 10s. per week was provided.

Then we have Mr. Dunningham's published policy as follows—

While men with seven children were in employment they received in wages not less than £3 15s. per week. With the payment of family endowment of 30s. per week in such cases, they would thus be in receipt of £5 5s. per week.

That is rather better than the £3 of the Minister here. I feel very keenly for those Frankland River men who have been forced into action as a protest. The Minister, or the Government, has been most unjust to them. Those men are not all qualified to clear land. This point has been stressed by other speakers, and I do not propose to delay the Chamber in going over it again. But I propose to read some information given to me: if it is only 50 per cent. true, the position at the Frankland River is a criminal one. The shifting of those men was altogether unfair. They were told that when they reached the Frankland they would find everything ready for them, camping utensils and everything else. Yet some of them had to sleep on two bags, and under two bags, for which they were charged 2s. And after walking to the stores they found that the truck had been bogged and would not be there until the following day. So they had to walk back six miles, and with nothing to eat. Here are the specifications for the clearing of one acre of maiden bush, the prices varying from £2 to £4 per acre—

All trees up to 12in. in diameter axe-handle height from ground to be removed 6in. below the ground level. From 12in. up to 20in. to be chopped down, sap wrung at the base, and dirt removed from ground level to a depth of 9in. All other trees to be sap wrung, except free-splitting timber, which must be left. All woody-rooted scrub to be well grubbed. Palms to be speared, spears left in, spears to be 24in. long. All old stumps to be cleaned around to a depth of 9in. and packed. All timber to be cut up and stacked ready for a burn.

Those are the specifications for bush on the Frankland River.

The Minister for Lands: To which part of the Frankland River district are you referring?

Mr. MARSHALL: To that near Mt. Barker.

The Minister for Lands: You have never seen it. It is very different country from the lower part.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have been to most parts of the district. So it will be seen it is not only impossible, but the prices are ridiculous. An experimental plot, not cleared nearly so well as those specifications stipulate, cost in the vicinity of £22 per acre. On that job experienced men were employed. For the Frankland River work, no such condition prevailed. Men were picked up haphazardly. Carpenters, engine-drivers, and men following all sorts of callings were put on as axemen when axemen were on sustenance and still idling about the town. There seems to be no organisation at all. I do not wish to be too severe on the officials, but we know that unemployment will not vanish to-morrow. It will be with us 12 months hence and 20 years hence. There is not the slightest doubt about that.

The Minister for Works: It was always with us.

Mr. MARSHALL: And will be. The longer we go, the greater will be the number of unemployed. We have either to accept the scientific inventions as a blessing or regard them as a curse and go back to primitive conditions. If the application of scientific methods is to be of no avail, we had better revert to the standard of the Chinese and to the standard the member for Swan eulogised this evening.

Mr. Sampson: You would be more at home with the Kanakas.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know those people and I consider myself in worse company with the hon. member.

Mr. Sampson: I am prepared to part with you.

Mr. MARSHALL: I understand that a financial emergency measure will be placed before us in a few weeks. We were told 12 months ago that if we gave it a trial, all would now be well and that prosperity would return.

The Minister for Lands: No one in this House told you that.

The Minister for Works: That is his imagination.

Mr. MARSHALL: The financial emergency measure was to rehabilitate the financial position of the Commonwealth. Yet the State's deficit is higher than it was 12 months ago. It is the highest deficit the State has experienced. It is not possible for

Government employees to give results on the rates of pay and the conditions under which they are asked to work. The pay is insufficient to keep men fit to do a day's work. Moreover, it is demoralising. Men realise that they are getting only 25s. 2d. a week and they earn that much and that much only. As a matter of fact, they probably earn less, and we cannot argue that they are not justified in adopting that attitude. There is nothing so demoralising to the people as the insecurity of income. Yet the Government are continually attempting to reduce rates and to persecute the people suffering under those reduced rates. Surely the men at Frankland River were worthy of some consideration instead of the mere retort, made whenever any industrial trouble occurs, that it was caused by communist influence.

The Minister for Lands: Will you say there is not any?

Mr. MARSHALL: I will not say there is not any, but I will not say it is the cause of every industrial dispute. If communism is getting a hold in the country, is it not significant that some change is necessary? What does a hungry and homeless person care what policy is adopted so long as it offers him something?

The Minister for Lands: The communists were here long before this trouble.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is nothing like an empty stomach to cause a man to make a move.

The Minister for Lands: Those communists do not work; they are well paid for what they do.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister seems well versed in the matter.

The Minister for Lands: You seem to be lacking in education in one respect.

The Minister for Works: You are putting up a good case for the communists.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the Parliaments cannot handle the situation, it is only natural that hungry men will look for something that will give them relief. All history shows that whenever reform has been advocated, objection was raised either through mouthpieces in Parliament or through the Press, but justice was done, even though heads were lost in the process. History will repeat itself. People will not stand idly by and see their children hungry. No man will long tolerate seeing his wife and children hungry, homeless and without clothes. That sort of thing will breed communism or any other "ism" that offers relief.

The Minister for Lands: You know that the unemployed here are treated better than anywhere else.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not care about that.

The Minister for Lands: You know that we are feeding single men, whereas they were not fed awhile ago.

Mr. MARSHALL: My God, is that the only hope we have?

The Minister for Lands: I did not hear your voice calling then.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Minister hears it calling now.

The Minister for Lands: But you are a bit late.

Mr. MARSHALL: Is that the only outlook the Government have? They can do no more than feed the unemployed, notwithstanding a record deficit.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us how we can get money.

Mr. MARSHALL: Another Premiers' Conference is necessary to deal with one subject only, namely, our financial position abroad. If the people there will not listen to reason, they will have to be forced to.

The Minister for Lands: Have not you been told repeatedly that that has been done?

Mr. MARSHALL: This morning I read that there is to be another conference to deal with the matter.

The Minister for Lands: You know when Mr. Bruce went abroad.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know what he did on several occasions. I know Mr. Bruce.

Hon. A. McCallum: I have not seen that authentically stated.

Mr. MARSHALL: In this morning's paper it was stated that there is to be a further conference, the idea being the fixation of price values to raise the standard of living. That is as far as it has gone. People have believed in the Premiers' Plan for 12 months, and now we have to admit that we as Parliamentarians have failed, that we are really controlled by the money power and that no one is game to attack that power. The goldmining industry is not suffering from the financial depression so much as are other industries. It is satisfactory to the State as well as the Commonwealth that this should be so. I am therefore surprised that the Minister for Mines should take the opportunity, while things are prosperous, to cut down the concessions and benefits which

for so many years have been extended to prospectors. I know the Government are pressed for finance, but this is the wrong time in which to cut away the assistance that has been rendered to prospectors, upon whom the State must depend for the future development of the industry. The time is coming when many of the old mines will be worked out, and new ones will be sought to take their place. If the Government were casting an obligation upon those mines and individuals who were producing gold at a profit, their action would not be so bad. It is, however, wrong to whittle away the concessions, such as free crushings at State batteries from new fields, the rebate on low-grade ore, the carting subsidies, and the treatment of the tailings. This is not fair to that section of prospectors who are not producing gold at a profit. A party or an individual may have a crushing which has yielded 3 or 4 ozs. of gold to the ton. No one knows what it has cost to produce that ore or how long it has taken to get it. The richer the ore, the less profit there may be in it. A very rich crushing is perhaps not as valuable to the prospector as a low-grade crushing. On the Murchison, men may break 150 tons of 10-dwt. ore in the course of a week, and make so much profit on it. Another person may bring in three tons of ore going 25 ozs. to the ton, but may have had to cart it 100 miles and may have taken 18 months to get it. Another unfair thing is noticeable in the attitude of the Government in confiscating repayments made by goldmining companies. I refer to money which has been loaned to such a company as the Sons of Gwalia. That mine has paid back quite a lot of the money borrowed, but instead of the money going to the Mines Department to assist in further prospecting, it is being utilised by the Treasury for ordinary departmental expenditure. That is most unfair. Some of the finest characters in the State are men who have been prospecting all their lives. Now is the time to encourage the production of gold. It is the only commodity we can sell. We advocate a bonus on wheat, on the export of wine, on sugar and almost everything else for which we cannot find a market. Ministers are looking all over the place for markets in which to sell our produce. Now we have a commodity for which we are getting an enhanced price, and the Government are contemptible enough to interfere with the pioneers of the industry. I also

object to the continual granting of exemption to certain individuals who hold many leases. There is what is known as the Big Bell, a low-grade show. For two years or more nothing has been done with the Big Bell leases. The lessee has been in England practically all that time seeking to raise money with which to work the property. Exemption after exemption has been granted. When a lessee is able to live in England for two years and is unable, with gold at its present price, to raise the necessary money, the Government are fully justified in withholding any further exemption. Oily-tongued individuals, who, 99 times out of a hundred, baulk the sale of a property by loading it heavily, are too often considered. Leases have been held for 15 years merely because the lessee wanted so much more than the purchase price for them that no investors would look at them. Exemptions should go by the board unless there is real justification for them.

Mr. Patrick: The Big Bell is still held up?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, and the lessee is still in possession of it. I have no objection to giving a man a reasonable time in which to raise money, but if he cannot get it in that time with gold at its present price, he should receive no further consideration. The Manganese Co. put down a line from Meekatharra to their big deposit at Horse-shoe, near Peak Hill. I am sorry to learn that the Government intend to pull up the line. I know they provided rails and sleepers to assist the enterprise. The railway could be put into a state of repair without much expenditure, and would constitute a great asset to the country. Meekatharra is the railhead for the transport of stock for the Kimberleys, Pilbara, Roebourne, and part of the Gascoyne district. I am sure the line would be pretty well patronised. It would also assist in the prospecting for gold. Having regard for world affairs, no one can say when a war may break out. If one developed in China, Russia or in Germany tomorrow, the manganese deposits could be successfully developed. The price of the ore would go up, and the line would be utilised to full advantage. The Government would be very unwise to interfere with it. It would be much better to put it in order and run a service.

Mr. Coverley: How long is that line?

Mr. MARSHALL: It crosses 83 miles of the worst country between the Kimberleys and Meekatharra. From the north of the Kimberleys stock are on the road occasionally for from six to nine months. They are compelled to do the last 83 miles of their long journey over auriferous country, which does more injury to them, and takes more off their market value, than all the other part of the way. It would be unfair to the people of the North-West not to put that railway into a condition of repair, and thus give their industries a chance to make good. It would be different if the railway had to be built; but the line is there, and merely requires a little doing up. Within the next few weeks, even, it may prove an acquisition to the Manganese Company for the purpose of developing their deposits. Having regard to the condition of the international mind, it seems to me that the so-called war to end war has been a war to end peace. Ever since 1914 the nations have been, and are to-day, angry and on the verge of war. War, in my opinion, must be the outcome. Once war has been declared, there will be no unemployed, and no shortage of money. Money will be found to protect vested interests. But no money can be found for the amelioration of the conditions of the people. It is up to the institutions of this country to give a lead. Let them attack the problem straightaway. Then this Party would not mind advising the workers of Western Australia to hang on. But our inaction and our silence on the question that counts, and our apathy towards the welfare of the people, are criminal, to say the least of it.

On motion by Mr. Angelo, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.
