

work at such a low price that he had to sweat the girls in order to carry it through. Then he made the astounding statement that he did not blame the contractor.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I think you are wrong.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I think the hon. member will find that in "Hansard."

Hon. A. H. Panton: The Federal Government set the price themselves.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It is just the same. What can be thought of a contractor who would take work at a price that he knows will mean the sweating of the girls who have to carry on the work?

Hon. A. H. Panton: And what about the Government?

Hon. J. E. DODD: My experience of some miners' unions is that if a man had a contract which did not pay him he was compelled to go on with it under certain penalties. If a contractor takes a contract where the prices are so fixed that he knows he will have to sweat the girls employed in order to carry it out, he is as much to blame as is the person who lets the contract.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The girls had to suffer on this occasion.

Hon. J. E. DODD: A man who takes work like that must be a kind of human vampire, and the sooner he gets out the better. I trust that in future we shall be able to get rid of our deficit. Of course we shall not do that all at once. I also hope that we shall get out of our difficulties before long.

On motion by Hon. J. Duffell debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.48 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—DAIRY FARMING AND CHILD LABOUR.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Honorary Minister: His attention having been called to an article appearing in the "Sunday Times" of the 27th ult., will he please state whether, in view of the fact that the dairymen on the Stirling estate, in the Capel district, view the article in the light of a specific charge of child slavery to cows, he will cause an investigation to be made and report the result of such investigation to this House?

The PREMIER (for the Honorary Minister) replied: The article referred to is too vague to form the basis of a satisfactory investigation.

QUESTION—FARMS ABANDONED.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many farms are at present in possession of the Government through foreclosure of mortgage to the Agricultural Bank or Industries Assistance Board? 2, What is the total amount involved in the foregoing question? 3, How many such farms have been disposed of to returned soldiers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 927, of which 154 were the property of settlers who enlisted. 2, (a) Agricultural Bank, £310,035, including interest. (b) Industries Assistance Board, £96,847. 3, 54.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE INCREMENTS.

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: What are the intentions of the Government with regard to paying civil servants (a) a further increment under the Classification from the 1st July last? (b) adequate living allowances to meet the increased cost of living?

The PREMIER replied: The matter has not yet been considered.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, NYABING-PINGRUP.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: In view of the statement that the Federal Government are providing money for the opening up of land for soldier settlements, will the Government take into consideration the question of the construction of the Nyabing-Pingrup railway, authorised in 1915, as the land in this district is suitable for that purpose?

The PREMIER replied: Yes.

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLERS.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: In regard to the 647 soldier settlers to whom loans have been approved, will he please state (a) the number of such settlers who held their properties before enlisting? (b) the number of new settlers who have ob-

tained their holdings under the provisions of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act?

The PREMIER replied: (a) 193; (b) 454.

QUESTION—"JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE."

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: Is it proposed to restore the publication of the "Journal of Agriculture" by the Agricultural Department?

The PREMIER replied: Not at present.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT HOUSE BALLROOM.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Under what conditions is the Government House ballroom made available for other than vice-regal functions? 2, Does a regulation exist which prevents this ballroom from being made available to the Returned Soldiers' Association, whilst not so operating against an association for the protection of animals? 3, Who framed the said regulation, and under what authority? 4, In view of the policy of preference to returned soldiers, will the Government have the Returned Soldiers' Association placed on at least the same footing as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the University in respect to the ballroom in future? 5, Will the Government endeavour to secure control of the ballroom as a State ballroom, under the control of the Ministry, in future?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The whole of the Government House buildings, including the ballroom, are entirely within the control of the Governor for the time being, and any portions of such buildings can only be made available under such conditions as successive Governors may approve. 2, No. 3, Answered by No. 1. 4, Answered by No. 1. 5, As this is a portion of the buildings assigned for the use of the State Governors by arrangement with the Secretary for State, the suggestion is impracticable.

QUESTION—POLICE SECRET SERVICE FUND.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Mines: Has the Police Department a secret service fund, which is used by members of the police force to buy information concerning certain offences from persons outside the Police Department? 2, How much was so expended during each of the past ten years? 3, What check or control is exercised over expenditure of this nature?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, In common with every other police force such a fund exists. 2, The amount so expended during the last ten years would require some time to tabulate. 3, All expenditure is checked and controlled, as is the custom in all police departments.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT REFRIGERATING WORKS.

Mr. HARDWICK asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What quantity of meat, fruit, and fish was stored in the Government Refrigerating Works, Perth, on the 11th of this month? 2, Is this an increase on the quantity stored on the similar date of last year?

The PREMIER (for the Honorary Minister) replied: 1, In regard to meat, the storage chambers for this purpose are let at weekly rentals, and the department does not keep account of the quantities of meat stored therein by the tenants. Ten compartments were let for meat in both years. Fruit: in 1918, approximately 500 cases; in 1919, 3,848 cases. Fish: in 1918, none; in 1919, 110 boxes. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—INCOME TAX ASSESSMENTS.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Griffiths) asked the Premier: 1, Has any finality been reached in regard to the question of assessing income tax on a three years' crop basis? 2, If so, will he inform the House the decision arrived at?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The question as to whether it is advisable to assess on a three years' average basis the incomes made by persons engaged in farming and other businesses has not yet been finalised, but it will be considered when the Bill to amalgamate the Income Tax Assessment Act and the Dividend Duties Acts, which it is intended to introduce during the present session of Parliament, is being dealt with. 2, See answer to No. 1.

QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier: Have the Government any intention of carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on agricultural industries?

The PREMIER replied: Many of the recommendations are already being carried out in the several departments concerned; others are receiving attention.

QUESTION—ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Mr. GREEN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, In view of the disinclination that industrial workers have shown recently to placing their grievances before the State Arbitration Court, and in the interests of industrial peace, will he bring in an amendment of the Act to remove the disabilities and anomalies that have appeared in the Act in the light of the experiences of recent years? 2, If he is prepared to bring in an amendment of the Act, will he so provide as to empower the court to grant a maximum as well as a minimum wage; also to grade the positions of the workers in such manner as would enable

them to reach the maximum wage awarded by the court?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The matter is under consideration, and if the hon. member will specifically point out the disabilities to which he refers he will render assistance. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—STATE BRICKWORKS.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that at present there are about 40 bricklayers in Perth who are out of work because they are held up for lack of bricks and other building materials? 2, Is it also a fact that the State brickworks have been kept working at full capacity for one shift per day for some months? 3, What is the number of orders and the number of bricks on order with the brickworks at present unfulfilled? 4, If the facts are as stated, will he cause another Hoffman kiln to be immediately erected so as to cope with the demand by working two shifts, and so assist in the policy of production that is said to be the general object of the Government?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Yes. 3, Seventy-six; two and a quarter millions. 4, No.

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

(First reading.)

Bill introduced and, on motion by the Premier, read a first time.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1. Prices Regulation.

Introduced by the Premier.

2. Trading Concerns.

3. Traffic.

Introduced by the Minister for Works.

4. Crown Suits Act (1898) Amendment.

Introduced by the Attorney General.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.)

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Holman (Murchison) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington): The criticisms which have been levelled by the leader of the Opposition and others against the Government have been replied to gener-

ally by the Premier, and the Minister for Mines last evening dealt with the views on the shipping question presented by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). The requests made by other speakers have had the attention of the Government. Their remarks have been taken note of and will be considered, and on their merits dealt with. Beyond that I only wish to remark upon a few other matters contained in the speeches made last night. I wish particularly to refer to the remarks of the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) who, in the course of a general condemnation of the Government, saw fit to deal with myself as Minister for Works. Ordinarily, one would take no notice of remarks by that hon. member on matters of this sort, because we have been for years accustomed to that kind of thing when the hon. member was associated with another Government, as he was associated with the late Government, when he, in his rugged manner, offered criticism of more or less value not only regarding hon. members but regarding concerns. I have no doubt that the hon. members on both sides of the House have weighed his remarks in the balance and arrived at a pretty fair judgment as to their value. One of the points to which the hon. member devoted some little time was that the Minister for Works had been spending tens of thousands of pounds in pulling offices to pieces, making alterations, and upsetting the routine of the offices generally.

Hon. P. Collier: And run amok.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member likes. That is a pretty fair accusation to make against a man. Tens of thousands of pounds have not been spent. Not half of that will be spent, and if what we have in view in alterations and cleaning is carried out there will be less than a quarter of ten thousand pounds spent. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) if he were here would admit that, during his term of office as Colonial Treasurer, the question of effecting economies in the public service was one to which he, together with myself, devoted special attention. It will be remembered that for years past there has hardly been an Address-in-reply or any set of Estimates dealt with but that one or more members have drawn attention to the necessity for the housing of the civil service in buildings belonging to the Government, and to the payment of rent being stopped. It was, therefore, right that we should devote some time to this matter. Three years ago in this House there was very grave criticism in connection with the renting for the Education Department of a building in St. George's-terrace belonging to Mr. A. E. Morgans.

Mr. Munsie: And it was justifiable criticism too.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not dispute that. I believe the rental was something like £550 a year. There was a great deal of criticism, justifiable from the point

of view of hon. members, from all sides of the House, as to this. It was impressed upon the Government that they should at the earliest possible moment endeavour either by building or making other arrangements to cut away the rents which were being paid. The efforts of the late Colonial Treasurer and myself were directed to avoiding if possible the payment of rents. The buildings with which we have been dealing during the last three or four months represent a rental of between £3,000 and £4,000 a year, and I am satisfied that, if I can show we are going to avoid that in the future, hon. members will acquit me of the charge which the member for Pilbara has made. In the first place, the late Colonial Treasurer found by some researches that he inaugurated—and I was able to endorse the finding by employing Mr. O'Neill of the Works Department, and going into the matter for myself,—that we had plenty of room in Government buildings of our own, if they were properly rearranged and re-organised and dealt with firmly by Ministers, to house every officer in the civil service. Without paying a penny of rent we have enough room for all our offices.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Did that include the Agricultural Bank?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. We found that we could house every officer of the civil service in Perth under Government roofs. Being satisfied on that point, surely we had a right to start on the work. We found, as every Minister who has been in office in the State will agree, and I believe every Minister to come afterwards will also agree, that there was a certain amount of passive resistance amongst the different civil servants. Where men have made their cosy nests and surroundings to suit themselves, and where some of them were able conveniently to do comparatively nothing from one year's end to the other, except to draw their salaries, there has been this resistance. If it had not been for the somewhat rugged character of the Minister for Works, who when his mind is made up, usually goes through with the thing, we would not have accomplished a single thing to-day.

Mr. Green: To whom are you referring?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: To the Minister for Works. I have had to take action during the last few weeks which I regret strongly, but on account of the passive resistance of officers of some of the departments I have been attempting to benefit, I have had to take this course.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I had to do the same thing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is why I rely on the hon. member to second the words I am going to use now. I have no doubt if he had been in my position he would have done what I have done, and a good deal more in that respect.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What did you do?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We had a building purchased several years ago for

the West Perth markets, and into that we had already put the accountancy branch, the show rooms, and the spare parts branch of the implement works. We found that the establishment of this branch there, though contrary to the views of a number of persons, influenced our business very considerably, rendered it far more convenient, and gave satisfaction to our customers. We have since found that we were somewhat out of the way there and consequently customers, who were coming down to deal with the implement works, passing as they did a number of private firms who were selling implements, called in on the way and instead of our getting the orders, our competitors got them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Is not the bulk of the business done in the country towns, or at the sidings?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will make that clear later. We then began to see what we could do. We were enabled to find a show room in Murray-street at a very moderate rental and we installed our men there. That gave us our first keynote. We then found it necessary to shift the Mines Department from the premises it occupied, and it was removed to the Stores building in Murray-street, which was too big for the present utilities of that department, and so the Stores were moved to Marquis-street. By this move we gave the Stores all the room and facilities they needed. At the same time we liberated the big buildings previously occupied by the Stores and shifted the Mines Department there. The building lately occupied by the Mines Department was like a rabbit warren and full of holes and corners. It was unfit for any decent person to work in, being dark and dirty, and it smelled. I said on one occasion before making the shift that I would not put a respectable pig into the building. We have now given the Mines Department clean roomy and healthy offices. The permanent head of the department and the Public Service Commissioner have thus been given an opportunity of seeing right before them the men who are employed in the department and of seeing whether they really are cats who catch mice. The next thing we did was to shift the Chief Inspector of Machinery, a gentleman who I think has been referred to in this House as being a mysterious official because he seems to have been under a Minister who has known very little about him. We moved that official to the barracks. We wanted him there so that he might carry on his work without disturbance. We know that professional men do not like disturbance and we have him now ensconced in offices in the barracks. We then altered his former offices so as to give the Auditor General and his staff more accommodation. Mr. Toppin told me on Saturday last that he is absolutely satisfied with his new rooms, and that his men are also satisfied, and that they are thankful they have at last got into self contained quiet and clean offices where they can do

better work. We have also been enabled to shift the Public Service Commissioner from Surrey Chambers, where we have been paying rent to the extent of £250 per annum.

Mr. Underwood: How much are you paying A. E. Morgans for his house for the Education Department?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have already told the House that. The building formerly occupied by the Mines Department is being thoroughly pulled to pieces. I believe that if the hon. member had tried to make a bigger mess of it he could not have done so with all his skill, which unfortunately I do not possess. It will cost probably £900 or £1,000 to make the necessary alterations to that building, and as soon as it is completed the Agricultural Department and the Industries Assistance Board will be accommodated there and that will represent a saving in rent of £1,984 per annum. All that should be sufficient to show that some thought and care have been taken in dealing with these matters.

Hon. P. Collier: Who re-organised the whole thing?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The man who has done the slogging work is Mr. O'Neill of the Public Works Department, but I take the responsibility. I do not shelter myself behind any man. There remains the question of the housing of the Education Department. We are paying £550 annually in rent for the building in St. George's Terrace. At the present time the only thing which I think we can do is to add another storey to the general stores building. That would cost, it is estimated, between £2,000 and £2,500, and that being done we could place the Education Department there permanently. They have their stores for their stationery in that building, and that would be a convenience, and in that way we should save £540 which is being paid as rental. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) and I had many conferences to see how the money which was being paid in rent could be saved, and I am satisfied that had the hon. gentleman remained in office my task of dealing with the matter would have been rendered easier, because he is a man of great force of character, and the officials he had to deal with would not have dared to throw trouble in the way as has been done.

Mr. O'Loughlin: What happened to the officials who were passively resisting. Did they go out?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I talked to them and the trouble petered out. The next matter I want to refer to is that of the Wyndham Freezing Works. The hon. member made some reference to old debates when I occupied a seat on the opposite side of the House, and he said I threw out a barrage of insinuation that palm grease and that sort of thing had been resorted to. If the hon. gentleman really thinks that, no words of mine will remove the impression from his mind. He is a man of tenacity and the only regret I have is that his view is so narrow. It is the duty of every member in

the House, if he holds the opinion that there has been wilful waste or bad administration, to bring the matter before the House and state his facts and let the House give its verdict upon them. I am not aware that I dealt in insinuations. The verdict of the House, however, was perfectly plain, and it justified whatever action I took. I wonder the hon. member has not higher ideals than that, even ideals as high as the lamp post referred to by the member for Fremantle. The hon. member also tried to make capital out of an old contract with the Government of which I believe he was a member, the amount of the contract being stated by him as £250,000.

Mr. Underwood: That was our estimate.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The value of that contract is shown by the action of the very Government that he was a member of. After they made their contract with Mr. Nevanas they paid Mr. Nevanas £11,000 to break it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is not correct.

Mr. Underwood: That is utterly wrong.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Nevanas was paid the money.

Hon. T. Walker: We bought material.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Give the exact amount; it was £8,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, say £8,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A thousand or two is nothing to you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Nevanas was paid a sum and his contract was concluded. It showed the opinion of the then Government of the value of the contract they had entered into with Nevanas. Even if it was a £5 note that was paid to Nevanas, it showed the value they placed upon the contract. Therefore, so far as the statement of the member for Pilbara is concerned it is absolutely out of court. When the Wilson Government took office the amount of money on the 1st August, 1916, that had already been paid away in connection with the Wyndham Freezing Works was £144,000. That was actually cash that had been paid away, and at that time the liabilities which had been incurred for which money afterwards had to be found amounted to another £100,000 or £120,000, and what the Premier of the day and his Ministers had to consider was the making provision for another £250,000 or more which the estimate before them required.

Hon. P. Collier: Where has the money gone?

Mr. Underwood: Yes, what became of it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There had been paid out of the Treasury before we took office £144,000 cash. What became of that money I cannot tell.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We want to know what has become of it since you took office.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member will know soon. There were liabilities of about £100,000. What the Ministry of the day had to consider was whether they were prepared to scrap practically a quarter of a million of money and they decided

they were not, and so the works were continued. That was the position so far as the works were concerned, then, because owing to the action of the previous Government the works had been started. Men had been sent there, foremen and officers had been sent there, and the works were going on, and more than that, in their wisdom the then Government made an agreement with an engineer of the name of Dalton, who had been selected by the Public Service Commissioner, to design and construct and afterwards carry on the operation of these works. The plans which Dalton prepared were sent to Sydney—and he went with them—to be examined and reported upon by Mr. Coxon, a consulting engineer of eminence.

Mr. Underwood: Dalton had not prepared any plans.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; according to the hon. member he did not do anything. These plans came back to us, and practically the only alteration made to them was that there should be more insulation. The hon. member makes a big song about the expenditure. I do not think these works will be completed under probably £600,000. Let me tell hon. members a few little things that have occurred since the Labour Government made up their minds that they would have these works. Since the present Government took office the expenditure on construction has been £232,400. Owing to labour demands enforced by strikes which, due to the distant and isolated position, rendered the Government impotent, the wages bill contains £30,677 for advances in rates of pay since the start of the job. The machinery provided by Nevanas was insufficient and incomplete. His estimate for machinery and for fixing, etc., was £48,000, and as a matter of fact the additional machinery that had to be ordered and got together and erected in addition to what had been provided cost £70,000.

Mr. Underwood: You told us the works could be built for less than £200,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not.

Mr. Underwood: You did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. gentleman is an hon. gentleman; that is all that can be said about him. Then came the question of insulation. Mr. Nevanas had provided £5,000 worth of cork board, but owing to the consulting engineer and others considering insulation had to be made better, we had to purchase £25,000 worth of additional cork board. The steamer fares and the paid time of the men going up and coming back had to be considered also.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I hope some of those other gentlemen associated with the erection of freezing works will take notice of this.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The steamer fares and time allowed to men alone came to £19,801. The freight we had to pay for material came to close on £53,000. The houses for the men, which were never provided in the Nevanas contract, came to

£12,000, and no provision was made for connection between the works and the jetty, nor did Nevanas make provision for the oil tanks, which cost £16,000. The total of those figures is approximately £230,000, and I defy the hon. member, with all his bluff and silly self-assertion, to tackle them.

Mr. Underwood: You said you could build the works for less than £200,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I understand that a gentleman who has been visiting the North is to bring forward a motion later on which may involve the appointment of a Royal Commission. I would welcome 50 Royal Commissions, and no doubt the Government will be prepared to grant one. I have given these figures to show the House that when the member for Pilbara was a member of the late Government and visited the works as he did, he came back and never offered his colleagues the slightest inkling that anything could be altered or improved.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He had lost faith in you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He hung on to us after that.

Mr. Underwood: Did not I tell you things were wrong?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In imagination, the hon. member might have done a lot of things.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does the hon. member who intends to move for a Royal Commission allege that there has been waste?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know, and do not mind. So far as it has been possible for a Minister and his officers to direct the carrying out of a work like this at a distance of 2,000 miles or more, there has not been a single bit of waste which could have been avoided. The staff on the works had a most difficult and trying proposition to carry out. Labour troubles have harassed the management from the start. To procure material has been a problem causing constant anxiety. Substitutions had to be made to fit in with what was possible to obtain. The shortage of shipping, owing to the war, resulted in piecemeal delivery, hindering the progress of the erection of the buildings and materially adding to the costs.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The only mistake you made was in not leaving us to finish the works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perhaps so. The manager for Vestey Bros., Mr. Nicholls, called on me eighteen months or so ago, and we discussed the question of the cost of such works. He told me that Vestey's works, the estimate for which was just over £300,000, had cost the firm over £750,000, and he did not then know where they would finish.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Vestey's wrote us a letter stating the estimate was £100,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Nicholls gave me the figures I have mentioned. I know nothing about the construction of freezing or chilling works, but I have gained a little experience from the

building of these works, and it is sufficient to persuade me to have nothing to do with them in the future. The abuse of the hon. member comes with very ill grace from him. He was very rude to the late Premier at the close of last session, so rude that a man of decency would have felt it incumbent on him to leave the Ministry then. He has told the House that another of his colleagues, Mr. Colebatch, was a mountebank and a coward.

Mr. Underwood: That occurred afterwards.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And he practically told the House that I was a silly old fool, without experience and full of bluff.

Mr. Munsie: He did a good all-round job.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: All I can say is that while the hon. member was away on his unexplained business trip he was in the pay of the Government, and the three members I mentioned were responsible for one-half of his salary, and if he wishes to pose in this House as being a square man and so forth, with the knowledge that during the time he was away he was not doing the work for which he was paid, he will refund the money; otherwise he stands condemned.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I do not like your chance of getting it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle): I am surprised at the Minister for Works becoming heated over the statements made by some of his own supporters. If the statements had come from this side of the House, I could have understood it.

The Minister for Works: So could I.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Generally, in dealing with questions, the Minister is very fair. He dealt with the amount we paid to Nevanas by way of what he termed compensation, but I say that not one penny of compensation was paid by the Government for the closing of that contract. Nevanas was paid £3,914 as commission on material which he purchased, and at that time we were told that the price had so increased that the value of the material was equal to £13,000, so we were really £10,000 to the good. I am right in saying that if the Government had purchased the material for the Wyndham freezing works since then the £13,000 would have had to be increased considerably.

The Minister for Works: Quite right.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is a big difference between the £11,000 or £12,000 representing the value of the material we purchased and the £3,000 commission. Nothing was paid to Nevanas as compensation. The Minister himself, since taking office, has agreed to pay the Westralian Farmers Ltd. 7½ per cent. as commission on goods sold for him. By paying five per cent. commission at that time we were clearly on the right side. We did not pay

Nevanas for cancelling the contract. We cancelled the contract because we were satisfied that Nevanas could not carry it out. I agree with the Minister that other works had necessarily to be carried out at Wyndham. It is true there was no connection between the works and the jetty; the jetty was not in the contract, and the connection between the jetty and the works was not considered with the contract. We were accused at the time of having entered into a contract for oil tanks. Now we are told there was no agreement under Nevanas's contract in connection with the oil tanks.

Mr. Munsie: Times have altered; it pays him to say so now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt the works have cost a good deal of money, and no one has realised that more than Vestey Bros. at Darwin. If I had known this discussion was coming on, I would have brought information to show that Vestey Bros. intended to spend £100,000 on their works at Darwin. When they found that the works were costing more, they wrote asking if we would enter into arrangements with them and obviate the erection of works at Wyndham. Their works at Darwin had then cost £300,000, and they did not know where the expenditure would end. So it is not Government officers alone who incur increased costs over the estimates for the construction of such works. Here we have an American firm, acquainted with American tactics, unable to estimate within several hundred thousand pounds the total cost of their works. I do not know whether the Press will take any notice of this, but I would remind them that although they refer to the Wyndham works as the white elephant created by the Labour party, costing the country £600,000, the total estimated cost of the works when the Labour party left office was only £270,000. To-day we are told they will cost from £600,000 to £700,000. It is a great mistake to change the management of such works. Whoever is sent there as manager must find something wrong in order to condemn his predecessor. That is the difficulty. As soon as Mr. Dalton came along, he disagreed with the plans prepared by Dunkerley and Nevanas. It was arranged to send those plans to Mr. Coxon, in New South Wales, an expert in chilling and freezing works, and when he got them he condemned them because the insulation was not complete. The Minister tells us this item has cost £25,000 extra. The plans were prepared by Dunkerley as engineer to Nevanas. No doubt they were drawn on the lines of works in Victoria, with which Dunkerley was familiar, but the climate in the North-West is very different, and the engineer advised alterations. Mr. Dalton, who I believe was in charge of the construction and running of works for an American firm in Queensland, and who, according to the facts placed before the Public Service Commissioner at the time, was more qualified than any other

man in Queensland to take charge of the works, was engaged to be at Wyndham during the construction of the works, so that he would become au fait with the whole concern and would know how to handle it when it was completed. I am informed that the works are completed and that Mr. Dalton has been thrown out and someone else put in his place. A new manager has come in, and I suppose he will want another couple of hundred thousand pounds to rebuild the works according to his ideas. And the same thing would occur again if we had yet another manager. I do not know the latest manager—he may be all right—but if he is no better at calculating the cost of the works than he is at calculating what is required to supply the metropolitan market with meat, he is very much at sea. When the Wyndham works were started, it was the intention to build them so that the dead meat could be brought to Fremantle, not frozen, but chilled. It was understood that that meat would be suitable for the metropolitan area. I have had some of that chilled meat, a small quantity brought down by the "Western Australia," and I say that better meat one could not desire. I enjoyed that meat. The expressed intention at the time of the purchase of the "Kangaroo" was that she should be used for the Wyndham Freezing Works. As has been repeatedly stated in this House, she was not intended to go into the various ports on the North-West coast, because she was too deep draught for that. She was intended also to go overseas; and she was to be insulated, and she was to bring down chilled meat to Fremantle. Now the new manager, I understand, says it is impossible to bring down chilled meat from Wyndham to Fremantle, that the distance is too great. Apparently, the metropolitan area is not going to get any chilled meat from the Wyndham Freezing Works. This is being done, in my opinion, for the purpose of boosting up freezing works at this end of the State, where there are no cattle available. For years to come we shall not have cattle in any numbers within reasonable distance of the metropolitan area. A man who has spent a lifetime in the cattle trade tells me that it is a matter of impossibility at present to get within reasonable distance of the metropolitan area sufficient cattle to supply the people of that area with beef for one week. And yet we are told that there is no need to bring meat from Wyndham to supply the metropolitan area. I suggest that some other advice is required by the Government in this connection. For years it has been recognised that in order to make meat available at a reasonable price in the metropolitan area, meat must come from works erected at Wyndham. No doubt in the next generation there will be a possibility of obtaining cattle within a reasonable distance of the metropolitan area—say in about 25 years from now. But to-day the cattle are not there. I am told there is a fair possibility of a supply of sheep near the metropolitan area, but that does not apply with regard to cattle. One of

the primary objects of the construction of the Wyndham works was to provide chilled meat for the metropolitan market. That well-known agreement which could not be found, that agreement with Nevanas for the management of the works, that draft agreement, contained special provision whereby a certain rate of commission, a lower rate of commission, was payable in respect of meat required by the metropolitan area, and whereunder a demand could be made that the first supplies from the works should be sent to the metropolitan markets in the form of chilled meat. That was one of the conditions of the draft agreement which was never finalised, and it shows conclusively that at that time the intention in establishing the Wyndham works was not only to enable the station owners to get rid of their cattle but also to furnish the people of Western Australia with a cheap meat supply. Mr. Hardwick, the present Government Architect, was sent to the Eastern States for the purpose of inspecting cool chambers there, so that he might be able to erect a cool chamber at Fremantle. The cool chamber was intended to be used principally for the storage of chilled meat from Wyndham, though it might also have been used to hold sheep or lambs for export, and fruit intended for export. However, it seems that the whole scheme of supplying the metropolitan market with chilled meat from Wyndham has been set aside for the purpose of erecting freezing works at Fremantle, whereby the small quantity of beef and mutton we have in the State will be exported from Western Australia. I must support the Minister for Works in his proposal for the removal of Government offices. It was my unfortunate lot at one time to engage in such an undertaking, and I experienced the greatest difficulty in getting any officer to remove from the very centre of the City. The removal of the Education Department to the wooden buildings within the grounds of Parliament House ensured a saving of £650 per annum rent for privately owned offices. It was a very hard job indeed to get the officers of that department to shift up here. When the Colonial Secretary's office was removed to the Health Department offices in Murray-street, the officers of the former department used every possible endeavour to avoid going there. Again, when the Taxation Department was to be removed from Howard street for the purpose of saving the payment of rent, the officers of that department complained that in Wellington-street they would be out of the centre of the City and in a place where it would be inconvenient for the people to pay in their taxes. I told them that they were in the fortunate position of not having to show goods in order to make sales, and that the cheques of the public would come to them in any case. I am pleased that the Government offices are being brought together again, as they were in the time of the Labour Government. In my opinion, the only way to get over the difficulty is to have all the Government offices centralised on the basis of the scheme sug-

gested by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). The Government ought to build new offices on the site of the old police court in Barrack-street, linked up with the present offices.

Mr. Underwood: Hear, hear! The rest is waste.

The Minister for Works: If we get rid of the Post Office people, we can take all the civil servants in Perth and put the whole of them in that one block.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When that is done we shall have all the Government offices together, which will be better for the public, and will result in the work being carried out more efficiently than it is at present. During this session it is becoming fashionable for hon. members to state that the Government cannot rely on their loyal support. During the war the leader of the Opposition promised the late Mr. Frank Wilson, then Premier, that we on this side would render him every support so long as he brought forward measures not of a controversial character. The leader of the Opposition not only gave the then Premier that promise, but made that promise a plank in the policy of the Labour party when he appealed to the people of Western Australia. At an election meeting at Boulder he read to the electors the letter which he had written to the then Premier, and said, "This is going to be our policy while the war lasts." And that policy has been faithfully carried out. But now the war is over. An hon. member said last night, "Nationalism is gone. We have not a Nationalist Government now. I do not feel myself bound to give that same loyal support to the present Government as I gave to the Nationalist Government during the war." Like the hon. member opposite who made that pronouncement, I do not feel myself bound to give to the Government in the future the same loyal support which I have accorded them in the past.

Hon. P. Collier: You will give them reasonable support, but not loyal support.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Any measures brought down by the Government which are for the advantage of the country will have my loyal support, but I am no longer going to stand behind the Government in regard to everything they bring down, as I have done in the past. That argument was used by an hon. member opposite, and I have adopted it from him. It is becoming a practice on the part of members who have left the Labour party to insinuate that those connected with that party do things that they would not do were they not adherents of that party. Indeed, those hon. members say that they themselves, while belonging to the Labour party, did various things which they would not have done if they had not belonged to it. I now challenge every hon. member who has ever been a supporter of the Labour party to say that in following that party he has ever done anything of which he need be ashamed.

Mr. Underwood: Except as regards the war.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is something entirely different. There is not one member can say so. It is stated, however, that owing to the existence of party government, members have sometimes to take a line of action which they would not take but for the existence of party government. Let me say that, under the system of government adopted by the various British communities, party cannot be done without.

Mr. Mullany: It all depends upon how far you carry party.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is true that, by an alteration of the Constitution, it would be possible to do away with party government; but, under present conditions, there must be a check on the Government—I care not of what political faith the Government may be. At the present time that check is put in the hands of the Opposition by the people. When we can follow the lines of Switzerland and various States of America there might be a possibility of abolishing party government, because under those Constitutions the people themselves can keep a check on the Government by demanding initiation and referendum whenever necessary.

Mr. Davies: The Labour party repudiated the referendum when it did not suit them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There must be party for the best conduct of the affairs of Parliament and of the Government. I go so far as to say that the greatest curse we can have in any Parliament is a too great majority behind the Government. I have seen in this House Governments with overwhelming majorities, Governments with narrow majorities and even Governments with no majority at all, as in the case of the present Government. The best majority we can have in a House of 50 members is a majority of not more than three or four, and some of those not too loyal. It is much better to have a narrow majority than a large one. I notice that on the 17th May last Mr. Asquith, the ex Prime Minister of England, one of the greatest parliamentarians we have had, and a man of authority—

Mr. Underwood: But of disreputable tactics.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When speaking at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Mr. Asquith emphasised the inestimable advantage of opposition in Parliament. He declared that it was the essence of Parliamentary life. The artificial conditions which prevailed in connection with the December elections, he said, had resulted in a top heavy and unworkmanlike machine. He went on to remark that a coalition was often necessary in a period of war, but that it was wholly unsuited to normal peace conditions. He contended that there must be a speedy return to healthy political and party division. Thus, on the statement of one of the best parliamentarians in England—

Mr. Underwood: He is a discredited parliamentarian; he failed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: For many years he held the public confidence as Prime Minister of England. He is an authority on

Parliamentary life, and he says that party is the very essence of that life.

Mr. Underwood: He is merely trying to get back again. He is out.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think his opinion ought to carry some weight even with the so-called politicians of Western Australia.

Mr. Pickering: Speak for yourself.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It should be of some weight even with those men who get up on every platform and, because they are not satisfied with their position, clamour for the abolition of party Government. Unless our Constitution is altered, I should say, "God help this country when there is no longer party Government." I hope this squabble about party Government will cease and that those who use it on the platform will remember that we have in Western Australia to-day, and have had for the past two years, party Government as strong and bitter as the history of the State has known.

Mr. Underwood: You are quite right there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let us not go out and attempt to fool the people all the time. Let us not tell the people that they have free and independent action, for we know it is not so.

Mr. Davies: You know nothing of the kind.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member knows it too. He has never dared to get up in this House and criticise his Premier in the way he did in caucus.

Hon. P. Collier: And then took a job under the man he was criticising.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We were told in the Press that the hon. member was the greatest critic of the Premier at that time, after which he went down on his knees and said to Sir Henry Lefroy, "Please make me one of your Honorary Ministers." The hon. member is one of those who are continually taking the public platform and declaring that party government is no longer required. He does not know what party means; he has never been true to a party in his life. Yet he is the greatest party man in the House in that he follows the Government to-day whether right or wrong. Any other member on that side of the House would get my confidence and trust sooner than would the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies).

Mr. Davies: It is characteristic of a Cornishman. You say I am a party man and you say I am not; which way will you have me?

Mr. Green: We will not have you at any price.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have never said "Cornwall for ever best!" Cornwall is all right, but I have for long contended that Western Australia is much better. Some hon. members have tried by a side issue to drag in the Fremantle wharf trouble. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones), the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), and the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood),

each had a go at it. I do not agree with the member for Pilbara that the Minister for Education is either a mountebank or a coward.

Mr. Underwood: I believe he is both.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not believe he is either. In going down to Fremantle that day the Minister showed that he was not a coward. And when, on arrival there, he realised the position, he was man enough to admit it. His action that day prevented bloodshed. I wish to repeat that I did my utmost in endeavouring to settle the dispute. The member for Moore (Sir Henry Lefroy) knows that times out of number I appealed to him in his office to use his influence with the shipping companies. He could not do anything with them, for they were as solid as a rock and would not bend. I gave the hon. member credit in this Chamber for endeavouring as far as possible to bring about an amicable settlement. I appealed to the late Colonial Treasurer (Mr. Gardiner) in the same manner. I appealed to the House, and the House by its expression agreed that it was time something should be done. Yet nothing was done. The shipping companies were ruling the roost. There is no doubt that the affair could have been settled satisfactorily without drastic action being resorted to. At the Governor General's conference held in Melbourne, an agreement was entered into that certain action should be taken. We on our part endeavoured to carry out that agreement, but the employers refused to abide by it. Let me read an extract taken from the "West Australian" of the 13th June, 1918—

Governor General's conference. Attitude of the Employers' Federation. Following upon the publication of the article in last Monday's "West Australian" setting out the attitude of local labourers towards the recruiting campaign which has been instituted as a sequel to the Governor General's conference in Melbourne, the secretary of the Employers' Federation (Mr. F. S. Andrews) was invited to indicate the attitude of the Federation in relation to the proposals made by the leader of the Federal Opposition (Mr. Tudor) at that gathering. Yesterday, Mr. Andrews made the following statement—"Some three weeks ago the State Government referred to the Federation certain points arising out of the Governor General's conference. The Federation immediately gave these matters full consideration and following on a special meeting of the council held on Monday last, a complete reply has to-day been forwarded to the Premier. Pending consideration of this letter by the Government, the Employers' Federation is not prepared to divulge its contents or make any full statement. On receipt of the Government's reply, the Federation will be in a position to make a statement." Mr. Andrews added that matters referring to the employment of labour on the Fremantle wharf had been referred to

and were being dealt with by the Association of Employers' Waterside Labour, who, it was to be noted, had not been represented at the Governor General's conference.

If my memory serves me correctly the representative of the Employers' Federation at the Governor General's conference right through was Mr. Fairbairn, M.H.R., and Mr. Alec McNeil and Mr. Leslie were the representatives of Western Australia, who agreed to what took place there. But it did not suit the shipping companies and they stood firm and would not move one iota, no matter what the other people did at the time this controversy was being carried on. The matter was also discussed with the committee representing the employers of the waterside workers at Fremantle, and they made the excuse that they were considering the advisableness of going before the Federal Arbitration Court. The matter was sub judice and consequently it was not deemed advisable to discuss it. That was the reply which was given. I am making this statement to show that Sir Henry Lefroy was endeavouring to effect a settlement. I want to say something else which I have not referred to before. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), who was at that time Honorary Minister for the North-West, also endeavoured to bring about a settlement. Efforts were made to bring both parties together, that is to say, to bring about a union between the National labourers and the Fremantle lumpers. It was pointed out that there was no room for the two unions. The Honorary Minister (Mr. Underwood) asked me whether I would see the representatives of the lumpers' union and ascertain whether they would accept the National workers as members of that union. I did so and informed the Minister in the affirmative. I want to say that arrangement could not be carried out. The shipowners were against it.

Mr. Munsie: They did not want peace at the wharves.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is regrettable that this matter has been going on at the wharves for so long. For murder we hang a man and put him out of his existence as quickly and as easily as possible, but at Fremantle, because a certain line of action was taken, we were starving innocent women and children for 17 solid months. To-day those people are suffering from the effects of ill-feeding during that period. I have been told that there are no fewer than 3,000 cases of influenza at Fremantle to-day, and medical men there have expressed the opinion that the lack of nourishment is largely responsible for that great number of cases. The action of the shipowners at that time was such that the people of Fremantle are suffering to-day to an extent that would not otherwise have been the case. We have been asked what it has cost the State to provide for the continuous employment of the National labourers. We are aware that on the last Esti-

mates a sum of £3,000 was provided to pay for the increased cost. I find that on the unloading of one steamer, the "Dimboola," in 1917, the Harbour Trust alone lost £106. In connection with the unloading of the "Waipera" the Harbour Trust lost £114. This could have gone on continually, and the losses of the Harbour Trust, we know, are paid out of State funds. The losses are not passed on, as would be done were they incurred by private individuals. We know that when merchants experience a loss they very promptly pass it on to the general public. The Harbour Trust cannot make increased charges and the State was losing revenue throughout the time the National labourers were employed at Fremantle. Every endeavour which was made to settle the dispute failed, and I intend to refer shortly to what was done finally. Most of us are aware that the "Dimboola" came to Fremantle somewhere about the end of March an infected ship. In February the Health Department issued instructions that no ships from the Eastern States must be given a berth at any wharf in Western Australia, even after pratique had been granted by the Federal quarantine authorities, unless that vessel had been seven days out from an infected port, namely, Adelaide, Melbourne, or Sydney. The notice went on to say that in such a case the order would be served on the ship under the State Health Act, ordering further isolation until the period of seven days had expired. It also stated that arrangements were being made to appoint at Fremantle and Albany representatives of the Health Department to issue necessary notices, and those representatives would be instructed to get into close touch with the harbour officials. Those were the instructions issued by the Health Department of this State, and quite right, too. But is it not strange that the instructions were not followed in connection with the "Dimboola"?

Mr. Underwood: You have not been in quarantine or you would not be in favour of them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those were the instructions and they should have been carried out. But what do we find? On the very day that the infected patients were removed from the "Dimboola," the crew and contacts, and everyone else, were going to the wharf. The instructions from the Commissioner of Health in this State were of no avail, as the shipping people were taking action on their own account. It is all very well to say that the people who were ill had been taken off the ship, but the contacts were there. If I were near Woodman's Point and got into contact with someone from the quarantine area, I would be put in as well. In the case of the "Dimboola," those on the ship would have come alongside the wharf if it had not been for the action of Mr. Stevens, the secretary of the Harbour Trust. He saw the ship in the river moving past his office, and he took action

at once. There is no doubt about it that the shipping company violated the law of this State. They were the first to violate law and order, about which we have heard so much since. A prosecution should have been instituted, but instead of that we find the Government supporting those people. Now we hear nothing; but the cry that we must uphold law and order. Let us take that eventful Sunday morning. The people who violated the law on that morning were the Premier and those who were with him.

Mr. Harrison: What about the throwing of stones from the bridge?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a great pity that they did not put someone under at the time.

Mr. Griffiths: Does the hon. member mean to say it would have been a good thing if someone had been drowned?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I did not say anything about drowning. I meant ducking. I want to put the position fairly before hon. members by asking who violated the law. The Harbour Trust commissioners are working under an Act of Parliament. Neither the Premier nor any of his colleagues, nor even Parliament, unless the Act is altered, has any right or power to interfere with the work of the Harbour Trust commissioners; excepting, of course, the fixing of charges for the handling of goods. We find, however, that without the consent of the commissioners, and without being asked by them in any way, Mr. Colebatch, who happened to be Premier at the time, went to the Commercial Travellers' Club, selected a few people there—a few merchants' agents from the Eastern States—and proceeded to Fremantle to take charge of the wharves. He did not have the authority of the Harbour Trust to do so. Is not that violating the law? If I did the same thing to-morrow I would soon find myself in gaol.

Mr. Harrison: They were assaulted before they got there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have heard of nothing but law and order since that time. It is only an election gag.

Mr. Davies: Was it an election gag when Walsh said he would plunge the streets of Melbourne in darkness?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the hon. member believes in everything that Walsh says, I do not.

Mr. Davies: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'Loughlen: I do not either; do you want any more testimony?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We find that the Premier and those who were with him violated the law on that Sunday morning, and that their action was the cause of the disorder which followed.

Mr. Harrison: Did not those who were on the bridges, and who threw stones on those passing beneath, break the law?

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are lucky you were not in that launch.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: My boy, who is 14 years of age, was on the bridge

on that day, and he hurled a stone, too. His father would have done the same if he had been there.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before tea I was alluding to the increased cost to which the Government were put for the work on the wharf. For the violation of law and order that day, Mr. Colebatch and his coterie were responsible.

Mr. Pickering: The king can do no harm.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Parliament has placed the Fremantle wharf under the control of commissioners, but during the trouble one of the commissioners, whose name was mentioned prominently last night in connection with State steamships, was a member of the Shipping Committee, who for the time being were controlling the employment of labour on the wharf. When some returned soldiers brought salt from Rottneest, before they could have the use of a crane to land it, the matter had to be submitted to the Shipping Committee. The Harbour Trust, though controlling on behalf of the State the machinery and everything connected with the wharf, could not and did not grant permission for the use of the crane. When attention was directed to this matter, Mr. Stevens partially contradicted it. It is strange that at four o'clock in the afternoon the Trust were not in a position to tell the men they could have the use of the crane, until the committee, then sitting, had dealt with the matter. The committee decided that they could use the crane, and it was placed at their disposal on the following morning.

Mr. Underwood: The sooner that Trust is abolished the better.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: For years the shipping people have been trying to get control of the Fremantle wharf. Under the new system instituted there, they get partial control. While the Harbour Trust employ the largest number of men, they could not, at that time, employ any except through a person appointed by the Shipping Committee. The Harbour Trust were paying a considerable sum for the maintenance of an office over and above the amount for their own offices. They had a staff to do the work and had to contribute funds, belonging to the State, to maintain this office which was detrimental to the port and to the State, and played into the hands of the Shipping Board. I need not enter into a discussion regarding the Shipping Board as it affects Western Australia. The Federal Government and the Shipping Board, consisting of the principal ship owners, with Admiral Clarkson supposed to be in control, have done everything possible to prevent shipping from coming to Western Australia. It has been only another attempt to damage Western Australia; this has been their action from start to finish. This was part of a scheme

brought about to ruin the trade of this State. We are told that the men who were employed in 1917 were patriots, that they went to the wharf to work for the good of their country. After the Sunday scrimmage, Mr. Colebatch was able to see light and to form a good judgment, and this little affair was referred to Melbourne, where, in all probability it was thought Ministers might be taught some sense of justice. Mr. H. Glance, secretary of the National Labour Party in Melbourne, who unfortunately split with the Labour party on account of war matters—some who split did so entirely on war matters—gave some advice to the loyalists in Melbourne after the settlement of the dispute on the Fremantle wharf. The loyalists went to the wharf in 1917, and this advice was given on 17th May last. He said—

They should take the stand that what they did at the time of the strike was in the interests of their country, and not because they were to be assured of jobs thereafter.

The position was that they were to be assured of jobs thereafter, but it was necessary to take that stand in order to play the game of getting compensation from the Government. Mr. Glance added—

It would be well to have a political side to their organisation and the National Labour party represented that side.

I was under the impression that the National Labour party did not believe in political action for industrial matters. This goes to prove conclusively that these men did not go on to the wharf for the benefit of their country.

Mr. Munsie: They only thought of that in May of this year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They went to the wharf to get other men's jobs, and my friend Mr. Prowse, one of the controllers of the Nationalist party, believes in legislation to prevent men of that class from blacklegging. If he could induce the Country party to bring down such a measure, it would receive my support. If Mr. Colebatch had taken the advice tendered him by the leader of the Opposition and myself on the Saturday and realised that we were telling him the true position, he would not have gone to Fremantle; but he was led away by the shipping agents. Western Australia is in an awkward position. The shipping men here are only agents. They have to do as they are instructed from the Eastern States, and we cannot get to the heads, who are some thousands of miles away; otherwise we might have been able to secure an amicable settlement of this trouble. Sir Henry Lefroy realised this from the endeavours he made. Mr. Colebatch took notice of what the shipping men told him. The shipping agents wanted to again control the wharf. Under the War Precautions Act they had controlled the wharf for a time, and they wanted to do so again. But there were no naval men or soldiers with drawn bayonets to warn the public off the wharf, and the result was loss

of life, which everyone regrets. Mr. Colebatch took the only line of action possible under the circumstances.

Mr. Underwood: To bolt.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Not to bolt. He saw that, in all probability, after the word was given to load rifles, further action would cost the lives of some of the civilians. Anyone present at the time could form no other conclusion than that, while civilians might have lost life or limb, not a policeman or any man of the party, not even Mr. Colebatch himself, would have left the wharf alive.

Mr. Underwood: Tripe!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not tripe. He showed good judgment. He realised the position for the first time and that he had to act. In my opinion he acted in the right direction.

Mr. Underwood: Exactly.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He acted in a manner which prevented sorrow being brought into many homes. I do not blame the Minister for Education altogether because he made a mistake. On the one side was Labour, and on the other side the representatives of the capitalists. During his lifetime that hon. gentleman has been brought up in the profession of a journalist, and the Press has been continually writing down labour and writing up capital. He has been so long in this walk of life that he failed to realise the truth when it was told him.

Hon. P. Collier: He was unconsciously biased.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think the hon. gentleman was anything but a coward.

Mr. Green: Hear, hear!

Mr. Underwood: It will take a lot of persuasion to convince me.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He did wrong, but the hon. member who called him a coward would never have had the courage to do what he did.

Mr. Underwood: I will go wherever it becomes a man to go.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The influenza epidemic is unfortunately very severe in the Fremantle district, and many lives have passed away as a result of it. There are fresh cases every day. Cannot the Government see their way clear to provide increased accommodation for patients? The portion of the Fremantle hospital that has been set aside for these cases is full, and patients have had to be sent, I am informed, to Blackboy. The Princess May school has attached to it a laundry and a kitchen for the instruction of the children. Is it not possible without any great expense to utilise that school as a hospital? Surely some other accommodation can be provided for the students, such as a portion of the Technical School or the Town Hall, instead of extra expense being incurred in providing proper laundries and making provision for cooking in other buildings, which are not equipped so well in this respect as the Princess May School. I understand that representations have been made to the effect that the Fremantle hospital should be set aside for the treatment of patients; and

quarantined, and that patients suffering from other diseases should be accommodated in the outside private hospitals. That is a good suggestion and would leave the necessary accommodation to deal with the influenza cases. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that influenza is in our midst, and every endeavour should be made to combat it. If it is not fought down, the results will probably be serious. Looking through some papers to-day I came across the platform of the National Federation of Western Australia as framed in 1917. Three of the planks in the platform are as follows:—

Finance—(a) economy in administration, concentration of Government offices, legislation where necessary to admit of the re-organisation of departments, the amalgamation of all branches exercising similar functions, and the encouragement of efficiency.

One or two speakers on the Address-in-reply, dealing with the question of the amalgamation of branches exercising similar functions, have pointed out that the time has arrived when the State and Federal Taxation departments and the two Electoral Departments should be amalgamated. I suppose all members think the same on this point. I would ask them, if a foolish Federal Government were to start departments similar to every department now controlled by the State, would they be prepared to hand over to the Federal Government the control of the State departments? The Federal Government came to Western Australia and started an Electoral Department when there was no necessity for them to do so. The same may be said of their Savings Bank, their Taxation Department, and their Analytical Department. If it is advisable to hand over the Electoral and the Taxation Departments to the Federal authorities, it is also advisable to hand over the other departments. Do members think that the Federal Government should take over all the administrative branches of State, bit by bit, because they wished to start similar departments irrespective of the expense which may be involved? If they are going to be encouraged in that manner, and are to have State members of Parliament and the State Press advocating that the departments should be handed over to the Federal people, the sooner we get an indication from the people of the State that this is to be done at their express wish, the better it will be for us. It is not for members of Parliament alone to do such a thing, but for the people of the State to express an opinion as to whether or not it should be done. Unless the matter is referred to the people we should be very wary about handing over our various departments to the Federal authorities.

Mr. Thomson: It is not suggested, is it?

Mr. Money: There should always be joint management.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They will not agree to that. The Federal Government are willing to amalgamate the various depart-

ments conditionally on their having full control.

Mr. Money: That is not amalgamation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is the only amalgamation they want.

Mr. Hudson: They are already establishing homes for soldiers here.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, we are handing that particular work over to them. The State Government have been doing all the analytical work of the Commonwealth Government for £400 a year. They were not satisfied with that but started a department of their own, and I guarantee that they have had to pay at least £800 a year for a Government Analyst, apart from the other expenditure on the necessary equipment. The line of argument taken by hon. members means that the other branches of the State department must be handed over to the Commonwealth as well. Such a thing should only be done on the voice of the people, and not by Parliament. It amounts to an encroachment by the Federal Government on the rights of the State, and the creation of a very expensive piece of Government machinery. The second part of the National Federation platform is as follows:—

(b) Taxation: After making all possible economy, and in order to keep the State expenditure within the revenue, the introduction of a graduated income tax and other equitable taxation.

The Premier said it was impossible to put the finances in order by means of taxation. No doubt that is true. He has some £200,000 or £300,000 a year now more than he had before. Where is there any evidence of economy? The revenue is more this year than it was in 1916, while the expenditure is also more than it was in 1916. There has been no economy.

The Premier: The interest and sinking fund have increased.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am glad the Premier said that. He has approximately £200,000 more revenue this year after allowing for the expense under loan Acts.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. P. Collier: You have had £180,000 from income tax.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The revenue this year is £166,117 more than it was in 1916. This is where the Government of the day did not act fairly in regard to the revenue. They took the total amount of revenue received, failing to explain that in 1916 the whole of the revenue from trading concerns was included, whereas this year it is excluded. This revenue has not been included since the State Trading Concerns Act was passed. The expenditure this year was £504,690 more than it was in 1916, and approximately £200,000 more after paying the increased cost under loan Acts. To get the actual result for comparison it is necessary to deduct from the revenue and expenditure the revenue and expenditure of trading concerns in 1916. The attitude of the Press on this question is very noticeable. The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) said he did not believe what was said

by the capitalist Press. The other day I was reading the leading article in the "West Australian," which is a very strong supporter of the present Government.

Hon. P. Collier: A very mild one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let us say a moderate one. This was an article on the present position, and in it were the words, "The dead past must bury its dead." It is very good advice. When we see these words quoted at any time it makes us wonder why those who write these articles and use these words are so anxious to have them carried into effect. There must be something that requires to be covered up. It is necessary occasionally to renew our acquaintance with past history in order that we may see what has taken place. It is necessary that we should know what the "West Australian" thought about the finances of the Labour party in 1916. The Labour Government finished up their year with a deficit of somewhere about £340,000. According to the Auditor General's report they left to the new Government goods to the value of £233,000 in stock, and £90,000 owing to the Government for machinery, etc. In round figures they left over £300,000 worth of assets as a set-off against their £340,000 deficit. In 1916 the June surplus was £214,718. What did the "West Australian" say? It said—

It is a wonderful accomplishment. Money, as we know, has a habit of falling on the Treasury in June like manna, and in the same month there would appear to be little call for expenditure. It is the month of July, however, that tells the tale of the stratagems to which the Treasurers resort in order to put the best possible face on the affairs of the preceding financial year. If Mr. Scaddan is in office on 31st July his deficit for the month would be on a scale rivalling the magnitude of the June surplus. If he is not, he will leave it as a legacy to his successors.

The June surplus was £214,718. He was going to rival that with the July deficit of £333,000. But he did not rival it by a long way.

The revenue is £147,509 less than the Treasurer estimated. The expenditure falls short of the estimate by £41,097, thereby keeping up Mr. Scaddan's reputation by being unable to reduce his expenditure in a ratio corresponding with the difference between actual and estimated revenue. Apart from the huge expenditure on the fancy schemes of the Government, ordinary administrative charges have not been reduced, although the Civil Service has less work to perform.

The whole of the expenditure has increased since then.

The Treasurer, as we know, will not be lacking in explanation of the finances; but if it is true that a period is fixed to the Government's existence, a consolation to Mr. Scaddan will be that he will escape the difficulties with which the extra-

gances of recent years will soon confront the State.

That was the time when the Country party was fixed up. It was necessary then to see what the "West Australian" thought about July. It wrote as follows:—

The returns of revenue and expenditure which were published in yesterday's "West Australian" are of a piece with what we are accustomed to under the Labour administration. There is a deficit for the month amounting to £133,273 bringing the total deficiency to £1,494,304. It is a financial record of which Mr. Scaddan is not ashamed. He has told us so time and again, after it had become evident that the administration of the Treasury had gotten entirely beyond him. The burden laid upon the new Ministry is a heavy one. It is not of their own making. It is one which was recklessly fabricated over a period of nearly five years, during which time the Opposition implored and preached to deaf ears.

However, there was a redeeming feature.

But the Liberal Government has come into power to restore efficiency and to stop waste, and we expect that indications of its methods will within a reasonable period show themselves in a less disparity between outgoings and incomings.

Hon. P. Collier: That writer was a bad judge. The disparity has been doubled.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The article continues—

The Treasurer and his colleagues are brave men. The task before them is one from which the stoutest might shrink.

I thought I would like to go a little further. The Labour party are out of office, and the brave men of the Liberal Government are in. I turned up 1917, and I found that the deficit for the year, instead of being £340,000, was £699,749. The accumulated deficit was £2,060,714. I thought I would find a leading article on this, but I actually got one on the Chinese upheaval. Then I turned up 1919, and found a deficit of £652,038, and an accumulated deficit of £3,418,553. On this position the "West Australian" commented as follows—

On the whole the figures of aggregate revenue and expenditure justify the belief that were it not for the tram strike and the influenza epidemic the deficit for the year would have been below instead of a little above the estimate. But they are a striking warning that the people of the State have to apply themselves with increased ardour to developing their resources, increasing production, and adding to their number.

It is all very well to read what the newspaper says to-day, until one turns back a year or two in order to be able to decide whether it is correct. I am now going to take as a guide the present Premier. He told us the other night to remember that one-half of the amount represented by each year's deficit is put by as sinking fund and

earns interest. The Labour Government, during their period of office, paid into the sinking fund a sum of £1,264,177. According to the present Premier, that amount represents savings. Consequently, the Labour Government are left with a deficit for their five years of only £96,823. That is not bad when one bears in mind that there were assets in the shape of timber and sleepers cut, and machines made, and goods for sale, equal to nearly £300,000. That was the position achieved by men lacking business acumen and business ability, and not understanding finance, and therefore not fit to run the country, men of whom the "West Australian" said that they were running the country into such a position that it would take men of the stoutest hearts to put things right. The affairs of State were handed over to the gentlemen of business acumen, and they did splendidly. They took office in July of 1916, these men who were going to practice economy, these men who told the public from the platform that economy in administration was essential, these men who pledged themselves to see that the State expenditure came within the State revenue. Here is what they did. They built up in three years a further deficit, additional to that of the Labour party; in three years they built up a deficit twice as large as that built up by the Labour party in six years. "But," says the Premier, "that is all right, because we have placed that money out at interest, and if we had not placed that money to sinking fund we should have no deficit at all."

The Minister for Works: You left your deficit in the pockets of the people.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is the difference between the two parties. But the total amount paid to sinking fund by the present Government is £891,069, leaving a deficit for their term of office, in addition to this amount, of £1,165,931 in three years. Let me ask hon. members, is it not about time that something was done, that some action should be taken to improve the financial position? We are told that taxation is not required. Last year we had about £200,000 less from railway revenue than in the year 1916. Let me tell Ministers that that shortage of £200,000, if made up this year to normal, will be absorbed in additional wages, which will have to be paid. Let no mistake be made about that. The minimum wage fixed by the Arbitration Court to-day is 11s., not 9s. 9d. In Fremantle there are men employed by the Harbour Trust at 11s. per day, and other men doing exactly similar work in the harbour for the State receive only 9s. 9d. Hon. members must understand that 11s. per day is becoming the minimum wage. In the Perth tramways the maximum wage now is 11s.; in future it is going to be 12s. 6d. for motor men. And the railway men will have to go up proportionately; and other workers throughout the State likewise. Something will have to be done to meet those increased charges. The little tramway scheme

in Fremantle is paying £4,000 a year in increased wages. That matter has been fixed up by agreement, a satisfactory arrangement being made on the basis of the tramway wages being paid in Melbourne. It is no use wasting the funds of the worker or those of the Government by going to arbitration when one knows full well what the result will be in view of certain rates being paid elsewhere, below which our Arbitration Court will not fix the minimum. The same thing will apply to Government servants as to private employees.

The Minister for Works: Would you give the same rates as outside to the Government servants plus the privileges?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes; the privileges are in it. It is no laughing matter from the point of view of finance. I trust trade will increase at an early date, that it will be necessary to pay increased wages in order to run the country. The position has been created by the profiteers, as stated by my friend here. The minimum wage of 9s. 9d. per day is no longer possible. Just fancy a man with a wife and four children trying to live on 9s. 9d. per day, paying 12s. 6d. or 14s. per week rent, paying 3s. 6d. per stone for potatoes, paying 30s. for a pair of boots that previously cost £1, paying for everything proportionately higher. A minimum wage of 9s. 9d. to such a man would only mean starvation. The minimum wage must go up. Then we are told that it is necessary for us to have increased borrowing. The Premier has stated that the Federal Government are providing money for the settlement of soldiers on the land. He states that the Federal Government are granting us special privileges in that respect, but the only special privilege I know of—it has been mentioned here on one or two occasions—is that for the first year the Federal Government will pay half the difference between the market rate of interest and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The State has to take all the responsibility. We are told that three millions of Federal money has been put aside for the purposes of settlement of soldiers on the lands of this State, and we are also told that if we do not spend that money one of the other States will get it. Surely if we do not want it, it is better to let the other States have it, more especially in view of the present rate of interest. The last loan the State Government raised cost them over six per cent. It is strange that the Commonwealth Government, through its bank, can lend small road boards money at five per cent., while the State cannot get it at less than six per cent. Only the other day the Minister said that in all probability he would be able to reduce the sinking fund. We all remember that the late Colonial Treasurer said he had tried to do so, but had been advised from England that it would be better not to interfere with existing arrangements. During the next seven years we shall have many millions of loan falling due for payment. I understand that in 1922 over four millions will be due to the

Commonwealth. But, the first loan of any importance will mature in 1927. On this we are paying three per cent. interest and three per cent. sinking fund. The Premier has said that, at the close of the term, we shall have in the sinking fund about £500,000 over and above the amount required for the redemption of that loan. But most of that sinking fund has been invested in Western Australian stock, the greater portion of which is bearing three per cent., $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and four per cent. interest. If money does not cheapen during the next four years, and if it is found necessary to put that stock on the market in order to redeem the loan, it will not be possible to realise anything like the full amount. Our three per cent. stock to-day is as low as £71, and it has been down to £69. The only consolation we have is the hope that before the loan falls due money will be cheaper. I have received a letter from a gentleman in London who appears to be very pessimistic in respect to the prospects of the money market. The Commonwealth's $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan has been placed at £98 in London. How, then, is it possible that we shall realise the £500,000 which the Premier expects to get over and above the loan redemption he referred to? That amount will be wiped out by the decreased price of the stock he will have to put on the market.

The Minister for Works: It is all clearly set out in our returns.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that; but we cannot expect three and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock to be of the same value as $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock. The last loan raised by the Commonwealth cost over six per cent. It behoves the State Government to be very careful in dealing with the sinking fund. It is a crying shame that those holding our stocks should have compelled the State to pay sinking fund during war time. On stocks held by the sinking fund trustees we are paying to ourselves to-day interest and sinking fund of over £400,000 a year. It is not only the trustees who are to blame, although no doubt they are up against it. The advice given to the late Colonial Treasurer last year came from the British Government. They were paying no sinking fund themselves, yet they thought it necessary that we should do so. We are the only State in the Commonwealth that is paying sinking fund. If we could have ceased paying it during the war there would have been no difficulty in respect to our finances. It is all very well for the Press of the Eastern States to decry the financial position of Western Australia. The Eastern States themselves would be in a far worse position than are we if they had provided sinking fund, as we have done. Almost the whole of the sinking fund paid in Australia has been provided by this State. Our contributions represent about six millions of money. According to advice received from London it is necessary that we should be very careful in dealing with this question. It behoves the Colonial Treasurer to exercise the utmost

caution as to what loan he raises. We cannot afford to pay over six per cent. for developmental work. We are in an unfortunate position. I am reminded that when the war first broke out we got money from the Commonwealth—it happens to have been a good thing for the State, because it kept us going—the Commonwealth undertook to come to the assistance of the States. The first thing the Commonwealth did for our assistance was to print a million or two of bank notes and charge us $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for the use of them. We in this State can be quite sure that we are not going to get much assistance from the Commonwealth. The Governor's Speech intimates that in future we shall have to go back to the old system of raising loans. Personally, I think it is a great pity we ever departed from it. The Premier has said that, owing to the splendid sale of wheat made by Mr. Hughes at 5s. 6d., no less than $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions is to be distributed amongst the farmers of Western Australia. I hope the farmers will not take that seriously.

Mr. Maley: We will if we can get it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope the farmers will not seriously expect to get it. I do not believe the farmers will make 8d. per bushel on their wheat this year. There is a possibility of the 1917-18 wheat realising a little, but much depends on the ravages, or absence of ravages, of the weevil. For last year's wheat the farmers received 4s. per bushel. According to a report by Mr. Keys, the manager of the West Australian Wheat Board, it is going to cost the State 5s. 2d. per bushel f.o.b., for every bushel acquired that year. Seeing that they have made arrangements for the storage of ten million bushels, instead of $7\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels, the estimated return may be increased as the result of the reduced harvest. The requirements of the State represent two million bushels of that $7\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels. That two million bushels have been sold at 4s. 9d. and 5s. The position is that if they get every penny of 5s. 6d. in respect of the $7\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels, it will only come to 4d. after exchanges have been accounted for. But it will be necessary to reduce the total by the two million bushels sold at 4s. 9d. and 5s., and consequently I cannot see any possibility of the farmers getting $1\frac{1}{4}$ million pounds, or even a quarter million pounds out of the wheat pool. I see in the Press that a poor harvest is feared in the Eastern States. I hope they are not looking forward to that as a means of raising the price. However that may be, in my opinion, on the present market conditions, there is no possibility of the farmers of Western Australia netting 3d. per bushel.

Mr. Maley: You are too pessimistic.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Not at all. I am basing my opinion on the information placed before the Royal Commission. If the hon. member will look into the question he will find that I am much nearer the mark than is the Premier, who estimates the gross amount at $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds. Why, if the

farmers were to get 1s. a bushel on the last crop, it would represent only an aggregate amount of £375,000. How, then, is it possible for the Premier's estimate to be realised? I hope the farmers will appreciate the fact that it is not possible to get anywhere near the amount stated by the Premier. A good deal of the wheat previously sold has been damaged by weevil.

Mr. Maley: Only two per cent.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is the average, but in some parcels it has been a great deal more. The other day I asked the Premier whether it was true that, on the shed at Fremantle being cleaned up, the tallies showed a shortage of 3,000 bags of flour. The Premier replied no, that the shortage was only 2,300 bags, and that some of the wheat ships had been overloaded. Of course that is merely a supposition. The Premier added that a claim is to be made on the Wheat Commission for the payment of that money when the returns are received from England. When those returns will be received I do not know, but I think we shall have a long time to wait. And, if the flour is found to be short when it reaches England, the Wheat Pool will have to stand the loss. One thing is now certain: we have the admission of the Harbour Trust officials that the shed tallies showed a shortage of 2,300 bags of flour. The farmers will have to stand the loss, if any. The member for Sussex last night dealt with the question of bulk handling of wheat, and because I interjected, he said "It is well known you are always against the farmer." I take that as a compliment, and I want to remark—there is no harm in being egotistical sometimes—that the successful handling this year is the result of the efforts of the Royal Commission of which I was chairman. We looked after the interests of the farmer during the existence of the commission, and we pointed out as far as we possibly could the advantage that would accrue to the farmer if the wheat was handled in a proper manner. The result was that Mr. Baxter, the Honorary Minister, was returned unopposed at the last election and the Western Farmers Ltd. have never since squealed. Everything was wrong before that time; now the farmers are perfectly satisfied. With regard to bulk handling, I notice that the Farmers and Settlers' Association are engaged in conference in Perth at the present time, and as usual—it is only human nature I suppose—they want everything. I would advise those who are interested in bulk handling to pay a visit to the Perth mills and see for themselves the silos which have been erected there. These silos have been constructed of jarrah, and I guarantee that those who inspect them will ask why the Government should be such fools as to engage an American firm to advise them on the question of the erection of silos at a cost of many thousands of pounds. I guarantee that all who see the jarrah silos at the Perth mills will leave with the impression that those who advocate the erection of silos

built of other material are a lot of fools. The silos at the Perth mills cost about £2,000, and their holding capacity is 25,000 bushels. They stand there as solid as a rock.

The Minister for Works: Where are they?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Almost next door to us; too close in fact for hon. members to inspect.

Mr. Maley: How long have they been there?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Two or three years. The money which will be involved in the erection of silos should all be spent here, because the whole of the material required can be obtained locally.

Mr. Pickering: What is the difference in the insurance?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Nothing, or next to nothing. The report of the Royal Commission shows that the insurance of concrete silos cost more than the insurance of wood silos. The engineers, Metcalf & Co., based their estimate on the insurance charges on soft wood in America. They submitted a report to the Government of this State against the use of jarrah because the insurance would be very high. Instead of ascertaining from the Underwriters' Association what the insurance would be, they followed the course I have just mentioned. The report of the Royal Commission shows the exact difference, which amounts to a bagatelle. So far as bulk handling is concerned, it is bound to come; there is nothing to prevent it. But when it does come we must have proper silos erected, and we must use that local material which is suitable.

Mr. Maley: We will have local cement then.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Do not be too sure about that. However, it has been demonstrated that jarrah can be used very successfully in the erection of silos, and I would advise hon. members to take some of their colleagues to the Perth Flour Mills and ask permission to inspect the silos there. I notice in the Governor's Speech that it is not intended to occupy the attention of members very long this session. The Government refer to Bills of importance which are to be introduced, in consequence of the reorganisation of the State owing to the termination of the war, but the titles of those Bills are not given, and neither is there any indication given of their importance. The only Bill referred to which appears to me to be of importance is that which relates to price fixing. I agree it will be a very difficult job to undertake, but there is one thing it will do, and that is it will prevent increased profits being made in this State. I hope that when the Bill is being framed the Government will take good care to see that the persons who have to supply commodities to the people in the State will not pass on their taxation, that they shall be made to bear their full share the same as others. Unless we do that price fixing will not be worth anything. We know of instances where persons who have had to pay the tax

have passed it on. The Bill should prevent that kind of thing. Let us do something which will prevent the robbery which is going on at the present time. I agree with the Premier when he stated that it is a matter for the Federal Parliament to deal with. Because we have to import so much every year it is a very difficult matter to reduce the wholesale price of goods. We can, however, prevent increased profits being made. The leader of the Opposition dealt very fully with the Government's policy of land settlement. I do not, therefore, intend to touch on that. I am one of those who believe that it is necessary that the State should fill up its empty spaces. I believe, and always have believed, since I have been a member of Parliament, in an immigration policy, but in carrying out that policy discretion should be used. No doubt an attempt will be made to send to the State a large number of children. There is no doubt that they will make the best Australians when they grow up, but at the same time we will have to watch carefully that those who send out children provide for their upkeep until those children are able to provide for themselves. There is no difficulty about bringing children here if the organisations responsible for sending them out do not neglect them entirely immediately afterwards. We cannot afford to increase taxation to provide for these young people in addition to our own. Our burdens are heavy enough in regard to the fatherless children. When the last lot of children came here I was at the wharf to meet them. They were a very nice lot of youngsters. An undertaking came with them that they would be maintained by the society in England responsible for sending them out, until they were able to earn their own livelihood. Scarcely twelve months had elapsed before the State was called upon for financial help.

The Minister for Works: Who paid for their transport?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They were allowed £6 a head by the State after they had been here a certain time. A little while later the responsibility for their maintenance was thrown on the State. That is what we will have to guard against in the future. Above all things it is necessary that we should fill our vacant spaces. We are told repeatedly that we should first settle those whom we have here. I am hoping that they will all be settled before immigration begins. We must, however, make provision for that immigration. It cannot be done in a month. Western Australia was never more prosperous in its history than it was in the three years that the Labour Government were in power, and when immigrants were coming here at the rate of 10,000 a year. No one was out of work; it was the population which provided work for each other. The Government may say what they like, but they will have to nationalise industry; they will be forced to do it, I do not care which Government is in power. The building up of State industries will be forced on them by the people of the State. We have boys

amongst us who are growing up and there is nowhere to send them so that they might learn trades. We must have industries, and it will be useless bringing immigrants here unless we can find employment for them.

Mr. Pickering: We want immigrants to go on the land.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All will not go on the land. We shall have to provide employment for boys and girls, and instead of sending money out of the State we can keep it here by teaching our boys the work. I have said before, and it is worth repeating, that when the implement works were started the sum of £69,000 was spent there in wages in the first year. If those works had not been in existence the greater part of that money would have gone to Victoria. Instead of that it was spent in our midst, and the baker, the butcher, and the grocer shared it. It added to the prosperity for the time being. It is necessary that we should have industries of this kind to increase the population, and when private people will not embark on enterprises the State will have to do so. In 1907 the Agricultural Bank Act was amended to provide for the lending of money to permit of the purchase of farming implements made in Western Australia. It was never availed of. There was an attempt to get the bank to pay on implements manufactured in the Eastern States and assembled here. When private people will not undertake these manufactures, the State must do it. We are always playing second fiddle to Victoria and New South Wales.

Mr. Green: And people who have made their money here will not put a "bob" into manufactures.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We shall not have manufacturing industries here unless the State assists them. The State will have to start works to enable children to be trained in employment which they may follow in manhood. Every day we hear the cry—"What shall we do with our boys?" I could get 50 boys to-day—

Mr. O'Loughlen: All your own?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, they are running about the streets and mothers and fathers are asking what they shall do with them.

Mr. Money: It is necessary to live and to first grow our own food.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All cannot be farmers or lawyers. We shall be a long time making headway in providing our own food supplies if people send their bacon to Melbourne as has been done, and have it brought back with a charge of 2d. a lb. added for railage. The Government will find it necessary to launch out upon more industries. The Governor's Speech states that they intend to provide for the reorganisation of our industries. This is required and when we do that, we shall hear less of juvenile depravity, to which the Press has been giving prominence. I hope the Government will assist to open up industries for the welfare of the people of this State.

Mr. DAVIES (Guildford): During the course of the debate, an hon. member sitting opposite said he regarded me as the strongest party man in this House. I think that is true. I regard myself as the strongest party man in the House but I owe no allegiance to any particular party other than the State, and that is how I shall regard myself in future. Reference has been made to my appointment as an Honorary Minister during the recess. I was also charged with the fact that I had not indicted the previous Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy. I did take some action during the recess and was one of those who helped to bring about his downfall. Let hon. members be fair. Since the recess, Sir Henry Lefroy has not met this House as Premier, and it has been impossible for a member to make a statement regarding his attitude towards the previous leader of the Government. I have no hesitation in giving my view of the present Premier, and to say that he did not get my support as the leader of this party. Further than that, it is useless to refer, because I have only one concern, and that is the welfare of the State. The severest indictment of the Government by the leader of the Opposition was in connection with the high cost of living. I will be quite frank and say this problem is exercising the minds of Governments throughout the world. I stand here ready to assist any Government, National, Official Labour, or any other, which can bring about that much desired reform. One is justified in comparing the cost of living here and in the other States of Australia, and the best and fairest method of comparison is to contrast Queensland with this State. My reason for quoting Queensland is that it is the only State which, since the commencement of the war, has been governed by a purely Labour Government. The leader of the Opposition said the Government proposed to deal with the cost of living, but during four years of war had sat idly by and allowed the people to be robbed by unscrupulous profiteers. In the Governor's Speech we find these remarks—

In order to protect consumers against local exploitation, you will be asked to pass legislation giving the Government power whilst abnormal conditions prevail, to regulate the prices of commodities, having regard to the reasonable profits and risks of the producer.

Five days after the Governor's Speech to this Parliament, the Governor's Speech delivered to the Queensland Parliament stated—

As the rescission of the Commonwealth price-fixing regulations has given this species of exploiter larger opportunities, a measure dealing with the whole matter thoroughly and with equality will be submitted.

During the four years of war, not one State made any attempt to bring in a price-fixing measure or take steps against the profiteer.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not correct.

Mr. DAVIES: Which State did?

Hon. P. Collier: Queensland, with regard to meat, for one.

Mr. DAVIES: I will deal with that later on. Mr. Ryan arrived in this State, and he is regarded as the strongest man in the official Labour party to-day.

Mr. Green: In the Australian Labour party. There is no official Labour party.

Mr. DAVIES: My only reason for mentioning Mr. Ryan is that he is the Premier of a purely official Labour party Government.

Mr. Munsie: There is no such party.

Mr. DAVIES: Mr. Ryan on the 9th June, said—

They might be told that the cost of living was higher in Queensland, but that was another misrepresentation. If the Press could publish the figures it would be found that meat was sold in Queensland State butcher shops at about half the price charged in Western Australia.

Do not forget that the workers of Wyndham have been forced to live on meat and sago and have complained of it.

Mr. Munsie: That is not correct.

Mr. DAVIES: Mr. Ryan added—

Soon after his Government took office in Queensland, the cost of living was greatly reduced until the debut of the Federal Win-the-War Government in 1917, when prices were increased again somewhat.

Now let us turn to Knibbs's figures. They are regarded as authentic.

Mr. Troy: Bunkum! Who supplies them?—the storekeepers.

Mr. DAVIES: I think Knibbs was appointed by a Labour Government.

Hon. P. Collier: That has nothing to do with it.

Mr. DAVIES: If a Labour Government appoint a man, it should be evidence that they have the utmost confidence in him. For June last, Knibbs states—

The increase in the cost of food and groceries since the outbreak of war is greatest in Queensland, 60.6 per cent. followed in the order named:—New South Wales, 52.8 per cent.; Victoria, 41.7 per cent.; Tasmania, 41.3 per cent.; Western Australia, 38.7 per cent.

I think the Government have had no more to do with the keeping down of prices in this State than the Queensland Government had to do with the increase of prices in Queensland. Both Governments are simply in office to govern things as they find them and no attempt so far as I know has been made by any Government, other than the Federal Price Fixing Board, to endeavour to keep the price of food within reasonable limits. Many suggestions have been made as to how the cost of living might be reduced. I think there is one way and one only. When I joined what was known as the Socialist Democratic Federation of Great Britain some 25 years ago, the main object of that organisation was to bring the producer and consumer closer together. The socialist party, for some reason, have departed from that and their cry is in another direction. I think

this is the only method by which the cost of living can be reduced.

Mr. Troy: That is why you joined the profiteering party.

Hon. P. Collier: You joined the company of profiteers, anyhow their political society. Every profiteer in this State stands behind your party.

Mr. Troy: Scoundrels!

Mr. DAVIES: I could charge the party opposite with associating with the Bolsheviks of Australia—

Mr. Munsie: I would sooner associate with them.

Mr. DAVIES: It is as well to have that statement on record. I would be quite as fair in charging members opposite with hobnobbing with the Bolsheviks of Australia.

Mr. Jones: Where are they?

Mr. Green: You crawled in and you will be kicked out.

Hon. P. Collier: The men you call Bolsheviks are the men you delighted to be associated with a couple of years ago.

Mr. DAVIES: Let me remind the leader of the Opposition that during his speech the other night, when he charged the Government with holding up the ships at Fremantle rather than pay the men a miserable 1s. 2d. a day, I interjected that they were adopting a similar attitude to that adopted by him when Minister for Railways.

Hon. P. Collier: There is no analogy.

Mr. DAVIES: There is, to my mind, and to the minds of the workers concerned at that time. On that occasion I stood behind the hon. member—

Hon. P. Collier: I did not see you; a long way behind.

Mr. Munsie: Out of shooting distance.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, well out of range.

Mr. DAVIES: When the hon. member went to a union of this State and asked for its support. I was at that particular time a member of the executive.

Hon. P. Collier: Of what union?

Mr. DAVIES: The W.A.G.R.

Hon. P. Collier: In support of what?

Mr. DAVIES: Of the stand the hon. member was taking at the time.

Hon. P. Collier: I never asked any union for support.

Mr. Green: That was before you were kicked out of the railway union.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not ask any union for support during any time I was in office. I want the hon. member to withdraw that remark.

Mr. DAVIES: I say the hon. member did so, and he says he did not. We will let other people judge.

Mr. SPEAKER: The leader of the Opposition has denied the hon. member's statement.

Hon. P. Collier: I want the statement withdrawn that I ever went to a union meeting and asked for support. It is incorrect.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Guildford must withdraw this statement. The hon. member for Boulder has denied it.

Mr. DAVIES: I withdraw the statement.

Mr. Troy: Tell us how the cup was dashed from your lips.

Mr. DAVIES: As one who consistently supported industrial arbitration, I want to be quite frank in this matter. If the Government of the day desire the workers of the State to support arbitration they must amend the Arbitration Act. The last amendment to it was made in 1912 by the Labour Government. The Act was then described as being the best Arbitration Act in the world.

Hon. T. Walker: It was the best Act then in existence. We do not say it was perfect.

Mr. DAVIES: Section 84 Subsection 2 of that Act says—

No minimum rate of wages or other remuneration shall be prescribed which is not sufficient to enable the average worker to whom it applies to live in reasonable comfort, having regard to any domestic obligations to which such average worker would be ordinarily subject.

Mr. Justice Higgins, the President of the Federal Arbitration Court, laid it down when making a basic wage for certain industries that the basic wage should be that which would keep a married man and a wife and three children in comparative comfort. It will be noted that whenever a minimum wage is prescribed, it applies to single men, married men without children, and to men with more than three children and up to seven children. To-day through that basic wage being laid down on that principle the people of the State, who have to rear more than three children, are handicapped. The Government of Western Australia have given the married worker another 1s. a day and have discriminated against the single men. I am not in favour of that method of discriminating against sections of employees. In the hands of certain employers this would become an instrument whereby they might employ only single men to the exclusion of the married men. I think the Government at the time took the best course in giving a war bonus of 1s. per day to married employees. I urge upon the Government, if they desire to assist those workers who are to-day objecting to the Arbitration Court, to do something in the direction of granting financial assistance for children over and above those allowed for by the basic wage. There should be a graduated scale of increases allowed for every child that has to be supported over and above three children. If the Government will do this it will be an encouragement to the people concerned not to restrict their families to one or two or at the most three children. Much has been said regarding immigration. In my opinion the best immigrants, if I may call them so, are those who are born in the State, and we should do our best to encourage that kind of immigrant.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you think an extra 2s. a week would have that effect?

Mr. DAVIES: No. The Government are to-day granting to widows with one child 8s. a week, and when they have to put that

child out to a foster parent they give something like 12s. 6d. If they gave a grant of that description on general lines I think it would be a good thing.

Mr. Chesson: That would be an incentive for employers to take on single instead of married men.

Hon. T. Walker: Assisting the employer all the time.

Mr. DAVIES: What other course could be suggested in place of this? The Arbitration Act could be amended in order that the basic wage might be increased to cover a man, his wife, and six children if necessary. The industry has to carry the wages that are being paid. It is "Bill Bowyangs" who has to bear the burden. If the industry has to carry an increased wage the men employed in it must produce the work so that the industry may be able to pay that wage. In the last award delivered by the Arbitration Court, in the case of the engineers, Mr. Justice Rooth made the minimum wage 11s. a day. When once the Court has laid down a basic wage in excess of what was given previously that basic wage ought to have a common application.

The Minister for Works: You would have all conditions equal?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. The basic wage is the minimum wage. It does not matter what the industry may be, the basic wage is the basic wage in all cases. It is the wage paid to the least competent worker.

Mr. Troy: And the Government take the balance.

Mr. DAVIES: No. The Government should amend the Arbitration Act so that when an increased basic wage is given it is made to apply equally throughout the State. For instance, the labourers in engineering shops will now receive 11s. a day. The labourers in the engineering branch of the workshops of the Government are to-day receiving 10s. 1d. per day in the case of married men, and 9s. 7d. in the case of single men. If the court were given power the basic wage ought to apply equally all round, otherwise there is constituted a premium on strikes.

Mr. Troy: Throughout the States?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. As an agent of a union I have had to wait for 19 months in order to approach the Arbitration Court. From the time when the case was cited until it reached the court a period of 19 months elapsed. The tramway men approached the Government and the Government made the basic wage 10s. 7d. I believe it was previously 9s. 6d. To-day the basic wage in the Government is 9s. 7d.; and the men in the railways have to continue on that wage until they can approach the Arbitration Court.

The Minister for Works: The case is coming on this month.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Could not the Government be a little generous prior to the case coming on, and give the men a living wage?

Mr. DAVIES: The Government ought to amend the Arbitration Act and allow the President to declare, when he has arrived at a basic wage, that it shall be a common

rule, so that the least competent worker in every industry shall receive that basic wage. That is a fair and just proposition.

Mr. Willcock: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. DAVIES: There would be no talk about men going on strike. There is some doubt as to the meaning of a basic wage. It is the lowest wage paid in the State under awards or industrial agreements for unskilled labour. An amendment of the Act in this direction would be one way of getting over the causes of industrial unrest to-day. I should like to refer to the strikes which have occurred recently. So far as the official Labour party is concerned—

Hon. T. Walker: Why do you not say the Australian Labour party? What right have you to christen it by that false appellation? There is nothing officious about it.

Mr. DAVIES: They call themselves that.

Mr. Munsie: They do nothing of the kind.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: One of the leaders in the Eastern States said when referring to the split in the Labour party, "We are the official Labour party." It is from that they have become known as the official Labour party.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You want to suit yourself. It does not matter.

Mr. Munsie: It is a recognition that he is unofficial.

Mr. Jones: We are the working class movement. That is sufficient.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: They repudiated the conscription referendum.

Hon. P. Collier: When?

Mr. DAVIES: First of all when it was submitted to the Federal Parliament by Mr. Hughes on the first occasion. Twenty-three members of the Federal Parliament voted against the submission of this question of conscription to the people.

Mr. Munsie: And you repudiated the decision of the referendum even when it was taken.

Mr. DAVIES: No!

Mr. Munsie: Yes, you did, and you called everyone who disagreed a disloyalist and a pro-German.

Mr. DAVIES: Thirteen members of the House of Representatives and nine of the Senate voted against the submission of that question to the people.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That stuff is horribly old.

Mr. Green: You are doing the dirty work for the bosses as you have always done.

Mr. DAVIES: If it gives hon. members any pleasure to make those remarks let them do so.

Mr. Green: You are doing the scab work as usual.

Mr. DAVIES: The strike just ended on the goldfields was assisted by members of the union known as the A.W.U., which is the largest and most militant organisation in Australia. Members must also admit that this union some time ago took a ballot of its

members as to the method to be adopted in the settlement of strikes. By a majority in every State that large and militant organisation carried a ballot in favour of arbitration over direct action.

Mr. Willcock: Could they get to this court?

Mr. DAVIES: We find to-day that some 500 or 600 men on the goldfields, in face of this resolution of the union, went out on strike instead of submitting the matter to arbitration.

Mr. Lambert: On a point of order, is the hon. member in order in making incorrect statements of that description? As a matter of fact the workers there, as he knows, are not on strike.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. Lambert: The hon. member is telling an untruth.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in accusing any hon. member of telling an untruth.

Mr. Lambert: He is telling an untruth, and I will accuse him of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Coolgardie must withdraw that statement.

Mr. Lambert: I withdraw the statement.

Hon. P. Collier: Does not the hon. member know that union is not registered under our State Act, and therefore cannot approach the Arbitration Court?

Mr. DAVIES: Then why did they take a ballot on the question?

Hon. P. Collier: That was a ballot of the whole union, throughout Australia, but the hon. member has been dealing with the firewood workers' union, and that union is not registered, and cannot be registered, under our State Act.

Mr. DAVIES: Then let us deal with the seamen.

Mr. Munsie: You are shifting your ground again.

Mr. DAVIES: I am now taking a union which may approach the Federal Arbitration Court. The South Australian branch of the seamen's union urged the executive in Melbourne to take a ballot of the members to say whether the seamen would strike or would submit the question to arbitration. What do we find? Mr. Walsh, the general secretary of the seamen's union, replied to South Australia that to take a ballot of the whole of the seamen would cost too much money. That was his only excuse for not consulting the whole of the seamen's union as to whether they would cause this criminal strike that is taking place in Australia to-day.

Mr. Troy: What is criminal?

Mr. Munsie: The attitude of the shipowners is criminal, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: Did the Australian seamen strike against the high profits being made by the Australian shipowners?

Mr. Green: Why did not you do so? You would sooner have a quid a day to speak for Hedges against the workers. That has got you.

Hon. P. Collier: You sold yourself.

Mr. Green: Yes, sold yourself to Hedges for a quid a day.

Mr. DAVIES: I ask the member for Kalgoorlie to withdraw that statement. It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. Green: What statement? That you sold yourself to Hedges for a quid a day? I have proof of it, even if I have to withdraw it in accordance with the rules of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Kalgoorlie must keep order. What is the objection of the member for Guildford?

Mr. DAVIES: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that I received £1 a day for working for Mr. Hedges.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Guildford takes exception to the statement that he received £1 a day for working for Mr. Hedges.

Mr. Green: I withdraw.

Mr. Troy: Why must the hon. member withdraw if he makes a statement that another member received £1 a day?

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. Troy: Why should an hon. member be called upon to withdraw a statement that another member made £1 a day by working for somebody?

Mr. SPEAKER: Because the member concerning whom the statement was made has denied it.

Mr. Troy: The point of order is that the Speaker is not correct in demanding a withdrawal from a member of the statement that another member worked for £1 a day.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the hon. member's point of order?

Mr. Troy: My point of order is that the Standing Orders do not require that an hon. member shall withdraw a statement merely because another hon. member states that the statement is not correct. The statement must be personal, and it must bear an insinuation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! What is the hon. member's point of order?

Mr. Troy: I wish to submit the point. If the member for Guildford feels that there is an insinuation in the statement, that in working for £1 a day for Mr. Hedges there is something contemptible, then he might ask for a withdrawal; but he is not entitled—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member resume his seat?

Mr. Troy: Just a moment, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat? The member for Kalgoorlie interjected that the member for Guildford had sold himself to Hedges for £1 a day. That is the statement objected to, and it is an offensive statement. Hence, I asked for a withdrawal, and the member for Kalgoorlie withdrew. The member for Guildford may

proceed. The interjections must cease, or we cannot carry on the business of the House.

Mr. DAVIES: I was dealing with the seamen's strike, and showing again the correctness of my statement that the Official Labour party have repudiated the referendum. At the last conference held by that party the referendum was again placed on the platform. To-night it has been urged by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that matters should be submitted to the people. All that I ask to-day of the party who pretend to represent the workers of Australia is that they shall first of all submit to the workers in an industry, whether they will go on strike. In this connection I could adduce several instances. We need only refer to the tramway trouble here in Perth. The tramway men's union is registered under the State Arbitration Act. The men decided by ballot to submit their dispute to arbitration. We find that a strike occurred in that industry, and it is pertinent to ask how that strike occurred, seeing that the tramway men had declared by ballot that they would submit the matter to arbitration. If further instances are needed, they can be given.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you believe that workmen should starve on 9s. 7d. a day, waiting for years to get to a court?

Mr. DAVIES: No, I do not.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Can you justify the logic of our local Arbitration Court in giving timber men with eight or nine children a wage of 9s. 7d. a day, and giving women without children here in Perth £2 and upwards per week.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: I have already urged on the Government that when the Arbitration Court lays down an increased basic wage, that basic wage should be made a common rule and should apply to the whole of the workers of this State; or not necessarily throughout the State, because a higher basic wage is given for the goldfields than for the coast. Therefore, there is no point in the interjection of the member for Forrest. I repeat, because it is worth repeating, that if the Government desire to get over the industrial unrest existing to-day, that is one of the methods of doing it.

Mr. Willcock: But this particular union is registered under the Federal Court.

Mr. DAVIES: The Federal court could take the same course. I would urge the same thing if I were in the Federal Parliament. But from the way some members are acting, one would think they did not desire to see the industrial unrest laid.

Opposition Members: Oh!

Mr. Munsie: What is your desire, when you refer to your own class as criminals?

Mr. DAVIES: I said this strike of the seamen was a criminal action.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Never a word against the shipowners.

Mr. Munsie: Every word against your fellow men.

Mr. DAVIES: Did the seamen strike against the profiteers?

Mr. Green: Why did not you?

Mr. DAVIES: Had the seamen struck against the increased freights charged by the shipowners, they would have had the public of Australia with them. However, we find the seamen going out on strike to get a share of the ill-gotten gains of the shipowner.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The British seamen are getting about £2 a month more than the Australian seamen.

Mr. Munsie: And so are the American seamen.

Mr. DAVIES: What wages are the British seamen getting to-day?

Mr. O'Loughlen: I cannot say offhand. However, they are getting more. I have been speaking with five seamen who are receiving the wages.

Mr. DAVIES: Seamen on the American coast are getting more than the British seamen, and that was explained by Mr. Justice Higgins, in the Arbitration Court, as being due to the increased cost of living in America beyond what it is in Australia. Returned soldiers tell us that the cost of commodities is much higher on the Continent and in America than in Australia.

Mr. Munsie: What difference does that make when the seamen are getting their keep?

Mr. O'Loughlen: There were three officers in the House to-night who asserted that clothing and material are cheaper in England than here. I can fetch them.

Mr. Wilson: You can fetch me also.

Mr. DAVIES: I agree entirely with what was stated by Mr. Justice Higgins when he met the seamen, and his words are worth repeating and worth putting on record. Mr. Justice Higgins on the 10th June said the following—

When assured of the power of the court to deal with these matters, they frankly said that they did not believe in arbitration—

That is the reason why, I conclude, members opposite are making the excuse for the firewood workers on the goldfields that they are not able to approach the State Arbitration Court.

Mr. Green: What worries you is that they are up against Hedges, your old boss at a quid a day.

Mr. DAVIES: Let the hon. member be careful. Mr. Justice Higgins said—

When assured of the power of the court to deal with these matters they frankly said they did not believe in arbitration, but believed in direct action. Some of the representatives, however, were strongly in favour of arbitration. The proposal that a plebiscite be taken was at once accepted, even by those opposed to arbitration, on the ground that the majority of the workers had a right to rule.

Mr. Lambert: It was the woodline companies that were on strike, if you want to know.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIES: The report continues—

He promised them that if the ships were manned he would refer the log of the men to the court for arbitration. All those against arbitration managed to induce the branch meeting to resolve that they would have nothing to do with arbitration. The natural result was that those who favoured arbitration abstained from voting.

I also agree with these remarks of Mr. Justice Higgins—

The curious thing was that under the constitution of the union the settlement of disputes by arbitration was the union's policy. This policy was now being ignored.

Mr. Green: Terrible fellows, the workers, are they not?

Mr. DAVIES: The report continues—

At the conference he went so far as to say, as one who might have to arbitrate, that the claims for proper accommodation ought in substance to be granted, and there appeared to be no sound reason why there should not be compensation for sickness, death, or accidents arising in the services.

We have only to turn to the industrial unrest existing throughout the British Empire. To-day we find every reputable leader of the working class in Great Britain decrying the direct-action tactics of some of the workers in Great Britain.

Mr. Lambert: They are not following the advice in Wales, thank God!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. Collier: Did you ever support strikers before you left us?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes.

Mr. Green: Where was arbitration then?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Guildford must address the Chair.

Mr. DAVIES: I have supported strikes in the past, and possibly I would support them again—

Mr. Troy: Possibly!

Mr. DAVIES: If the matter that had to be settled was one that could not be settled by a court of arbitration. Let me remind hon. members opposite that I led a strike in this State when a Government of which the present leader of the Opposition was a member held power.

Hon. P. Collier: You led a strike?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes, and it was successful.

Mr. Green: You dangerous man! You must be a Bolshevik.

Mr. DAVIES: And this notwithstanding the fact that the then Government, a Labour Government, sent word to me at Midland Junction that unless the matter was settled I was to be prosecuted and my books confiscated. At that time the question over which the men were on strike could not be settled by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Green: What was their complaint?

Mr. DAVIES: Having to work with non-unionists in the brick-yards. After seven weeks those men won, and they have never since been asked to work with non-unionists.

Mr. Green: We had exactly the same position at Fremantle, when you were against the men.

Mr. DAVIES: In regard to the industrial unrest that prevails to-day, I think it would be wise if the leaders of the unions were to follow the advice given by the Labour leaders of Great Britain. J. H. Thomas, M.P., secretary to one of the largest unions in Great Britain, recently denounced the direct actionists in Great Britain.

Mr. Wilson: No, he did not.

Mr. DAVIES: I can repeat what he said. Jimmy Sexton, the secretary of the National Transport Workers Union of Great Britain, has also spoken against them.

Mr. Jones: He is another Labour rat.

Mr. DAVIES: Appleton also has spoken against them, and so, too, has Clynes.

Mr. Jones: They are all in the same category as yourself; they are all Labour rats.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not use offensive epithets. The hon. member will withdraw the term "Labour rat."

Mr. Jones: I withdraw.

Mr. DAVIES: Arthur Henderson, who is to-day a member of a party in Great Britain similar to the party sitting opposite, has denounced the direct actionists. I think it only fair to ask the union leaders in Australia to adopt the same attitude as is adopted by those leaders in Great Britain.

Hon. P. Collier: But in the case of the strike in the brickyards you were leading the direct actionists.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is too much direct action in this House. I am afraid it will compel me to take direct action.

Mr. DAVIES: My sole reason for speaking on these lines is that Australia is too good a country to be spoilt by the tactics of certain individuals in Australia to-day. If we desire to see what Australia looks like in the eyes of the outside world, we have only to remember what was said by the members of the French Mission when in Australia. The representative of the French Mission who visited this State was fêted at the Trades Hall.

Mr. Lambert: He was a good democrat.

Mr. DAVIES: He said—

I think that so far as Australia is concerned you have everything at your command, and whatever you desire brought into existence you may do so by the ballot box.

I wish to remind members of that part of the document drafted at the Peace Conference which referred to the Labour charter. Finlayson, a member of the House of Representatives, said that however desirable the Labour charter might be to the rest of the world, it was of no use to the workers of Australia, because they already had got everything it conceded. He declared that it was a wonderful step forward for the rest of the world, yet he admitted that Australia had already got what that charter provided for the remainder of the world. Therefore

I ask that we in Australia may continue on the same lines as we have followed during the past 15 or 20 years; in other words, that we continue to rely on constitutional means of reform. Let me refer to the attitude I propose to adopt during the coming weeks. I will adopt the same attitude this session as I adopted in previous sessions. When the Government bring down something which I believe to be of benefit to the State, I will vote for it; whereas if the Government bring down something which I think will not be of benefit to the State, I will vote against it. When the Taxation Bill was brought down last session it was described by an hon. member opposite as an instrument to rob the workers of the State.

Mr. Munsie: That was perfectly true.

Mr. DAVIES: When the measure finally left this Chamber the leader of the Opposition described it as one of the most equitable forms of taxation ever passed by this Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: Quote the statement.

Mr. DAVIES: This goes to show that when the Government bring down a measure and it is placed before hon. members—

Hon. P. Collier: On a point of order. I do not think the hon. member has quoted me correctly. I deny having said that the Income Tax Bill was the most equitable ever passed by this Chamber, and I ask the hon. member to withdraw the statement.

Mr. DAVIES: I withdraw.

Hon. P. Collier: I said it was an equitable measure, but not that it was the most equitable ever passed here.

Mr. DAVIES: I wish to deal with what some people in Australia regard as a desirable policy, a policy known in some countries as Bolshevism. I have here a copy of the "Westralian Worker" of 4th April, 1919. Under the heading, "Labour and the Bolshevik Revolution," the leading article reads as follows—

The eagerness with which politicians of the Storey type denounce the Russian Bolsheviks emphasises the great power the capitalistic Press exercises over the minds, or rather the emotions, of certain Labour leaders. Let John Storey, leader of the New South Wales Labour party, announce that he stands for the abolition of private property and the means of life, and he will discover that he also is a Bolshevik, equally with Lenin and Trotsky, though he sticks to constitutional means.

Hon. T. Walker: Well, what is wrong with that?

Mr. DAVIES: That is the leading article from the "Worker." Let me again turn to the interview granted by Mr. Ryan on his return from the United Kingdom, and reported on the 10th June, as follows—

A favourite epithet used by the opponents of the Labour party was that of "Bolshevik," though nobody knew what it meant. He did not know just what Bolshevism meant, but their platform was entirely different from that of the Australian Labour party, and the best answer

to such critics was to refer them to the platform of the Australian Labour party. If we look at the platform of the Australian Labour party, and look also at the attitude of the direct actionists, we find that they have repudiated that party.

Hon. P. Collier: But you were the very effective leader of the direct actionists in the brickyards. You have admitted that tonight.

Mr. DAVIES: I wish to remind members of what Colonel John Ward, the Labour leader, has said.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We do not disagree with that. We do not know whether or not it is true.

Mr. DAVIES: If hon. members recollect what was said by Ward, let me remind them that there are in Australia to-day men agitating for the introduction of Soviet government. It was necessary for Mr. Theodore, the Acting Premier of Queensland, to denounce those men the other day, and his remarks are worth quoting. He said—

If the Australian Labour movement desire to save themselves from destruction the best thing they can do is to boot out the I.W.Ws.

Hon. P. Collier: They are all in gaol.

Mr. DAVIES: He added that they should boot out also the Bolsheviks and anyone else who preached violence. Unless that is done, there will be nothing for this country other than to go back to the dark days experienced by the people of the United Kingdom 30 years ago, and that will be to work for a mere pittance, because to-day they are destroying every avenue of employment. It does not matter what is suggested in this State, we find that an agitation is organised and the result is that the industry does not commence operations. Whether it is right or wrong, the charge was made that the Wyndham Freezing Works were to start work a season or two earlier than they actually did, but that that course was prevented on account of the action of some individual. It is said that the same thing occurred with regard to the freezers at Fremantle, the commencement of operations in connection with which was held up.

Hon. P. Collier: Who is the individual?

Mr. DAVIES: The same thing was said to have occurred in connection with the proposal to build ships.

Hon. T. Walker: The Commonwealth cut that out.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The experience of the Commonwealth Government in connection with wooden ships proves that it was a good thing it was cut out.

Mr. DAVIES: If much more of that kind of thing goes on, there will be dark days ahead of Western Australia. Let me now, before concluding, deal with profiteering. So far as I am concerned, I would like to see the coastal shipping of Australia controlled in the future by the Commonwealth Government. They to-day have control of it to an extent, and I trust that that control will be retained. It is said, "Why should

not the Commonwealth Government own the industry?" Let me remind hon. members that for many years nationalisation has been urged in Australia. I do not know that that success which members hope for has attended it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They nationalised everything at the beginning of the war.

Mr. DAVIES: No; they took control. Let us deal for the moment with one of the greatest crises Great Britain was faced with shortly after the termination of the war. I refer to the coal strike. A Royal Commission was appointed to go into the matter, and I understand the report of the Commissioner, Justice Sankey, was in favour of the nationalisation of the mines. Since that time, Mr. Lloyd George has announced that the Government decided to limit the profits in the coal mining industry and he said "We will prescribe them at something like 4 to 6 per cent." On those conditions the men resumed employment with the exception of the Yorkshire miners. I urge that the same thing should take place in Australia, that is, the limitation of profits. It is true that they limit the wages of the worker by means of the Arbitration Court, and I am prepared to support a measure in this House which would have the effect of limiting profits. I can refer to an industry in this State which was nationalised, or partly nationalised, and the Government promised to reduce the product of that industry to the people something like 25 per cent. I believe that announcement was made in all good faith, but it has been proved since that on account of the industry being partly nationalised, it was impossible to carry out the pledge given to the public of this State.

Mr. Munsie: What industry was that?

Mr. DAVIES: And to-day it is hard to get the organised workers of that industry to engage in it if they can get employment in a private yard. They say that the conditions are too exacting there, and the reason for that is owing to the overhead charges, and on account of the fact that the industry is over-capitalised. That seems to me to be the fault of nationalising industries in Australia. I want to remind the House that a change of heart is taking place regarding many of the principles advocated by the Labour party. For instance, during the Albany election the cry went up that they stood for co-operation. Not one word was said regarding the nationalisation of industries. The strangest thing of the lot was that during that campaign there was a member of this House down there urging the return of Mr. Johnson on the score that he was a co-operationist, and that same individual at the State Executive of the Australian Labour party, when the question of co-operation was brought up, moved that the next business be proceeded with.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Who was that?

Mr. DAVIES: I am not blaming the official Labour party for their change of views in that direction. They can see to-day that it is right to depart from the cry of nationalisation and go in for co-operation. They say co-operation will save the working classes and they urge closer co-operation and declare that all will be well.

Mr. Green: Who said that?

Mr. DAVIES: I want to remind the House that where we have co-operation, we will get little or no nationalisation.

Mr. Troy: It is the same thing.

Mr. DAVIES: And where we have nationalisation, we have little or no co-operation.

Mr. Troy: Is it only a question of degree.

Mr. DAVIES: They will say that unionism is co-operation. Of course it is. It is co-operation if the working man in an industry protects his interests in that particular industry. But a section of the workers are urging nationalisation to-day so that those engaged in a particular industry should own it to the exclusion of everyone else.

Mr. Green: That is not preached anywhere in the world.

Mr. DAVIES: It is preached that the workers in an industry should own that industry to the exclusion of the general public. So far as I am concerned, I shall never support that sort of nationalisation.

Mr. Green: Nor will anyone else.

Mr. DAVIES: I do not know that any hon. member can say more than I have said regarding profiteering. I am prepared to support a measure which will have for its object the limiting of profits. If the seamen struck against the enormous profits which have been made by the ship owners in consequence of the iniquitous charges they have imposed on the public of Australia, the seamen would have had the population of Australia behind them.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans): I desire to say a word or two on the Address-in-reply before the debate is brought to a conclusion, and before making any remarks about the Speech of the Governor, I want to deal with some of the statements made by hon. members and particularly the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. That hon. member quoted figures to prove—naturally of course coming from him—that where a Labour Government existed, the cost of living had increased more than in any other State in the Commonwealth where national Governments were in power, and he quoted Knibbs as his authority. The point he and I disagree on is with reference to Knibbs being recognised as an authority on that subject. The Labour movement in Australia—not only Western Australia—and thousands outside it have disagreed with Knibbs for years past; they repudiate his figures. How can the worker in this or in any State accept Knibbs's figures when the prices are wholly and solely supplied by the employers, and the employees have no chance of checking

them? Let me draw attention to just one statement and hon. members will see how far out Knibbs is in his calculations. Quoting the cost of living in Western Australia, Knibbs says that the rent of a four-roomed house in the metropolitan area is 11s. That statement is absolutely incorrect. It is nearer 20s. or 23s. a week.

Mr. Davies: That is not included in what I read. I quoted the prices of food.

Hon. P. Collier: If he is wrong in regard to house rent, he will be wrong in other things.

Mr. MUNSIE: The hon. member said that Knibbs's figures were recognised and accepted by all classes. I want to show that that is not the case and has not been the case for years past. I am not even prepared to accept Knibbs's prices in regard to groceries. He is supplied from Western Australia and from other portions of the Commonwealth with price-lists that are absolutely inaccurate. One cannot buy groceries at the prices mentioned. A very affable gentleman gave evidence in the Arbitration Court to disprove figures submitted by the workers regarding the cost of living in Perth. He was head of a department at Foy & Gibson's, and quoted various items and the prices at which they could be purchased there. Within the next week, a number of ladies of the metropolitan area organised, went to Foy & Gibson's, and demanded items at the prices mentioned, but could not procure them.

Hon. P. Collier: He was just a plain preparator.

Mr. MUNSIE: The goods were not in the shop and were not to be had at the prices quoted. That is the kind of evidence supplied to Mr. Knibbs from which he compiles his statistics which the hon. gentleman says are accepted as accurate. They are not accepted by me and they are not accepted by any section of the Labour movement throughout Australia. It is remarkable that almost every speaker on the Ministerial side has made some apology for the position he occupies to-day. We have them all apologising now. They do not know where they are.

Mr. Troy: They are ashamed of being where they are.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, they are apologising for the position they hold.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not responsible for the Government.

Mr. MUNSIE: It is remarkable, too, that with one exception, every member on the Ministerial side has disclaimed responsibility for placing the present Government where they are.

Hon. P. Collier: The mystery is how they got there.

Mr. MUNSIE: Whenever I have discussed the question with any member on the Government side, I have always been met with the statement—"It was not my vote which put the Premier in office." How did he get there? I am rather curious to know how the Government come to occupy the Ministerial benches.

The Minister for Mines: We are here, anyhow.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not know how the Premier got there, and I cannot find a solitary individual who admits having supported the Premier to gain that position. This is only to be expected. When the Nationalist party came into being in Western Australia it was by intrigue and underhand work—not the slightest doubt.

Hon. P. Collier: It was something to the credit of the present Premier that he stuck to his independence.

Mr. MUNSIE: They came in by intrigue, and an undercurrent was worked to jockey the late Mr. Frank Wilson out and put someone else in. I admit many of them had reasons for wanting to get rid of Mr. Wilson and for wishing to get Sir Henry Lefroy as leader of the party and, therefore, Premier of the State. The reason was that an election was looming in sight, and the people had nothing against Sir Henry Lefroy. They had much against Mr. Wilson; they wished to remove him from the position of Premier, and they did so.

Mr. Troy: Why did not they have anything against Sir Henry Lefroy?

Mr. MUNSIE: He had never done anything good, bad, or indifferent to which they could object. He was just a very affable gentleman. So we continued to the termination of last session. At the close of the session, so far as any member on this side of the House or a considerable number on the Ministerial side were aware, they still had every confidence in Sir Henry Lefroy as their leader. With the exception of the present Premier, almost everyone had absolute confidence in him, and proved it. When the member for Northam moved a no-confidence motion against the Lefroy Government, only two members, apart from the Opposition, supported him. Yet the gentleman who moved the no-confidence motion and for whom nobody on that side of the House had any time, is now their leader. I have nothing against the present Premier, but that is what happened. Sir Henry Lefroy was got rid of during the recess.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Sandbagged at midnight.

Mr. MUNSIE: A bit after midnight, I think. Last session, it did not matter what Bill was before the House or at what hour of the night or day a member on this side rose to speak, we were constantly told from the Ministerial benches, "For Heaven's sake don't criticise; stop this absolutely factious opposition; give us a chance; let's get into recess, and give us an opportunity to show the people what we can do by administration."

The Minister for Works: What an imagination you have got!

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister for Works has said it, not once but fifty times.

The Minister for Works: Then it must have been true.

Mr. MUNSIE: They were going to effect wonderful economies if they only had a chance to get into their offices. The session

ended and ever since, as the leader of the Opposition said, they have been squabbling like Kilkenny cats to see who should get the fruits of office. No member sitting on the Ministerial benches has been one-third of the time in his office.

The Minister for Works: What!

Mr. MUNSIE: They have been squabbling most of the time. While I am speaking now, I hardly know who are the Ministers facing me; almost all the members on the Government side have been Ministers or Honorary Ministers.

Hon. P. Collier: Except the member for East Perth.

Mr. MUNSIE: He says his turn is coming next; I do not know when the next shuffle will be.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for septic tanks.

Mr. MUNSIE: The whole of one side of the cover of "Hansard" is required to show the names of the various Ministers who have held office since Parliament last met. We have had three Governments and one reconstructed Ministry.

The Minister for Works: What you might call "in memoriams."

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, ins and outs.

The Minister for Works: It shows how versatile we are.

Hon. P. Collier: Testing all the material you have.

Mr. MUNSIE: The first intimation I and many people in the State received that there were any signs of disruption in the National Government—

Mr. O'Loughlen: Was when Smith blew the gaff.

Mr. MUNSIE: No, before that, when three Ministers left to attend a conference in the East. While they were away, the leading daily paper started to boost one man as being the strong man and saviour of Western Australia. That newspaper did it day in and day out, and he was not slow to accept their advice. Immediately he set to work giving interviews to the Press. Hardly a day passed without one; in fact it was a contest between the then Attorney General and the acting-Premier to see who would get the most prominence. The then Attorney General was outdone altogether; he did not have a chance with Mr. Colebatch; at the finish he was not even included as a starter. Mr. Colebatch was mentioned every day and was backed up as the strong man because of the attitude he adopted in connection with the influenza epidemic. He did all this while three of his colleagues were in Melbourne. He was undermining them to get the position, and so strong did things become that, when they returned from Melbourne, a meeting of the party was called and we were told by the Press—I am not in the secret of their caucus; I know what occurs when we meet upstairs, but according to them that is a criminal offence—we are told that when the voting took place it was very close indeed. In fact, it showed a majority of one for the

then Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy voting twice to get a majority of one.

The Minister for Works: That is not so.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not know whether it is true or not; that is what was stated in the Press. Presently the Minister for Works may tell us what took place.

Hon. P. Collier: When there is a dead-heat, the only way to decide is by giving one man two votes.

The Minister for Works: On a point of order, I cannot allow the hon. member to insult an absent member. Sir Henry Lefroy did nothing of the sort.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is not an insult.

The Minister for Works: To spread through the country the statement that Sir Henry Lefroy voted twice for himself is an insult. He did nothing of the sort.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not say whether it is true or not. I said it was what I read in the Press.

The Minister for Works: You can put it out of your mind.

Mr. MUNSIE: That is what we were told happened.

Mr. O'Loughlen: As chairman he gave his casting vote.

Mr. MUNSIE: To himself, naturally.

Mr. Robinson: On a point of order, under Standing Order No. 121, no member shall use offensive or unbecoming words to any member of the House. The words which have been used in connection with Sir Henry Lefroy are unbecoming and are offensive to that gentleman as well as being incorrect.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. Robinson: I ask that those words be withdrawn.

Hon. P. Collier: I would like to say—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member may resume his seat. I have no intention of asking the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. MUNSIE: No man in this State, not even the member for Canning, has a higher personal opinion of Sir Henry Lefroy than I have.

Mr. Maley: Why make that remark?

Mr. MUNSIE: I have every respect for him. I believe he is a fine affable gentleman, but that is no recommendation for him as Premier.

The Minister for Works: Why accuse him of an ungentlemanly act?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Not one member on that side of the House belied Smith's statement.

Mr. MUNSIE: Before this debate concludes, I hope some member will tell us what actually took place. We are getting it gradually. I have merely quoted a statement which appeared in the Press.

Mr. Thomson: You tell us what takes place in your meetings.

Mr. MUNSIE: After that had appeared there had to be an election for a Minister in order to fill the vacancy that had occurred. The then Colonial Treasurer (the member for Irwin) had resigned and someone had to be appointed in his place. The member for

Nelson (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott), who was an Honorary Minister, was then appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. O'Lughlen: He was unlucky that night.

Mr. MUNSIE: The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) was also appointed an Honorary Minister.

Mr. Troy: After assailing the member for Moore.

Mr. MUNSIE: I have seen that in the paper. We are told that he did this. Nevertheless, he was elected to the position of Honorary Minister.

Hon. P. Collier: That was the end of the Ministry.

Mr. MUNSIE: The next morning the "West Australian"—this is the maker and unmaker of Governments in Western Australia while the National party is occupying the Treasury benches—came out with a leading article in which it was pointed out that there was only one course open to the Premier, namely, to send in his resignation as leader of the party, and allow someone else to be appointed. The dictum of the "West Australian" was accepted, and the hon. gentleman resigned. Another party meeting was called. We then have the boomed gentleman of the "West Australian" appointed to the position of Premier. I refer to the present Minister for Education. By virtue of his becoming leader of the National party he became Premier of the State. It has been the custom, ever since we have had Responsible Government, for the Premier to hold a seat in the Legislative Assembly. Unfortunately, at the time he was not a member of this Chamber. Whether it is true or not, we are told that was promised distinctly that a seat would be found for him.

Mr. Green: This is where Napoleon came in.

Mr. MUNSIE: In the course of the days that followed, we saw in the Press statements made about gentlemen who were going to resign, and these were followed by denials that they had any intention of resigning. Unfortunately, Providence provided an opportunity for the Premier to obtain a seat in this House, if he so desired. A vacancy occurred in the Albany electorate. Why did the hon. gentleman not accept that opportunity? He said he desired a country seat, and here was a seaport a considerable distance from the capital of this State. This particular seat had been held by a member of his own party, though unfortunately that gentleman died. The Minister for Education did not accept the opportunity. After the disastrous occurrence of that Sunday morning at Fremantle, Mr. Colebatch resigned. The one act of that hon. gentleman, which I am more sorry for than any other, is that he went to the Commercial Travellers' Club, which has always been looked upon as a respectable institution, late on Friday night or on Saturday morning, and delivered an address calling for volunteers to accompany him on Sunday morning to the Fremantle wharf to erect barricades there.

There were 49 members of the institution present at the time, but he only secured 18 volunteers and one of these failed to turn up on the Sunday morning. I am sorry this hon. gentleman saw fit to go to this respectable institution for the purpose of organising seabs, of whom he succeeded in getting only 17. We know what happened at Fremantle. He returned to Perth and put in his resignation. There was no other alternative open to him. Another party meeting was then called, and the present Premier was elected as leader. How he got there is a mystery. I cannot find a single member on the other side of the House who can say that he voted for him.

Mr. Hardwick: He had an overwhelming majority.

Mr. Griffiths: How many have you asked?

Mr. MUNSIE: I should like to say a few words about the Albany election. The newspaper, which is the mouthpiece of the present Government, and particularly that of the Premier, had one cry only during that election. The Minister for Mines is a member of this House to-day by virtue of his advocacy of one policy only. In an interview with the Press he distinctly stated that he only had one plank in his platform, which was that constitutional authority must be maintained.

Mr. Green: Law and order!

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes. That was his cry at the Albany election.

Mr. Troy: That was not the cry that told.

Mr. MUNSIE: I was in Albany at the time.

Mr. Thomson: You were one of the "spruikers."

Mr. O'Lughlen: You were there once and lost your deposit.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am not ashamed of having been there. I am not ashamed of my attitude in the Albany election but I am a little ashamed of the result. The "West Australian" came out with a leader within a day or two after the election was fought and quoted the result as the opinion of the people of Western Australia. It said that the people were behind the Government in their attitude, and were against the attitude of the lumpers on the Fremantle wharf. While it is true the Minister for Mines won his seat at Albany, which is 400 miles from Fremantle, because of this one plank in his platform, we have since had an election for a seat in the Upper House, for which there is a property qualification. The province in question covered the whole area affected by the Fremantle dispute. The same hon. gentleman was down there assisting one of the candidates. This was in Fremantle, where the trouble took place. Although he continued to advocate that the people should stick to law and order, even with the property qualification the candidate who was sticking up for the Labour policy won the seat by a handsome majority for the first time in the history of Western Australia, so far as that Province is concerned. If the "West Australian" had been just it would

have pointed out that the people of Fremantle at least were behind the lumpers in their attitude over the strike, but it failed to mention anything about the matter.

Hon. P. Collier: It was a mere oversight.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. MUNSIE: A good deal depends upon what is meant by maintaining law and order and constituted authority. Members may say that we must adhere to our present Constitution, but they will never have a supporter in me. I want to see the present Constitution of Western Australia altered. It is absolutely unfair, and I am not prepared to give my vote for its continuance. Do my friends opposite believe that a Constitution which provides, in what is supposed to be a democratic country, that about 40,000 people can out-vote, or nullify, the work of 162,000 people, is just? On our Assembly rolls to-day, where every adult man and woman in Western Australia is entitled to have his name, we have 162,000 names. At the other end of this building we have the Legislative Council, and under our Constitution it is provided that this shall be maintained on a property qualification. On the rolls for that Chamber there are 52,000 names. Those 52,000 names, however, do not represent 40,000 people. Some of those persons have six votes, because they have property in six different provinces. Even under our present franchise there are not 40,000 people who are entitled to vote for the Upper House. I never have been in favour of a Constitution of that kind, and trust I never will be. What is the policy of the present Government? The great cry last session was "Let us get into recess so that we may demonstrate what we can do by administration." The Government got into recess and have squabbled amongst themselves ever since. They have never had time to do any administration or effect any economies. They now meet the House after a third attempt with a new Premier, who puts forward practically no policy whatever.

Hon. P. Collier: An optimistic policy.

Mr. MUNSIE: There is no policy outlined in the Governor's Speech. One hon. member has just held up the blank side of that speech and said "That is where the policy is." There is no policy. When challenged in the House the Premier put forward a statement which he says is the policy of the Government. It is the same policy as that held by the National party when returned to power a few years ago. It is, "Produce, produce, produce." There is one great advantage to the party advocating that policy. In five years time they can say they have not had time to materialise that policy, and that it will be beneficial when that time has arrived. The Premier went to Bridgetown. I take it that when speaking as Premier at a public function at a place like Bridgetown, he is outlining the policy of the Government of which he is the head. In that town he predicted the

building of hundreds of miles of railway, to cost a million of money, and he said he was going to survey a million acres of land a year, and that he wanted a million immigrants. In that same speech he referred to the sacrifices made by the Honorary Minister. Before dealing with those sacrifices, however, let me say a word or two regarding the million immigrants and the millions of acres of land mentioned by the Premier. To me it is remarkable that the Premier of this State—who is an optimist when in office and a pessimist when in Opposition—should talk in nothing but millions. The hon. gentleman wants a million immigrants, and he says he has arranged for a thousand immigrants per month, which means 12,000 per year. He is making arrangements to immigrate 12,000 people for the purpose of settling them on our lands within a year. Can any member of this House say that is a reasonable proposition? Is it reasonable in view of the fact that the Premier has just been purchasing 39,000 acres of land for the purpose of settling 214 returned soldiers? Where is the consistency, the reason, of a policy of that kind? Personally, I am opposed to the policy of repurchasing estates, as I said when legislation for compulsory purchase and the measure for soldier settlement were before the House. If the Government do repurchase estates, it should be done by only one method. To me it seems remarkable that the Government have been able to repurchase such large areas of land at what Ministers say are bargain prices, and this without ever having to put into operation their compulsory purchase powers. I am not prepared to believe that the land holders from whom these areas have been repurchased are such philanthropists as to let the Government have the land at less than its value. I trust that when a motion now on the Notice Paper is carried the whole of the papers bearing on this subject will be laid on the Table. I think those papers will prove that the actual capital cost of the repurchased estates, together with the advance to the soldier for the purpose of building a home will amount to a total foredooming the soldier settler to failure.

The Minister for Works Soldier settlement is costing more in the other States than here.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, and there is different land in the other States.

Government Members: No.

Mr. MUNSIE: I was born and reared on a farm. There is one other subject mentioned in the Governor's Speech with which I wish to deal, because it interests me very much. That is the measure to regulate the sale of commodities. Let me be candid and say straight away that I have absolutely no faith in the control of prices of necessary commodities by the present Government, even if a good measure were passed for that purpose. I have no faith in the administration of such a law by the present Ministers in the

interests of the working classes of Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: That is very severe.

Mr. MUNSIE: Personally I do not believe the measure will be what it ought to be, after it has gone through this Chamber. In 1915, when we had a Control of Trade in War Time Act on the statute-book and the measure came up for re-enactment, many members now sitting on the opposite side of the House, including some on the Treasury bench, actually opposed the re-enactment of that law, and it was eventually defeated in another Chamber, at the instance of the present leader of that Chamber, Mr. Colebatch. And now Mr. Colebatch has to turn round and introduce this promised measure. I will go so far as to say that the appearance of a promise of this nature in the Governor's Speech is simply intended as a means of vote catching at the next election. Many hon. members opposite have said that price fixing can do no good, and members of the Government even declare that they are absolutely opposed to any State control of prices, believing that these matters should be left entirely to private enterprise. In my opinion, there are scores of ways in which the Government could do a great deal of good by a price fixing measure. Ministers have asked what chance they have of controlling the prices of necessities of life imported into this State from other States? They have a good chance if they possess the necessary backbone. In order to do anything effective in this respect, they must tackle the importers of Western Australia, and in fact they must become the sole importers of foodstuffs into Western Australia. The Government cannot comprehensively control the prices of imported foodstuffs unless they become the sole importer of them. My belief is that a good deal of the increase in the cost of commodities results from unnecessary handling and from excessive profits made by middlemen. A Government sincerely wanting to reduce the cost of living should step in and do the importing themselves. The Government could do a great deal in connection with the price of meat in Western Australia, but when asked to take action they say "First settle the seamen's strike and let the boats get away to bring down cattle." Had there never been a seamen's strike, had the State boats not been delayed in Fremantle, they could not have made the trip and been back again earlier than a week ago. How much, therefore, has the holding up of those vessels interfered with the price of meat in Western Australia? It has not interfered with it at all, although it will do so in the future. But who is getting the excess profits from the price of meat to-day? Is it the grower? I say that in nine cases out of ten it is not the grower, but the agents, the big firms, who are getting those profits. Weeks ago it was suggested to the present Premier that the Government should take control of the handling of the stock from the pro-

ducer to the abattoirs. But the Government did nothing of the sort, for that would have been against their friends. Recently the "West Australian" published a statement by J. K. Warner, a butcher in a fairly large way in Subiaco, who stated at a meeting of the retail butchers that 75 per cent. of the stock sold in the Midland sale yard was owned by the agent. On the following day two of the agents wrote to the newspaper declaring that they did not own one head of stock. Then Mr. Warner set out to prove his statement. He despatched a number of telegrams to growers in the pastoral and agricultural areas, offering to purchase a thousand sheep at 8½d. per lb. on the hoof. He got the same replies all round, something to this effect, "Sorry, all stock available for market to-day sold weeks ago to the agents at 5½d. per lb." At the very next sale at Midland, as reported in the "West Australian," sheep brought up to 1s. 0½d. per lb. on the hoof, the very sheep that had been purchased at 5½d. by the agents. From this it is easy to see who is getting the profits. The newspaper report went on to say that the lowest price paid that day was 9½d. per lb. Probably that particular mutton was bought at 4½d. per lb. from the grower. Clearly then, the excess profits have been going, not to the grower, but to the agent, the man who does no useful work whatever for the country. Here is an instance where the Government could do something, namely by cutting out that man altogether. It has been said that the State Government can do no good by attempting to regulate prices, that it is a Federal matter. Members of the Country party know that for the season before last the jute merchants of Australia could not, or would not, import the necessary jute goods. The result was that the Commonwealth Government stepped in and imported the whole of the jute goods required. But before giving their order they accepted the estimate prepared by their inspectors as to the probable harvest, and they ordered their bags accordingly. Unfortunately, the crop did not come up to expectations, and in consequence the Federal Government had an enormous quantity, something like 432,000 dozen bags, left over. A citizen of this State, hearing about this over-carry, went to Melbourne and proposed to the Prime Minister that it would be only fair to the farmers of Australia if they were supplied with those bags at the cost price to the Commonwealth. To this the Prime Minister agreed; but as it did not come strictly within his department, he went and consulted the Minister specifically concerned who, in turn, said that it was a fair proposition. The Western Australian merchant left for home with a definite promise that the bags would be distributed in accordance with the requirements of each State at 9s. 8d. per dozen. When he got back he discovered something else. Almost immediately after leaving, a deputation from the jute merchants waited on the same Minister in Melbourne, to put their side of the question. They said they

were importing a large number of bags for the present harvest and if they could not have the distribution of the lot they would not distribute any. The Minister was accommodating enough to hand over the whole lot of them. He gave 432,000 dozen to one firm, Crispen & Co., of Melbourne. That firm obligingly notified the farmers of Australia that they could have the bags at 12s. 6d. a dozen, a difference of 2s. 10d. a dozen. That in itself pans out at £61,200 that the Commonwealth Government by refusing to go on with the control of the jute goods handed over to Crispen & Co., and as a matter of fact on the total quantity of bags the amount of profit that the jute merchants made for next door to nothing was £170,000. There was a beautiful present for them. What do we find takes place when the National Government are attacked in this matter? A question was asked in the Senate in connection with the bags, and one of the reasons as to why they were handed over to the jute merchants is as follows—

The terms and conditions suggested were not very satisfactory.

That is, the terms and conditions from the Farmers and Settlers' Association.

Moreover the conditions under which the sacks were purchased in Calcutta required that they be distributed through the usual trade channel.

That reply is absolutely untrue.

Member: You do not wonder then that they developed into a co-operation.

Mr. MUNSIE: I want to see co-operation, but I do not want to see it come into operation only in the interests of the people for whom my friend is an advocate. Those people came into the co-operative movement for the purpose of getting out the middleman, but they are acting practically as the middlemen themselves to-day. I do not want to see that. The Minister who gave the reply in the Senate was responsible for the distribution of the whole of the bags the year before without consulting the merchants, and he had the audacity to say that the conditions under which they were purchased in Calcutta prohibited the distribution through other than the ordinary trade channel.

Mr. Maley: The jute combine in Calcutta refused to sell to the Commonwealth Government, but they had to sell these bags because they were in Australia. They only got them through the good offices of the Imperial Government.

Mr. MUNSIE: They were here, and I do not care how the Federal Government got them. If the people of Australia are prepared to accept the reply which was given in the Senate they deserve what they get. A good deal has been said with regard to industrial unrest. I honestly believe that while existing conditions prevail we are going to have more industrial unrest. I do not see any other alternative. I believe we are going to get a considerable amount more than we have had up to the present unless the Governments, both State and Federal, are pre-

pared and have backbone enough to take a hand. Let us view the industrial trouble we have had in Western Australia. In every instance when an employee has attempted to meet the employer—they have done it on every occasion—the employer has point blank refused to concede anything until the men have gone out on strike. I challenge contradiction to that statement. Under existing conditions men with wives and families cannot live. Theirs is a mere existence.

The Minister for Works: They cannot live on strikes.

Mr. MUNSIE: They have to do something in order to get better consideration than they are receiving to-day. I quite agree that they cannot live on strikes, but fortunately for the workers of Western Australia they have not all been on strike at the same time, and many of those who have not been forced to take that action have seen that the dependants of those on strike have not wanted. That is the cause of all the industrial unrest. I have heard it said times out of number by Nationalists and people who have always opposed trades unionism and the labour movement, that the cause is the high cost of living.

Mr. Harrison: In part.

Mr. MUNSIE: That wants to be turned clean over, absolutely upside down. The whole of the industrial unrest during the past two or three years in Australia has been caused by the high cost of living. Men have suffered until they cannot suffer any longer. Take the tramway strike in Perth. Did the Government concede anything until the men came out? No; the men had to go on strike before the Government even agreed to consider the position. Take the woodline strike which has lasted seven weeks, and which has proved most disastrous for Western Australia. This has been one of the longest troubles we have ever had on the goldfields. I heard it said that the employers declared that some of the demands made by the men were extortionate, that they were asking something that they knew the companies could not concede. In my opinion they were not asking enough. I am not going to argue the position of the companies and their ability to pay; I argue the right of the worker to live on a decent standard of comfort. Something must be done. The earnings of the firewood workers are known exactly. They pay a check weighman at one end and at the other end a man to supervise the loading. It is known exactly how much wood a man cuts and what his earnings are and, of course, the earnings of the wages men are known. Figuring it out in this way, they asked for the increases and put forward the alternative that they would accept 1916 rates if the company supplied the tools of trade and commodities at the prices ruling in January, 1916. Had the companies paid the increase, instead of accepting the alternative proposal, the men would have been worse off to the amount of £1 1s. 6d. a month, due to the present high

cost of living. No wonder they were prepared to accept the 1916 agreement. As an industrialist and a trade unionist, I am glad this settlement has been made. It is the first instance of a strike in Australia having been settled on the right lines. The time has come when the workers should realise that it is useless to go for increased wages if no control is to be exercised over the prices of the commodities which they have to buy with the wages. This settlement is practically an admission that all those employees on the wood lines have been robbed for the last three years. They are going back regardless of what the profiteer might do in future; for 12 months he cannot affect them. They will still get their commodities on the job at the prices ruling in 1916. I would like to see a few other disputes settled on similar lines, in order to force a reduction in the prices of commodities. There is no necessity for prices to be as high as they are at present. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), in the course of an address recently, said the only possible way out, in his opinion, was that the workers must work harder and do more work.

Mr. Hardwick: He did not say the workers; he said the people—those who are not working.

Mr. MUNSIE: The hon. member is a good apologist for him.

Mr. Hardwick: I heard what he said; he was misquoted in the Press.

Mr. MUNSIE: I would like the hon. member to explain what people he meant should work harder.

Mr. Hardwick: Those who are not producing.

Mr. MUNSIE: If that policy is favoured, how would it be to take a census of all people in the State, from 18 years upwards, to ascertain who are doing useful work and who are not? It would be absolutely astounding to find how many parasites we have in the State—people doing no useful work. If the man doing useful work has to work harder, he has to be paid higher than the man doing less useful work. If I had my way, a man doing non-useful work should receive no pay at all.

Mr. Harrison: Dispense with him altogether.

Mr. Hardwick: Hand him over to the member for Fremantle.

Mr. MUNSIE: Every individual should be employed in doing some useful work.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am pleased to have the endorsement of the Minister. If he is sincere, and can influence the Government to insist on this, they will accomplish considerable good and reduce the cost of living by wiping out dozens, nay thousands, of people who are drawing ten times as much as those engaged in useful work.

The Minister for Works: You draw the list out.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Minister knows dozens of them who could be wiped out completely.

The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies), during the whole course of his speech, did nothing but attack and abuse the working class people of Australia. He did not have one word to say in favour of any member of the community who is of the working class—not from beginning to end. The whole speech was one of absolute abuse. The hon. member said he would deal with the profiteer, but he went on to deal with something else and left the profiteer severely alone. I would not take exception to many members on that side of the House adopting such tactics, but I do take exception to the hon. member resorting to those tactics in the House, and then going outside and saying he is still a member of the working class, and as good a unionist as I am. He is not, and never was.

The Minister for Works: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. MUNSIE: It might be. The time is not far distant when the whole system of government, in fact the whole social system of the world, will be altered. I am sufficiently optimistic to believe, notwithstanding the revolution in Russia, that the working class of Australia will get their rights before the workers of Russia get theirs. I am not altogether with my friend the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones), or with the interpretation placed on his remarks by members sitting opposite.

Mr. Jones: That is more like it.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not think he believes it necessary to take up arms to get what we want.

Mr. Jones: I never advocated such a thing.

Mr. MUNSIE: I have heard men refer to the revolution in Russia and then advocate a revolution in Australia, but I believe the workers can get their rights without that. There is no comparison between the two countries. Had I been a Russian and been obliged to live under the conditions prevailing in Russia, I should have said "Yes, a revolution with arms." There would have been no alternative. For Australia, however, I say, "Yes, a revolution, but without arms." If the workers of Australia would only be true to themselves they could get what they want through the ballot box.

Mr. Troy: Under this Constitution?

Mr. MUNSIE: If they were unanimous in their desires they could alter it within three months.

Mr. Troy: How?

Mr. MUNSIE: The hon. member knows quite well how it could be done. If the people of Western Australia are sincerely desirous of altering the Constitution they can bring that about very quickly. They can demand that it be altered, and it will be done. If my reactionary friends on the opposite benches thought for a moment that the majority of the people was going in a certain direction they would rush to go in that direction also, but as things are they have to be forced there by the people themselves. Hon. members on this side of the House, however, try to lead the people on at a faster

rate than they are now going. Members on the other side have to be shoved by the people before they will do anything. Ever since the Labour party went out of office we have had a Government which has done nothing but talk. We have a Premier now who, if talk is any good, has talked enough to save Western Australia, and who, if he did what he says he is going to do, will put us out of our difficulties by the end of the financial year. When the end of the financial year comes, however, we shall find that what has happened in the past will happen again. Members of the Government say they are the only people who possess the necessary business acumen. As a matter of fact, they have not been as good administrators by half as the Labour Government. They had more revenue, and though they spent less money they went further into debt. They are beginning to admit now that they know nothing about administration. When the Labour Government were in office they were criticised because of the amount of money they spent. They did spend money, but work was being carried on in Western Australia because of that expenditure. The expenditure last year was even more than was the expenditure in the last year of office of the Labour Government, but where are the works going on in Western Australia? There are none.

The Minister for Works: Nonsense.

Mr. MUNSIE: Nothing has been done by the Government. When he sat on this side of the House the Premier was one of the most bitter critics of the Labour Government, and said that the whole of the money borrowed by them and spent on public works had been wasted. At the sitting before last he said that the whole of the money that had been borrowed and spent in Western Australia was a good asset for the State. That shows how his attitude changes when he crosses over to the other side of the House. I hope the Government will make a genuine endeavour to reduce the cost of living. I warn them that if they neglect to do this their political existence will be brief. They will never survive the next election if they fail to effect an improvement. In spite of their talk about the matter I have no faith in their intentions.

On motion by Mr. Robinson debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—SODIUM NITRATE.

Hon. H. STEWART asked the Minister for Education: What restrictions or regulations are in operation or are likely to be brought into operation with reference to the use of sodium nitrate in nitro-glycerine explosives?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied as follows: Regulations are now being framed, and will be gazetted on Friday next, permitting the use of sodium nitrate in mining explosives, provided that the presence of that compound is indicated in the marking on the cases.

QUESTION—EDUCATION, SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCES.

Hon. J. E. DODD asked the Minister for Education: 1, What number of children over the age of 14 years left the State schools in 1917 and 1918? 2, Are any figures available as to the percentage of scholars leaving the Primary Schools who passed into the Technical or Secondary Schools?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied as follows: No statistics are kept which would enable me to answer these questions, but steps are being taken to collect the information.

QUESTION—NATIONALIST WORKERS, ROYAL COMMISSION.

Hon. H. CARSON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Has a Royal Commission been appointed to inquire into the recent Fremantle trouble? 2, If so, who are the gentlemen to act on the commission? 3, What is to be the scope of the commission's inquiry?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied as follows: No. The delay is due to protracted negotiations with the Federal Government, which is jointly concerned with the State Government in the matter. Finality will be reached on the visit, next week, of the Acting Prime Minister.