

to the Federal authorities, and when the hon. member has read that let me ask him what is left for the Parliament of Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Take the Parliament of Western Australia in 1900 and compare it with that of 1918.

Mr. MONEY: The Act to which I refer will show the hon. member those things which have been transferred to the Federal Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We have not sat here quietly if you have at Bunbury.

Mr. MONEY: The legislative enactments in Western Australia have decreased very considerably indeed. Had there been a little more work to do in the House during the past two or three years we might have avoided those scenes which have been so deplorable. It is to the want of serious work that these scenes, which have been so much deplored by the people of Western Australia, may probably be attributed.

The Minister for Works: Let the past be buried.

Mr. MONEY: I have been looking in vain for suggestions for economies. With the advent of Federation I feel that our cost of administration has very considerably increased. To-day we have to bear our share of the cost of the Federal Statistical Department as well as that of our own Statistical Department. We have to bear our share of the cost of the Federal Electoral Department in addition to bearing the cost of our own State Electoral Department. We have to bear the cost of a Federal Taxation Department in our midst, as well as bear the cost of our State Taxation Department. We have to bear the cost of the Federal Savings Bank in addition to the cost of our own State Savings Bank. The time has arrived when some effort should be made to do away with those dual departments. One taxation department should serve the purposes of both State and Commonwealth, and similarly one statistical department and one electoral department. I see from this morning's newspaper that steps are being taken in Victoria to amalgamate the two electoral departments in that State. I am now endeavouring to point out certain matters which seem to have escaped members who have already spoken on the Address-in-reply, and if I can offer suggestions which will help in any way, I will not say to get us out of our financial difficulties, because that will take a long time, but help even a little towards that end, I think it my duty to give those suggestions to the Treasurer.

Hon. P. Collier: Make any suggestions you like, but for Heaven's sake make no attack upon this institution.

Mr. MONEY: We shall be only doing right if we occasionally investigate the position of Parliament itself. If we are sincere to the people of Western Australia we shall not refrain from investigating the cost of every department of the State of Western Australia. It must be admitted that Parliament represents the most important department of the State, and it is only due to it that thorough attention should be paid to it.

Unless we adopt this course, how can we practise economy in every other department, leaving our own alone? From what I have seen I am satisfied that hon. members, although they have indulged in a considerable amount of criticism, have only one interest, and that is the advancement of Western Australia and the benefit of its people. I was glad to hear that an invitation had been extended by the Premier to our friends on the Opposition benches to join hands in the government of Western Australia, to assist in the election of a Ministry to conduct the affairs of State.

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

Mr. MONEY: That invitation, I understand, was extended before the general election.

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

Mr. MONEY: I for my part hope sincerely that the same invitation may be extended again after the election.

Hon. P. Collier: Is that offer still open, Mr. Premier?

Mr. MONEY: I am satisfied that if our Government are really and truly national, their administration will not be that of a section of the people but that of the whole of the people. Our condition to-day is such as to need the united help of all parties in this House, in order to improve matters, instead of continuing the present drift. I feel that to a certain extent my presence in this Chamber is due to the fact that my constituents considered that it would be better, even if the National party returned to power after the election, that the whole of the Ministry should be re-elected.

Mr. Holman: Has not that been done?

Mr. MONEY: It was considered that gentlemen should be appointed to Ministerial positions for their qualifications, and for no other consideration whatever. I would prefer the Premier's invitation to be extended once more. Exceptional circumstances require exceptional remedies, and there is no doubt that to-day our circumstances are most exceptional. Radical wrongs require radical remedies, and therefore I hope that in the future there may be united action in this House for two purposes—the increasing of our wealth by production and by the secondary industries, and also economy in every possible direction, so that our industries may not be hampered by excessive burdens but may be fostered in every way possible in order to improve our position.

Mr. DAVIES (Guildford) [9.37]: I intend to follow the example set by the leader of the Opposition, and not delay the business of the House by speaking at undue length. I am very glad the hon. gentleman has set that example for the benefit of new members. There is only one subject to which I desire to refer particularly on the Address-in-reply; and I somewhat regret, although in another way I am pleased, that it has been mentioned by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money). I recollect well that a few days after the result of the recent State elections were known, the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) gave an interview to the Press, which appeared in the



"West Australian" of the 2nd October and contained the following passage:—

So far as the Official Labour party was concerned, there was no intention of playing the party game; all possible assistance would be given to the Government in the difficult and trying times ahead.

Hon. P. Collier: I have lived up to that so far.

Mr. DAVIES: That is so.

Mr. Munsie: I will engage that the leader of the Opposition did not say exactly that. He would not say "Official Labour party."

Mr. DAVIES: He may have said "The Labour party."

Mr. Munsie: Yes; that is right.

Mr. DAVIES: Every advantage should be taken of that promise of the leader of the Opposition, and I must express my surprise that on the meeting of the National party no invitation was extended to the Opposition to join hands with those returned at the last election to carry on the affairs of the country. I think that, throughout Australia—and this is notable in the Federal arena also—there is an idea of coming together for the purpose of carrying on the affairs of Australia. The differences between the parties in this House do not seem so great that a conference of the heads might not lead to the formulation of some scheme for the elimination of party differences existing to-day. No man was more surprised than myself during the debate on the Wheat Marketing Bill. I received the shock of my life when some hon. members sitting in Opposition to-day rose in the interests of what I term big business in this State. I do not know whether it is owing to my lack of knowledge—I am here to learn—but from the discussion which took place on the Wheat Marketing Bill it appeared to me that certain hon. members opposite were primed by those agents who had lost the wheat handling business through the operations of the Westralian Farmers Ltd.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are wrong. Nobody spoke to me on the subject.

Mr. Holman: You ought to be in the game yourself; then you would know differently.

Mr. DAVIES: It had that appearance to a new member.

Hon. P. Collier: We were primed with the facts.

Mr. DAVIES: By whom?

Hon. P. Collier: That does not matter. The point is that we had the facts.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They were published in the Press.

Mr. DAVIES: To-night we have had a member on this side of the House assuming an attitude exactly similar to that adopted by the Opposition on the previous occasion. That being so, what reason is there for the Opposition opposing the present Government? I think it would not be out of order if the Premier made an offer to the leader of the Opposition to confer and see whether the Opposition cannot accept some part of the responsibility of conducting the affairs of this State for the next three years.

Mr. Green: You know the basis of the movement; you know it will never come to anything.

Mr. DAVIES: I am glad to get that admission from the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green), though it is really a fatal admission for any member recently elected to make. My knowledge of that fact enables me to appreciate the difficulties confronting the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Green: That is my attitude.

Mr. DAVIES: It is not the attitude of the hon. member at all. It is the attitude he is bound to take unless he, and every man sitting with him, is prepared to abandon party tactics to-day. I trust that the invitation to which I have alluded will be extended to the leader of the Opposition, if it has not already been extended to him. There are one or two other matters I desire to touch on. First, let me offer my congratulations to the railway men of this State on the increases granted them by the Arbitration Court award. Undoubtedly arbitration in this State is on its trial at the present juncture.

Hon. P. Collier: And it has proved a failure.

Mr. DAVIES: No; I do not believe that, though I understand a judge has said so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The judge does not know what he is talking about. I believe in Somerville.

Mr. DAVIES: I congratulate the railway men now because some criticism has been levelled at them. At the same time I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to the fact that, notwithstanding this Arbitration Court award, there are to-day in the railway service men working below the poverty line. These men have not had an opportunity of placing their case before the Arbitration Court. The unions who appeared before the court do not cover the entire railway service.

Mr. Lambert: Will you withdraw your support from the Government until they give the railway men a fair deal?

Mr. DAVIES: I am giving the Government my support in order that I may help to get the railwaymen a fair deal. There are to-day in the railway service salaried men in receipt of less than £156 per annum, and some of them are married men. When Mr. Frank Wilson gave the railway men the war bonus, which brought up the minimum wage of the married man to 10s. per day, why was not some appeal made on behalf of railway servants in receipt of annual salaries of £140, £145, and £150?

Mr. O'Loughlen: What about the men in the timber industry with nine and ten children and earning 9s. 7d. per day?

Mr. DAVIES: If the court rules that 9s. 7d. should be the basic wage, must it not be accepted that no man in Government employ should receive less?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Those timber men are in intermittent employment.

Mr. DAVIES: I would make the Arbitration Court available to every man in the State, whether on salary or on wages.

Member: Would you remove the judge from the Arbitration Court and appoint a better qualified man?

Mr. DAVIES: I will not express an opinion on that matter. The Minister for Railways should extend every consideration to the ability there is in the Railway Department. We can-



not expect men to give the best service to the Government unless they are encouraged. It has come to me on the best authority that there are men in charge of stations with a turnover of £30,000 or £40,000 per year who are being paid annual salaries of £160. If that is so, it is time the responsible Minister took heed of those things and rectified them. The repatriation of our returned soldiers and sailors is a very big matter, and it will require all the attention we can give it from both sides of the House so as to complete a scheme which will be satisfactory to the men who have gone to fight for us and have left their wives and children behind. I am glad to know that the Government have not cast iron rules with regard to repatriation, because I believe that as time goes on we will find we shall have to change our methods. Men who have left their homes in the country have brought their families to the City, and then gone to the front. Those people have had a taste of back country life, and is it likely that they will accept any proposal to send them back again? I believe there is land available in and around Perth, say within a distance of 20 or 30 miles from the metropolis, which could repatriate thousands of men. But it will require money to do that, and I do not want to be regarded as in any way parochial when I say that the attention of the Government might well be turned towards the Guildford electorate and the districts surrounding it. I do not think it is right to send men 20 miles from a railway line and 200 or 300 miles from the capital. Advantage should be taken of the offers made to-day by some of our leading men. If our moneyed men in this State prove themselves as good as the aristocrats in England, I shall be prepared to turn round and tell them that they are thoroughbreds. I believe there are many men in this State who, if approached, would be prepared to do what is possible for the repatriation of our soldiers by giving up their estates so that the soldiers might be settled on the land. It is all very well for hon. members to laugh, but I would remind them that all men are not bad. We might find bad employers, but I can speak from experience as a union secretary and declare that I have found employers who have been gentlemen. True, there are others who are brutes, but the same thing will be found on the side of the employees. Men will be found who are prepared to give an employer a fair deal, and we can also find men who will take 10s. out of an industry and will not put 4s. back into it. Because some moneyed men are bad, it does not follow that all are bad. With regard to the State enterprises, it may surprise the House to know that so far as the brick-making industry is concerned, the Minister for Works has asked me to confer with him on the subject of the men employed in it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I suppose you know I once asked you to confer with me when the men at the brickworks cleared out.

Mr. DAVIES: That is absolutely wrong, and I am just the man who can put the hon. member right on that subject.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They cleared out from the works.

Mr. DAVIES: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did.

Mr. DAVIES: I was secretary of the union, and I know that those men did not clear out. It was alleged in the columns of the "Worker" that the hon. member said at Kalgoorlie that those men had put on their coats because they were not given an increase in wages.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They asked for an increase over the Arbitration award.

Mr. DAVIES: I rang up Mr. Munt, the Under Secretary, and asked him if there was any truth in that statement. He replied that he could not say, but so far as the department were concerned it could be taken that those men did not go out because an increase over the Arbitration rate was not given to them. I then wrote and asked if that was the case why the staff were kept intact, were put on a train and sent to another job.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was not the reason for closing down. The men cleared out and the manager had to train a new lot of men.

Mr. DAVIES: That is wrong.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is quite correct.

Mr. DAVIES: So far as the workers in State enterprises are concerned they are not so well off as those who work for private enterprise. What is the reason? When we applied to the Arbitration Court for an increase for those men, amounting in the aggregate to 2s. 6d. per thousand bricks, Mr. Daghish's figures were 2s. 7½d., the brick masters were 3s. 6d., and mine 2s. 6d. I urged that we should split the difference. The men's claim was for 1s. 2d. per day, or 2d. an hour, and the reply was that the brick works could not afford to pay it. A statement was published on behalf of the State brickworks that bricks could be produced at 25s. per thousand.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They were produced at 22s. 6d. per thousand.

Mr. DAVIES: Six months before we went to the Arbitration Court bricks were selling in this State at £2 10s. per thousand, and they were all first class, because bricks were in great demand. Prior to that, there were first and second class bricks and clinkers. We appealed to the court on behalf of the men, whose wages had not been increased since 1911, but the increase was not given owing to the price at which the State was selling bricks. To-day bricks are being sold at 36s. per thousand.

The Minister for Works: Second class.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And for first class bricks 45s. to 50s.

The Minister for Works: Forty-five shillings and 46s.

Mr. DAVIES: Where is that, at the kiln?

The Minister for Works: At the station.

Mr. DAVIES: I am talking about at the kiln. If all the State industries are carried out on such lines, the men will say, "Do not give us any more State enterprises." They will call it State capitalism.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That does not get away from the fact that the men cleared out.

Mr. DAVIES: I will soothe the men on to you.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Never mind, they cleared out and left the job.



Mr. DAVIES: I am prepared to give State enterprises a fair deal, but if they are going to compete with outside employers with big businesses, do not let it be at the expense of the men working in the industries.

Mr. Lambert: Are you in favour of selling the State enterprises?

Mr. DAVIES: I am not.

Mr. Green: The Government are.

Mr. DAVIES: It does not matter. The policy of the Government can be what it likes, and it does not matter what my view would be on the floor of the House. We have been elected as Nationalists, and we have the right of free discussion in Parliament. Hon. members have had an example of it.

Mr. Holman: You did not have a voice in the election of the Ministry.

Mr. DAVIES: I am surprised that when Parliament was re-elected Ministers did not offer themselves for re-election. I thought that before the House met all the Ministers would have submitted themselves for re-election.

Mr. Holman: You were afraid to take action.

Mr. DAVIES: The hon. member does not expect a man who has been in the House for five or ten minutes to take the initiative. I am waiting for guidance. It is gall to me to refer to the member for Boulder as the leader of the Opposition. Opposition to what? To try and put this country on its legs?

Mr. Green: You know better than that.

Mr. DAVIES: I sincerely hope that an effort will be made in this House to bring parties together, just as is being done in the Federal Parliament. The leader of the Opposition stated that so far as the party behind him were concerned they would give the Government a fair deal. If that is the case I will ask the Government, and particularly the Premier, to extend to the leader of the Opposition an invitation to confer with them with a view of at least one member of the Opposition taking part in the government of the State. Are hon. members opposite prepared to consider that if the offer is made?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Was there any party in connection with the election of the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. DAVIES: I cannot tell the hon. member, but I will tell him that I was asked where I was on the night the member for Wagin was elected Chairman of Committees. I was missing on that night because I was taking part at a conscription meeting, the first that was inaugurated in this State. No one was more surprised than I was when I read of the appointment of the member for Wagin. I do not know that I need say anything else. I did intend to speak on other subjects, and take advantage of the opportunity on the Address-in-reply to refer to a number of matters, but I am following the commendable example set by the leader of the Opposition by cutting short my remarks.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy-Moore) [10.10]: I cannot allow the debate to

close without replying to some criticisms from hon. members on this side. It is usual to reply to criticisms from members of the Opposition, but hon. members opposite have been good enough to consider that this is not a time to indulge in unnecessary debate, when there are so many matters of graver importance to be considered. Hon. members are aware that they will have full opportunity for discussion when the Estimates come down, and I understand that members opposite consider that on the return of the Treasurer from the Eastern States a different complexion might possibly be put on certain questions to be brought before the House. Whilst complimenting hon. members opposite, I cannot compliment some of my friends on this side in respect of the criticisms they have levelled against the Government. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), in speaking on the Address-in-reply, almost led one to suppose that he had a brief for some particular section of the community. Members on the Treasury bench have no brief for any particular section. They have but one brief, namely, a brief for Western Australia as a whole, a brief to endeavour to advance the State, to treat all views of hon. members with tolerance and to consider, not one class of the community, but all classes as a whole.

Mr. Holman. It sounds very nice, but you do not do it.

The PREMIER: One might suppose that certain members were returned to the House not to support the interests of the community as a whole, but to support merely the interests of some one section. At this time, when the nation is at war, when the Empire is in the throes of the greatest conflict the world has ever seen, when in consequence we might have thought that matters of national moment would be considered rather than the grievances of certain sections of the community, we have had brought before us grievances which savour, not of the interests of the State, but merely of the interests of one particular section. I would like to deal first with the member for Perth, who confined his remarks principally to the question of finance. Every one agrees with the hon. member that the most difficult position we have to deal with at present, not merely in Western Australia, but throughout the whole of Australia and indeed of the British Dominions, is the question of finance. When hundreds of millions of pounds are being spent in the manufacture of war material and the prosecution of the war in Europe and elsewhere, it is only natural to expect that States which are not directly engaged in the war, or which I might say have the different industries of their peoples to keep moving should feel the financial stringency. We are charged with the existing deficit. Does the member for Perth believe it is possible to reduce that deficit to any material extent at present without upsetting the whole machinery of State, without placing us in such a position that, when the war is ended, instead of our being ready to go ahead and cope with the difficulties we shall have to contend with we shall find the industries of the country