

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Another department.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Without safe scaffolding, there will be danger to the lives of people walking in the streets. This Bill seeks to protect those people just the same as the men working on high buildings. The minimum height to which the Bill applies is 8ft. That point has been combated in another place, but I think the height is reasonable, as cottages are not likely to come under the Bill.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Are cottages exempt?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I did not say that. Eight feet from the horizontal line is the minimum height to which the Bill applies. Some people wanted to make the minimum 4ft. However, the Minister who had charge of the Bill in another place was satisfied that 8ft. represented a fair and reasonable minimum. Beyond 8ft. one needs good and substantial tackle, and it is also necessary that the men who tie the knots and put up the scaffolding shall be experienced in the work. It is very easy to tie a knot that will untie and thus endanger life. Something should be done to see that the men engaged in erecting scaffolding know how to tie knots.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That will necessitate another chief inspector.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Oh, no!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There will be an army of inspectors under the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Bill provides for a chief inspector and other inspectors, and for the right, under reservations, to those inspectors to enter on buildings and inspect scaffolding. It is proposed to charge a fee for the work of inspection. To some slight extent those fees will make building more costly, but certainly not to any material extent. There will be no charge on the Government or on anybody else. The building contractor will make provision for the fees in his tender price.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Ultimately the tenant will pay the fees.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Probably. But I am sure the hon. member will not oppose the Bill, seeing that in the industry in which he is engaged, coal mining, everything possible is done to safeguard life and limb. The hon. member will appreciate the application of that principle to the building trade, and I confidently look to him to support this measure. Seeing that there will be no charge on the Treasury, but that the fees will be charged incidentally, and that the cost of building can in the result be increased but very slightly, I confidently recommend the Bill to the House. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## ADJOURNMENT—ROYAL SHOW.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [6.11]: I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn to this day week.*

My reasons for the motion are that Royal Show day is important in the annals of Western Australia, and that I am loth to ask hon. members to come back on Thursday for an hour, as this would break the continuity of their enjoyment.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 9th October, 1923.*

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

## QUESTION—MIGRANTS, UNEMPLOYMENT AT NARROGIN.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Has any action been taken by his department in regard to unemployed migrants at Narrogin during the past three weeks? 2, Is there a branch of the Labour Bureau at Narrogin? 3, Are the names of all persons looking for work at that branch recorded? 4, If not, will he have this done in future?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. The officer in charge of immigration personally interviewed immigrants who were reported out of employment, and information regarding situations was telegraphed to them by the New Settlers' League. 2, Yes; at the Government Land Agency. 3, Yes. 4, Answered by No. 3.

## QUESTION—WIRE NETTING, FEDERAL ADVANCES.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that an Act has been passed by the Federal Parliament authorising advances for wire netting to a value of £250,000, without interest, and that the advances are to be made through the State Governments? 2, What action has been taken by the Government to secure the advantages of this Act for settlers in this State? 3, When, and where, should applications for fencing material under this Act be lodged?

The PREMIER replied: Yes. 2, The Government have asked for information of amounts available, terms, and conditions, but have not yet received a reply. Full publication will be made as soon as possible.

## ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to Registration of Deeds Amendment Bill.

## MOTION—KENDENUP SETTLEMENT.

*To Inquire by Royal Commission.*

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from 19th September on the following motion by Mr. Hughes:—

*That in the opinion of this House it is in the interests of this State generally, and the settlers in particular, that a Royal Commission be appointed to investigate the affairs and transactions of—*

- 1, *The Kendenup Fruit Packing Company,*
- 2, *The De Garis Kendenup (W.A.) Development Company, Ltd.,*  
*with a view to ascertaining whether there has been any—*

- (a) *misrepresentation or fraudulent misrepresentation to the settlers or debenture holders;*
- (b) *criminal act on the part of any person or persons concerned, and*
- (c) *that the Commission have the power to examine the persons, papers, and banking accounts of all shareholders, employees, agents, and receivers of the said companies, the trustee for the debenture holders, his agents and employees, and such other persons as the Commission may deem advisable.*

### *Point of Order.*

Mr. Johnston: On a point of order, why is business brought forward by a private member, taking precedence over usual Government business generally transacted on Tuesdays? It appears to me that there are matters of greater importance on the Notice Paper.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will deal with his point of order first.

Mr. Johnston: I wish to know why this private motion is to be taken first and Government business later on?

Hon. P. Collier: This is greater in importance.

Mr. Speaker: The House knows that the Premier arranges the business on the Notice Paper. If a private member's motion is the first Order of the Day, I suppose the Premier has taken charge of the motion and he has the right to give the consideration of the motion precedence over Government business. The hon. member would have ground for complaint if the Premier gave precedence to Government business on private member's day.

### *Debate resumed.*

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [4.37]: It may be as well to explain to hon. members that the Government consider an inquiry should be held concerning Kendenup, and that time is the essence of the contract regarding such an inquiry.

Mr. A. Thomson: And about sandalwood, too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not regard the two questions as analogous. The motion before the House is of importance and the position at Kendenup is serious to those who are settled there. The Government feel that it is desirable that an inquiry shall be held and we want that inquiry to be held as quickly as possible, to enable matters affecting Kendenup to be cleared up in the interests of the settlers themselves.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Without committing themselves to the motion tabled by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) and its exact wording, the Government desire to have an inquiry as far as practicable and within our powers, concerning all matters affecting the commencement of operations at Kendenup by Mr. De Garis, and concerning all matters up to the time of the liquidation. There will possibly be other matters arising out of such an inquiry that, I am afraid, cannot be investigated by a Royal Commission appointed by the State Government. Our powers are limited. It is proposed that, in the event of the inquiries made by a Royal Commission, appointed by the State Government, showing that there are other phases beyond the scope of a State inquiry which should receive consideration, we will approach the Federal Government with a suggestion that the inquiry shall be continued in order that it may be completed. We do not for one moment admit that any charge has been proved.

Hon. P. Collier: You neither admit nor deny.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. On the other hand, we admit there is sufficient difficulty in connection with unravelling the tangle into which Kendenup has drifted, that an inquiry cannot do any harm, but should

enlighten the people of Kendenup and investors regarding the position they are in. In these circumstances, the Government propose to agree to the motion, although I suggest to the member for East Perth that he should not bind the inquiry down to specific points. The scope of the inquiry should be framed by the Crown Law Department and the terms of the reference can be shown to the hon. member. We desire the inquiry to be as full and complete as the laws of the State will permit. If the motion is carried as it appears on the Notice Paper, it will limit the inquiry to the particular points referred to. If the hon. member agrees to delete the latter portion of his motion, which will then simply provide for a Royal Commission to investigate the affairs and transactions of the Kendenup Fruit Packing Company and the De Garis Kendenup (W.A.) Development Company Limited, it will be possible for the inquiry to be as thorough as our laws permit.

Mr. Hughes: My object in framing the motion was to avoid any possible restrictions. I will agree to such an inquiry as the Minister suggests.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There will be no restrictions. If the motion reads as I suggest, it will give the Government the right to make the scope of the Commission as thorough and complete as is possible under the State law. In the event of the inquiry not being complete, we are prepared to approach the Federal Government in order to secure the continuation of the inquiry.

Mr. Hughes: I am agreeable to that course being pursued.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot move to amend his own motion.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [4.42]: I move an amendment—

*That all the words after "Ltd." be struck out.*

Mr. Hughes: Will the Commission say whether there has been fraud?

The Minister for Mines: Of course, if that is their opinion.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.43]: I do not like the amendment.

The Minister for Mines: It does not matter then. I do not press for it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not like it, because certain people in this State, acting as agents, were paid sums of money as deposits on the purchase of blocks.

The Minister for Mines: That would come under the inquiry into the "affairs and transactions of the companies."

Hon. M. F. TROY: No, not agents. That aspect would come under an inquiry to ascertain whether there had been "any misrepresentation or fraudulent misrepresentation to the settlers or debenture holders." That portion of the motion is important, because there are some local people who may have made misrepresentations, whether fraudulent or not,

which induced people to invest their money. The second paragraph in the motion would empower the Commission to make an inquiry to ascertain whether there had been "any criminal act on the part of any person or persons concerned." I have in my possession letters from various people, some prospectors, who paid money to agents of the company, and the money cannot be traced. I have made inquiries from a certain firm of auctioneers in this city and have been informed that the money was not paid in, though it was paid to the agents. If the amendment be carried the commission will not have an opportunity to inquire into any fraudulent act by the agents, sub-agents, or any party appointed by the agents of the company. Yet that is a most important phase of the inquiry.

The Minister for Mines: Add another paragraph "and other relative matters."

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am prepared to agree to that.

Hon. T. Walker: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [4.47]: I realise that the Government are anxious to have an exhaustive inquiry, and I am willing to withdraw from my motion any portion that would tend to limit the inquiry. My object was to have an inquiry as exhaustive and unrestricted as possible. I want the commission to be able to say whether there has been any fraudulent or criminal misrepresentation. If the words be deleted it might be possible for the commission to inquire, but to give no decision.

The Minister for Mines: That would be laid down in the commission.

Mr. HUGHES: Is it intended to frame the commission in such a way that a decision on these points will be necessary?

The Minister for Mines: On every point. The commission will inquire under the Royal Commissioners' Powers Act.

Mr. HUGHES: I want the commission to be all-embracing, and I want the commissioner to give a decision.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.50]: The motion would not have been put on to-day's notice paper but for the fact of the Government having decided that a full and responsible inquiry should be held. There are hundreds of people at Kendenup, and they are in a bad way. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) may accept our assurance that the inquiry will not be limited. We propose to have an inquiry to the fullest possible extent to protect the people at Kendenup.

Hon. P. Collier: And also as regards any agents or other persons in any way associated with the business.

The PREMIER: Of course that follows.

Hon. P. Collier: It will depend upon the terms of the commission.

The PREMIER: We want an inquiry to clear up the matter and let the people know just where they stand. The hon. member need have no fear that it will not be a complete inquiry.

Hon. T. Walker: Will you consult the mover of the motion when drawing up the commission?

The PREMIER: We shall have regard to what he said in his motion.

Hon. T. Walker: And special regard to paragraphs (a) and (b).

The Minister for Mines: The Royal Commissioners' Powers Act provides for that. The motion cannot go beyond the Act.

The PREMIER: We shall get all the facts.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.52]: The Minister's object will be met if we include in paragraph (b) the words "and other relative matters."

The Premier: That would be all right.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then we shall know definitely what we are voting for. I move an amendment—

*That after "concerned" the words "and any other relative matters" be inserted.*

The Minister for Mines: Does the hon. member desire to delete paragraph (c)?

Hon. M. F. TROY: No; that merely gives the commission powers.

The Minister for Mines: The motion cannot give the commission powers.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is quite competent to insert the words proposed in paragraph (b).

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I have been assured that the commission will have power to examine papers and bank accounts, but such a thing has not been done in this country.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, by the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Mines: If they have not the power under the Royal Commissioners Powers Act, you cannot give them power by resolution.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is important that this point be not overlooked. The commission should examine pass-books.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.56]: There is no statute setting out that a commission may be appointed. The power to appoint a commission is inherent in the Government. The Royal Commissioners' Powers Act enables a commission to procure the attendances of witnesses. There is a penalty of £100 if any person summoned neglects or fails to appear, or refuses to be sworn or give evidence or answer questions put to him, or produce papers in his custody.

Mr. Wilson: Who inflicts the penalty?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The commission.

Mr. Wilson: The Crown Law Department say no.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Section 3 states that the penalty may be recovered in a summary way before any court of summary jurisdiction by any person authorised by the commission.

Mr. Wilson: The Solicitor General said a commission could not fine a witness.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I recollect that the question cropped up on a commission of which the member for Collie was chairman. A witness, acting on the advice of an eminent legal authority, declined to answer certain questions. The Act, however, seems clear and definite.

Hon. T. Walker: Was not that a case in which Federal law was involved?

Mr. Wilson: No, it was the witness Abrahams who declined to give evidence.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The scope of the inquiry will depend upon the terms of the commission as drawn up by the Executive Council. It is obviously the intention of the House that the inquiry be as complete and comprehensive as possible. That will depend upon the language employed in drawing up the Commission. In doing that it is open to the Government to use any language they like. They can circumscribe the inquiry in any direction they please, or they may make it as wide and as all embracing as possible. In this case I hope, when the Government draw up the Commission, it will be of the widest possible character, so that no avenue of investigation, that may be useful, will be avoided.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [5.2]: The Leader of the Opposition expressed the opinion of the House when he said, as the Premier said before him, that we desire the fullest inquiry into the circumstances of this unfortunate affair. I wish to ask, however, whether by appointing a State Commission we can go as completely into the matter as we would like to do.

The Premier: We can carry on the inquiry as far as possible and then approach the Federal Government.

Capt. CARTER: I understand that there are many matters to be inquired into which will have to be investigated in the other States.

The Minister for Mines: We can ask the Federal Government to take it up at a later stage.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it proposed to strike out paragraph (c)?

Hon. T. WALKER (Kalgoorlie) [5.1]: I move an amendment—

*That Paragraph (c) be struck out.*

Amendment put and passed.

Question, as amended, agreed to.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1923-24.

*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 2nd October; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Department of Mines, Forests, and Police (Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister).

Vote—*Mines Department, £62,822* (partly considered):

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.5]: There is very little, generally speaking, that is new to be said regarding the condition of the mining industry. Unfortunately, for many years past, the story has not been very encouraging. We have to face the fact that the industry which once was in a flourishing condition and contributed to a great extent to the development and prosperity of Western Australia, has for some years now been in a declining state. Since the outbreak of war, and subsequent to the war, mining generally has been particularly hard hit. The industry has not been in the favourable position that other industries have occupied in that it has not been possible to pass on the added cost occasioned by the war, as other industries have been able to do. The result is that there has been a steady and continuous decline. The principal difficulty associated with the industry for a considerable time past has been the excessive costs. Many things have been responsible for this. First of all, there was heavy taxation imposed, particularly by the Commonwealth Government. There was also the new tariff passed two years ago by the Federal Parliament, and this hit the industry very severely. The result has been that the commodities required for the carrying on of mining operations have been largely increased in cost. I do not know what can be done in the matter. A few months ago a deputation from those interested in the industry throughout Australia waited upon the Prime Minister and asked for relief from the burden of taxation. We know that the Prime Minister declined to accede to the request, so that we are left in practically the position we were in before, notwithstanding the fact that in the early years of the war, owing to the prohibition placed by the Commonwealth on the export of gold, the industry in Western Australia suffered to the extent of some millions of pounds. This has been denied by Commonwealth Ministers of the Crown, but with other people in the State I am unable to see how it could be otherwise. We were compelled to sell our gold at pre war rates for some two years or more after the outbreak of war, when we could have obtained a premium equivalent to £2 per ounce. It seems to me there is no escape from the logic of those figures that the State suffered a great loss.

Mr. A. Thomson: We did not have the pull of Scott, Fell & Company.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Or even that of the pastoralists who were successful in inducing the Federal Government to introduce a Bill which allowed them to forego taxation to the

extent of a million and a quarter pounds. Here we have a striking instance of invidious distinctions made by the Commonwealth Government between those engaged in the pastoral industry, and those engaged in the mining industry.

The Minister for Mines: The cases are not quite parallel.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know, but there is a relationship, surely, in the fact that in the later years of the war, permitting the export of gold enabled those engaged in the industry to obtain the then premium. It would have been a fair thing to have allowed that to be done from the commencement. However, there is no redress; the Commonwealth Government do not acknowledge any liability. The fact remains that had the gold producers of Western Australia been permitted to dispose of their gold just as other producers in the Commonwealth were allowed to dispose of their particular products, at least £2,000,000 would have come to Western Australia over and above the sum which was actually obtained. As has been stated, those engaged in mining operations in the Commonwealth were not able to exercise the same pressure on the Commonwealth as those who were fortunate enough to be engaged in the pastoral industry, whose taxes were allowed to remain in abeyance for the past five or six years. If an humble individual failed to pay up his land tax he would have been compelled to meet the obligation, and if he had not done so within the prescribed time, an additional sum by way of penalty would have been added to his total. When it comes to the Midland Railway Company—I am not going to dwell upon this point; I am using it as a means of illustration only—we find that they were permitted to allow their tax to remain in abeyance for a number of years; and eventually, as a result of a deputation to the Prime Minister, the company were not called upon to pay, and so they obtained a permanent reduction. Early this year the pastoralists of Australia secured the advantage of their taxes being allowed to stand in abeyance. The amount in this respect is £1,300,000, and a Bill was introduced in the Federal Parliament to permit of the wiping out of this sum. The measure was not made retrospective, but it was carried through in a manner that will enable the pastoralists of Australia to avoid the payment of Federal land tax in the future. I am sorry that the cold shoulder was turned towards the gold-mining industry by the Federal authorities. It seems that there is to be no relief whatever for it in the matter of heavy taxation; no consideration is to be shown to those that are engaged in gold mining even though, for a number of years, they were prohibited from disposing of their product in the market, and therefore were deprived of a sum amounting, as I have stated, to about two millions sterling. On top of that those engaged in the industry have had a burdensome tariff to carry. It has been the cry of the Federal Parliament

that we must have an effective tariff to enable us to build up our secondary industries. I have been a protectionist for many years, but I do not hesitate to say that in our present Federal tariff we have protection run mad. Duties have been imposed, not for the purpose of enabling industries to be established in this country, but solely for the purpose of raising revenue. If one looks at the receipts from the Customs House, quarter after quarter and year after year, he will get an idea of the extent of the revenue that is derived from this source. If the high duties were to effect the purpose for which it is alleged they are imposed, then, instead of the amount of duties collected through the Customs increasing year by year, it should be diminishing, by reason of industries being established and thus payments through the Customs being reduced or extinguished. Instead, the payments are increasing at an enormous rate. Undoubtedly duties have in many directions been imposed with the result of simply adding to the cost of production, and without in any way assisting to establish manufactures or secondary industries in Australia. Then we have the goldfields. Our mining industry has been hit by the increases in railway freights which took place in Western Australia during recent years. It could not be expected that those engaged in mining would be exempt when rates were being raised, but I do hope that the Government will, as soon as ever the revenue of the State permits it, reconsider the question of railway rates. As I have stated here before, mining is particularly hard hit by reason of the fact that the industry is carried on at such great distances from the seaboard. Kalgoorlie, 400 miles from the coast, is the nearest point at which mining operations are carried on to any considerable extent. To Leonora the distance is 600 miles, and the mileage from the coast to Meekatharra is of similar extent. When one has to carry all one's requisites between 400 and 600 miles, it makes a great difference to the industry as compared with other industries situated, say, 100 or 150 miles from the sea-board. Therefore the Government should do their utmost to revise at the earliest possible date the railway rates so far as they concern the mining industry. With regard to the demands from the goldfields for assistance in the shape of reduced railway rates and reduced water charges, and reductions in other directions, it has been stated—I think it was mentioned in a leading article in the "West Australian" of a few days ago—that the time has arrived when the managements of our mines should turn to themselves and put their own house in order, so to speak. There can be no question that the overhead or managerial expenses of the mines of Kalgoorlie and Boulder, which are all situated in a small group covering a very restricted area, could be reduced by 50 per cent. without efficiency being affected in the slightest degree. It was all very well in days gone by, when each mine was producing in a

large way, employing large numbers of men, and paying big dividends, to have a separate staff, right down from the management, for each company. But that condition of things no longer obtains, and it behoves the directors in the Old Country, if no move is made at this end, to take steps to reduce the overhead charges. Unquestionably there has been mismanagement in connection with some of our principal mines. Take the case of the Boulder Perseverance. There we have a mine which for years employed about 600 men, and in fact did so right up to the date of its closing down. The mine had been carrying on for a long time at a profit of 3d. per ton—for some years, I understand. Eventually that 3d. disappeared, the mine got on the wrong side of the ledger, and was closed down. Immediately afterwards it was let on tribute, and 150 or 200 men engaged in tributing operations with astonishingly good results. In the course of about 18 months they had made scores of thousands of pounds out of a mine closed down as an unpayable proposition. I understand that the tributers obtained £132,000 by way of dividends or profits in the course of the first 15 months, and that they have continued in the same direction since. Now we find something occurring which the Minister for Mines will admit to be rare in the history of mining. It has never before come under my notice that a mine which, after having been worked on a large scale for a considerable number of years—as the Boulder Perseverance was—is found to be unpayable to operate and is handed over to tributers, has gone back to the company stage, and resumed working under wages conditions as previously. But that is what is taking place in the case of the Boulder Perseverance. As the result of the work of the tributers on that mine, the directors in the Old Country have apparently discovered that the mine is a payable proposition. Therefore they have reorganised the mine, beginning by dismissing the whole of the old staff from the manager downwards—a very wise step. Dismissal will not, however, affect the majority of the staff, because they are now very comfortably placed for the rest of their lives, as the result of two or three years' tributing operations. The mine is opening up again on the old basis but under new management, and will, I suppose, employ upwards of 200 wages men. That is a clear proof of mismanagement, to say the very least. The word "mismanagement" puts it very mildly. I dealt with the matter some three years ago in this Chamber, and I do not wish to cover the ground again. I hope that what I said on that occasion reached the ears of the directors in the Old Country. Briefly, the facts were that when the mine closed down, much of it was taken over on tribute by the management—the assayers, the underground bosses, and so on; in fact, all the heads of the mine. They immediately started to operate on ore going as high as 30s., and many of them became independent in the course of a few months.

That kind of thing can fairly be described as barefaced robbery. That it should take place is a bad thing for the mining industry of this State. When such conduct comes to be discovered, as eventually it must be, and as in this case it was, by the directors in the Old Country, the effect is to make those who wish to put money into mining investments very diffident about doing so. It is up to the managements of our various mines, and particularly the mines of Kalgoorlie and Boulder, immediately to set about putting their house in order. Many thousands of pounds, probably scores of thousands of pounds, could be saved annually by some form of amalgamation and re-organisation. I was very pleased indeed to hear the Minister say that he is hopeful of a revival in the old field of Wiluna. I know that district well, having visited it on two or three occasions and made a thorough inspection of the mines. In my opinion there can be no doubt whatever as to the value of the field. The question has always been one of recovery. So far, or up to comparatively recent years, the difficulties of recovery have baffled the most expert mining men we have had in Western Australia.

The Minister for Mines: They can recover the gold, but the cost of recovering is too great.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Exactly. I understand, however, that some influential men in the Old Country, men whose names stand pretty well in Western Australian mining matters, are now considering the question of putting capital into the Wiluna mines. Should they decide to do so, that fact in itself will be evidence that the gold can be recovered from those mines at a profitable rate. Those men are too shrewd to make any speculation upon such a matter at all. They will be thoroughly satisfied that the gold can be recovered profitably, before they put their capital into the proposition. Should they do so, I hope the Minister's indication—he did not pledge himself on the point—that the Government would be prepared to consider favourably the provision of some form of transport facilities for the Wiluna field will materialise. I hope the Government will go on with that idea, because it is a very expensive matter to conduct mining operations on a fairly large scale 120 miles from the railhead, this in its turn being 600 miles from the seaboard. When I was in Wiluna a few years ago, the mines were working in a small way, and they were fairly rich. Still, they had the greatest difficulty in carrying on because of the cost of transport, especially in winter time, when teams or wagons were sometimes bogged for weeks. I happened to go to the place just after heavy winter rains, and no teams had reached Wiluna then for about six weeks. Under those conditions it is almost impossible to carry on mining operations. I see no reason why in those isolated places we should not have railways similar to those operated by the woodline companies. The question of laying down a standard line and operating it by the Railway Department is

impracticable from the financial point of view. But I see no reason why the Government should not favourably consider a proposal to put down a light line, simply to throw the rails on the surface without regard to grades, in the same way as the woodline companies carry on—that is, of course, if the necessary capital is raised for opening up the field. I have been very pleased to observe during the past year or two the very generous measure of assistance given by the Government to prospectors. I think I can safely say that during the past year there have been more prospectors out and more general prospecting done than for several years past. Prospecting is the only hope of the industry for the future. It is inevitable from the very nature of the industry that we should see mines going out of existence year by year; and if no active steps are taken to maintain prospectors in the field, so that new mines may be discovered, it means that we are within measurable distance of the complete extinction of the industry. I do not know what the results of the State-aided prospecting so far have been, but I hope the Minister will not be discouraged if the results prove very small for a year or two. It would be a foolish policy to give generous assistance to prospecting for a year, and then, unless a good mine is discovered, to say, "We have given the matter a fair trial, and nothing has resulted, and we will not go further with it." The wise policy would be to persevere for a year or two. We may not get results this year, or next year; but I believe that if we spend the necessary amount, satisfactory results will accrue. I regret that the Miners' Phthisis Act passed last session has not been proclaimed. The explanation, I understand, is that the laboratory which was to be established by the Federal Government in Kalgoorlie has not yet been brought into existence. I do not know how long we are going to wait for it. It may prove to be like the Forests Products Laboratory, and never eventuate.

The Minister for Mines: Let me say again that Dr. Cumpston is very earnest in the matter, but that Sir George Knibbs is not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We must assume that Federal Ministers take the responsibility, surely, for the doings of both Knibbs and Dr. Cumpston. Personally I am not at all disposed to place the responsibility on Sir George Knibbs for what has been done regarding the Forests Products Laboratory.

Hon. M. F. TROY: He is merely the buffer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. Even if Knibbs has been allowed to take away the Forests Products Laboratory, it means that we have had insincere Federal Ministers, who have been making promises to us from year to year, saying, "That will be all right now, and the laboratory will not be taken away," while meaning nothing of the sort. Some months after those assurances we find steps taken to remove the laboratory, and then another Federal Minister comes along, and we make the same representations to him and are again assured that all is well. Eventually it disappears.

Mr. Mann: One Federal Minister said he endeavoured to prevent its being removed, but that Knibbs over-ride him.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then it is about time the electors said to that Minister, "You are no good to us since, apparently, you are but a rubber stamp." I do not think the Minister said quite what the hon. member would have us believe. What the Minister wished to convey was that he was against its removal, but was over-riden, not by Sir George Knibbs, but by a majority of his own Cabinet.

Mr. Mann: He said it was a million to one chance that Mr. Seaddan and he were right in their opinion, but that there was a chance that Knibbs was right, and so they should give way to him.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If I were reviewing the matter from a party point I should be quite prepared to accept that. I will make a note of it.

Mr. Mann: It was in the Press.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Not only has Sir George Knibbs been able to over-ride his Federal Minister, but also, in conjunction with him, the Minister for Forests in this State.

The Minister for Mines: I deny the soft impeachment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope nothing similar is taking place in relation to the laboratory at Kalgoorlie. At the end of last year or early this year I read that active steps were being taken to establish the laboratory at Kalgoorlie. We had a visit from some Federal officer or other, who made inquiries.

The Minister for Mines: Two doctors came over, Dr. Robertson, who is to be in charge, being one of them. I discussed the matter with Dr. Cumpston, and he showed me the plans he had awaiting the passing of the Estimates. They are now negotiating for the purchase of a suitable building in order to establish the laboratory at once.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope the Minister will keep on reminding them of it. However, I do not think it was necessary that the Minister should await the establishment of that institution before proclaiming the Act.

The Minister for Mines: The Act could not operate without the laboratory.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Oh yes, it could. If our Act provided for dealing with miners' complaints, phthisis, silicosis and other ailments, it would be necessary to have a laboratory; but since the Act deals only with those who are affected with tuberculosis, the laboratory is not necessary, for any doctor, especially Dr. Mitchell, would be able to decide whether or not a man was suffering from tuberculosis.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister will not contend that our mining fraternity are unable to decide when a man is affected by tuberculosis.

The Minister for Mines: I am only giving you the statement made to me by doctors and mine managers. Under the existing

regulations mine managers are not permitted to employ underground men suffering from tuberculosis. But the mine managers say they cannot tell when a man is tubercular.

Mr. Chesson: Can it not be shown by the sputum?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I admit that it is more difficult for a doctor to diagnose tuberculosis in a phthisical patient than in a patient whose lungs are free from dust. The difficulty is to determine whether the patient's condition is due to phthisis or to tuberculosis. Even so, I should say a tubercular patient quickly reaches a stage at which any qualified medical man could correctly diagnose.

The Minister for Mines: Without a laboratory test a tubercular patient could carry on for a long time.

Mr. Chesson: But you could detect his condition by a test of the sputum.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course, tuberculosis often supervenes on phthisis.

The Minister for Mines: And we want to get out of the mines any man carrying even the smallest tubercle.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course a doctor might not be able to differentiate in the earlier stages, but once the phthisical patient contracts tuberculosis his condition soon becomes evident. I see no reason why there should be any undue delay in the establishment of the laboratory. If the Federal Government have finally decided, and if the money is provided on the Estimates, I hope the project will be finalised pretty soon. The installation of the necessary apparatus will not take very much time, and so it should be pushed on with. Then we shall not only have the advantage of the laboratory to reveal the tubercular patients, but I understand there will be careful periodical examinations in order that we may attain greater knowledge of the progress of miners' phthisis.

The Minister for Mines: A complete survey is proposed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have read that the Minister, a few days ago, said he was considering the sending of one of our inspectors to South Africa to study ventilation and sanitation of mines. I hope the Minister will go on with that proposal.

The Minister for Mines: It has been decided upon.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am glad to hear it.

The Minister for Mines: I have given a South African company authority to attach our inspector to their staff for three months.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am very pleased to hear it. He will be able to study, not only sanitation and ventilation, but mining conditions generally. Apparently we are 20 years behind South Africa in dealing with tubercular patients. I hope the inspector will be despatched at the earliest possible moment. Of course he will have to remain there for a little time.

The Minister for Mines: Dr. Mitchell advises that he be attached for three months.



Hon. P. COLLIER: It must result in benefit to the State. Many of our old mines have been carried on in such a way that it will be very difficult at this stage to make alterations in their ventilation. However, nothing but good can result from the inspector's visit to South Africa.

Mr. HERON (Mt. Leonora) [5.40]: At the outset, like other members on this side, I wish to thank the officials of the Mines Department for kindness and consideration invariably extended to me. I was pleased to hear the Minister say the other night that he was assisting me to prevail on the Premier to take a party to the goldfields on the occasion of the opening of the new battery at the Sons of Gwalia mine. I have been criticised for stating in the House that a percentage of members and even of Ministers, do not know the conditions of the outer mining areas. The projected visit will afford them all an opportunity to see for themselves the existing conditions and difficulties. Long ago, when it was expected that the mine would reopen in June, the Premier promised me to come along. I was also glad to hear the Minister say that in all probability he would consider the reduction of railway charges. Our railway freights may not be excessive from the point of view of the Railway Department, but from the mining point of view both freights and fares are excessive. If the Minister, who as it chances controls both Mines and Railways, could bring about a reduction of railway freights, we should certainly have a revival of mining in the back country. Having regard, first to the railway freights, and secondly to the cost of transport by road beyond the railway, it is seen how difficult is the position of those carrying on the mining industry. One of the directors of the Gwalia Mine told me that the life and death of the mine depended on the costs. He explained that the mine might be worked for four or five years, or it might be carried on for 14 years, according to whether the present costs were maintained or reduced. And we all know that the railway freights are an important factor in mining costs. Of course the director with whom I was speaking mentioned wages as one of the factors. But it is impossible at present to reduce wages in outback mining districts, if only by reason of the high cost of living, largely contributed to by excessive railway charges. If a man in Lawlers wants a case of fruit, he has to be prepared to pay up to 22s. 6d. for it. I know the railway freight on fruit has been reduced to 1s. 6d. per case, but when the case leaves the railway at Leonora it has to be taken on by motor car. I give the Minister credit for the introduction of the flat railway rate on fruit. The cost per case should not now be so high as it was a little time ago, but I assure the Minister that the people of Lawlers have paid up to 22s. 6d. for a case of apples.

The Minister for Mines: We have no control over the charges beyond the railway.

Mr. HERON: No, I admit that. I give the department every credit for the reduction made. How can we expect those who are living there to put up with a reduction in wages when they have to pay such a high price for necessary commodities? People at Linden are paying 2s. 3d. a lb. for bacon, 3s. 6d. a stone for potatoes, and about 2s. 6d. a dozen for eggs, all of which have to be carted 55 miles from the rail head. The Minister has given a rebate on the freight on fruit, but if it were possible to reduce the freight on other necessary commodities as well as on mining requisites, I think all these districts would have a long life. The shows are mostly of low grade. None was ever worked on high grade ore. The Gwalia mine is of low grade, as is also the Lancefield mine. If a reduction in freight could be given, the Lancefield mine would be working again. The Mt. Morgans mine is another low grade proposition. There are 35 men employed on it to-day, but if freights were reduced that number would be increased. The Minister can imagine what the mining requisites for the Linden mine would cost by the time they had been carted 55 miles from the rail head. I met some of the Melbourne directors of that mine. They were satisfied with the prospects, and were prepared to recommend to the shareholders that more money should be spent in developing the mine. The Government should do all they can to enable costs to be reduced, so that these mines might continue working. This might mean a loss to the railways, but it would be in the interests of the State. It should not be the policy of the Government to force the Commissioner to endeavour to make the railways pay when industries are in a developmental stage. The Commissioner is criticised by the public, who say what he should do and what he should not do, and he has the Minister over him. This policy is wrong, and we should do whatever is possible to assist the mines or any other industry where long distances have to be travelled. There are big firms in the city which hardly ever use the railways. These should be obliged to pay for the upkeep of the railways, so that people in the back country may not be starved on account of the high freights. I am pleased to know the Minister has been instrumental in effecting a reduction in the cost of water for mines in and around Kalgoorlie. A letter was sent from the road board to the Minister through me asking for a reduction in the cost of water for the Leonora district. When the principal mine was closed down, the rate went up from 2s. to 3s. This constitutes an extra burden upon the people. The mine that was burnt was paying the Government £5,500 a year for water. When the fire occurred it ceased taking water, and there was a loss on the scheme. I was fortunate, in introducing a deputation from my district, to secure a reduction to 2s. 6d.,

but the price is still 6d. more than it was before the fire. This is another handicap to the people as well as to the mines. The Minister for Water Supply should reduce the rate back to what it was before. The mine will probably be in full swing in two months. With reduced railway freights, and reduced charges for water, the mines in the district should be able to continue working. I was glad to hear the Minister refer to the Wiluna district. If it is opened up, it will mean more men travelling backwards and forwards through the area, and there will be afforded more opportunity for other districts along the route to be opened up. If people find the necessary capital to develop the district, the Government cannot refuse to put in a railway, even if it be only a light one. Such a line could be built from the rail head at Leonora. There is a point at which the rail head is nearer to Wiluna than from Leonora, but undoubtedly the starting off point that is best suited to the district is Leonora. From that point every twenty or 30 miles of country has been worked and is being worked. There are many deep low-grade shows along there. If railway facilities were given, these would be worked at a profit. The line would also bring the stock route 200 miles nearer the rail head, and open up the country from the pastoral point of view. If costs were reduced the big mines that have closed down would start operations again. I am pleased to hear that money is available for the Wiluna district if the mines can find a cheaper way of treating their ore. There are many mines in the district that are waiting for a suitable opportunity to commence work again. There is a lot of auriferous country in the district. The Auckland mine is a low-grade proposition about eight miles from Leonora. Then we come to the old Diorite district, where there is a party of prospectors who have been doing well. If they had cheaper facilities for the transport of their ore, they could work on a bigger scale. At the Bannockburn, there is another big body of ore. Those who are working there have recently opened up a lease with good results. Just now the prospectors have lost the rich chute, and it does not pay them to work the ore they are now on and cart it 40 miles to a battery. They are looking for something that will give better returns. If a line were built through the district it would be possible to crush low grade ore that at present it does not pay to treat. Lawlers is also handicapped by high costs. During the war a number of prospectors left the district, and those who have gone back have not done as well as they did before the war. The people mainly responsible for keeping the district going are the Branson Bros. and the Langford and Finch party. Five or six years ago there was no battery in the district, but Branson Bros. of the Queen mine put up a five-head battery. The Hampton Daisy Company used the battery for a time, but encountered difficulties, and

work was stopped. A party of men could make the show pay where a company could not do so because of the expense. There are many cases where parties could make a profit out of a show, but a company could not do so. Branson Bros. then erected another five-head battery on the Great Eastern mine. They are now crushing stone there, and also taking ore for prospectors. Some eight miles away there is the Wahronga mine owned at one time by Bewick Moreing & Co. It was closed down because it did not pay to work. Finch, his son, and Langford took over the mine a few years ago and have been successful on the higher levels. When the costs became too high they only treated the sands. Some 12 months ago they unwatered the mine, and are now working on the 600ft. level. They have opened up a body of ore 12ft. wide going from 14 dwts. to 16 dwts. to the ton. They are handicapped because they have to cart mining requisites 100 miles by road. Some 22 miles further on there is Mt. Sir Samuel, which is another big district. Many shows have been worked there that proved the gold to be in the district. There is one big lode which crushed well for a number of years, but as costs went up it proved too expensive for a company to work. There is plenty of room for development there if costs could be reduced. Some nine miles further on is the Kathleen Valley. This show was worked for a number of years. Curry is working there now with good results. He is treating the sands and working the mine with a small party of men, but if costs could be reduced he could work on a bigger scale. On each side of this line of auriferous country the pastoralists are busy fencing for the purpose of replacing cattle and sheep. A few days ago I was in the district and was informed that 13,000 or 14,000 sheep were coming overland to be put into the Lawlers, Leonora, and Kookynie districts. That is another reason why I am glad to hear that the Premier intends to go through that part of the State. Despite the dry season, the pastoral industry is progressing. If they went there hon. members would see that pastoralists are increasing their flocks and fencing in larger areas, despite the fact that they have passed through one of the driest seasons ever experienced. That shows what the pastoralists think of the land and its carrying capacity. One of the big leases there has just been taken over by the Robinson brothers and they have fenced the property south and west half way to Menzies. The pastoral companies' lease has changed hands at Lawlers within the last month or two, and the new company is spending £20,000 on developing the holding as sheer country. Although the mining industry is quiet, the district is by no means down and out, as some people seem to think. It would be of advantage to hon. members if they accompanied the Premier on his promised trip. The position regarding the Linden State battery has given rise to complaints in that locality, because those interested in mining

there do not know what are the intentions of the Government. It has been stated that the Government intend to shift the State battery elsewhere.

The Minister for Mines: We are accused of closing the battery. It is merely closed, because the prospectors are not producing ore for treatment.

Mr. HERON: That is because they are uncertain as to what will happen, and they are not producing because they do not know whether the battery is to be shifted.

The Minister for Mines: They should get busy; the battery cannot crush air.

Mr. HERON: The uncertainty as to the intentions of the Government resulted in operations ceasing, and naturally no ore was available for the battery.

The Minister for Mines: There is no proposal to remove the battery. It is closed because there is no ore to be crushed.

Mr. HERON: The people concerned will be pleased to have that assurance. Mining operations have been carried on in the face of great difficulties. If there were a reduction in railway freights, I am satisfied the Linden mine would be working in a very short time. One of the owners of the mine told me that they contemplated making another start. Should a reduction in railway freights be granted, enabling operations to be carried on more cheaply, quite a number of mines will be producing in that district. At Yarri there is the Bedrock mine owned by Mr. Dance. Good results are being obtained from that mine even under present day conditions. There are other new lodes, work on which has been hung up owing to litigation. It is hoped that these also will prove valuable propositions. Wherever I went in the back country, the feeling seemed to be that the heavy railway freights, which had made the cost of living and the price of mining requisites higher, had hampered the industry. It is pleasing, therefore, to hear the Minister say that it may be possible to reduce railway freights and that he will go into the matter. I trust the Minister will look into the water supply question as it affects the mining industry at Leonora.

The Minister for Mines: The district is entitled to consideration when the mines work again. There is a heavy loss.

Mr. HERON: I know there is a heavy loss, but I do not think it fair for the Minister in charge of water supplies to put up the water charges and thus create an extra burden to be borne by people who were only holding on, pending the starting of the mine. I hope a reduction in the charges will be made.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [6.7]: There are one or two matters to which I desire to refer. Regarding water supplies, I appreciate the difficulties under which the department is labouring in supplying water in the outlying districts. The schemes were costly at the outset and, in some instances, the demands have fallen off to a considerable degree. Notwithstanding that fact, I appeal to the Minister

to assist any low grade shows being operated to-day. I know—I can speak for my own electorate in particular—that such shows are labouring under grave disabilities indeed. Much relief will be afforded if a reduction in water charges be agreed to. Some 18 months ago, when the Minister visited my electorate, he was good enough to assist one mine, but there are others respecting which Government assistance has not been forthcoming, although such assistance is fully warranted. It appears to me that the trouble is not on account of lack of sympathy, but of lack of co-ordination between the Mines Department and the Water Supply Department. The two departments are controlled by different Ministers, and while one Minister may appreciate the difficulties from a mining point of view, I am afraid the Minister in charge of water supplies looks upon a mining proposal as a business proposition only. We have the Mines Department agreeing that it is essential that assistance shall be given in order that a show may be effectively worked, but that attitude is nullified by the action of the Minister controlling water supplies and the charges levied for water. Recently action was taken to secure for the central goldfields a considerable reduction in the price of water. I hope something definite will be done to assist other mining centres. As I mentioned by way of interjection, there is at least one mine within 20 miles of Southern Cross where not less than 10s. per 1,000 gallons is paid for water. Those supplies are pumped for another 100 miles to Kalgoorlie and sold at a smaller sum for gardening purposes. I believe the growing of vegetables by worn-out or phthisical miners should be encouraged, but that encouragement should also extend to the miners working in other centres. I know that that is the position with this particular mine.

The Minister for Mines: Not now.

Mr. CORBOY: The position must have been altered within the last fortnight.

The Minister for Mines: The reduced charges will operate as from the 1st July, but they cannot operate yet because the vote has not been passed.

Mr. CORBOY: I am pleased to know that a radical alteration will take place. There is one astonishing feature connected with the attitude of the Water Supply Department in that they charge heavily if rich stone is obtained from a mine. Apparently the attitude of the department is that if one or two rich crushings are obtained from a mine, those concerned should be required to pay a higher rate.

Mr. Harrison: That is not a new attitude.

Mr. CORBOY: It may not be new, but it is unjust.

Mr. Harrison: I concur.

Mr. CORBOY: I hope the Water Supply Department will adopt a more sympathetic attitude regarding mining operations, which are being hampered now.

Mr. Harrison: Westonia has suffered considerably.

Mr. CORBOY: I believe that is so. As to men suffering from miners' phthisis, I was pleased to hear that the Minister has definitely decided to send an officer to South Africa for three months to inquire into the conditions there. If, by the end of that period, the officer is not thoroughly conversant with what is done in South Africa, the Government should not hesitate to extend the time allowed the officer. I do not wish to go into details regarding what was told to us at a conference we had with Dr. Sayers and Dr. Pritchford. I was never more astounded in my life than I was at statements made to us on that occasion. It revealed to me that we, who claim to be so progressive regarding our industrial legislation—with some justice we claimed a few years ago that we led the world in that direction—have really lagged behind in the protection of our workers from occupational diseases and accidents. It was really deplorable to hear of the conditions operating in the Commonwealth and the necessity for following up discoveries made in other countries regarding remedial measures to be applied. The Minister referred to the difficulty experienced in diagnosing miner's phthisis. I gathered from the discussion with Drs. Sayers and Pritchford that material assistance in the diagnosis was rendered by X-ray plates. I understand that men employed in the mines are regularly photographed with the X-ray. The Minister for Mines: They are photographed periodically.

Mr. CORBOY: That is what I understand.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. CORBOY: Before tea I was saying I understood from the remarks of Doctors Sayers and Pritchford that the modern X-ray forms the essential part of the equipment for diagnosing miner's complaint. I earnestly appeal to the Minister and to the Government to consider very fully the advisability of immediately spending the money necessary to equip our goldfields with this apparatus. The opinions of those two medical gentlemen on miner's complaint are worth having, and I hope the visit will be productive of a sufficient effort on the part of the Government to enable a proper check to be imposed on the disease. I wish to refer to what has become with me a hardy annual, namely the Ravenshorpe Smelter case. Members will express astonishment when I tell them the Government have not yet honoured the decision of the court.

Mr. Johnston: Although 8 per cent. interest is going on all the time!

The Minister for Mines: We will pay as soon as the thing is fixed.

Mr. CORBOY: It is all very well for the Minister to say that. He is largely responsible.

The Minister for Mines: It has nothing to do with me!

Mr. CORBOY: That is the official attitude. The Minister for Mines says the case is in

the law courts, while the Minister for Justice says it is for the Mines Department to take action.

The Minister for Mines: It is in the hands of the Crown Law Department.

Hon. P. Collier: If it be there much longer it will cost £1,000 in interest.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister himself, in his own words has confirmed exactly what I say. He contends it is for the Crown Law Department to move, whereas the Minister for Justice says he cannot take the responsibility, that if the Mines Department have done wrong, it is the responsibility of the Minister for Mines.

The Minister for Mines: The thing is in the law courts.

Mr. CORBOY: It is not. The Privy Council would not even give you leave to appeal.

Mr. Marshall: The department won all the way up to that point.

Hon. P. Collier: They lost all the way up to that point.

Mr. CORBOY: I admit that the Minister for Mines was not there when the wrong was done.

The Minister for Mines: Then why worry me about it?

Mr. CORBOY: Because the Minister, as Minister, is responsible, and has to shoulder his job properly. The Minister apparently would accept office merely to deal with what occurs while he is in office; for anything that happened prior to his taking over, he would not accept responsibility. In point of fact, the Minister's influence in Cabinet is sufficient to secure a settlement if he wished it.

The Minister for Mines: You flatter me.

Mr. CORBOY: Possibly I have an exaggerated estimate of the Minister's ability. If so, it is because the field in which he got his training should warrant such an estimate.

Hon. P. Collier: He has slipped a bit, but he is not too bad even now.

Mr. CORBOY: You, Mr. Stubbs, are aware of the position in Ravenshorpe, and know something of the difficulties confronting the people there. For the past two years they have been suffering very severely as the result of the way in which they were treated by the State smelters. Let me briefly review the history of the case. It was taken through the Supreme Court, where the verdict went against the Government. Subsequently it was reviewed by the High Court of Australia where, despite a slight amendment of the judgement in the Supreme Court, the ultimate result was not affected, owing to an undertaking given by the Government. The High Court upheld the decision in respect of the facts, although they ruled that certain of the earlier campaigns were out of court because of the Crown Suits Act. An application by the Government for leave to appeal against the finding of the High Court was disallowed by the Privy Council who, after going thoroughly into the case, came to the conclusion that the Government had no ground on which to appeal. Approximately

that was 12 months ago, yet to-day the people of Ravensthorpe have not got a settlement. In my opinion the reason for that has been the intervention, not of the Crown Law authorities, but of Mines Department officials. So I say the Minister is responsible.

The Minister for Mines: I do not admit that.

Mr. CORBOY: There are reasonable grounds for assuming it. The Crown Law authorities lose the case in court. For them that is the finish of it. It becomes necessary to pay out a certain sum of money.

The Minister for Mines: On the basis of the judgment.

Mr. CORBOY: Once the Crown Law authorities have lost the case, it matters not a rap to them. Why should they persist? It is inconceivable that they would persist in any action that would have the effect of delaying settlement. Whether settlement is being delayed at the direction of Cabinet, or because certain officials of the Mines Department are using the Crown Law in an endeavour to get out of the mess they have got themselves into, I do not know. Since the Privy Council refused the Government leave to appeal, every possible legal impediment has been placed in the way of settlement.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think you are right.

Mr. CORBOY: I appealed to the Minister and to the Premier last year to go into this case for themselves. I told them they were throwing money away in going to the Privy Council. Nevertheless they persisted in piling up further costs.

The Minister for Mines: You would not expect us to accept your opinion on legal matters before that of the Crown Law Department?

Mr. CORBOY: No, I am only a layman.

Hon. P. Collier: I would accept the view of any sensible layman in preference to that of the Crown Law Department.

Mr. CORBOY: I am not satisfied that the decision to appeal to the Privy Council was the untrammelled decision of the Crown Law Department. It is significant that a select one or two of the legal fraternity seem to have been getting all the plums worth having from the Government tree during the last two or three years, and it is possible that their opinion had something to do with the Government's decision to appeal.

The Minister for Mines: Why don't the legal representatives of your friends see what action they can take?

Mr. CORBOY: They have done so. After the hearing by the Privy Council they appealed to the judge of the Supreme Court for an interpretation of the Supreme Court decision. The judge gave them that interpretation. The department have put up the contention that they cannot pay out because the decision was so framed that they do not know to whom they have to pay the money. In a way that, I claim, is almost dishonour-

able, the Government have delayed settlement of this question. They were ordered by the court to render an account based on certain charges, which they were permitted by the court to levy, but which were considerably less than the charges they levied when making up the accounts previously. The department, in submitting their accounts for acceptance, framed them in a way that they knew would not be acceptable to the court or to the plaintiffs.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think you are entitled to say that.

Mr. CORBOY: I do say it; it was done repeatedly with the deliberate object of holding up settlement. It is impossible to conceive any other reason; the action of the department was so illogical. The position in Ravensthorpe was that both gold and copper had been produced. When it came to dividing up the money, the bulk of it was due to the copper men. The copper realisation costs were written up to an extent that enabled the Government smelter at Ravensthorpe to recover its losses. The costs on gold could not be tampered with materially. In making advances to the producers of gold, the amount advanced approximated the net receipts from gold, but the copper producers got an advance considerably less than the amount realised for their product and, of the balance, a considerable portion was taken from them afterwards by writing up their realisation costs. The department made out their accounts in such a way that the gold producers would receive many thousands of pounds that rightly belonged to the copper producers. They submitted the accounts to the court on that basis. The court, after hearing the views of the plaintiffs, rightly rejected the accounts as being improper, and sent them back to the department to be made up properly. That happened not once, but many times; on each occasion the department sent up accounts compiled in a similar way and altered in some trifling respect; and these were thrown out. This went on for months. There is only one conclusion at which one can arrive, namely, that the department was deliberately putting up accounts in a way they knew was wrong in order to gain time before settling the case. After this had happened repeatedly, the Master of the court apparently became sick of it, and advised the plaintiffs to accept the accounts and appeal to the judge in chambers for a ruling. The plaintiffs accepted the accounts, although they knew they were still wrong. The judge gave a decision that was quite clear. Any sensible accountant could make up the accounts quite easily from the department's books. The judge laid down definitely what proportion of the money available was to go to copper and what proportion to gold. Although judges do not usually make mistakes, or become involved in grammar, His Honour, in this case, repeated at the end of his judgment something he had stated at the beginning, but used slightly different language. The department seized on this slight difference to again plead

that they did not know how to make up the accounts. This was nothing but a subterfuge to delay settlement. I can only hope I am wrong in expressing this opinion, but if I am wrong, I should like the Minister to give a feasible explanation of the methods adopted by the Crown Law and Mines Departments to delay settlement as they have done. The only feasible explanation is that the delay is deliberate. I do not know to whose interest it would be to delay the settlement. If the Government are short of money and cannot find the requisite amount, why do they not say so and make a proper arrangement? I pointed out last year the department had claimed all along that the case involved a sum of £30,000. I said the amount was just over £50,000, and the Minister said I was wrong. I am satisfied I was right. The amount involved is not £30,000, but only £55,000. In applying for leave to appeal to the Privy Council, the Government put up the following contentions: firstly, that the judgment was wrong, and that the Government should be given a verdict on appeal; secondly, that there were two sums that might, by different methods, be involved, one in which the plaintiffs were claiming £30,000, and an alternative in which they said that even if the case went against them they should not be mulcted in £30,000, but in only £50,000. The alternative proposal is the one we have all along contended was the correct one. Even recently the plaintiffs have offered the Government to immediately settle the whole business on the £50,000 basis — the alternative the Government put up to the Privy Council. It is time some direction was given to the departmental officials that they should cease frittering away the taxpayers' money in legal costs and should settle the business as they know it should and must be settled. It is nonsense for them to plead they do not know how to make up the accounts. Even a layman of average common sense could quite easily see how the accounts should be made up. I am satisfied that the officers of the Mines Department, with the expert training they have had in this work, would experience no difficulty whatever in arriving at a proper and equitable conclusion. An injustice has been perpetrated long enough; it is time something definite was done. If the case drags on much longer, I am afraid the legal costs incurred by the Government will exceed even the amount of the verdict they consider so large. Though the opinion I expressed last year carried no weight with the Minister, surely the decision of the Privy Council should convince him there is something radically wrong on the Government side. I appeal to him to personally investigate the matter thoroughly and effect a settlement. As Minister, it is his duty to do this. It is useless for him to talk about it being the responsibility of the Crown Law Department. It is equally the responsibility of his department. A settlement would have been effected months ago had the Crown Law officials been the only ones concerned. I am convinced it is the

officials of the Mines Department—if it is not the Cabinet, and the Minister says it is not—that have succeeded in delaying settlement so long. There is one other matter to which I wish to refer. Members may have noticed the small paragraph in this evening's paper regarding a discovery of oil in Yilgarn. I hope that the discovery is right, and that we are not going to have a repetition of some of the so-called oil finds that have been reported from other parts of the State. At present the North-West is altogether out in the cold.

Mr. Clydesdale: Is this the right oil?

Mr. CORBOY: The information I have goes a long way to convince me that the discoverers of this oil are on the track of something worth while. Yesterday the chairman and two members of the Yilgarn Road Board went out from Southern Cross and personally took a sample from the bore. These gentlemen were quite independent of those who discovered the field. They brought the sample to Southern Cross last night, and one of the leading townsmen conveyed it to me. I have it here, and any member may examine it.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What does it taste like?

Mr. CORBOY: I have not tasted it, but it is not like the stuff some members are used to tasting.

The Minister for Mines: It is not fusel oil?

Mr. CORBOY: No.

The Minister for Works: There have been no complaints regarding Perth water for a long time.

Mr. CORBOY: The sample certainly looks like some of the water the Minister was supplying last year.

The Minister for Works: That is adulterated water.

Mr. CORBOY: I took the sample to the Government Analyst's Department and Dr. Simpson, after examining it, assured me he regarded it as the genuine mineral oil.

The Minister for Works: It looks like lubricating oil.

Mr. CORBOY: It is not the sort of lubricant one would care to drink.

Mr. Marshall: It is not horse dope, I suppose?

Mr. CORBOY: No, it would be useless to give it to the hon. member. Dr. Simpson made it clear that he was not committing himself in any way. He pointed out that this sample had not been officially taken by officers of his department, and that he could not vouch for anything that was not an official sample. Knowing the chairman of the road board who went out and got it and the gentlemen who accompanied him, I am convinced it is a genuine sample.

Mr. Teesdale: You do not remember the gentleman who put down the bore previously. I remember the Trans-line.

Mr. CORBOY: I know the hon. member has had some unfortunate experiences with various propositions he has tried to assist, but I hope both the oil found in Yilgarn and the concerns in which the member for

Roebourne is interested will prove equally successful. I cannot vouch for the genuineness of the bore. There are circumstances which it is unnecessary to relate here but which go a long way towards convincing me that there is every likelihood of the find being genuine.

Mr. Teesdale: We all hope it is so.

Mr. CORBOY: I am hopeful that the value of the find will be confirmed by official investigation. I am pleased to know the Minister has acted quickly in sending a field officer yesterday to make investigations. Mr. Wilson will obtain official samples from the bore and will be able to confirm, or otherwise, the reports.

Mr. Teesdale: We will be there the next day.

Mr. Lutey: What is the good? The ground is all taken up.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not care to whom the ground belongs so long as the oil is there. I say good luck to the man who finds genuine oil. The find is about a mile and a half off the old Menzies-road and 35 miles from Southern Cross. The road has not been used for many years and is largely overgrown with bush. The chairman of the road board, who traversed the road yesterday, sent word to me that it was in good order, and that the road board was prepared to clear the growth away for the full distance if the Works Department would give the local authority a grant of £50. If the official of the Mines Department reports that the find is a genuine one, I hope the Minister will make this grant to enable the road board to clear the track.

The Minister for Works: Is that not a Mines Department affair?

Mr. CORBOY: We may have to ask the Minister for Mines if the Minister for Works will not assist.

The Minister for Mines: You had better start on me. You have a better chance than with the Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: I think it is a matter for the Mines Development Vote.

Mr. CORBOY: If the official report is favourable, as I trust it will be, I hope there will be no difficulty about getting this paltry £50.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [8.5]: I regret I was not in the House when the Minister for Mines introduced this vote; neither have I had an opportunity of reading his speech.

The Minister for Mines: But I suppose you will criticise it?

Hon. M. F. TROY: No. I am going to speak of those things within my knowledge, and judge the department upon its administration during the past year, and from the position of the industry as it is administered by the department, upon which it depends so much for sympathetic treatment. The mining industry is in a parlous position. Regret is expressed from time to time at the decrease in the gold production, and at the number

of men employed in the industry as compared with a few years ago.

Mr. Teesdale: Are not things a little better than they were last year?

Hon. M. F. TROY: No; the gold production fell off last year.

Mr. Teesdale: But there is more development.

Hon. M. F. TROY: This is particularly apparent in the back country. Were it not for the Golden Mile, with its rather sensational mining belt, the production of gold in Western Australia would be small. In the back country the number of those who live and work in the industry in its primal stages is diminishing, and the industry there is in a bad way. There is evidence of a revival in some parts of the State, such as in Yalgoo. The possibilities there are very hopeful for the next year or two. The Minister for Mines spoke about the future of the Lake Way district. Nothing much can be accomplished there until the railway has been built. It is one of the most promising fields in the Commonwealth. Not only would a railway open up the mining possibilities there, but it would open up large areas of splendid pastoral country. Some 12 months ago the Railway Royal Commission recommended the pulling up of the Sandstone line. That would be a reactionary step. I could not understand any Government pulling up that line, which has been instrumental in opening up so much grazing as well as mining country. Instead of being pulled up it should be continued, if the country is to progress. I do not urge the construction of a line to Wiluna from Sandstone, but I hope one will be built from the best centre. Our industries cannot be developed except by the provision of railway communication. If the suggested line does not assist the mining industry, as we hope, it will be of benefit to the sheep and cattle raising industry. One of the obstacles to the expansion of the mining industry is the heavy taxation. I do not refer exclusively to the income and dividends taxation. In reply to a question I asked the Premier, he said that the sum paid by the mining industry on these two accounts last year was £20,000. I do not say this is a large sum to obtain from the industry. I refer more particularly to the heavy customs duties, to the heavy cost of machinery, and mining requisites used in the production of gold, and to the high railway freights. Mining has rapidly diminished since the beginning of the war, particularly since the heavy imposts on mining requisites placed upon the industry by the Commonwealth Government, and also since the imposition of high railway freights by the State Government. The mining industry started on the down grade when these penalties were imposed upon it. If the Commonwealth Government could be induced to reduce the customs duties to help the industry, which has been of such great assistance to Australia, and was responsible for Australia becoming a nation, we might be able to look forward to better days for it. What we want is ready cash. We should strive to make gold more

plentiful. We want in the State abundant money for the purchase of other commodities. Since we possess a belt of auriferous country extending from the south to the north, there is no better way of increasing our buying capacity and our ready money than by assisting in the development of the mining industry. We hear a great deal in the House from time to time about giving greater consideration to the agricultural industry. Members representing farming constituencies ask for concessions here and concessions there, reduced railway freights, Government assistance through the Industries Assistance Board and the Agricultural Bank, and all kinds of concessions. Farmers are appointed as advisory committees to recommend to the Government the cutting down of farmers' mortgages and liabilities. Not one of these members, however, offers a word of sympathy for the mining industry. None of them has ever urged the Government to reduce railway freights, which constitute such a great burden upon the cost of production from the mines. The concession to farmers on the carriage of superphosphate has been costing the country £60,000 a year. I dare say the sum to-day is about £80,000. In every other way the Government expend large sums of money in assisting the agricultural industry. No member on this side of the House has ever criticised their action, for the Labour Government did the same thing when in power. Probably no Government ever did more than the Labour Government did for the agricultural industry. Such things as the reduction of land rents and the initiation of the Industries Assistance Board were accomplished by the Labour Government, and not, as members representing agricultural constituencies claim, by any other party.

Mr. A. Thomson: How do you suggest we could assist the mining industry?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I read in the "Primary Producer" the other day that Mr. Sutcliffe, speaking in the constituency of the member for Katanning, told the farmers that the Primary Producers' Association had been instrumental in securing concessions amounting to one million pounds. He mentioned particularly the initiation of the Industries' Assistance Board and the reduction of land rents. The statement is made so consistently that farmers begin to think there is some truth in it.

Mr. A. Thomson: There is a certain amount of truth in it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There is none. The Government that reduced land rents and initiated the I.A.B. was the Labour Government. The hon. member was then a supporter of the Liberal Government which had raised the land rents, and yet the other day he sat calmly by while Mr. Sutcliffe claimed that his party had done these things.

Mr. A. Thomson: So it did.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It was the Labour Party that did them, without the necessity of a vote from members of the Opposition.

Mr. A. Thomson: Your party was not in office long enough.

Hon. M. F. TROY: As soon as the Labour Party lost its majority it was turned out. The things I speak of were the work of the Labour Government and not any other. We think they should stand by us and help those who are engaged in the mining industry, whose necessities are greater, whose hope of ultimate success is less, whose conditions are worse, who are endeavouring to live upon an industry lacking that permanency which obtains in connection with agriculture. Members representing agricultural constituencies have never by any advocacy endeavoured to assist mining.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is not correct.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Whereas they have been quite prepared to insist upon reductions and concessions wholesale for the benefit of the agricultural industry, they have never even attempted to assist that industry which has been responsible for the building up of every other industry in Western Australia. This is the first occasion on which the discussion of the Mines Estimates in this Chamber has attracted the attention of members on the cross benches.

Mr. Hickmott: Has the mining industry had any assistance from the State?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but very little. At the request of the Primary Producers' Association the Government have appointed persons, in an advisory capacity, to report on their neighbours' farms, and to recommend to the Government reduction of liabilities on the farms.

Mr. A. Thomson: To report as to the value of the assets.

Hon. M. F. TROY: And as to reduction of liabilities.

Mr. A. Thomson: No.

Hon. M. F. TROY: To-day the same association are clamouring that the Government shall determine settlers' liabilities on conditions which will mean a heavy loss to the State. If the Government make an advance to the holder of a mining lease, they take security over his lease and his machinery. There is no writing off in that case. If the holder abandons the lease, the next man who takes it up must assume responsibility for the whole of the mortgage debt, not merely part of it. I have assured the Minister time after time that if he intends to hold the mortgages in full over these leases, he will be doing something that is not going to assist the industry. Prospectors will not take up leases to prove them under such conditions. I am surprised that the Minister for Mines, who sees his colleagues giving concessions to other industries, does not insist upon the same conditions being applied to his industry.

Mr. A. Thomson: Why don't you battle for that?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I have done so. I have here a letter from the Minister for Mines stating that for two years he cannot



reduce a mortgage. We on this side of the House must insist for the future that where people in one industry receive concessions, the mining industry must get them also.

Mr. A. Thomson: Can you give one instance of a farmer's liability being written down by the Government?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I cannot, simply because I am not in the department concerned. But is it conceivable that the Government, having gone to the expense of appointing these boards, do not intend to give effect to their recommendations? Why have the boards been appointed? Is it because the Government wish to placate the Primary Producers' Association? Or is it because the Government intend to carry out the recommendations of the boards? If they do not intend to carry out those recommendations, why should they pay the boards to advise? The Government incur a tremendous loss every year in connection with the carriage of superphosphate, for instance. As regards the State batteries, I admit that last year there was a loss of £8,000; but that, after all, is a very small loss, seeing that the system of State batteries has been responsible for the production of millions of pounds worth of gold in Western Australia, and for the circulation of that money in the community. If the mining industry is to progress, we must have reduction in railway freights, and furthermore, as regards the composite Commonwealth Government elected last year on the promise that they would reduce Customs duties, the people should insist on that promise being fulfilled. I have read the report of an interview with Senator Drake-Brockman, who has visited the State, after an absence of four years, because his next election is at hand. He was unable to give any particulars of what the Commonwealth Government had done, but he indulged in a lot of talk about Bolshevism and communism and red-raggism. On the vital subject of the tariff he had not one word to say. Men like Senator Drake-Brockman went to the Federal Parliament pledged to reduce the tariff, but beyond forming a composite Government they have not taken a single step in that direction. Someone has said that they have not yet had the necessary time. Let me point out that they have found time to endeavour to relieve the big pastoralists of taxation to the extent of £1,500,000 a year. Senator Drake-Brockman made no reference to that fact. He was too busy talking about the terrors of communism and Bolshevism, about conditions in Russia, about cats in Kamschatka. For four years he has never been here.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, he has.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Well, he has not been heard of.

Hon. P. Collier: At the last Federal election the "West Australian" made a feature of Fowler's absence from the State.

Hon. M. F. TROY: During the last Federal election we heard a great deal about the way in which the gold-mining industry of this

State had been robbed by the Federal Government owing to the treatment given it during the war. Senator Pearce and others absolutely denied that the Commonwealth Government had ever injured the industry.

Hon. P. Collier: He would not admit injury to the extent of one pound.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Apart from a few men like James Gardiner, who criticised Senator Pearce, his remarks were generally endorsed by the Nationalists and the Country Party. Now they are beginning to admit that the industry has, in fact, been robbed by the Federal Government.

Mr. A. Thomson: Do the State Country Party endorse that?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Whatever I say here about the Nationalists, I say about the Country Party also. There is no division between them. They are one people. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) has merely taken off one coat and put on another, or turned his coat inside out, in passing from Nationalist to the Country Party. He is now defending Senator Drake-Brockman, who is a Nationalist.

Mr. Harrison: What is the vote?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Hon. members opposite do not like this.

Mr. A. Thomson: It is good electioneering matter.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Country Party and the Nationalists may bluff the crowd for the time by going to the poll as two separate parties, but they are one people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us keep to the vote.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Federal member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) introduced a deputation to the deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Earle Page, to ask for consideration, because of the way the mining industry had been handicapped during the war period. So far, however, the Commonwealth have done nothing for that industry. In last Saturday's "West Australian" I saw that they have given to the wool producers of Australia no less a sum than £475,000, because of a deal made by the Federal authorities.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is because the law courts compelled them.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The law courts did not compel them. I will read the report—

The Central Wool Committee, in the course of its administration of the Imperial wool purchase scheme, entered into a number of contracts for combing wool tops for export overseas. A dispute arose between the committee and the Colonial Combing, Spinning and Weaving Co., Ltd., one of the companies which had entered into contracts, and finally an agreement relating to wool tops was concluded on March 12, 1920, between the company and the Commonwealth Government direct. The Central Wool Committee was not a party to the arrangements made, and protested against the contract. The company purchased a total of 13,887 bales of the 1919-20 clip, 9,047 bales of wool under

the special agreement, and 4,850 bales previously. The British Government's wool contract was on the basis of a flat rate of 15½d. per lb. greasy, but as a consequence of the excessively large quantity of high grade wool purchased by wool tops companies in Australia the value of the balance of the clip for shipment to the British Government was considerably reduced. Under the terms of the acquisition of the Australian wool clips by the British Government woolgrowers were entitled to 50 per cent. of the profits on wool re-sold by the Imperial authorities for civilian purposes, and it has been always contended by the Central Wool Committee that the Colonial combing companies' purchases of such large quantities of high grade wool on the flat rate basis brought about a consequential diminution of such profits.

The CHAIRMAN: What is this leading up to?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am leading up to the point. I know members opposite do not like this. I am drawing attention to the fact that because the wool producers stated that they had not got their fair share of profit from the sale of that wool—that is all; they fully agreed to the wool being sold—the Commonwealth Government gave them compensation to the extent of £475,000. The Commonwealth Government can give £475,000 to the wool growers, but cannot help the mining industry to the extent of one penny. When the Commonwealth Government said that they had not robbed the West Australian mining industry of anything whatever, that statement was endorsed by the Nationalists of this House. Since the Federal Government can help every industry but the Western Australian gold mining industry, we in this country must insist that the Commonwealth shall reduce the heavy tariff which makes the purchase of mining machinery and mining commodities almost prohibitive. We on this side ought to have the assistance of hon. members opposite.

Mr. A. Thompson: Have you ever been refused it?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Your party largely comprises the Government in office in the Federal Parliament, with solemn pledges given to the people of Western Australia. Why do not hon. members opposite insist upon the Commonwealth Government keeping their pledges? Why do not members opposite ask their Federal representatives, when they come here after a lengthy sojourn in the Eastern States, what they intend to do to assist our industries hampered, as they are, because of the Federal tariff and other considerations. It is no use the Minister or anyone else speaking in glowing terms about the mining industry. Unless by some fortunate circumstances, another Golden Mile or some rich mine like the Great Fingall or the Gwalia is discovered, there is no possibility of the mining industry progressing under existing conditions, because every-

thing is against it. There is the heavy tariff, as well as the heavy railway freights, the prohibitive cost of all commodities required in mining production and of all goods required by the people residing in the gold-fields districts. I ask the Minister to extend the State battery system. I admit that there was a loss of £8,000 last year and that there has been a recurring loss year by year. After all that loss is a small one when we realise that the State battery system has produced gold and tin to the value of £5,654,871. Western Australia requires ready money. Could the people engaged in the agricultural industry have a better market than is provided by the goldfields areas? They have there a ready market for all the chaff, flour, butter and other products the agriculturists hope to produce, and that local market would be better than any to be found abroad. That market is at hand. I recently applied to the Mines Department for the establishment of a battery at Field's Find. The department refused my request. Although no crushing facilities are available and the prospectors have to cart their ore for 54 miles to the Warriedar battery, that particular district is going ahead. If the batteries were dotted about the State in places where there were good prospects, possibly a large number of good properties would be opened up and large tonnages crushed. The Department could arrange for a number of these batteries to be supervised by one officer who could be provided with a motor car, enabling him to get over the country quickly.

The Minister for Mines: Is that not being done?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but I suggest the system should be extended.

The Minister for Mines: You are suggesting something that is in operation already.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am aware that the managers of some batteries supervise others as well. Batteries should be established in the outer areas because without provision for crushing the ore, prospectors cannot hold on to their shows. The system should be extended and a number of batteries placed under the control of one superintendent who could supervise the crushing of the ore as it was produced. I know dozens of small fields that can be developed along these lines. Yalgoo is a centre where a battery could be established with advantage. There are shows there that can be developed, but the ore is not rich enough to be carted 20 miles to a railway, railed to the centre where a State battery is erected and carted from the railway to the battery for crushing. If I were in charge of the Mines Department, it would be my policy to erect State batteries in every little field and at strategic points along the railway line, so that ore could be taken there, shunted off the line, and delivered direct to the battery. I see no other way of helping the industry, much as I support the action of the Government in sending out prospecting parties. I realise that that

policy is a useful one but it is useless sending prospectors out unless, should they discover ore of value, crushing facilities are available to deal with the ore. Take Mitchelltown near Payneville: there are a number of prospectors in that district, and they are getting results. Some are dollying propositions, but they cannot do much without a battery. Wherever it is known that prospectors are finding gold in any quantity, the Government should erect a battery. If this system were carried out, a large number of men would be employed, the consumption of food products would be increased, and ready money would be provided for the State. I suggest that the Minister takes into consideration the advisability of removing mortgages from existing mines where those propositions are valueless. If the mortgage is retained on such a mine, it is only humbugging people who may be inclined to take over the proposition. The Minister may say that there is a possibility of collusion, that one party securing the mortgage may abandon the mine and arrange with someone else to take it up. It is possible, but highly improbable. If there is one thing more than another concerning which men are likely to quarrel, it is gold. Parties may work for years without trouble, but immediately gold is discovered quarrels are frequent. There is little possibility of collusion if gold is discovered, because a man would not take the risk attendant upon dishonesty. I know that the Government do not insist on interest being paid on the money involved, unless the men use the workings opened up by means of the money advanced by the State.

The Minister for Mines: And then not until such time as gold is produced from the workings.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Minister for Mines knows that these prospectors do not like coming to Perth and fixing mortgages—

Mr. Chesson: Merely to develop the proposition.

Hon. M. F. TROY: These men have no time for legal documents and have a strong objection to taking over properties when they know they have to enter into an agreement respecting mortgages.

The Minister for Mines: You do not suggest that I, as a Minister, should take no notice of legal methods in carrying on my department.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Not for a moment. I merely suggest that the Minister should remove the mortgages from those properties which are of no value. Where there is machinery or anything else of value on the proposition, the Government should retain the mortgages.

The Minister for Mines: Why not state the facts?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am doing so.

The Minister for Mines: Until I altered the conditions these mortgages were not lifted.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I told the Minister what he said. He refused to lift the mortgage for two years because of the danger of collusion.

The Minister for Mines: My predecessors in office refused to lift the mortgages at all.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Why refer to previous Ministers?

The Minister for Mines: Because I liberalised the policy.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not dispute the Minister's view, but I am giving my opinion to the House, as I am entitled to do. This question was discussed at a mining conference held some time ago, and it was pointed out that it was useless retaining mortgages respecting properties which were unpayable, because men would not take over the additional responsibilities. Mines are not like farms, where improvements can be pointed out.

The Minister for Mines: The leaseholder does not pay if he does not produce anything. It is not a question of personal liability. We have not imposed a personal liability on any person to whom money has been lent for a mining proposition.

Hon. M. F. TROY: In connection with the Industries Assistance Board the Government are reducing the mortgages and cutting the losses!

The Minister for Mines: Not cutting the losses entirely.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They are cutting the losses materially, and, in addition, have appointed advisory committees to recommend still larger cuts in those losses. The Primary Producers' Association urge the carrying out of the policy.

The Minister for Mines: We are doing it in connection with mining in your own district.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Where?

The Minister for Mines: What about Curran's Find?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Regarding that proposition, the departmental officers were sadly lacking in an appreciation of the position. I admit the Minister has treated the men concerned in that proposition generously indeed. The departmental officers expected those men to take over the complete mortgage on obsolete machinery, over 10 or 11 years old. The very foundations of the stamps were falling away, the pumps were no good, and yet the men were asked to take the machinery over at the value fixed 10 or 12 years ago. I cannot understand the attitude of the departmental officers.

Mr. A. Thomson: Surely the men did not take over the mortgage?

Hon. M. F. TROY: They did not; the Minister fixed the matter up.

Mr. A. Thomson: Would you favour men taking over abandoned holdings and machinery under those conditions?

Hon. M. F. TROY: The buyer of a farm does not take over the machinery at full value. But here the department insisted upon the men taking over the machinery at the full value of 12 years ago. So, in this instance,

whereas the Lands Department officers are up-to-date, those of the Mines Department are 12 years behind the times. Little wonder that there is a general pessimism in respect of the mining industry, a feeling that the industry cannot be saved. I say it ought to be saved.

The Minister for Mines: Don't commit yourself too far. You might have to undertake the job next year. Where will you be then?

Hon. M. F. TROY: For a start, I will want a fair sum of money to establish State batteries in every mining centre.

Hon. P. Collier: Say half a million, to begin with.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Prime Minister can promise a large sum of money to the squatters.

The Minister for Mines: You had better get a promise from him now.

Hon. P. Collier: Don't commit us too far.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not know who will be the next Minister for Mines, but whoever he be I will advise him to wipe out those harassing mortgages, and to extend the State battery system to every centre, to organise a department of competent men, and so help the prospector and the industry. I do not intend to refer at any length to the officials of the department, one or two of whom, I think, are getting too conservative for their jobs. There are others, particularly those with goldfields training, who are in every way competent and satisfactory. Mr. Howe, the manager of State batteries, is, in my opinion, the best officer that has ever administered that department.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

Hon. M. F. TROY: No matter how small the complaint may be, Mr. Howe is not too big to look into it. He goes around the country inquiring into complaints on the spot. He has given more satisfaction than has any other man I have known in the department.

Mr. Heron: Within the last six months he has travelled through all the districts.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If given a free hand, Mr. Howe will do a lot of good. I have heard it rumoured that the Minister said he proposed to reduce railway freights.

The Minister for Mines: No, I did not.

Mr. Marshall: He was entirely non-committal in that, and in everything else he said.

The Minister for Mines: I said that if such a reduction were to be considered, the out-back goldfields would receive the first benefit.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I suggest to the Minister that he keep his promise to reduce lease rentals. It is hard when a man has to pay out in this form £10 or £12 he can ill-afford. Then there are the miners' homestead leases, introduced some years ago by Mr. Gregory, then Minister for Mines. For such a lease the miner has to pay a fairly big rental. The possibilities are that he will go on paying this year after year until the field goes down, when the homestead lease is no longer of any value. Contrast this with the man in an agricultural area who can take up 160 acres

free! Hundreds of miners' homestead leases have been taken up and abandoned.

Mr. A. Thomson: Why?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Because the field petered out.

The Minister for Mines: They are of value only while the community remains.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I suggest to the Minister that in the proposed amending Bill he wipe out those miners' homestead leases altogether and make provision for a lease at a peppercorn rental. Why should there be this distinction between a homestead lease in a mining area, and a similar lease in an agricultural district? The removal of this anomaly would be some consideration to the mining community. If any body of men ought to be assisted more than another, it is the mining community. Those people work under most unhealthy conditions. The Minister is well aware of it, and I do not deny his sympathy with those people. Securing work in a mine, the miner puts all his money into a little home. After a short time he is sacked; perhaps for some good reason, more likely for some petty reason, or none at all.

The Minister for Mines: Perhaps for turning up a couple of minutes late.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Unlike the Minister's own associates, miners cannot go to work at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The Minister for Mines: I did not say that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Neither have they motor cars and other facilities such as obtain in the city for exploiting the public. They have no tenure of employment. Moreover, when they lose their employment there is little else for them to turn to, except shearing, fencing, and sandalwood getting. To engage in any of those avocations they have to leave their wives and families and maintain two homes.

Mr. A. Thomson: That happens in the agricultural districts also.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Imagine a mining community of 200 or 300 persons. The mine closes down without a moment's notice—as has actually happened. The men leave their wives and families and travel hundreds of miles looking for a job. They are away eight or nine months, maintaining two homes meanwhile.

The Minister for Mines: But that mine resumed operations.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That is true, but this sort of thing occurs everywhere, and frequently. The men go to another field, start all over again, work a year or two, and then have to go off elsewhere. With them life is one continual pilgrimage, establishing homes and selling homes, always at a loss. Yet they are the men who made this country possible for every other industry, with the exception of the pastoral industry. For the agriculturist the miners represent the best and readiest market.

Mr. A. Thomson: How would you have us assist them?

Hon. M. F. TROY: By reducing railway freights, by asking the Federal Government to reduce Customs duties, by helping the

members of this House to secure from the Treasurer money to be utilised by the Minister for Mines in establishing State batteries and extending the industry.

Mr. A. Thomson: Have we ever refused?

Hon. M. F. TROY: You have never assisted. The Treasurer has but a certain amount of money to spend, and the Government supporters want the whole of it. If the Treasurer has £100,000, and the Government supporters want £95,000, we on this side can get for the mining industry only £5,000. The Treasurer cannot spend millions on the agricultural industry and give it to us at the same time. Consequently, our industry, the mining industry, has to suffer.

The Minister for Mines: Do you suggest that seriously?

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do.

The Minister for Mines: The logical inference is that when your party get over here mining will receive everything and agriculture nothing.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That is not so. During the drought of 1914, when the now Minister for Mines was Labour Premier, and our agriculturists were in a bad way, I went to my constituents and said to them, "The Treasurer has only a certain amount to spend. The farmers' need is now the greatest. We have to help them, and you must wait." If necessary I would say it again to-morrow. But to-day I say that our people's needs are the greatest.

The Minister for Mines: And they are becoming greater.

Hon. M. F. TROY: We ought to insist upon the support that will make the mining industry, not perhaps what it once was, but still of the importance that it must be if Western Australia is to progress.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.59]: When the Estimates were being discussed last year the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) had the temerity, as a cross-bench member, to support the mining industry. He was greeted with derision by some of those sitting opposite. The member who has just sat down declared that members on these cross-benches never assist the mining industry. By interjection I asked him to point to an instance of cross-bench members refusing assistance to that industry. Throughout the whole of his speech the hon. member was "slinging off" at these cross-benches. I am not worried as to the particular coat I wore when I came into the House, or the one I am wearing at present. Suffice it to say that the same constituency has returned me for three consecutive Parliaments, and I trust it will do so again.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You changed your coat to win your seat.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is a most generous statement.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is not a generous statement; it is a fact.

Mr. A. THOMSON: It is a deliberate lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must withdraw that statement.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Then I say it is a deliberate mis-statement.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The hon. member is not going to get out of it like that.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I shall do so, according to the rules of the House, and request that the member for Mt. Magnet withdraw the statement he made, to which I take exception.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Which statement?

Hon. P. Collier: You are too late now.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Even if you had raised the point in time, I would not have withdrawn it, because I made no statement that must be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is too late now; he should have taken exception at the time.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I must congratulate the hon. member on his high and lofty ideals.

The Minister for Mines: Get down to the 2,000ft. level now.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The hon. member dealt trenchantly with members representing the primary producers and said they had not sought a reduction of the tariff or tried to do anything for the mining industry. If there is one section in the Federal Parliament that has strongly advocated a reduction of the tariff, it has been a section of the Country Party.

Hon. P. Collier: They comprise half the Cabinet.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I refer to Messrs. Gregory and Prowse, who have consistently advocated a reduction of the tariff.

Hon. P. Collier: What about Earle Page?

Mr. A. THOMSON: The hon. member, instead of flogging us, should direct his arguments to his own party in the Federal House. A majority of Labour supporters are protectionists and do not desire a low tariff.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is wandering from the vote.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I claim I am entitled to reply to the statements of the member for Mt. Magnet, especially as he directed his remarks to me.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Isn't the tariff in favour of the manufacturer?

Mr. A. THOMSON: The hon. member said one of the burdens under which the mining industry was labouring was the high tariff.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And I charge you with holding in power a Federal Government who are doing nothing to relieve it.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The hon. member cannot fairly charge us with any responsibility there.

The Minister for Mines: The tariff has always been a non-party issue in the Federal House.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Members on the cross benches are keenly desirous that the mining industry should flourish. The Government have assisted the industry recently by reducing the water charges to the extent of £40,000 a year, and I think I would be safe in pledging every member of the Country Party to assist to reduce mining costs wherever possible. The mining industry has been a valuable asset to the State. It made Western Australia.

Mr. Marshall: Does not that apply to the Commonwealth?

Mr. A. THOMSON: It applies particularly to Western Australia. The member for Mt. Magnet said we desire special legislation regarding mortgages, etc. In the mining industry it is possible to get a mortgage reduced after two years.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The Minister has a right to reduce it.

The Minister for Mines: Not as you have stated it.

Mr. A. THOMSON: If a mortgage has depreciated, the Minister has the right to reduce it.

The Minister for Mines: If a mining area has been abandoned for at least two years, any mortgage existing on a loan granted by the Government may be reduced in the event of the area being taken up afresh by a new party.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is not the position with the primary producers. The price of land is being reduced through force of circumstances.

The Minister for Mines: A man takes up land to produce something and the land has a value. If a man takes up a lease, he does so in the hope of getting gold, but there is no guarantee that he will get it. The two cases are not parallel.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The member for Mt. Magnet inferred that the farmers were trying to get something that was unfair or unjust. Members on the cross benches are sincere in their desire to see the mining industry flourish. If we can place 50,000 or 100,000 people on the goldfields, or anywhere in Western Australia, it must prove beneficial to the agricultural industry. Mining is a primary industry. I hope we shall have no more carping criticism, or statements that members on the cross benches are not sympathetic to the mining industry. No one can prove that we have ever been unsympathetic.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Council of Industrial Development*, £1,514:

Mr. A. THOMSON: Can the Minister give us an indication of the Government's intentions regarding the establishment of industries?

Hon. P. Collier: Oh, there is a Bill under consideration.

The Minister for Mines: You will delay the bringing down of the Bill if you discuss it now.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The Government have made an honest endeavour to establish and assist industries. A statement was recently made by Mr. Rayner regarding the failure of the local jam factory, and it is only fair that attention should be directed to his statement.

The Minister for Mines: That has nothing to do with the Council of Industrial Development.

Mr. A. THOMSON: It has.

The Minister for Mines: It was established prior to the council.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The council have power to grant assistance to industries.

Hon. P. Collier: No, to recommend.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is practically equivalent to granting assistance.

Mr. Teesdale: That is not so; I have been there.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I cannot speak as an applicant for assistance. Western Australia is faced with great difficulties. Mr. Rayner said an honest endeavour had been made to manufacture an article, which I understand, is of good quality. He said—

The Eastern States are putting jam on the local market at prices which would be out of the question if the competition were fair. . . . I mean that the Eastern States jams, and more especially the South Australian jams, are being retailed here at 10s. and 11s. per dozen, while precisely the same article is selling for 13s. 6d. in South Australia.

It is time we made an honest endeavour to assist the people trying to establish industries here. There is a lot of talk about starting secondary industries, and attention is frequently directed to the large amount of money being sent to the Eastern States for commodities that ought to be produced here. To-night's paper says that Interstate imports in August amounted to £715,769, and, looking over the list, I should say that every item should be wholly manufactured in this State. Why cannot we manufacture these goods? The Eastern States are dumping their goods here.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot see anything in the vote to justify your dealing with that question. If the Minister assured us that the Council of Industrial Development had something to do with Rayner's jam factory, your argument would be relevant.

Mr. Underwood: He might show that the council ought to have had something to do with the factory.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I understand the Council of Industrial Development—

Mr. Underwood: Is there to give a few officials a salary.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The council is under the administration of the Minister for Industries and if the object of the Department of Industries is to assist to establish local industries, we should be able to discuss it on this vote. I cannot see that there will be any other opportunity to discuss it on the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister assures us that the industry is assisted by loan. This vote deals with salaries only.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The functions of these officers are to assist and recommend to the Government that certain loans shall be made from loan funds.

Hon. P. Collier: Not these officers; the members of the council in an honorary capacity.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The necessity for paying these salaries—

The CHAIRMAN: I must rule the hon. member out of order. He will have an opportunity of discussing the matter on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [9.16]: I rise to protest against the expenditure shown under this vote. It is money wasted, whether it is spent from revenue or loan. At this period in our existence—

Hon. P. Collier: We have turned the financial corner, you know.

Mr. Hughes: Another corner.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If we cut this out it will mean a brick or two further round the corner. I have looked at the exhibition in Barrack-street.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is a very good one.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: These exhibitions are thought to be so important that we keep them open at night so that the public may attend. What do we see when we get there? We see soap, candles, and biscuits.

The Minister for Mines: You are not frightened when you see soap, are you?

Hon. P. Collier: Why run away from soap?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As an advertisement for the State it is the worst we can have. Imagine someone coming from other parts of the civilised world—

The Minister for Mines: Doodlakine, for instance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is near enough. Fancy a man coming from Doodlakine and seeing at the exhibition that we could make soap, candles, and biscuits! We show the visitor from some great manufacturing country that we can make a shackle or turn a screw. He could imagine we could do that without seeing these things. If the exhibits had come from Moola-Bulla, and we could have displayed them as the products of some aboriginal tribe living far away from civilisation, they would have been worth looking at for that reason. Fancy putting those things forward as the products of the people of Western Australia! I never saw such a rotten thing in my life.

The Minister for Mines: We can draw our own screws, too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hands of those in charge of the exhibition should shake when they are signing for theirs. I looked at the timber exhibition, and saw a great heap of sleepers. The Federal Government are paying a man £1,200 a year to advise us that

our timber should not be cut into sleepers. There is on exhibition tuart, wandoo and banksia, samples of which are going to the great exhibition in England. There is not a stick of this timber for sale here, and yet we can use every stick we can get. The Government put these things into the Barrack-street exhibition and pay several men to show them to us. Bless my soul, I knew they were here before they showed them to me. If any member does not know we can make soap and candles in this State he ought to be defeated at the next election.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.20]: I hope the Committee will take a definite stand on this vote and refuse to pass it. We have been tinkering with the matter for years. The Council of Industrial Development was originally formed during the régime of Mr. Robinson. It consisted of a few of his friends, and was formed with the object of getting their advice upon the development of our secondary industries. I fail to see in what way the council has rendered any service to the State.

Mr. Underwood: None whatever.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Even if the advice given to the Government by the council had been of great assistance to them the basis on which it is formed is entirely wrong. The principle is also wrong, and is indefensible. Private citizens, when in business in the city, are enabled to sit in judgment on other men in business who are desirous of establishing some industry. The recommendations of the council must have carried weight with the Government and they were practically in a position to decide whether assistance should be rendered or otherwise. Great power has been conferred upon the members of the council, who are irresponsible, in that they have no responsibility to Parliament. They were not appointed by statute and have no statutory authority. No obligation is cast upon them to present an annual report, such as statutory boards and other responsible officials have to present to Parliament.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The work is done secretly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. We know nothing of their work, their motives or their reasons for recommending or refusing to recommend applications for assistance. The whole thing is done quietly. I do not use the word "secretly" in any offensive way, but the work is done in a manner that is highly undesirable. I repeat the view I expressed last year and in previous years, that there is not any question of assistance to existing industries or of assistance to proposed industries in which this State does not possess in the Public Service men qualified to advise the Government. I have the précis presented by the Minister for the information of members at the beginning of the session, in response to a request I made. This shows the number of applications dealt with by the council from its inception. Altogether there

are about 80 applications, 11 of which are recommended, the balance being not recommended. I see the names of the applicants and the nature of the assistance sought. I fail to find one case regarding which there are not officers in the various departments well qualified to advise the Minister. This is a superfluous body.

The Minister for Mines: It does not exist.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have a Vote for it.

The Minister for Mines: Not for the council.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then what is it?

The Minister for Mines: It is a sub-department, but no member of the council is paid.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am aware of that.

The Minister for Mines: But there are no members on the council.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What has become of them?

The Minister for Mines: They have resigned.

Hon. P. COLLIER: All of them?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Evidently the comments made in the House have had some effect.

Mr. Willecock: The department still exists.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What does the department do? Have we a set of officers without any council?

The Minister for Mines: That does not matter. The council did not control them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Are we to understand that these are officers who were really attached to the office of the Minister for Industry?

The Minister for Mines: Yes. The Under Secretary for Mines is the permanent head.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of the Council of Industrial Development?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is a new arrangement. When was the alteration made?

The Minister for Mines: That has always been the case.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The vote is for £1,514. That is the staff of the department.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, of the sub-department.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Is it not the staff that has been serving the members of the council?

The Minister for Mines: Yes. But as part of the Public Service they come under the Under Secretary for Mines, who is the permanent head.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I did not know the council had resigned. When did this occur?

The Minister for Mines: Yesterday, or the day before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In anticipation, I suppose.

Mr. Teesdale: They knew what was coming.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is a secretary, a clerk and other assistance provided for. This is the staff that has been doing the

clerical work in connection with the council. If the council has resigned there will be no need for the staff.

The Minister for Mines: Will there not?

Mr. Underwood: For the exhibition, of course.

The Minister for Mines: And a very good one it is.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I agree that the exhibition is a good one and I hope it will be continued. The number of persons who visited the forestry exhibition shows it was much appreciated by the public. If the council has resigned it should be possible to carry on the work with the staff of the Mines Department. It may be necessary to have a secretary apart from that, but I understand the secretary to the council is not the official who is now attached to the exhibition committee.

The Minister for Mines: No, he is not filling the position at the moment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Now that the council has resigned I am not so keen upon attacking this vote. The situation has changed. I will give way to the Minister so that he may explain what services are performed by these officers, and whether they are really essential now that the council has resigned.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [9.30]: I regret the necessity for having to explain this matter to the Chamber again. I admit at once that probably it would have been better if the Council of Industrial Development had been placed on a statutory basis. The council, however, are in no way responsible for that not having been done. Notwithstanding the criticisms passed on members of the council, I must say, from my intimate knowledge of their work during the past three years, that these gentlemen, who are otherwise very busy, have given up a great deal of their time to matters arising out of difficulties pertaining to industries already established here, matters quite apart from applications for assistance towards the establishment of industries.

Hon. P. Collier: But could not that work be done by the departmental officers?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Even if that were so, those departmental officers would have to be taken off their ordinary work, and their time would have to be paid by the State, whereas the members of the Council of Industrial Development have given their services without any cost whatever to the community. It may be argued that the departmental officers could do this work after hours, but that would involve payment of overtime.

Hon. P. Collier: They should do it in their ordinary hours.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That suggestion implies that they have not enough to do at present. In my opinion, a body like the Council of Industrial Development ought not to be inquiring into the question of assistance towards the establishment of



industries here. I do not agree with that course at all, because the council are not a banking institution. But the council should be able to give full particulars of our raw materials, information as to where they are to be obtained, as to their value compared with similar raw materials in other parts of the world, information as to markets and so forth. The council ought to be able to give intending investors in new industries such information as would help them to obtain financial assistance. This last was done in connection with the establishment of woollen mills at Albany, the first enterprise of its kind in Western Australia. In that instance the council gave material help.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The committee did it. I was one of the committee.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The council had been moving in the matter before the committee were thought of. The committee were appointed by the Federal Government. However, whether the council did much or did little, they helped to establish the woollen industry in Albany without the Government assisting financially in any way. The members of the council resigned because they were dissatisfied with the conditions under which they were working. Up to date the Government have not been able to approach Parliament on the question of the powers to be given to a body of that sort. My personal view all along has been that if we call in anyone outside Government control, the appointment should not carry with it any direct responsibility. The responsibility for the handling of public funds, whether in assisting industries or otherwise, must rest with the Ministers of the Crown. Ministers can obtain advice if they like, but the responsibility for expenditure must rest with them. Any council or board appointed in this connection must carry responsibility in the same way as a road board or a municipality, but must not carry such a responsibility as that of obtaining a sum of money every year and expending it without being answerable to Parliament. Therefore we can render in only one way the assistance required—by centring responsibility on a Minister of the Crown, who will call in officers to advise him. This may be an eleventh-hour admission, but nevertheless I want to make it. As regards Mr. Nathan, the chairman of the council, I wish to say that he has given up literally months of his time in inquiring into matters which would not be shown even if all the applications for assistance were, as has been suggested, produced in this Chamber.

Hon. P. Collier: I quite agree with you as to that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Mr. Nathan did a great deal for the State in giving a lead to the establishment of secondary industries. He has had loyal assistance from his fellow members on the council: Mr. Monger, the president of the Primary Producers' Association; Mr. Perry, the chemist; and Mr. R. O. Law, who is a trained business man. All those gentlemen

have given their time freely, without the cost of a single penny to the State. If hon. members disagree with me in my views on the Council of Industrial Development, as the Leader of the Opposition did—and he did it in a way at which no one can cavil—still let them give credit where it is due. The members of the council have asked more than once that the Government should place the affairs of that body on a statutory basis. They resigned because they were just as dissatisfied as we were with the conditions under which they operated. There is one matter to which I hardly desire to refer, but I may tell the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), who decries the State's timbers, that he can see at the departmental exhibition a heap of sleepers, and alongside them some jarrah panelling which constitutes a most magnificent display. Would the hon. member suggest that that timber should not be exhibited? Up to the time of that forestry exhibition, there were local firms who would not allow locally manufactured articles to be displayed as such. To-day they have changed utterly in that respect. To-day housewives are coming to know our products. The exhibitions, outside one or two departmental displays, have cost the State nothing, but have paid the exhibition officer's salary and shown a profit to the State into the bargain.

Mr. Underwood: Where did you make the profit?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In charging rent for space.

Mr. Underwood: That is no credit to the State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member is a credit to the State, he ought not to be decrying the State's products, but ought to help in displaying them. What does the hon. member suggest?

Mr. Underwood: I suggest that you cut out the vote.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In my opinion the hon. member is not expressing the desire which is uppermost in the minds of the people who are paying for the opportunity to display their wares, who want to get in touch with consumers of our commodities. Take the case of the asbestos that is available in the North. Does the hon. member think it is not worth while to display, even to our own community, asbestos that is probably second to none in the world?

Mr. Underwood: Can you sell it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We are using some of it now. If we cannot at present sell it, that is all the more reason why we should display it. The people at Home who obtain asbestos from Canada might then obtain some from us. The hon. member recently expressed himself against the distribution of literature.

Mr. Underwood: I am not against literature, but against that advertising rubbish which is mis-called literature.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Probably the hon. member and I disagree as to

what is literature. Some of these things have a value, though their value may not be appreciated by the hon. member. However, I think I can better appreciate what is in the minds of the people as regards advertising our wares, even to our own citizens. The result of this latter may be that residents of Western Australia will use the local instead of the imported article. That end can most readily be achieved by making a slight display.

Hon. P. Collier: Why do you want a staff if the council has disappeared?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is one temporary officer.

Hon. P. Collier: There is a secretary.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is an exhibition officer, and his salary is met by the exhibitors, whose fees show, in addition, a profit.

Hon. P. Collier: What has the secretary to do now?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A fair volume of work goes through the office, quite apart from applications for assistance. We are continually in touch with people in this State who are producing commodities for which they want markets overseas. We are also in touch with the Commonwealth officer established in Java, who is endeavouring to bring about business. These functions are costing us the salaries of one officer and one clerk.

Mr. Hughes: Do you contemplate appointing another council?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not at the moment. I shall consult with my colleagues as to a policy for the future.

Mr. Hughes: Why not postpone this vote until the future policy has been decided?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the Committee do not pass the vote, the officers in question will be out of existence. They will then have to do this work under another department, because the work must be done.

Mr. Hughes: Really, then, we have no control at all over this?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Does the hon. member suggest that we should close down the inquiries we are making and discontinue the assistance we are rendering? That assistance, apparently, is not quite to the extent he desires in connection with the establishment of secondary industries. I suppose he would say that we ought to give even greater assistance than we have given to the industry established in East Perth.

Mr. Hughes: I said you had no right to guarantee the overdraft of the company when they had uncalled capital. They should have called up that capital.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: People sometimes take an interest in a company on the understanding that all the capital will not be called up at once. If a stage is reached when it is necessary, in view of the possible value of the company's operations, to come to their temporary assistance over a rocky period, should we refuse that assistance,

and tell those applying that they must get the money wherever they can?

Mr. Hughes: I will answer that point.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When these exhibitions were first established, they were heralded with the blowing of trumpets. I told hon. members at the time that it was not intended to keep the exhibition as a sort of museum, but that we should display our various wares from time to time and thus keep alive the interest. That interest has been maintained. Now, simply because we have not been able to meet all the desires of members along certain directions, it is suggested that this small vote should not be passed.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [9.47]: The Minister wishes to know whether I think we should not give assistance to people who float companies, but do not call up all their capital. I do not think we should do so. This is a specious form of finance. Under that system, it will not be necessary for any company to call up the whole of the capital because, if it gets into difficulties, and the shareholders are not prepared or able to pay up the full value of their shares, the Government can be called upon for assistance in these more or less risky enterprises. The Government will receive only the minimum rate of interest.

Mr. Underwood: With no security at all.

Mr. HUGHES: That is so. If the enterprises are successful, the Government will collect the minimum rate of interest, and the maximum will go to the shareholders; if the enterprises result in failures, the Government will lose everything, and the shareholders will be in a better position.

The Minister for Mines: All Government assistance is on that basis. If you object to that form of finance, you will quarrel with the member for Mt. Magnet?

Hon. M. F. Troy: Why?

The Minister for Mine: Assistance to mining is given on that basis.

Hon. M. F. Troy: There is no parallel.

Mr. HUGHES: None whatever.

The Minister for Mines: It is exactly the same thing. If the mines make a profit, we get our money back; if the mine does not pay, we get nothing.

Mr. HUGHES: There is no analogy whatever. If the Council of Industrial Development, or the Minister, risks State funds in investments of a risky character, the State stands to lose. If, however, funds are to be made available in the establishment of factories and so on, some provision could be made whereby, if the undertakings proved successful, the Government will have an equal share of the profits.

The Minister for Mines: Why not apply that to the mining industry?

Hon. M. F. Troy: That is a gamble.

Mr. HUGHES: It is a different proposition altogether. It is said that the Govern-

ment are endeavouring to establish secondary industries.

Hon. P. Collier: See what we would have made if we had applied that to the farming industry!

Mr. HUGHES: A little while ago we had the announcement that Monger, the boss of the Country Party, was demanding from the Government money for his freezing works at Fremantle.

Hon. P. Collier: And he got it.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And he is a member of this council.

Hon. P. Collier: And got the money on the recommendation of this body.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

Mr. HUGHES: I believe that the money he received was in part used to repay interest owing to the Government on a previous loan.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And at the same time, as a director, he drew his fees.

Mr. HUGHES: While those people were demanding capital from the Government to finance their freezing works, they were financing other companies. For instance, they are floating a newspaper.

Hon. P. Collier: They will get assistance for that, because the paper is to be non-party.

Mr. HUGHES: I believe some of the people who are shareholders in the Fremantle Freezing Works are also shareholders in the Perpetual Executors, Trustees and Agency Co.

The Minister for Mines: I am a shareholder in the People's Printing and Publishing Company, Ltd.

Mr. HUGHES: That company has not been to the Council for Industrial Development to secure Government assistance.

The Minister for Mines: No. There was another council, however, who put it over us, don't you worry!

Mr. HUGHES: So long as the Minister has no say in the matter of policy, he is welcome to the shares. The Minister has received more publicity from that paper than any other member.

The Minister for Mines: I deserved it, too.

Mr. HUGHES: I wish I could get as much publicity in other sections of the Press.

The Minister for Mines: There is no advertisement to be gained by giving publicity to your views.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it not be better to deal with the vote.

Mr. HUGHES: If these people request assistance for the paper—

The CHAIRMAN: When they do, you will have an opportunity to discuss it.

Mr. HUGHES: I object to financing of this description. The spectacle of "Comrade" Monger, the chief of the cross benches, demanding money for his freezing works—

Hon. P. Collier: And getting £92,000.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister says that the Government are justified in assisting

people who cannot carry on. There was no excuse for Mr. Monger not carrying on his freezing works, because at the time he was putting money into the Perpetual Trustee Co.

The Minister for Mines: That has nothing to do with this vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the Minister to say that the advance for the Fremantle Freezing Works has nothing to do with the vote.

Hon. M. F. Troy: On a point of order—

Hon. P. Collier: It is all right, the Chairman has not prevented the member for East Perth from speaking.

Mr. A. Thomson: On a point of order, you, Mr. Chairman, refused to allow me to proceed on the lines followed by the member for East Perth.

The CHAIRMAN: I was assured that the vote was not made by the Council.

Mr. A. Thomson: You also have the assurance of the Minister now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If I have, I will stop the member for East Perth from proceeding.

Hon. P. Collier: I say emphatically that a request for £12,000 for the Fremantle Freezing Works was dealt with by the Council and recommended by that body.

The CHAIRMAN: Then the discussion is in order.

Mr. A. Thomson: How much did the jam factory get?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can deal with that matter later on.

Mr. HUGHES: Although Mr. Monger received money from the Government for the freezing works, he was floating, with others, the Trustee Company which was to be given a monopoly. Perhaps the last mentioned consideration resulted in the capital being fully subscribed rapidly. I am as anxious as is the Minister to foster secondary industries, and I want to see them established by the Government. When, however, people carry on several companies on a limited amount of invested capital, no money should be obtained from the Government. That is not assisting industries; it is merely making use of Government funds for the benefit of private speculators and investors. If people have the necessary money, there is no reason why Government assistance should be forthcoming. If this system of finance is to be permitted, it will simply mean that a number of influential men can float any number of companies dealing with risky propositions, put in a few pounds themselves, and then call upon the Treasury to supply the rest.

Mr. Willcock: But the Government will not be given any share on the directorates.

Mr. HUGHES: No. If the State funds are to be invested in such ventures, the Government should take a certain number of shares and have a voice in the management of the companies. Thus they would secure the advantage of good investments as well as suffer losses from the bad speculations.

Mr. Lambert: Would you suggest that assistance to the farming community should be on the same basis of fifty-fifty?

Mr. HUGHES: There is a big difference between the agricultural industry and investments in industries. There is the security in the farm, and, moreover, the farmer does not come to the Government at the end of the year and claim director's fees. Money loaned to the farmers is gilt-edged security; and the farmer does not charge up directors' fees.

Mr. Lambert: He charges 9s. a day, though.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister saw to it that the interests of the workers were not represented on the board, although the worker is just as much concerned in the establishment of industries as is the business man; because, after all, the worker has to do the work, and that for a miserable pittance.

Hon. P. Collier: The worker will be represented on the next board.

Mr. HUGHES: No doubt the council will be asked to reconsider their resignation. I will gamble on the Government's decision.

The Minister for Mines: Don't. You gamble enough as it is.

Mr. HUGHES: The Minister admits that some of his time is taken up attending to the business of the board. If the board have gone out of existence—

The Minister for Mines: I will have to do the work they did.

Mr. HUGHES: If the board have gone out of existence, the secretary will not have so much to do.

Mr. Underwood: He can play bowls.

The Minister for Mines: Or go off to a mica deposit.

Mr. HUGHES: If Nathan gave months to investigations, the Minister will not be able to give that time. If he does not intend to reappoint the board, not all the officers will be necessary, and so we ought to amend the Estimates accordingly.

The Minister for Mines: They are electors of yours.

Mr. HUGHES: So is the Minister, but we tolerate him in silence.

[Mr. Stubbs resumed the Chair.]

The Minister for Mines: We don't tolerate you in silence.

Mr. HUGHES: I represent the constituency, not with the Minister's consent, but in spite of him.

The Minister for Mines: Only temporarily.

Mr. HUGHES: My tenure as representative of East Perth is more secure than is the Minister's tenure of his portfolio.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will be good enough to confine his attention to the question before the Chair.

Mr. HUGHES: Since the board have gone out of existence, the vote ought to be reduced.

The Minister for Mines: Sack your constituents!

Mr. HUGHES: Yes, sack the Minister.

The Minister for Mines: Now you are coming to what you want.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not play up to the people as the Minister does.

The Minister for Mines: I like that from you!

Mr. HUGHES: I have not a revolving policy like that of the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: This is not an argument between you and the Minister.

Hon. P. Collier: It promises to develop into one.

Mr. HUGHES: I hope the Committee will reduce some of these superfluous officers.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.10]: The Minister gives no assurance that the Council of Industrial Development will not be reappointed.

The Minister for Mines: The same members? I will give you that, yes.

Hon. M. F. TROY: That is what we want. Members of the council have been criticised from time to time, and rightly.

The Minister for Mines: It is easy to criticise, especially men working for nothing.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Was Monger on that basis?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. M. F. TROY: He used the influence of this council to get an advance for which he paid no interest.

The Minister for Mines: He did not. He had nothing to do with that question.

Hon. M. F. TROY: He sits on a council that insists upon getting money for a private company that does not pay interest to the Government, yet divides £7,500 in directors' fees. And the members of the company could find money to put into the Perpetual Trustees Company. I take exception to the Minister's statement that the council were entirely responsible for the initiation of woollen mills in Western Australia. He said the council started long before any other committee did. I was a member of the first committee, the one that sat in Mr. Robinson's room. The members of that committee put their hands in their pockets and threw in a small amount to finance the preliminary work, work done with the Agent General and with the woollen companies of Great Britain. After that committee did all the work the Minister stepped in and took the expert down to Albany, and the Council of Industrial Development began its activities.

The Minister for Mines: That statement is incorrect.

Hon. M. F. TROY: All this occurred long before the Minister was elected for Albany.

The Minister for Mines: That is not correct, either. I know when the committee was appointed.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Before the Minister was elected for Albany that first committee was sitting in Mr. Robinson's office, doing the preliminary work. Now I want to deal with Mr. Nathan. We are told that these people

did all their work for nothing. Who paid Mr. Nathan's expenses to the Eastern States?

The Minister for Mines: Mr. Nathan has not drawn any money from the State Treasury?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Was he refunded his expenses on the Eastern States trip, when he went with the Minister for the Empire Exhibition? Mr. Nathan was then representing this institution.

The Minister for Mines: Nothing of the kind. It had nothing whatever to do with the council.

Hon. M. F. TROY: My real objection to Mr. Nathan is that he, an importer, was appointed to encourage the manufacture of Western Australian products. Is it to be expected that an importer will encourage the manufacture of local products? It is unreasonable to expect it. The Minister has placed in the Speaker's room a precis of applications made to the Council of Industrial Development. We are told to regard this as confidential, notwithstanding that the money is found by the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: Many of the applicants would not like to see their names published.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I can understand that. Applications have been turned down by the council when help might reasonably have been given. The people behind the wool-scouring works started at Yalgoo applied for a loan, but were refused. I consider that loan should have been granted.

Mr. Mann: Was it a new industry?

Hon. M. F. TROY: It was the first there.

Mr. Mann: But the intention was to assist only new industries.

Mr. Hughes: Was freezing a new industry?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Thousands of pounds worth of dirty wool that would not bear the cost of freight to Perth could be treated profitably on the spot.

The Minister for Mines: Why did not the squatters do it?

Hon. M. F. TROY: The people at Yalgoo have carried on successfully, and are responsible for the treatment of thousands of pounds' worth of wool that otherwise would have been thrown out of the shearing sheds. I do not object to the exhibition in Barrack street—

Mr. Underwood: I do.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But the building is not suitable.

The Minister for Mines: It is the best we can get.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is like an old-fashioned shop; a good many people would pass it without appreciating its importance.

Mr. Underwood: And the exhibits are old-fashioned, too.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The exhibitions are of value to citizens as well as to visitors to demonstrate what the State can produce. An attractive site should be obtained near the new G.P.O. and a small building with up-to-date window space should be erected for the exhibition. I do not care to give the Min-

ister the right to carry on this department unless we know who the appointees will be.

Hon. P. Collier: I hope there will not be any appointees until a Bill is brought in.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Minister has not told us whether he intends to make any appointments.

The Minister for Mines: I have said no appointments will be recommended by me until we bring down a Bill.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then I have nothing more to say.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.20]: If we are going to promote the industries of this State it is essential to decide upon a proper policy. The Premier, in his latest Budget, referred to the amount of money lent to agriculturists. No one would find fault with a judicious policy of that kind, but I again impress upon the Premier that it is of equal if not greater importance to encourage other industries also. We must have regard for the unfortunate position Western Australia occupies in the Federation. The great bulk of our exports are raw materials. Over 85 per cent. of our primary production is taxed by the Commonwealth Government and unless we do something, we shall never have industries in Western Australia.

Mr. Underwood: How did they get industries in other countries? By exhibitions?

Mr. LAMBERT: In Victoria a barrier was raised against the world.

Mr. Underwood: How did they get them in New South Wales under free trade?

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member knows that no great progress was made with industries in New South Wales, except those closely related to primary industries, until the consummation of Federation.

Mr. Underwood: I do not know that and neither does anyone else.

Mr. LAMBERT: Surely it is not necessary for me to deal with the great expansion of trade in New South Wales in the last two decades under protection. We are unable to get manufacturers to come here from the East.

Mr. Underwood: Therefore you will have an exhibition.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Eastern States manufacturers should be given to understand that the credit of Western Australia is behind our desire to establish industries. If we are going to arrest the balance of trade against this State, the Government must make available one or two millions of money to be expended under a sound and well-considered policy. It is all moonshine to suggest that a young State with raw materials and almost limitless potentialities should be unable to find profitable and suitable employment for its boys and girls when they finish their course at the School of Mines or University. This state of affairs must not continue. I prophesy that the next Government will be chosen by the people for evincing a desire to ensure suitable employment locally for the boys and girls of the State. I find no fault with the Government policy of set-

thing the land; I commend them for it. Would that I could commend them on a policy recognising the needs for developing the secondary industries! If private individuals will not bring their capital and knowledge here to establish such industries, the Government must place the credit of the country behind this movement and show a determination to supply the State's requirements.

Mr. Mann: Are not the Government doing that?

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member knows the extent to which the Government are doing it.

Mr. Hughes: Did not Monger get his £12,000?

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not concerned whether he got £200,000 so long as it was advanced on business lines.

The Premier: He did not get it for himself.

Mr. Hughes: He got his fees out of it.

Mr. Mann: Was he not entitled to his fees?

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not require the assistance of the member for East Perth.

Mr. Hughes: You interrupted me.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not want any interruption from the hon. member. I am not concerned whether Mr. Monger got his fees. If he performed duties on a directorate he was as much entitled to his fees as was Mr. Hughes to his Parliamentary allowance. If, because he was Mr. Monger, he was able to get £50,000 or £100,000 to start freezing works when the Government are callous to the call of other industries, it was quite wrong. Freezing works are essential to the pastoral industry. I am sorry that the works at Wyndham, Carnarvon and Fremantle are not all prosperous. We want to see them hives of industry. We cannot stop there; the Government must go on, and they can only go on by adopting a sound policy. The Premier said we must have a stocktaking. We have been stocktaking too long. It is time he told the Eastern States producers of leather that we are going to produce our own and that the State is going to back the industry. He should tell the men engaged in the leather industry here, "If you want cheap money we can provide it if you double your output. We shall get a tannin extract plant from America. We can absorb the leather you produce." Leather goods are being imported to the tune of close on £400,000 worth a year. We are exporting our raw hides though we have plenty of tanning material within the State. What sort of a policy is this? If the Premier pointed out that we had the tanning material and the raw hides, and that the State was prepared to back local industry, the local plants would be duplicated. The fruit crop is rotting; there is no local market and no outlet for it. Is the Premier going to stand idly by while a monopolistic jam factory in Victoria dumps jam here more cheaply than it is sold in the State where it is made? They had all the advantages of mass production. When the Federal Government had hundreds of thousands of pounds to spend on food-stuffs for the soldiers, had they any considera-

tion for the fruit industry in this State? When they had millions of pounds to spend on woollen goods did they spend any in this State? They spent it all in Geelong. If they had spent a quarter of a million pounds in this State we would probably have other woollen mills here now. The head of the Government in this State must say, for our financial safety, that it is essential we should do something to counterbalance the effect of the trade against us. I should like to see appointed a board of scientific and commercial men who would take stock of what we have in this State, see what can be manufactured here, and place before the Government figures showing the adverse trade against us and our loan indebtedness. Side by side with this adverse trade of £8,000,000 against us is the loan money we spend every year. The difference between our imports and our exports must draw closer together. Unfortunately, it is to a great extent being made up by borrowed money, and when we tire of that we borrow more money. If it is a sound policy to borrow money for the development of agriculture, where industry is not so immediately responsive to the call of investors as is the case of secondary industries, it must be sound policy to borrow for the development of the more potential secondary industries of the State. We must consider the need of the men and women of the State, and see that proper channels of suitable employment are provided for our boys and girls. If this is not done by private individuals the Government are morally obliged to make such provision. Parliament should see that we do not rear year after year a big army of unskilled labour. Unskilled labour is the greatest danger that can face any country. I hope the Government will not hesitate to show the outside world, and particularly the Eastern States, what we can do. The Eastern States are our greatest bugbear. They can walk in here with their goods scot free and duty free. At the pow-wow of the Chamber of Manufacturers one of the delegates said yesterday we should show more concern about the large importations from overseas than we need show about the £6,000,000 worth of products from the Eastern States. They want more production and more industries in the Eastern States. Did he show any regard for the financial soundness of Western Australia? Did anyone call attention to our growing deficit? I hope one of our own delegates at the Conference will show that we are tired of thinking with a Federal mind. Speaking broadly from a business point of view, I say the Federal sentiment is forgotten for ever in Western Australia. Parliament should realise its responsibilities to the people, and fight for our own economic emancipation. Let us look after our own business affairs, until this weak arm of the Commonwealth arrives at a satisfactory basis of production. When we have regard for the money spent on development we must admit it is a disgrace for Parliament to sit callously by indifferent as to whether our in-

dustries progress or not. We should come to grips with the situation and formulate a policy on sound lines. We should have good men to direct a policy that will absorb much of our primary production, and make for the establishment of many of our promising secondary industries.

Item, *Exhibition, £200:*

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The expenditure of £260 on the little show in Barrack-street will not assist our industries in any way. The Minister says we can show our timber there. But we can sell it without showing it. He also said that asbestos had been exhibited there. The only asbestos of first-class quality to be found in Australia exists north of the tropics. Very little of this asbestos is found outside the North-West. The users of asbestos know where to get it. Notwithstanding the exhibition of it here for three or four years, all the asbestos mines in the North-West are closed down. As soon as the European market gave out, there was no demand for our asbestos.

Mr. Mann: The Minister for Mines explained that Canada was beating us in point of freight and distance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And the hon. member thinks that we can get over those difficulties by putting some asbestos in a shop-window in Barrack-street! That gets us no further forward. I have seen cabbages and eggs exhibited there. Fancy announcing to a startled world that Western Australia has hens that can lay eggs! The Minister spoke of raw material. I will admit that uncooked potatoes are raw material. Do we want a shop in Barrack-street to show the world that we can grow swede turnips? That shop is a discredit to us. We are showing stuff in that shop-window like a small boy shows his first top or mouth-organ, saying, "Look what I've got." The shop can well be cut out.

Mr. Mann: Would you not rather see it extended?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No; cut out. The Minister explained that the people who show cabbages, eggs, and coap in that shop, pay the rent of it. Then let us put up a sign saying this is a show of various traders. In that case I would have no objection. But I do object to that shop-window being put forward as an exhibition of Western Australian products.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret very much the last speaker's attitude, as I have always looked upon this exhibition as a valuable adjunct to the department concerned in the advertising of our products. We want to educate our people in the utilisation of Western Australian products, primary and secondary alike. I sincerely trust that the Government will persist in these exhibitions. If through the instrumentality of the present small exhibition, which should be larger and in a more prominent position, we can assist our secondary industries, a material advantage will

accrue to the State. A site should be obtained for the exhibition in the newly opened Forrest Place. Our Immigration Department also should be located there. It is all very well for the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) to belittle the industries of Western Australia. We are vitally concerned in fostering our industries, and to see that justice is done to Western Australian products, having regard to Eastern States competition. Unfortunately, Western Australians are not prone to use their own manufactures, which is another reason why these exhibitions should be persisted in. The member for Pilbara reflected upon the timber display. The sooner we realise that our timbers are valuable for other things than sleepers and so forth, the better for the State; and the sooner we realise that some of our timbers are rare and valuable, the sooner shall we realise the necessity for conserving them.

Mr. MANN: I would rather see this vote for advertising our secondary industries increased than reduced. In four lines of goods we are now beginning to compete successfully with the Eastern States. That fact is due in part to the circumstance that our people are commencing to appreciate our own manufactured goods. Local prejudice is being overcome. That end is furthered by the showing of local goods in that small exhibition in Barrack-street. A building three times the size could well be utilised for the purpose. Several of our boot factories are successfully exporting boots in competition with Eastern States manufacturers. Recently one of our largest clothing factories secured an Eastern States contract against Eastern States competitors, and thus we are now exporting clothes to the East. We have established knitting mills, starting on a small scale. A large knitting factory is now established in Wellington-street, and is competing successfully against Victoria and New South Wales. Further, we have the honour of possessing the only porcelain works in the Commonwealth, and in porcelain goods Western Australia is competing successfully in Eastern States markets against the Japanese. Is it not our duty to show these goods so that the public may realise what our secondary industries are doing and know the brands they should ask for? Rather than have the exhibition limited in scope, it should be extended. I hope greater efforts will be made in this direction, particularly in connection with those industries that are being successfully established in competition with the Eastern States manufacturers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not believe the exhibition will assist us very much in connection with the export trade. The exhibition should be extended mainly in connection with our primary industries.

Mr. Mann: In connection with every industry.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: People, and particularly visitors, should be shown what we can produce.

The Minister for Mines: We cannot properly display our wares in the present building.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Prior to the war an exhibition was maintained on the Fremantle wharf and it was visited by more people than the display in Barrack-street. When a ship entered port that exhibition would be crowded. Displays were made of our minerals, farm products, our soils and almost everything connected with our primary production. Since the war the exhibition has been a disgrace. I have drawn the attention of the Premier to it privately on a couple of occasions. Formerly fresh fruit was exhibited in the glass cases; to-day the empty glass cases only are there. If that exhibition were kept up to standard, more good would result than can be expected from the Barrack-street display.

The Minister for Mines: We could arrange for the transfer of most of our exhibits to Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We advertise our banksia timber, but if someone were to ask for 10,000ft. to-morrow, where could he get it? The same thing applies to tuart.

Mr. Pickering: We do not export those timbers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Formerly we used to export a lot of those timbers, but that was stopped.

The Minister for Mines: Why should we not display what we produce in the State?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We should display principally what we can send overseas. If we have not anything to sell, what is the use of showing goods?

The Minister for Works: The people can get tuart supplies if they want them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Only in small quantities. I suggest that the Minister should re-establish the exhibition on the Fremantle wharf and make it the centre of interest we knew it to be in years gone by.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. K. Maley—Greenough): I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Thursday next.*

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 10.59 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 11th October, 1923.*

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

### QUESTION—RAILWAY RATES, SUPERPHOSPHATE.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the rate for the carriage of superphosphate been materially increased, except during the months of December to March inclusive? 2, Is the rate per ton to Narrogin increased from 5s. 8d. to 14s. 7d. during the months of April to November inclusive? 3, What is the reason for this increase? 4, Will the Railway Department be able to carry all the manures offering in the months of December to March inclusive? 5, Are the Government aware that the use of superphosphate for the improvement of pastures is strongly recommended for application to the land during the months of April and May? 6, What provision is made for the old rates to apply to manures for this purpose?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, 2 and 3, It is desired to minimise the running of empty trucks to country stations during the wheat season by a specially low rate of freight for fertiliser. This rate is of itself unprofitable, but it is practicable by utilising trucks running otherwise empty. 4, Yes. 5, Yes. 6, Consideration is now being given to the rates for the carriage of fertilisers used for the growing of other than cereal crops.

### QUESTION—DIABETES, DUTY ON INSULIN.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Premier: Will he approach the Federal Government for the purpose of inducing them to remove the duty on insulin, a preparation used in the treatment of diabetes?

The PREMIER replied: Yes.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Willcock, leave of absence for four weeks granted to Mr. O'Loughlen (Forrest), on the ground of ill-health.