

I travel over it the more I am convinced that this is so. I have much pleasure in supporting the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 19th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—PASTORAL LEASES, INDIVIDUAL HOLDINGS.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Lands:—1, Does the Land Act Amendment Act, 1917, confine the pastoral lease holding of an individual to one million acres in one division? 2, If so, is it possible for this provision to be evaded by the formation of companies? 3, Can an individual hold, say, ninety per cent. of the shares in any number of companies formed for pastoral purposes in each and every division of the State? 4, Can an individual be interested to the extent of, say, ninety per cent. in six million acres of land in one division if he holds ninety per cent. of the shares in each of six pastoral companies, each holding one million acres in such division, but not worked in association? 5, If so, is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation to give effect to the wish of Parliament, which clearly intended that no person should be beneficially interested in more than one million acres in one division? 6, How many companies have been registered in connection with pastoral objects—(a) for the two years prior to the passing of the Act of 1917, and (b) since March, 1917?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The Land Act Amendment Act, 1917, limits the area which an individual may hold under lease granted under such Act, i.e., for a term expiring on the 31st December, 1958, to 1,000,000 acres in any one division. 2, A company is an individual. 3, Yes, 4, A

shareholder in a company which holds pastoral leases has no beneficial interest in any of such leases, and may hold any number of shares in any or all of the companies mentioned in the question. 5, The Government have given consideration to remedying the defect in the Act, and will seek to give effect to this in the amendment of the Land Act, 1898, which it proposes to introduce. 6, (a) For two years prior to the passing of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1917—seven companies; (b) for two years since March, 1917—18 companies.

Mr. Troy: They are getting on.

QUESTION—SUBIACO, ASSAULT ON MAYOR.

Mr. MULLANY asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the names of the persons who committed a brutal assault on the mayor of Subiaco in May last are known to the authorities? 2, Have instructions been issued that no action be taken against these persons? 3, If so, by whom were such instructions issued?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—BULLER RIVER RESERVOIR, EXPENDITURE.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Works: 1, What amount of money has been expended at the Buller River reservoir up to 30th June, 1919? 2, What amount was expended during the financial year ending 30th June, 1919?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Expenditure to 30th June, 1919, £8,905 8s. 11d. 2, Expenditure for year ending 30th June, 1919, £792 19s. 3d.

QUESTION—SMELTING WORKS, GERALDTON.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has a full report, for the purpose of deciding whether a smelting works is justified at Geraldton, been made in accordance with the resolution passed in this House on the 6th of December last? 2, If so, will he place the report on the Table of the House? 3, If no report is available, will he state what steps he proposes to take to re-establish the lead mining industry in this State?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. Immediately notice of the motion was given a full report was prepared and submitted. 2, Yes, herewith. 3, The position as to the future of lead has been so obscure up to the present time that no definite decision has yet been arrived at as to the best action to be taken to reanimate the lead mining industry. The matter is receiving consideration in several aspects, most of which depend to some extent on the attitude taken up by the Federal Government, before finality can be obtained.

QUESTION—WHEAT LOADING AT FREMANTLE, DELAY.

Mr. JONES asked the Honorary Minister: 1, Is he aware that the s.s. "Largo Law," loading wheat at Fremantle, has been in port since 4th August? 2, Is he aware that, with the men available for work, the vessel could have been finished in 60 to 70 hours? 3, Can he inform the House who is to blame for the delay in loading? 4, Can the supply of wheat be expedited? 5, Will it not be possible to blame the lumpers for the delay?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes, with sufficient labour engaged. 3, The s.s. "Largo Law" is under charter to the Australian Wheat Board and the loading is being carried out in accordance with the charter party. 4, Answered by No. 3.

Mr. Jones: What about the answer to No. 5?

QUESTION—STATE SAVINGS BANK, MANAGER.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Johnston) asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, Is it proposed to fill the vacant position of manager of the State Savings Bank? 2, If so, when?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied: 1, Yes. 2, In accordance with the policy of the Government, applications will not be called until the soldiers have returned from active service.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet): A feature of the Address-in-reply has been the element of discontent which characterised the speeches of a number of members opposite, together with an ill-concealed hostility to the present Government. To the onlooker it would appear that members opposite will support the Government, but will accept responsibility only for those acts which are to their political advantage, repudiating all responsibility for anything done by the Government which might bring them into political disrepute and of course endanger place and position. Remembering the history of politics during the last two years and the fact that a number of members cherished an ideal for which the National Government are alleged to have stood, I admit that those members are rightly discontented, because they are disillusioned; but the fact that the National Government have failed and failed lamentably was only in the nature of things. It could not have been otherwise because the Government were conceived in deception and intrigue—the deception of those who were prepared to utilise the prevailing times and exploit the patriotism, passions, prejudices, and anxieties of the people to their own advantage, and the intrigue of those who, for place and pay and approval, left their old associations for per-

sonal advantage. To-day it cannot be denied that the word "Nationalist" no longer conveys anything of a satisfactory nature to the people. To-day the word "Nationalist" is a byword in the mouths of the people, as is proved by the fact that at every election held since the last general election, every candidate supporting the present Government has repudiated the term "Nationalism." When Mr. Mills defeated Mr. Drew for a seat in the Upper House, Mr. Mills repudiated the term "Nationalist," declaring himself an Independent. Again at Albany, a few months ago, Mr. Scaddan distinctly stated that he was not a Nationalist, but a non-party man having nothing whatever to do with the Nationalist party. I give Mr. Scaddan credit for no longer pretending to be that which he is not: at least he is honest in that connection. He was elected to this House as a non-party man. Even the Nationalist party in this House has been compelled to accept the leadership of a gentleman whom they looked upon with distrust, and, I may say, contempt, for nearly two years, a gentleman whose inclusion in the Wilson Government they consented to only because of the fact that the late Mr. Wilson stood to Mr. Mitchell. However, in consenting to his inclusion they made the condition that Mr. Mitchell should not be Minister for Lands in the Wilson Government. To-day that gentleman, who sat for two years in tearful discontent in the seat next to mine, is the leader of the combination who had declared that he was responsible for all the ills under which the primary producer of Western Australia labours. To-day he is not only the Minister for Lands of that party, but also their Premier. The same party have been compelled to accept as another member of the Government a gentleman who, they held, two years ago, should be removed from office in the interests of the State. Less than two years ago they assured the people of Western Australia that it was Mr. Scaddan who was responsible for all the maladministration that had brought the State into its financial difficulties.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must be referred to as the member for Albany.

Mr. TROY: They declared that no good could be secured until the present member for Albany was removed from office. And yet those very same people are responsible for the fact that to-day the member for Albany is among their leaders. Indeed, I believe they cherish the hope, expressed by the hon. member himself at Albany, that the time is not very far distant when he will lead the present Government. The hon. member said he was not going to take a second place in the Government. He intimated that in a few short months he would displace the present Premier and lead the Government.

The Minister for Works: Did Mr. Scaddan say that?

Mr. TROY: That was his attitude, and he is reported to have said it. That, moreover, was the current opinion in the electorate; and in my opinion it had very much to

do with his return to this House. The Nationalist party, when facing the electors at the last general election, gave a very definite promise. They appealed on only one issue, "Produce, produce, produce."

Sir Henry Lefroy: A good motto.

Mr. TROY: I admit that. I have no fault to find with the motto. The member for Moore, then the leader of the Nationalist party, in those three words expressed the aims of his party, their whole policy, and on that policy the Nationalist party was swept into this House in such large numbers. Production was the first plank in the platform. They expressed it in this way, "The Government will remove all those unnecessary costs which are a bar to production." On this increased production was to rest the future of the country. The increased production was to restore the finances, and again put the State on the high road to prosperity.

Sir Henry Lefroy: You will admit it is the only way, will you not?

Mr. TROY: I have no hesitation in saying that if the Nationalist Government had pursued that policy, the position of this State to-day would be very different from what it is. So far as I can see, however, neither the then Premier, nor any member of his Government, made one solitary attempt to keep the promise which was made to the people at the last general election. Further I say that it was impossible for them to keep that promise because of the nature of the Government's construction. With such backing as that Government had, any attempt to redeem their promise would have injured the very interests in this country which secured their numbers in this House. Who formed the Nationalist party? Mr. R. P. Vincent, Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Lathlain. Who financed the party? All the importers and merchants and middle men of this country. Was it to be expected that from a party supported by a combination of that character there could be the carrying out of any such policy as that enunciated by the late Premier at Moore? It was utterly impossible, for the Government would have had to strike a blow at the very interests which secured place and power in this House for them. The Minister for Mines himself has told myself and others that Mr. R. P. Vincent was a profiteer. He said, "I saw his income tax returns, and I know he is a profiteer." The Minister for Mines gave us the amount which Mr. Vincent had made during the first year of the war, and the amount he had made during the last year before the war, showing that Mr. Vincent had increased the prices of commodities so as to secure an increased income.

Hon. P. Collier: Increased by 125 per cent.

Mr. TROY: And yet he and others with him left this party to join another party under the leadership of Mr. Vincent, whom they termed a profiteer. And the Nationalist Government asked the community to believe that they, if returned to power, would strike at the interests of the gentlemanly

clique and class who were responsible for the formation of Nationalist Governments both here and in the Federal Parliament. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the Government did not carry out their policy. In the very nature of things they were bound to fail. What are the obstacles to the successful development of the primary industries of Western Australia? Nobody can deny that during the whole course of the war the great obstacle has been the excessive cost of the commodities required in production. The fact that every unnecessary cost has not been eliminated is the reason why we have not been able to increase our production in this country. The miner, the farmer, the timber worker, the producer wherever he may be, has been exploited during the whole period of the present Government's and the previous Government's terms of office. All the people who are so necessary, so vital to the well-being of the State have been exploited by that large, flag-flapping section of the community who live and prosper in St. George's-terrace and in the large ports and towns. A little while ago, when speaking in an agricultural district of this State, I made reference to the manner in which the price of superphosphate, which is absolutely essential to wheat production, has been raised in this country. I compared the price here with the price in the Eastern States, and I made some statements to which reference was made later by the member for York (Mr. Griffiths) who, I understand, wrote on the subject to the "Western Mail" and the "Primary Producer." The hon. member said—

Mr. M. F. Troy, M.L.A., has been making very strong statements at Quairading, Kwolyin, and Corrigin to the effect that profiteering and exploitation of the farmers by Messrs. Cumming Smith and the Mount Lyell Company are rampant. He states that whilst the State steamers have been bringing phosphatic rock from Christmas Island at a pre-war freight, the manufacturers have increased the fertiliser charges to an extent that is profiteering on a very bad scale. He states that no attempt is being made by the Government to stop this. I want to find out to what extent the charge of exploitation and profiteering is justified.

And he asked Mr. Grasby, of the "Western Mail," to give him some particulars. But I made none of those statements, not one of them. I made certain definite charges which I will repeat here to-day. I drew attention to the fact that, whilst in South Australia fertiliser was being sold at £5 5s. per ton, and as low as £4 17s. 6d. per ton—

Mr. Harrison: Is that Thomas's phosphate, or superphosphate?

Mr. TROY: I was quoting Elder's weekly report of the 12th March this year, and I spoke about a fortnight after that date. Standard superphosphate was quoted there at £5 5s. per ton. I mentioned the fact that

the Western Australian Government had placed at the disposal of the superphosphate merchants the State steamship "Kwinana," I did not say that the superphosphate merchants had secured a pre-war freight. I knew the freight and stated it. I said the "Kwinana" had brought superphosphate rock to this country at a freight of £2 per ton. The Minister concerned has admitted that since. At the same time neutral or British shipping, I know on the best authority, would not have brought that same rock to this country under £5 or £6 per ton. I want to know why superphosphate in South Australia could be sold at £5 5s. per ton, whereas it was priced at £6 per ton here, particularly when the Government had placed at the service of the superphosphate companies the State steamship "Kwinana" at a reasonable rate of freight.

The Minister for Mines: Has not South Australia a nearer supply of the rock?

Mr. TROY: Where from?

The Minister for Mines: I do not know.

Mr. TROY: That is it. I do not think so. I think the source of supply is Christmas Island in both cases. The Wallaroo and Mt. Lyell superphosphate are both produced in the same way. I purchase my superphosphate from the Mt. Lyell Company. Now our friends here are making excuses for those companies? How ready they are to quarrel with me merely because I wish to point out obvious facts so that my friends may work on them! Is it asserted by the leader of the Country party that the phosphates secured in South Australia are of less value than the phosphates sold here? Would the South Australian farmer consent to buy an inferior article?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): You can get it for £3 7s. 6d. here.

Mr. TROY: But that is the lowest price for an inferior article. The South Australian farmer knows the value, just as well as we know it here. He can buy the article for £1 less than we can buy it here. When the Government placed the State steamers at the disposal of the superphosphate companies, they should have made it a condition that the superphosphate companies should show our farmers consideration in view of the low freights the companies were charged by the Government. But it is now said that the superphosphate was required for next year. Again, it is said that the superphosphate is a necessary commodity, and that the price is regulated under the Necessary Commodities Act. But we all know that the Federal Government have abandoned that scheme. Clearly if the hon. member is depending on the Federal Government to get the consideration he asks for he is not likely to obtain much satisfaction. Again, will the Minister deny that a freight of bonedust was brought down from Vestey Bros., at Port Darwin, at a rate which represented a loss to the people of the State? Did the price of bonedust decrease here as a result? No. The commodity is as dear as ever. The Government

stood inactive, the Government whose policy we were told was produce, produce, produce, whose policy was to eliminate every unnecessary cost that would be a bar to production. That Government have given consideration to the manufacturer without making any provision that the producer should receive a corresponding advantage. I know that the profits made by the Mt. Lyell Company in South Australia have largely increased, yet I have not said a word about profiteering. These companies got an advantage from the State by which the State revenue was deprived of a certain amount, and therefore the Government should have seen to it that corresponding advantages were given to the primary producers.

The Minister for Works: We prevented the price from going higher.

Mr. TROY: Did you? There are no State steamers in South Australia, and so the superphosphate companies could not get lower freights than they got in this State. As a matter of fact, Christmas Island is nearer to Perth than it is to Adelaide; yet the phosphate is being sold at a lower price in South Australia than here. Until the member for York made inquiries from Mr. Catton Grasby in the "Western Mail" he had no knowledge whatever of the subject.

Mr. Green: Did not you challenge the hon. member to debate this question with him in his own town?

Mr. TROY: Yes, and I am prepared to go to York whenever the hon. member cares to arrange for the debate. I will prove to the people of York that neither the hon. member's party nor the Government which they support have ever made a solitary attempt to eliminate the unnecessary cost to the producer of this State. I remember reading a little while ago, when the question became urgent, that the Country party's executive in Perth had passed a motion expressing abhorrence of the profiteering which was in evidence. Apparently they knew that profiteering was rampant, and that the profiteer was exploiting the very people whom the Country party represent in Parliament. Then there was that ramp in Melbourne, mentioned by the member for Hannans the other night, when the Commonwealth Government handed over to one commercial firm 30,000 bales of wheat bags at 9s. 8d. per dozen.

Mr. Maley: How do you know the price?

Mr. TROY: It has been stated time after time. To-day the farmer is paying 15s. a dozen for his bags. That ramp was permitted by a Government for whom the primary producers have been responsible. The reply given in the Federal Parliament was that the Minister could not make any distinction, that there were not sufficient bags to supply the farmers all round, and therefore it would have been unfair to give a few farmers the advantage of 30,000 bales. Yet it would seem that it is quite a proper thing to give that advantage to one commercial firm. I find that a few Nationalists from this State,

farmers' representatives in the Federal Parliament, looking forward to future possibilities, have asked questions on the subject; but the primary producers' party in this State have made no outcry whatever about the outrage. Their reasoning is that the least said about the matter the better, because it might draw attention to the position they occupy in this House as supporters of the National Government. Let me quote some of the profits made, by way of showing how the producer has been robbed in this country without any action being taken by the gentlemen who in this House represent big interests. The other night the member for Guildford searched the four corners of the world for information by which he might bring contempt upon members on this side of the House, in order that he might subject them, and with them the workers they represent, to derision. He also scraped the gutter, so to speak, to find means by which he could condemn whom he called the "agitators" in this country, particularly the seamen. The seamen, he told us, were criminals because they had indulged in a strike in order to secure what Mr. Dodd said in another place it was time they should have, and what the Federal Government said was only fair and reasonable. But the hon. member had no word to say about the shipping ring, which has robbed this country throughout the war, robbed it by virtue of the fact that the ring has been protected by the Federal Parliament, by members of a party of which the member for Guildford is a supporter. He could find words of contempt for the seamen, but not one word against the shipping combine, which has held up the country, which has killed the timber trade by increased freights, and which has robbed the people of hundreds of thousands of pounds under the protection received from the National party in the Federal Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: His attitude in that respect marks the measure of his hypocrisy.

Mr. TROY: That is so. Here are the profits of the shipping companies. The Adelaide Steamship Co. in 1916 made a profit of £173,000, and in 1918 £395,000. The Huddart Parker Co. in 1916 made a profit of £75,000, and in 1918 £308,000. The Melbourne Steamship Co. in 1916 made a profit of £176,000, and in 1918 £228,000. The Union Steamship Co. in 1916 made a profit of £553,000 and in 1918 £722,000.

The Attorney General: What is the capital of those companies?

Mr. TROY: The profits I have quoted are clear profits. Does the hon. member want anything more than the figures I have given?

Mr. Duff: Would not the profits have been on account of the carrying of troops to the Old Country?

Hon. P. Collier: If so it only makes it worse.

Mr. TROY: The hon. member's reference is most unfortunate. He would have it appear that those shipping companies profited because they carried troops to the other side of the world. When I remember

that this combine did not lose a solitary pound of tonnage, that they were protected by the Federal Government, I cannot understand the reason why the hon. member should champion their cause.

Mr. Duff: I am not championing their cause.

Mr. TROY: Take Western Australia. There is the Swan Brewery, a little business firm on the banks of the Swan River. The Attorney General will know the capital of that company.

The Attorney General: I am afraid I do not.

Mr. TROY: The Swan Brewery Co. in 1916 made a profit of £188,000, and in 1918 £206,000, nearly a quarter of a million. Western Australia is almost insolvent. The Premier is in despair or ought to be because of this. Corporations have waxed fat because the industries of the country are being exploited for purposes of private profit. There was a little firm in New South Wales, Miggit's Oil Company, which was promoted a few years ago with a capital of £90,000. In the first year of its operations the profit was £70,000. That profit was made by the sale of a commodity required largely by the producers of the country. All this has been done under the eye of the price fixing commissioner and of the various Governments who held power both in the Federal and State Parliaments, in the interests of the primary producers. I wish to refer briefly to the profits made by the clothing merchants. The profit made by the 22 firms manufacturing tweeds and serges in the Commonwealth in the last three years was £3,200,000, and their capital was £1,440,000. It is interesting to record what the Interstate Commissioner had to say in his report about these corporations. He said—

It is beyond doubt that manufacturers, importers, and wholesale distributors have been enabled by the existence of war conditions to secure high profits, and that these profits have been made largely by supplying material for the clothing of our soldiers, and when merchants were acting in unison.

All this has been done during the time that a Government was in office which was out to help the primary producer and to carry out the policy of production. The most extraordinary thing is that there was no protest from any nationalist or member of the farmers' party in any part of Australia. The Vacuum Oil Coy. in 1913 made a profit of £263,000, in 1914 a profit of £274,000, in 1915 a profit of £402,000, in 1916 a profit of £579,000, and in 1917 they made a profit of £488,000. In four years this company made a profit of £1,469,000. Commenting upon this the Interstate Commissioner points out that the Vacuum Oil Company could have made a profit which would have paid them a ten per cent. dividend and enabled them to sell their commodity at a rate which would have saved the people £821,000. To paraphrase the words of the Interstate Commissioner, the

Vacuum Oil Company has robbed the producers of Australia to the tune of £821,000. All this has been done under the eye of the party and with the knowledge of the party which is supposed to represent the primary producers of Australia, and which holds the balance of power in both the Federal and State Governments. Is it any wonder that the term "Nationalist" excites disgust and that the people are discontented? Is it any wonder there is abroad a spirit of unrest and agitation, and that there are strikes, when this thing is being carried on by the supporters of the Nationalist party and with the protection of the Federal Government. We must not forget that the Interstate Commissioner drew attention to the fact and urged the Federal Government to take action, but that Government so far has not done so.

Mr. Pickering: Was not the "Kangaroo" engaged by the Government in the carriage of goods?

Mr. TROY: I have here a sample of the specious pleading put forward by the "Daily News" on behalf of the profiteer. In the opinion of the "Daily News" there is no profiteer, and if any people are making a profit it is the National Government by means of the "Kangaroo." If the "Kangaroo" profiteered with her large freights she profiteered in the interests of the taxpayers of the country, for if the amount of freight earned by her had not gone to the Treasury, the people would have had to find that amount themselves. I am sorry that all the profiteering was not carried out in the interests of the people. My complaint is that it is carried on in the interests of those corporations which formed the Nationalist party and stand behind it and whose interests would be injured by the Nationalist party if it attempted to carry out the policy of produce, produce, produce.

Mr. Davies: The other ship owners keep up the freights.

Mr. TROY: Hark to the apologist!

Mr. Davies: That is the answer.

Mr. Munsie: It was a question of open competition in the world's market, and the lowest quote must have been put in by the "Kangaroo."

Mr. Davies: I do not think it was open competition.

Mr. TROY: According to the Interstate Commissioner, the undistributed profits and reserve funds of 20 firms in Australia in 1916 amounted to £10,000,000, in 1918 to £12,000,000, and in 1919 to £12,693,000. This has taken place in face of the policy that the leader of the Nationalist party enunciated at Moora when he told the people of the country that the Government would eliminate every unnecessary cost which was a bar to production, and in face of the fact that Mr. William Morris Hughes called upon God to witness at Bendigo that he would protect the producer and consumer against the profiteer. Mr. Hughes is returning to Australia, and has already enunciated his policy at Durban. A few days ago he said, as one

belonging to another party, "Damn the profiteer and damn the Bolshevik." For over two years that same Government has held the reins of office in the Federal Parliament and has made no attempt to interfere with the profiteer. It is due to the promises of his Government that the shipping combine has made these profits, because the shipping has been controlled by the shipping board under the provisions of the War Precautions Act, and every increase in price made by the shipping companies has had the consent of the Federal Government.

Hon. P. Collier: And all other profits also.

Mr. TROY: This is Mr. Hughes' policy. He knows profiteering has become a vital matter. He can no longer secure advantage from the "win the war" cry. He can no longer secure support by shouting patriotism, and no longer incite the people against his opponents. He knows that time has now passed. He knows that it is now the time of the profiteer and the Bolshevik. Mr. Hughes and his supporters will damn the profiteer in public, but will protect him in private. No harm will come to the profiteer and he knows it. Let hon. members listen to the naïve remarks from the "West Australian" as telegraphed by the "Argus"—

A great reception is preparing for Mr. Hughes. The returned soldiers are taking the matter in hand, and there will be a notable demonstration of public approval of the work he performed at the Peace Conference. The fly in the ointment, as far as political affairs go, is his ship-building policy, and his explanation of the extensive purchases of ships is awaited with interest.

Why is the ship-building policy and the purchase of ships the fly in the ointment? The supporters of the shipping companies do not like it and will not have it—

And it is possible that his return will have other grave significance. An early election is in the air, and the wire pullers in the political organisations are already making preparations for an early appeal to the country. Mr. Hughes' recent declarations with regard to fighting the Bolsheviks and profiteering have been followed with keen interest—

The whole country knows him—

The view taken being that they fore-shadow an appeal to the electors at an early date. Mr. Hughes may possibly go further in some directions than would please some of his supporters, but this is a matter of conjecture for the moment.

It will be all fixed up. Here is the gem of the paragraph—

The profiteers have no friends, but the question is, what are the best means of meeting a situation which is beset with difficulties.

The profiteer has no friends! He has only enemies and yet no one in the whole community during the last four years has done so well as he has.

Hon. P. Collier: For a man without friends the profiteer has done remarkably well.

Mr. TROY: This is from the "Argus," the very organ of the profiteer—

The question is, what are the best means of meeting a situation which is beset with difficulties.

During the elections there will be no difficulties. The profiteer and the Bolshevik will be fought, but after the elections the profiteer and the Nationalists will be a happy family once more. The facts I have given must be admitted by any person engaged in production to be the reasons why the policy enunciated by the Nationalist party has not been successful in this country. Everyone engaged in farming operations, in mining, or in any of the great primary industries of the State, knows that they have been severely handicapped by the excessive prices charged for all commodities. These factors are responsible for the lack of production, largely responsible for our financial situation, and entirely responsible for the discontent, strikes and unrest amongst the community. A meeting was held in Perth in April last, called by a number of gentlemen interested in forming the Nationalist party. There were present amongst others, the Minister for Mines, Mr. Lathlain, Mr. Vincent, and the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo). This meeting was called to protest against the injury done to the State by the Federal Government. Federation was the bogey. It was no longer a question of winning the war, but of federation. It was a new cry found for the discontented electors of Western Australia. One of the arguments used against the Federal Government was that our timber industry had been crippled because the shipping companies had raised the freight on timber 7s. 6d. per load. That gave the death blow to the timber trade with the Eastern States. Neither the Minister for Mines nor any other gentleman present on the platform, these including Mr. Gregory, the member for Dampier, gave their audience the real facts of the situation. Our timber industry, which is one of our greatest primary industries, received that death blow not because of federation nor because of the system, but because of the actions of those controlling the system.

Mr. Munsie: It was the administration.

Mr. TROY: The shipping companies operating on our coast could not have raised the freight on timber one penny per load had it not been for the Controller of Shipping. Therefore, it was the Federal Government who were responsible, and those who attended the meeting to which I have referred did not breathe a word of the real facts to the members of the audience. It is not the system which is wrong, it is those who control it who have been responsible for profiteering. Take as another example, the metal trade which was recently held up. That too was stifled by the Federal Government. Who introduced a regulation respecting the output

of our base metals? The Metal Board. Who authorised the formation of that board? The Federal Government. The Metal Board held their power under the authority of the Federal Government and therefore—I do not make a charge against the member for Gascoyne, I prefer to think that he was innocent and had no desire to mislead the people at the meeting—that board were responsible for the base metal industries closing down just as the Federal Government were responsible for the severe handicap inflicted on the timber industry. I am inclined to believe that the majority of the gentlemen who addressed that meeting at the Town Hall, prominent Nationalists, had no other intention than to mislead the people. I remembered at the time the advice once given me by the gentleman controlling the Rabbit Department, Mr. Crawford. We were talking about the destruction of rabbits and he said, "You want to change the baits frequently. At one time you can use phosphorised pollard while the next time you must use something else." That seems to be the policy of the National party. Last time it was win the war, and now it is the curse of Federation.

Hon. P. Collier: Change the bait.

Mr. TROY: The State Government have no control over the shipping companies or the metal industry, but both National Governments are allied by closer associations than has been the case with any similar Governments hitherto. The same causes are affirmed by both parties and members in the Federal Parliament and in this House found it necessary to join their opponents in order to carry out the policy of the Governments with which they are now associated. Despite the fact that the operations of the profiteers have been to the disadvantage of the primary producer, no action has been taken up to date. A new policy has been enunciated by the member for Perth who I regret to say is not in his seat. His new gospel to save this country and the world is the gospel of work, more work, work longer and harder. I cannot help thinking, and I say it without offence, that the gentleman who gave that advice never intended that advice to be for home consumption. It was advice for the other fellow. More work for the other fellow and not for himself. I would like to tell the member for Perth—and I hope someone will convey my remarks to him—that there is an old adage which says, "Example is better than precept." Why does not the hon. member set the example? Why does he not start in St. George's-terrace. He will get thousands there who do not add anything whatever to the wealth of the country. The occupations those people are engaged in are not material to the welfare of the country. If all the work that the member for Perth was engaged in for a period of 12 months was cast into the fire and turned into ashes, this State would not be one solitary penny the loser.

Hon. P. Collier: Bertie Johnston would have been richer.

Mr. TROY: I am surprised that the gentleman who gave that advice did not set the example. What is wrong with this country is that those who give the advice about more work and work harder do not propose to work harder themselves, and those gentlemen are invariably engaged in professions wherefrom they receive considerably more than is fair remuneration for services rendered. I guarantee that the primary producer who grows one bushel of wheat or produces one ounce of gold or one foot of timber—

Hon. P. Collier: Or makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before.

Mr. TROY: Exactly, is worth all the Pilkingtons and all the gentlemen engaged in similar professions. I suggest that the member for Perth and "Billy" Hughes also, who preached the gospel of work and more work, should immediately enter upon a new crusade by lighting the fiery torch and marching down St. George's-terrace.

Hon. P. Collier: Calling for recruits.

Mr. TROY: In that way they will do a greater service.

Hon. P. Collier: They would require conscription, I am afraid.

Mr. Munsie: They would never get it.

Mr. TROY: In my opinion, the majority of people are engaged in hard work and are doing their share. I desire to take exception to the remarks of the leader of the Country party, that the farmers were the only people who did their duty to this country during the war. I consider that statement was quite uncalled for. The hon. member said the extreme wings, the profiteer and the worker, were not doing their duty, that it was only the farmer who had done his duty. My opinion is that all the workers in this country have done their duty.

Mr. Harrison: I said there were two extreme wings, the striker and the profiteer.

Mr. TROY: The striker is a man whose wages have not been increased to any extent since the war started. He has made great sacrifices throughout the whole period of the war. The profiteer, on the other hand, is the person who has been able to make large fortunes. The farmer does his duty but no more than any other primary producer, and he has done it under most favourable conditions. A great number of the electors represented by the hon. member are maintained largely by payments made by the State and these gentlemen who are receiving 9s. a day and have their own homes are able to produce a number of commodities they require. As a matter of fact they should produce two-thirds of the commodities they require for their livelihood, and they are receiving support from the State to help to make a competence. I do not know what worker would not carry on under similar conditions. I would do so to-morrow.

Mr. Hudson: Even some of the Terrace people would go out under those conditions.

Mr. TROY: The leader of the Country party spoke for a community who had been given all the inducements by which they

could make a home for themselves. No particular pleading is required for any community who are carrying on under such conditions.

Mr. Pickering: The whole of the farming community are not carrying on operations in that way.

Mr. TROY: I know. The worker with his 9s. and 10s. a day has no hope for the future except an old-age pension, but the farmer has some hope for the future. He is being maintained by the Government of the country, and he should be jolly glad to carry on. I certainly would do so under similar circumstances. I hope the leader of the Country party will cease making such comparisons which do little good. This country cannot progress by the policy of the present Government or any policy which up to date has been adopted in this House, or by other Nationalist Governments. Before any progress can be made there must be a radical change. Banning the profiteer by word of mouth will do no good. The Government must take radical measures. This brings to mind a reference made the other evening by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) in a speech in which he could find no good whatever in the gentlemen with whom he had been associated and had found it necessary to leave. He stated—

Price fixing seemed to be the Government's long suit. One could not be at all optimistic with regard to what was likely to be done by the Government, some of whose members had bitterly opposed price fixing some years ago. One could not feel that we were in safe hands, when we had the Premier, the Minister for Works, and the Minister for Education administering price fixing because of the speeches they made in condemnation of the principle. Price fixing was abolished by those gentlemen just when it would have been far more effective than it could possibly be to-day. Prices having been put up, price-fixing would not bring them down again.

That is a most impudent imposture. The hon. member has been associated for nearly two years with the very members in whose hands, he says, he would not trust price fixing, and whom he condemns for having abolished it. After two years, he has found it necessary to rise in this House and condemn the very gentlemen with whom he was associated, because of what they have not done during the whole time he was associated with them as a member of the Ministry. His condemnation comes rather late in the day.

Hon. P. Collier: The same applies to his criticism of the State steamships—a condemnation of his own administration.

Mr. TROY: In my opinion he is imposing on our credulity. His remarks might be accepted in Marble Bar, or at Sandy Creek, but a speech of that character made in this House, where every member is conversant with the full facts, is not only impudent but amazing. The member for Pilbara richly deserved the condemnation from the Minister for Works. He does not expect

very much from the hands of the men who abolished price fixing. Yet he left this party, who was responsible for price fixing, and joined up with the very party whom he said for two years had done nothing and would not do anything. Now where does the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) stand?

Hon. P. Collier: Any old where.

Mr. TROY: The member for Guildford, to make his speech, went to every corner of the universe to obtain information from all the apostates of democracy to bring contempt on the principles he pretends to have once held. I am satisfied the present Government will not do much good by introducing a price fixing Bill, unless they are prepared to act differently when the measure is in operation. We do not want any more of the pretence or humbug of the Federal Government who established in Australia price fixing institutions, paying large salaries for inspectors and clerks, and who never took one solitary action and never intended to, because that was part of the game. The agreement by which those Liberals and those who once belonged to the Labour party came together, namely to re-establish the postal vote and abolish price fixing, was never carried out.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Do not you think the old Labour party has something on its soul with regard to the sugar combine?

Mr. TROY: The old Labour party could not tackle that because, when the Prime Minister asked for the power to deal with trusts and monopolies, the Minister, for one, voted against it. Mr. Sampson and Mr. Watt, who opposed the granting of those powers to the then Federal Government, are now in favour of granting them. The Honorary Minister should be silent, because he assisted to prevent the former Government from getting the power to deal with monopolies. The Government will have to take such action as the Governments in Italy and France and America have taken. In America during the last few days, the Government have taken possession of large quantities of foodstuffs and other commodities. In Italy, because the populace rose in rebellion, the prices fell 50 per cent. in a day. The same applies to France, and prices here would fall if the Government grappled with the problem in earnest, and if we had in the Federal Parliament members who would look after the well-being of the people of this State. The Government must give greater facilities for primary production and, when price-fixing is inaugurated, I want to see not only a public servant but a worker on the board representing the producer and consumer. I want the organisation, too, to have the power to make profiteering a criminal offence, by which they can imprison any person found guilty of profiteering. The Premier's land settlement policy is one which he says is a progressive land policy for the settlement of the South-West. If the Government have any particular policy, it is the development of the South-West. I

fear that the Premier proposes to follow in the South-West that fatuous policy which brought so much misery in the eastern districts of the State.

Hon. P. Collier: Defiant optimism.

Mr. TROY: I think such optimism is criminal because, if he is going to follow that same fatuous policy as he followed in the wheat belt, there will be a lot of ruined homes and blighted hopes.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Stick up for your country, Peter.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I cannot stick up for the Government.

Mr. TROY: The course of the present Government should be easy because they will have the money. The Commonwealth Government are providing the money, which we shall have to pay back later on. All will go as merry as a marriage bell so long as the money lasts, but when the money is spent, the Government then in office will be in a position similar to that of the last Labour Government, namely, they will have to carry the burden. The Government's policy of settling soldiers in the wheat belt is to buy out settlers who have made good, who have got their experience and paid for it, and to put in their place soldiers without experience.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Some of those settlers are mighty glad to sell.

Mr. TROY: But is it good policy to remove from the land a settler with the experience and put on the land a settler without the experience, who will have the added burden of the price paid by the Government for the land? I hope that policy will be discontinued.

The Minister for Works: We will consider it.

Mr. TROY: I do not despair of success in the wheat belt. I was one of those of whom the Premier made an experiment, but I think the future of the wheat belt is assured. But why does the Premier now enter upon a new policy in the South-West, in totally different country under totally different conditions when, by the experience already gained, a policy of settlement could be pursued in the wheat belt? There is much country in the wheat belt that has not been taken up and, if the policy of land settlement were pursued wisely in both areas, successful results would be secured. I know the development of the South-West will be slow. The first men who go there may not make good; the second and third generation will.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Not with modern methods.

Mr. TROY: I know the settlement of that part of the State must be attended to. We cannot allow the South-West to remain idle for years, as it has done, but let us not be too hasty. Let us act with caution, and if the Government proceed on such lines I shall not cavil at them. But if the Premier is going to throw all the repatriation money holus bolus into the South-West, and thrust people on the land there, I shall feel very

fearsome of the future. I do not know what the South-West is capable of. We hear a great deal about the production of butter and bacon there. For some years there have been butter factories at Bunbury and Busselton but, so far as I have heard, they have not been largely successful. I am inclined to think that for some years to come the place which shows the greatest promise for butter production is the wheat belt. For two-thirds of the year, the farmers engaged in wheat production should be able to provide the State's requirements in butter.

The Minister for Works: Horticulture will transform the country.

Mr. TROY: I visited Yarloop this year and was interested in the luxuriant growth of paspalum, but I was surprised to find the stock miserably poor.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): At what time of the year?

Mr. TROY: Early this year; in the summer. Something must be wrong with that country when, with such luxuriant growth of paspalum, the stock were still poor. It cannot possess the nutritive qualities, because I have had some experience of paspalum as feed for stock.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): That is the worst grass for stock unless it is kept fed down.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it must be kept fed down.

Mr. TROY: The whole of the north coast district of New South Wales was transformed from a very poor district into one of the most prosperous by the growth of paspalum. Travelling from Brisbane south for 100 miles one can see paspalum grass land carrying a cow to the acre all the year round. I am speaking from former experience of paspalum and know what it has done for those districts of New South Wales and Queensland. The land in the South-West is sour and it will take some years to sweeten it, and introduce those nutritive qualities necessary for fattening cattle and for milk production. I have had no experience of the South-West but I was reared in country which owes its prosperity to paspalum. I have contrasted some of my own cattle with cattle I saw while in the South-West, and if I may judge the relative values of the two districts by the condition of the cattle I would not give 1,000 acres of my land for 3,000 acres in the South-West. I may be wrong, but that is the impression I formed. There is one aspect of the repatriation of soldiers and their settlement on the land which has escaped the observation of the Government, and that is the cutting up of pastoral areas. Parliament has made provision for that purpose, but the Government have taken no steps in that direction. In my opinion, the cutting up of large pastoral areas holds out the best prospects of the successful settlement of soldiers on Western Australian lands. Take Yoweragabbie station, and Narlbra station adjoining, covering a total of about one million acres: 20 soldier settlers could make a good living for themselves and their families off that land if it were cut up. The Government railway runs right through that country, and yet the Government will not take the necessary

action, for fear of offending their supporters. Travelling from the Murchison to Perth recently I spoke to one of the largest of the Murchison squires—I will not mention his name—on this very subject, and he said to me, "The present policy cannot continue. We must cut up the large pastoral areas. They cannot be held as they are for all time, if the country is to progress." I say, the sooner the cutting up is done, the better for the successful development of Western Australia and for the railway and general revenue of this State. We hear of droughts on the Murchison, but the drought hits the small squatter no harder than it hits the farmer. If there were a drought to-morrow, I should lose all I possess, pretty well. But the squatter does not lose everything because of a drought. I do not know of any industry in which there is such quick recovery as in the pastoral industry. I am speaking of the cutting up of large pastoral areas into blocks of say 30,000 acres for soldier settlers.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Twenty thousand, did you say, or 30,000?

Mr. TROY: I have never yet said that 20,000 acres is a sufficient area on the Murchison. I think 20,000 acres was first mentioned in the Council. What I have favoured is an area of from 50,000 to 80,000 acres.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): I favour 80,000 to 100,000 acres.

Mr. TROY: Twenty thousand acres was mentioned, I fancy, for the purpose of prejudicing the scheme. The same process of cutting up could be applied in the Gascoyne district. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) is enthusiastic regarding the possibilities of irrigation in his electorate. I hope the Government will not engage in such a scheme. I say this without any desire whatever of prejudicing the claims of the member for Gascoyne. But the hon. member must realise that a few hundred settlers, even 100, on the Gascoyne River with a few acres between them producing perishable commodities must have a ready market; and this would involve a Government steamship service to Carnarvon alone. It would never pay. Give the returned soldier sufficient pastoral land to carry 2,000 sheep, and he then has the possibility of making a livelihood for himself and his family. When that has been done, we may tackle irrigation. I do not consider that the scheme of the member for Gascoyne is one which the small population of this State could handle at present. Moreover, it would prove too costly. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) referred to the iniquitous land measures passed by the Wilson Government and the Lefroy Government. Was the hon. member in his right senses when he made that reference? Did not he support those measures? Was not he commended by Mr. Butcher, the then member for Gascoyne, because of his broadmindedness? One of the provisions of the Bill deprived the people of their heritage in the North. Did the member for Pilbara condemn the measure on that account? No. He condemned it because a few pastoralists would, under that measure, have to pay higher rentals than he thought they ought to pay. It is opportune to draw attention to the unsatisfactory advice given to this House by the Crown Solicitor and the other legal advisers of the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear! This House was absolutely misled in the passing of that Bill, and it has been misled since.

Mr. TROY: If we read the speeches delivered on that particular measure, it will be seen that the attention of the Government was drawn to the matter time after time. But the legal advisers of the Government, who have all the knowledge, while laymen have none, said that there was no danger of large aggregations of pastoral country being held by a single lessee under the provisions of the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: I suspect the misleading was not altogether unintentional or entirely accidental.

Mr. TROY: The advice given not only by the Crown Law Department but by legal members of this House was not advice which was in the best interests of the country.

Hon. P. Collier: The plain fact is that we have on the statute-book an Act which we never intended to pass, and which we never thought we were passing.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Who is denying it?

Hon. P. Collier: Who is responsible for it?

Mr. Lambert: Who is going to rectify it?

Mr. TROY: As regard the mining industry, I was surprised to learn that of the amount of £50,000 on last year's Loan Estimates for mining development, only £8,000 has been expended. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) condemns the late Minister for Mines for the non-expenditure of the amount. The Minister for Mines of the day should have done his duty by the mining industry and seen that the full amount provided was expended in the development of the industry. In future I shall do my best, whoever may bring down the Estimates, to have the full amount for mining development expended in a manner which will promote the industry. Probably the Minister thought he was acting economically, and possibly he followed the advice of Cabinet in this matter, but apparently with regard to economy he has been more loyal to his colleagues than the other members of the Government have been to him. I was glad to see a reference in the newspapers recently to the fact that the Government did not intend to sell the State enterprises.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for Works is struggling to get rid of them.

The Minister for Works: I am not struggling very much.

Mr. TROY: It is nothing short of poetic justice that a deputation representing the views of the National interests of Western Australia should have received the refusal they did the other day from no other person than the most boisterous and violent opponent of State enterprise in this House, the present Minister for Works.

The Minister for Works: Boisterous?

Mr. TROY: Yes. "Boisterous" expresses it. It struck me as poetic justice that the very persons who put the Government into office on the promise that the State enterprises would be got rid of should have received this recent refusal from no less a person than the gentleman who for three solid years made no speech in this Chamber without indulging in violent condemnation of State enterprises. Now the Nationalists have learnt that a Nationalist outside the House is not the same as a Nationalist inside the House,

and that a Nationalist in Opposition is not the same as a Nationalist in office. Members of the Nationalist party will be gratified to learn that the policy which they promised the electors at the last general election should be carried out was not to be carried out. I want to express my very deep gratification that the State steamship service is to be extended when the time is opportune, and that the experiment initiated by the Labour Government will be continued and, further, will be enlarged and improved as time goes on.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne): It is just about two years since the late leader of the National party delivered his policy speech in his electorate. A little later, when I was invited to enter Parliament, I decided to join the National party because the Premier's policy had appealed to me as the best for the country at that time, particularly that plank of produce, produce, produce. I recognised that although economy and taxation were very necessary, they in themselves would not bring us to a better financial position, that it was essential that we should have greater population and increased production. I very much regret to say that I had not been long in Parliament when I had to acknowledge that the policy being carried out by the then Premier and his Government appeared to be one of words rather than of action. Another thing: At the last election some 15 new members were returned to Parliament, the greater number of whom ranged themselves behind the then Premier (Sir Henry Lefroy). Those new members, presumably, were the best fitted to advocate the requirements of their districts and to suggest what was necessary in the best interests, not only of their electorates, but of the State as a whole. The then Premier invited suggestions from those new members. He paid my electorate the compliment of asking me to move the Address-in-reply. During that debate and others of the first session of this Parliament, a number of recommendations were advanced to the Government. In my opinion it was the duty of the Premier to have taken a note of those recommendations and, at a later stage, called upon those who had made them to discuss the propositions with him. I contend that through the Government treating those recommendations with scant courtesy the State has lost some hundreds of thousands of pounds. The statement may sound a little exaggerated, but I intend to prove it. When I moved the Address-in-reply nearly two years ago I made use of the following remarks—

I desire to refer briefly to the industries which particularly affect the North-West. The first I desire to touch on is the pastoral industry, the principal industry of that part of the State. I am glad to say that the industry is now in a flourishing condition. But there is danger ahead. Before the war the shipping requirements of the North-West were met by four Singa-

pore steamers, three cattle steamers, and a mail boat. That tonnage has now been reduced by approximately 50 per cent. There are now only two Singapore boats on that coast, and only one cattle boat, because I understand the "Maira" has been definitely withdrawn. The one mail boat runs only occasionally. Hon. members will see that North-Western tonnage has been reduced by 50 per cent. But, on top of that, the effectiveness of the remaining tonnage has been further reduced by reason of the fact that before the war the wool went north and the stock came south, whereas now both wool and stock have to come south. Up to the present no difficulty has been experienced from this fact, because the seasons have been good and the stock routes have been open. The records of the pastoral industry, however, show that after a cycle of good seasons we must expect bad seasons. We have had three good seasons, and may reasonably expect a bad season to follow. What is going to happen to our produce and our stock if a bad season comes along next year, closing the stock routes, with the shipping tonnage fallen away as it has? The question is not one which affects the North-West only. The people of the metropolitan area are to eat the meat of the North-West, and they will suffer if that meat cannot be brought down—the cost of living must in such circumstances increase materially. As regards the State Steamship Service, I am opposed to State enterprise unless the enterprise be of such a character that it is impossible for any individual or body of individuals to carry it on. The railway service is an instance in point; and I consider it to be the interest of the State as a whole to develop the North-West by steamer communication in the same way as our Governments have developed the southern portion of the State by railway communication. At the present time, unfortunately, the requirements of the North-West are supplied by two old, obsolete boats. Both vessels are too slow for the exacting conditions of the North-Western service. I consider the Government would be acting wisely in immediately ordering two new steamers to run on the North-West coast.

At that point Mr. Angwin interjected, "What about the money?" Continuing my remarks I said:

Of course the question of money comes in, but I understand that really no money would be required to obtain the two steamers. They can be purchased on the same conditions as the "Kangaroo" was purchased. One of them, a passenger boat, would cost about £170,000, and the other, a cattle boat, about £130,000. If handled on the same lines as resulted in the freight bookings made for the "Kangaroo," these two steamers could earn something like £100,000 or £120,000 on their way out; so that, after deducting the cost of running them, they would not cost the State more than £50,000 or £60,000

each. The old "Kwinana," which cost the Government some £17,000 could, I believe, be sold to-day for £50,000. The matter is one which the Government should take into their serious consideration in view of the difficulty threatening the North-West as regards the getting away of its stock and produce.

Those figures are not guess-work. There were in the possession of the Government at that time files from the manager of the State Steamship Service advising the Government that those steamers could be purchased for the figures I have quoted if immediately ordered. Further, Mr. Stevens had offers of that freight which I have quoted open for a certain time, until the Government made up their mind whether or not to purchase the steamers. That offer of a mail boat for £170,000 was open, and only required the decision of the Government to accept it, as also was the offer of the stock boat, and the freights which I said could have been earned on the way out were also open. The Government took no notice of my remarks.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was against their policy.

Mr. ANGELO: I strongly recommended that those two boats should be purchased, but the Government, taking not the slightest notice of members who knew the existing conditions, turned down the proposition. I was given access to the manager's reports by the courtesy of the Minister then in control, so I am not speaking without my facts. We are now told that the Government intend to increase the service, and probably they will be asked to order a new boat straight away. That new boat, I am informed by Mr. Stevens, will cost £350,000—the same boat that we could have bought two years ago for £170,000.

The Minister for Works: When did you hear that from Mr. Stevens?

Mr. ANGELO: Within the last fortnight. And the cattle boat will now cost about £270,000. If we work it out, two years ago the Government could have got a new mail boat for £170,000 and a cattle boat for £130,000, and those two boats on the way out would have earned freight of £200,000; thus it will be seen that we should have had those two boats running here four or five months ago at a cost of £100,000. Against that we shall now have to pay £620,000 for the two boats, while the utmost freight they can earn on the way out will be about £100,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are you sure that Mr. Stevens was not dealing with the boat that was recommended 12 months prior to that?

Mr. ANGELO: The boat I am referring to is the one which he recommended should be purchased two years ago.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was recommended by an engineer in England before the Labour party went out of office. We proposed to buy her, but the Legislative Council turned down the proposed expenditure.

Mr. ANGELO: It means that because the Government did not then take the advice offered them they will now have to pay something like £400,000 more than should have been necessary. And in addition to this, the people of the metropolitan area have suffered considerable loss through those boats not having been ordered. Mutton is selling up to 1s. per lb., and beef to 1s. 6d. per lb. Yet there are 40,000 or 50,000 fat bullocks in Kimberley and 100,000 fat sheep in the Gascoyne which cannot be brought down. It will be found that by not having those two boats, as recommended by the Labour Government and, later on, asked for by members who knew the conditions in the North, the people of the metropolitan area during the last few months have been paying between £15,000 and £20,000 per week extra for their meat supply. In the same speech I strongly recommended the expenditure by the Government of a sum of £2,000 or £3,000 on opening up a stock route between Hamelin Pool and Ajana. It was only a small span of about 80 miles and this route would have run through virgin country. All that was required was three sub-artesian bores to connect up the gap between Hamelin Pool and the Murchison River, but that also was turned down. As I predicted, bad seasons have now come along and the existing stock routes are closed. Had the route I advocated at a cost of £2,000 or £3,000 been put through, the people of the metropolitan area would have had for consumption 80,000 to 100,000 sheep that are now fat between the Gascoyne and Wooramel. It was a loss to the population of between £30,000 and £40,000 because the then Government had apparently no sympathy with the recommendations that were made. Is it any wonder, therefore, that I and others are glad to see a change of Government? I welcome the present Premier because I feel sure he is a progressive man. He has announced his policy. It is to a large extent the same as that of his predecessor, but I feel certain that in this instance it is going to be a policy of action rather than of words. This I consider is what Western Australia requires at the present time. The Premier will agree with me when I say that the only way this State is going to square its finances, or in any way to develop, is by increasing the population and production. I should be only too pleased to see the indebtedness of the State increased by 50 per cent. if at the same time we could double our population. That would bring down the indebtedness per head by 33 per cent. The Premier has been accused of bad administration in his past land policy. Probably there have been faults in that direction. The man who makes no mistakes generally does not do much for his country. From what I have learned since I sat in this House, and from various visits I have paid to different parts of the State, I feel that a lot of the trouble was due to bad advice and bad information tendered by the various departments. There is one case in which the Premier is accused of having sent people out to settle in a dis-

trict for wheat growing where there was a rainfall of 14 inches in the year. Since the people have been settled there, the rainfall has been very short indeed. I find that bad records—

Mr. Pickering: No records at all.

Mr. ANGELO: Or I should say, perhaps, the absence of records has created this position. Sometimes the statistics that are kept are very faulty. In connection with the Gascoyne settlement, we were told by Mr. Curlewis that Carnarvon had not enough wind with which to drive a windmill for any length of time throughout the year, and that there was not as much wind as there is in Perth. I would point out that at the Observatory the wind gauge is at the top of the building, whereas in Carnarvon it is in a backyard surrounded by other buildings. The skippers of the different vessels trading along the coast say that Carnarvon is as windy a place as any on the coast. The Premier has been blamed for faulty methods in connection with his land policy, but in my opinion these faults were not due to him but to the departmental officers. One glaring instance was brought under my notice recently. In Ajana we visited several little farms lately. The people there each have 200 or 300 acres, and are growing a little wheat, and carrying a few sheep. On each of these farms I noticed a large agricultural machine—I believe a harvester—costing about £100. These were lying out in the sun and the weather. None of these farms possessed a windmill or a tank. The first thing in the morning the farmer had to get up, and for two hours or so draw water until he had enough for his family and his stock. He then sent his dog round the paddocks and had the sheep brought in to water. Is it any wonder that the stock did not get fat? If the proper method had been adopted of utilising one of these harvesters for every half a dozen farmers very much better results could have been obtained.

The Minister for Works: They will not pool the poison carts, let alone the harvesters.

Mr. ANGELO: That only shows that there is a want of tact somewhere. One harvester would have sufficed for at least half a dozen of these people, and the money saved could have been spent on windmills and tanks. With windmills the water could have been raised, and so much time would have been saved to the farmer for his ordinary operations. It seems ridiculous that valuable machinery like this should be left out in the sun to rust and perhaps only be used during one week in the year, whilst, if one harvester could have been shared by half a dozen farmers, the money saved could have been spent on providing better water facilities. By this means the sheep would have become fat instead of being kept poor by being run in once a day by means of a dog. With regard to the offer to the British Government to take a large number of ex-soldiers as settlers in this country, if the Premier can arrange for each immigrant to

be accompanied by the sum of £500, I say let him go ahead at once and complete the arrangement.

Hon. P. Collier: Or send the £500 unaccompanied by anyone.

Mr. ANGELO: I understand that about 12,000 men a year are to come here, over a period of three years. Do hon. members realise that this means, in the course of three years, that a sum of 18 million pounds will be available for the development of the State?

Hon. P. Collier: How much?

Mr. ANGELO: I said a sum of 18 million pounds. The leader of the Opposition apparently does not realise what that offer means to the country. Our indebtedness is only about 36 millions, and if we can get another 18 millions of money guaranteed by the British Government we should not hesitate to take it. We have also three or four million pounds from the repatriation scheme, which I am glad to see the Government are accepting. So that the best results may be had from this expenditure, the Government would be well advised to secure the services of experts, men who are thoroughly experienced in the development of our various industries. The Public Works Department would also very much benefit if it possessed an engineer of more experience than the officer we now have.

The Minister for Works: Do you mean for the North-West?

Mr. ANGELO: I mean for the whole State. It is ridiculous to expect that we can get the best engineering ability and knowledge for the paltry sum that is being paid to our Engineer-in-Chief.

The Minister for Works: It is £1,300 a year.

Mr. ANGELO: It is no more than a soft goods firm would pay to its manager. We want an engineer in this State who has a very wide experience and a knowledge of the latest methods employed throughout the world, even if we have to pay him up to £3,000 a year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have a very good man now.

Mr. ANGELO: Unfortunately, as pointed out in the leading article of the "West Australian" to-day, there is a number of monuments up and down the State which do not reflect credit upon the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How do you know he was the engineer responsible?

Mr. ANGELO: He is the permanent head of that particular section.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is not.

The Minister for Works: Many of these things were not under his jurisdiction.

Mr. ANGELO: Who, then, is to blame? The time has come when this State should import an engineer, say, from India, or any other country where irrigation works are carried on on a large scale, in order that we might have the benefit of his services. The future of the North-West will depend to a great extent on irrigation works. I am not talking about the Gascoyne River only, because

there are many rivers besides that one. There are dozens of rivers which are admirably suited for irrigation purposes. We must have an engineer who has had experience in this direction. If not, we shall be obliged to educate one of our own at considerable expense to the State. We also require experts for other matters in regard to which the Government decide that expansion and development are necessary. It is better to pay a man a good salary than to pay for the huge mistakes that have been made and are liable to be made by incompetent persons.

The Minister for Works: When our young fellows go from here they get double the salary in the other States.

Mr. ANGELO: If we have a good man we should pay him and stick to him. What is the good of allowing our good men to leave us for the sake of a paltry few hundred a year?

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Minister for Works could not stick to anything.

The Minister for Works: Could I not?

Hon. P. Collier: I am afraid we shall lose the Minister for Works unless we raise his pay.

Mr. Lambert: He has stuck to his portfolio pretty well.

Mr. ANGELO: With this British Government scheme and the repatriation scheme we should have a sum of about 20 million pounds to spend within a few years. Let us, therefore, have in our departments men who are capable of devising the best means for the expenditure of this money.

Hon. T. Walker: More business acumen.

Mr. ANGELO: If we have not got it in the House, let us import it and pay for it. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) dealt briefly the other night with the question of the Federal and State finances. I should like to remind hon. members that two years ago I asked a question in this House with regard to the finances of the State in conjunction with the Federal finances.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It caused a lot of public comment at the time.

Mr. ANGELO: In the answer to those questions we were promised by the head of the Government that an opportunity would be given for a debate on the matter so that the best brains the House possessed might argue it out. Nothing more was heard about it. I pointed out that within two years we would have to approach the Federal Government for a new financial arrangement.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You did not revive the question yourself.

Mr. ANGELO: I did. If the hon. member will turn to the debates of last session he will see that I spoke for nearly half an hour on it, and I urged the Government to carry out the promise given us during the previous session to let the House debate the matter.

Hon. P. Collier: Then why support a Government who will not keep their promises?

Mr. ANGELO: We have a new leader now and some new blood in the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: How about bringing Hughes to the bar of the House and making him listen to us while we debate the subject.

Mr. ANGELO: The other day I got from the Under Treasurer figures to the 30th June of this year. The State received from the Commonwealth during the 12 months ended 30th June last 25s. per head of the population. That amounted to £391,995. There was a special contribution of £164,710, while the old age pensions amounted to £168,006, and the maternity bonus to £37,635, making a total of £762,346. Against that the Federal Government received from Western Australia in taxation—this is estimated—£680,000. Customs payments received in this State amounted to £675,465, and we might also add 15s. per head of the population—a reasonable figure—because we are a consuming State and we send to the other States for commodities on which customs duties are paid there. That would give us £230,000. Therefore, in all, we find that this State paid the Commonwealth approximately £1,535,465, which gives us a difference of £823,119 to the disadvantage of Western Australia. We can fairly estimate that the cost of the various departments—I am leaving out the Post and Telegraphs because the revenue and expenditure there are nearly equal—would amount to probably £150,000. So that we are, roughly speaking, nearly £700,000 to the bad so far as our relations with the Commonwealth are concerned. I think that that matter has to be seriously considered by the Government and the House, and all I ask is that the debate, which I advocated two years ago, should now take place, so that every member might weigh the pros and cons as they appeal to him. That would be a big guidance for the Treasurer, or the Premier, or whoever might be going over early next year to confer with the Federal Government and members of the other States in connection with the drawing up of the new agreement. That is only one of the many disadvantages that this State is suffering from in connection with Federation. Other disadvantages have been mentioned at various times. There is the base metals industry, which has been so seriously interfered with and threatens serious loss to this State. I would like to draw attention to the fact that the Commonwealth are still advertising their loans and making them free of State taxation. It is estimated that for every million pounds of war loan that this State raised it is now losing £7,000 or £8,000 a year in taxation, simply because of the action of the Federal Government. That is another disadvantage under which we labour. There was a public meeting held in the Town Hall recently, and the Government were approached with a request that Mr. Owen or some other Government official qualified to carry out the work, should prepare a report in connection with this matter.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What happened to the Premier that night?

Mr. ANGELO: We have not heard yet and no report has yet been published. I hope, however, that the Government will take the matter seriously into consideration. Something like £700,000 a year is our financial disadvantage, and we are sitting here and not a member of the Government will give us any word or explanation, or any idea of how the position is viewed, or what it is intended to do. When we can arrive at some arrangement with the Commonwealth by which this great disadvantage will disappear, our troubles will be lessened. I have pointed out before and I want to repeat it, that in Western Australia we have a northern territory of our own, and Western Australia has contributed something like £400,000 towards the cost of the administration of the Federal Northern Territory.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Against that there is the expenditure on the Trans-continental railway.

The Minister for Works: They will make us pay for that right enough. Don't you worry!

Mr. ANGELO: The attention of the Commonwealth Government should be drawn to the Northern Territory question and they should be asked to refund what we have paid annually on the understanding that we spend it in the development of our own northern territory. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) criticised the statement made by Mr. Holmes in another place that we were going back at the rate of about £2,000 a day, and he pointed out that although our deficit for the last 12 months was £662,000 we had contributed £313,000 to the sinking fund and that that left us to the bad only to the extent of £279,000. I have before me a return giving information about the loan expenditure of last year. I find that departmental expenditure ran into £28,000, and that harbours and rivers accounted for £65,000. We know that in connection with most of these harbour and river works they are merely patching up old jobs paid for out of previous loans.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is about all the department is fit for to-day.

Mr. ANGELO: This should have been paid for out of loan. There was also spent on the development of agriculture £588,000, on public buildings £21,000, and on the Wyndham Freezing Works £100,000. I ask hon. members whether these are reproductive works. We may perhaps leave out the Wyndham Freezing Works. We get a total then of over £300,000. The member for Irwin stated that if we went to a bank manager and said that we had spent so much and against that we had so much for sinking fund, the bank would be satisfied we had only gone back to the extent of the difference. No manager would ask for information as to how the money had been spent, and whether it had been spent in the direction to which I have just referred. He would ask how much was to be allowed for depreciation.

Mr. Lambert: You must have put the acid on them pretty solidly when you were a bank manager.

Mr. ANGELO: I carried out my duties on business lines. Some of this expenditure to which I refer is departmental. There is nothing reproductive there. I contend that we ought to look upon that sinking fund as a depreciation fund and it is a mighty little one if taken at that. The other day I was discussing the matter with the ex-Treasurer and he said, "It does not matter; you must take into consideration public buildings constructed out of revenue some years ago." I told him, however, that I considered that was bad business because we could not take credit for an asset built up some years ago, to bolster up the deficit for the current year. I consider that Mr. Holmes was quite right when he said we were going back at the rate of £2,000 a day.

The Minister for Mines: You must take your assets into account when you prepare a balance sheet.

Mr. ANGELO: Mr. Holmes referred to the losses we had experienced during the last three or four years.

Mr. Lambert: Who is Holmes?

Mr. Angwin: You admit that the Labour party left behind some assets?

Mr. ANGELO: I admit that there are good assets and if a balance sheet were prepared we would find the assets considerably higher than the liabilities, but that is not what Mr. Holmes contended. His contention is that we are going back at the rate of £2,000 a day and I think he is right. I am not a pessimist; neither do I cry stinking fish, but it is due to hon. members to realise that the position is bad and we must do our best to economise in administration and not object to fair taxation, and that we must assist the Government in carrying out their policy of production and also endeavour to increase the population.

The Minister for Mines: How are you going to economise in administration?

Mr. ANGELO: That should be done to the utmost of the Government's ability.

Hon. P. Collier: That is definite enough, surely.

Mr. Lambert: You can go to the country on that.

Mr. ANGELO: There is another matter I would like to mention and it is the rent on pastoral leases. It will be remembered that an Act was passed in 1917 which permitted pastoral leases to be brought under its provisions, one of which was that rent was to be doubled. What the Government are doing at the present time is that they are charging all the new leases—and about nine-tenths of the old leases have been brought under the provisions of the Act—double rent, and are not waiting until the appraiser comes along and fixes what the rent shall be. Many of those leases on which double rent is being paid will have to be brought back to the old rates, and it may be that future rents will be even lower.

Hon. P. Collier: They will get a refund.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, but what is being done with the money in the meantime? I consider that half of the additional rent should be lodged in the Treasury to the credit of a separate fund from which rebates could be made. In that way we would not be hampering financially the years to come. That would be only a fair business proposition. Instead of doing that the Government are bolstering up the present revenue by the amount received to the detriment of the years to come when the rebates will have to be made. I do not consider that is fair business.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not considering a year or two; they will not be there then.

Mr. ANGELO: Regarding repatriation, much can be done in the South-West, but the Government should not allow too much of our valuable timber land to be cut out. It is of no use settling one industry at the expense of another, and I am afraid that, when land is being cleared for many of the settlements, timber reserves will be depleted.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): There is any amount of land without timber.

Mr. ANGELO: I am told that valuable timber is being cleared at present to create settlements for returned soldiers.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): You are misinformed.

Mr. ANGELO: The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) mentioned the proposed settlement on the Gascoyne, and I must reply to his criticisms. What we want is not a large settlement but 200 or 300 men sent there for demonstration purposes. The larger schemes will come later on. Every pound of butter, bacon and cheese that is used in the North-West comes from the south, and is probably imported from the Eastern States. Mr. Scott, the State Irrigationist, who visited the Gascoyne with me recently, is very pleased with what he saw of the prospects for dairying there. We want to establish a small dairying proposition to supply the North-West with our own products. The member for Mt. Magnet seems to think the idea is to settle huge numbers of people in the Gascoyne. That will necessitate a large expenditure to dam the rivers. I am not asking for that at present. All I want is a small settlement to prove the possibilities of that portion of the State. The member for Mt. Magnet also spoke of cutting up large pastoral areas into smaller stations. I agree it would be a very good thing if some of those large stations could be cut up and so made to support larger numbers of people. Some of the holdings are far too large, but we are faced with a brick wall. The present Act does not allow of pastoral leases being resumed for pastoral purposes; they may be resumed for agricultural purposes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is where the Act is wrong.

Mr. ANGELO: Just so. The Government have the machinery now under the Repat-

riation Act, so long as they compensate the holder. I think compensation might be offered in some cases, and an effort made to purchase some of these leases. If the Government approached some of the station owners, I feel certain they would make a reasonable offer of some of the properties. Drought is prevailing at present and a number of station owners—

Mr. Munsie: Want to get out.

Mr. ANGELO: There is a bogey over their heads in connection with war profits and other taxation, and they cannot make a "do" of things. Now would be the time to approach them and see whether they would sell. I was hoping the intention of the House that no man should hold more than one million acres would be rigidly adhered to. From the answers given today, apparently that is not being done.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): The Act has been rigidly adhered to.

Mr. ANGELO: Perhaps so, but not the intention of the House. I would welcome legislation that would give effect to the wishes of the House as expressed when that measure was passed. I was looking forward to some of these areas of over one million acres being made available for soldier settlements, because I consider our soldiers should be given the best we have. They gave the best they had, and we should do the same. I urged in this House last year that a vacant piece of land near Hamelin Pool, comprising some three million acres, should be earmarked for returned soldiers. I understand it is good sheep country, but requires water. I induced a few returned soldiers to go with me to the Honorary Minister, who met us in a very sympathetic spirit and promised an artesian boring plant. The whole of that land has now been taken up by returned soldiers, and the Minister has despatched a boring plant to prove the country and develop it. To show what the Government and those desirous of assisting the soldiers are doing, I may state that I went to the Lands Department and found that an outside man had applied the other day for the whole of the remaining land, consisting of 400,000 acres, and I had the application refused on the ground that this area would settle four soldiers.

Mr. Harrison: Is there artesian water near by?

Mr. ANGELO: The closest bore is about 15 miles from the boundary of one of the blocks. The flow is two million gallons of potable water from a depth of 370 feet, and all this land, according to Mr. Gibb Maitland, is in the artesian basin. The Minister has gone further and has despatched an expert to have the land inspected, so that none of these returned soldiers will be embarked on an unprofitable undertaking. I wish to thank the Honorary Minister for the assistance he has given in this direction. I am certain if the results prove satisfactory, we shall have a nice little district settling something like 30 soldiers on propositions that will

prove profitable to them. The Premier mentioned the settlement of the Kimberleys. I would again urge the Government to consider the scheme I advanced to the House last year—the settlement of the land between Wyndham and Derby, where there are tens of millions of acres of magnificent pastoral country, well watered, with numerous flowing rivers. Mr. Fred Brockman's report has given us that information, and others who have been there since corroborate his statement. There are also good harbours. The Government should send up a boat with 200 or 300 returned soldiers, accompanied by a doctor and a few surveyors. They could pick up horses on the road, and settle a town in one of these harbours, as was done at Wyndham. The one trouble is the natives. People have kept away from that part of the State owing to the presence of large numbers of wild natives.

Mr. Pickering: What do you suggest doing with the natives?

Mr. ANGELO: With the kind, but firm treatment which only a band of soldiers could give them, these natives in a year or two would be transformed from hindrances to assets. After a little training, natives make capital stockmen. If such an expedition were fitted out, I feel sure the same success would result as in the case of the expedition which developed the district of Wyndham 20 or 30 years ago. One of the great disadvantages in settling our soldiers in the pastoral industry is the heavy cost of wire; but this would be a cattle proposition and no wire would be required. I trust the Government will consider this scheme. I have mentioned it to several people who know the Kimberley district well, and they all consider it is the one way of developing that portion of the State. If it were developed it would be capable in a few years time of carrying a quarter of a million extra cattle. Another great feature to its advantage is that we already have meat works on one side—at Wyndham—and I understand a company is being formed for the erection of meat works at Derby, so that by the time they had stock for sale, these settlers would have a market for their stock on both sides. Regarding the State steamship service, I am opposed to business concerns being undertaken by the Government, but I do not consider steamships are business concerns. Steamships are as necessary for the development of the North as are railways down here.

Mr. Lambert: Does that make them any the less State-owned?

Mr. ANGELO: No; I advocate that the State should own them. Without favourable freights we shall never be able to develop the North. The member for Mt. Magnet has quoted figures setting out the huge profits made by private steamship companies. That is one reason why the State should continue its service. If companies make such huge profits, they would be made at the expense of the development of the North-West if it had to depend on privately-owned boats.

Mr. Munsie: Do not you think it would have been a good thing if the Commonwealth had owned all those steamers and made the profits for the people?

Mr. ANGELO: I think so.

Mr. Munsie: Yet you are against State-owned concerns.

Mr. ANGELO: I object to State-owned brick works and such like. But it is impossible to get private individuals or companies to start steamship services in opposition to an existing monopoly. Anyone will start brick works and fish shops.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you say we should have implement works?

Mr. ANGELO: I do not think so. The Farmers and Settlers' Association are becoming a very powerful factor in the land, and should be able to raise enough money to carry on implement works themselves. The North-West is not full of squatters, as some members seem to think. I suppose there are 50 or 60 working men for every squatter in the North-West. It is for their sake, and for the sake of the thousands of people we hope to get there to develop that huge area, that we want these steamers.

Mr. Green: Are you in favour of nationalising wool raising on the same lines?

Mr. ANGELO: I do not think it is possible. Private enterprise seems to be able to do more in that direction than would be possible if it were put into a huge Government concern.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why have a wheat pool?

The Minister for Mines: Would you nationalise chemicals?

Mr. Lambert: And flour also?

Mr. ANGELO: We are not getting out of our steamships the work that we should. The State steaunship "Eucla" runs from Albany to the south coast. The other day I obtained a time table of this steamer's running. One can hardly credit it, but I find that for two months out of every three she is tied up at Albany jetty for 20 days out of 28, and that in the third month she is tied up similarly for 16 days out of 28. Meantime the North-West is starving for steamer space. Before the strike, the vessel was leaving Albany on a Wednesday to run to Israelite Bay, whence she returned in five days, whereupon she was tied up for nine. Thereafter she went to Esperance and back again, taking three days, and then was tied up for 11 days. This went on month after month. Had the boat been diverted to Carnarvon, she could have done the work on the South coast as well. Had she been allowed to go into Shark Bay, it would have saved the "Bambra" two days on her monthly trip—one day going up and one day coming back. Moreover, the "Eucla" could have taken all the Carnarvon cargo and saved the "Bambra" that space also, the unloading of the cargo taking a day. Thus the "Bambra" would have been saved three days on her monthly trip.

The Minister for Mines: But we have a mail contract on the South coast.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes. That disability was hurled at my head by the Postmaster General's Department, and there was shown to me a long telegram from the people of Israelite Bay objecting to any interference with their postal service. But the scheme I suggest would not interfere with the Israelite Bay residents' postal service for one hour. The boat could have run to Israelite Bay in exactly the same way as she is doing now, once per month.

Mr. Hudson: But the boat comes up to Fremantle also. Be fair.

Mr. ANGELO: If she is coming up to Fremantle, she is on her way to Carnarvon. Contrast the running of that steamer with the running of the little "Kurnalpi," which is owned privately. The "Kurnalpi" is into port one day and out the next. As regards the Esperance mails, they could in these days of shipping shortage be sent by motor car, if necessary. Under the scheme I propose, the mail service on the South coast might be a little irregular, but that is the only disadvantage involved. The "Bambra" on her last trip North shut out about 50 passengers and about 200 tons of cargo for Wyndham. This could be avoided if my suggestion were adopted. However, I feel certain that the Minister now controlling the State steamship service will give my proposal every consideration.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, especially as regards taking the boat away from Albany and sending her up North.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not wish to take that vessel away from Albany at all. It is only a matter of slightly altering the time table. As regards freezing works, I am glad to inform the House that a company has been formed for the erection of freezing works at Carnarvon and that the works have already been started. The preparing of the land has been completed, and all that we are waiting for now is shipping to take up the building material and portion of the machinery. The Carnarvon works will deal with 1,500 sheep per day and will employ 160 men. I mention these things because the member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) has told us what Fremantle is going to do in this direction. The squatters of the Carnarvon district have raised £45,000 and the Government have lent the company—this is by way of loan only—a sum of £30,000.

Hon. P. Collier: At what rate of interest?

Mr. ANGELO: At five and a half per cent. The company have to give the Government a mortgage in the same way as a bank would require.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Here we have the Government borrowing money at upwards of six per cent. and lending it at five and a half per cent.

Mr. ANGELO: The money is being obtained by the Government at four and a half per cent. from the insurance companies. These meat works being required as an insurance against famine, the transaction seems perfectly justified. As to the freezing works at Fremantle, I do not care whether the Gov-

ernment build them or a private company build them, but I do strongly urge that the cool storage chambers at Fremantle should be controlled by the Government.

The Minister for Mines: They should be on the wharf, too.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes.

Mr. Munsie: I thought you were opposed to State enterprise.

Mr. ANGELO: I am giving my reasons for this. I believe in co-operation. The Carnarvon meat works are being built by squatters on a co-operative basis.

Hon. F. Collier: With the co-operation of the Government.

Mr. ANGELO: Geraldton will do the same, and so, I presume, will other centres. But when it comes to the only port in Western Australia from which frozen meat can be shipped—

The Minister for Mines: No. There is Albany.

Mr. ANGELO: Albany is at the other end. The North-West has to depend on Fremantle for export, and I contend it is on the lines of co-operation if the Government, representing the whole State, should take part in establishing cool storage at the only port from which the northern pastoralists' product can be shipped. Cool storage should be part and parcel of the Fremantle harbour facilities accommodation in the same way as the wharves and sheds are. That is the only means by which the northern pastoralists can get a fair deal when shipping from Fremantle. We do not know who may be in control of cool storage at Fremantle. It might be the party with which the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) is associated. I am pleased to see the brief reference in the Governor's Speech to the North-West and its development. I thank the Premier for having advised the Governor to that effect, but I do hope that the reference in question will not be like so many similar utterances in the past, simply a matter of words. I hope the Government will recognise that the North-West is not only a portion of the State requiring development, but one which can be turned into a huge asset, an asset which will help materially to bring the State finances to a position which we all desire they should attain.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie): I have for some little time been convinced that of all the difficulties confronting this State, including variable climatic conditions and poor land and many other drawbacks, the biggest which the State has to confront is Parliament itself. Until the people of this State are courageous enough to deal with Parliament itself we shall not have that development which Western Australia should witness. The whole futility of the Parliamentary system of Western Australia has been beautifully illustrated by the history of the past three years, and it is to be hoped that Western Australia will never witness a recurrence of such events. I need hardly refer to the lightning change artists on the politi-

cal horizon of this State since the last general election. I may just allude to the absolutely unqualified and callous hypocrisy of the pretences under which a great number of members of this House were elected. The pretences which were made in a spirit of opposition to the Labour party at the last general election were absolutely false and unpardonable. As a result of a strong appeal made by the late Mr. Wilson to the leader of the Labour party, an undertaking was given by the member for Boulder which must stand for all time to the absolute credit of the party now in Opposition. We adhered to that undertaking, although we had many insults to bear, much that hurt not only our feelings of personal pride but our sense of manhood. In observance of that agreement we were compelled to stand idly by while the utmost possible political hypocrisy and humbug were being practised in the legislative halls of this State. On top of that there has been the insidious growth of the Federal Parliamentary system. Until the people of this State and of the other States of the Commonwealth realise that there must be an absolute re-modelling and re-casting of our whole constitutional system, we shall not have progress in Australia. It is almost unthinkable that the Australian people to-day should suffer seven State Parliaments at the same time as there is an increasing growth of the functions of the Federal Parliament. It is unthinkable, too, that the Australian people should suffer in times like these such ornamental institutions as the State Governorships. Fancy that to-day, when Western Australia is on the very verge of bankruptcy, we should have an absolutely useless and stupid institution like Government House! It is almost unbelievable that this should be tolerated by men who are supposed to represent the spirit of advance and to be imbued with something like common sense. Why do not men of that standard go out and tell the people of this State that such an institution as the State Government House is absolutely unnecessary and should be cast aside? That is not the only function of our present governmental system which requires re-modelling. Surely to Heaven we can deal with some of the administrative heads in a more or less effective manner! To-day it is known that in many of our departments the heads are standing in the way of progress and reform.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): So much for Buckingham; off with his head!

Mr. LAMBERT: No, I am not going to adopt the methods which the hon. member adopted towards State orchards. I am not going to be as severe as that. I only ask him as Honorary Minister to go out into the highways and byways and tell the people the plain truth, refraining from indulging, for the sake of political position, in the hypocrisy that has characterised the life of this Parliament. Much has been said about the existing social unrest. It was certainly good of the Premier, and it stands to his

credit, that with his big-heartedness he immediately came to the relief of many men who had been automatically forced out of employment. But does he not realise that until the cause of the present industrial unrest has been erased from our social and economic life, the unrest will continue? It would be to his credit if he realised that the State Arbitration Court is on its death bed, and that until some institution can be built up which will give us a more equitable and just divisible result of capital and labour, the industrial unrest will continue. In two instances the Premier has afforded some relief, but will he not realise that until the paramount cause of the present industrial unrest is removed, he will be called upon in and out of season to give the same relief by way of sustenance which he has been so lavishly affording throughout the country during the last few weeks?

The Minister for Mines: You frankly confess that it is lavish relief.

Mr. LAMBERT: I say it, not to the disparagement of the Premier, but to his credit. It is more than some of the white-livered brigands outside the Chamber would do. Recently no less a person than the King referred to the "dawn of the new order." Surely to God it sounds hypocritical when people who only the other day were preaching about "the manhood who had left these shores to make Australia safe for democracy," should now talk about the dawn of a new order. His Majesty the King is reported to have said—

He was convinced that nothing was more essential for national prosperity and happiness than education. True education, developing to the fullest extent the spiritual, mental and physical potentialities of every member of the community, would transform the national life in a generation.

It was not a Bolshevik who said that, not a despised Labour member, but His Majesty the King. I only hope that the people will soon have an opportunity of electing a new Parliament. Futile as I think Parliaments are as constituted to-day, I do not think any Parliament could be more futile than the present. We had in His Excellency's Speech an announcement which practically embodied the policy of the Mitchell Government, and no one, however, desirous of finding merit in that Government, could for a moment suggest that any other policy could be more barren and fruitless. Until we find a Government prepared to realise the almost limitless resources of the State, until we have a Government prepared to go out and tell the people that the unused land alongside railways must be unlocked and worked, never shall we get that development and expansion in agriculture which we should have. It is nonsensical for a Premier or a Ministry to be allowed to go on acquiring, at prohibitive prices, farms on which to settle soldiers when there is an easier and more equitable way of acquiring good land along the railway system. Admittedly we have fine land

along those railways, all of which should be unlocked. To-day, when it is necessary to settle returned soldiers, those lands should be utilised. It is regrettable that the Government will not see their way clear to opening up some of those lands on which to repatriate returned soldiers. It is to be hoped that the soldiers realise that the Government have virtually nothing but a political interest in them. The only people to-day who could come out with a definite policy for unlocking lands and rendering them utilisable for production, are the Labour party. Until the people of Western Australia realise that the Labour party have a clear and definite policy upon that point we shall never have any good land policy in this State.

Mr. Hardwick: Why did your Government go on building railways if so much land was waiting to be unlocked?

Mr. LAMBERT: Because they desired, even at the risk of erring on the wrong side, to do something. If the finances of the State are to be remedied, we should monopolise for the State all the more accessible avenues of production and profit. It is almost unpardonable that big institutions like private insurance companies should be flourishing in Western Australia, whilst opposed to the interests of the people. I have here a reference to insurance in Queensland, where the Government by reduction in premiums alone, saved to the people £140,000 last year. Yet we have in this State 42 insurance companies operating, paying virtually a nominal sum by way of taxation and, possibly, costing the country a quarter of a million per annum directly and indirectly. Until we have a Government prepared to nationalise big avenues of production and profit, we shall continue to drift on to the rocks of insolvency. Admittedly there are many undertakings which do not lend themselves so readily to State enterprise. Having regard to the finances of the State, insurance should not for a moment longer remain in the hands of private enterprise. We have come almost to the taxable limit of the people. Admittedly the weight of taxation is unfair and unreasonable. It is pressing to a greater extent than it should upon the poorer classes.

Mr. Pickering: Indirect taxation.

Mr. LAMBERT: I will deal with the hon. member and indirect taxation later on. I know that the Minister for Works and others opposite are in favour of State insurance. It is regrettable that we cannot all realise that the finances of the State must be tackled in a practical, fair and honest manner. The taxable limit of the people is about reached, except in regard to the wealthier classes, and it is not likely that the present Government will tackle those. I hope some clear pronouncement will be made regarding institutions of this description that will make for the solvency of the State and for its general good. This is one activity which would not suffer by being in the hands of the State. There are many

social problems to deal with, and probably two of the greatest are the excess of drinking and gambling in Western Australia. This House should tackle these problems not in a spirit of wowserism, but on the lines of sound common sense. We should realise that the excesses in both directions should be stopped. There is admittedly too much drinking and too much gambling in the State to-day. I do not believe that Perth should be dotted all over with private racing clubs running for private gain. If horse racing is to be classed as a national sport it should be undertaken by the people and not by one or half-a-dozen individuals for their own gain. In nearly every other civilised country, this problem has been tackled, but in this State, like most other things, it has been allowed to drift.

Mr. Duff: Would you favour sweeps being run by the Government?

Mr. LAMBERT: I favour no form of activity which would give the people an opportunity to gamble when they cannot afford to do so. The only people who can afford to gamble are those who have an excess of wealth which they can throw away on any luxury of life. Unfortunately, the people who cannot afford to gamble are those who do so.

The Minister for Mines: Everybody gambles.

Mr. LAMBERT: Why does the Minister refer to this in such a flippant schoolboy-like way? Some members gamble with their political lives at times. There is no reason why an excess of gambling should be fostered in this State. In other parts of Australia it has been regulated. The late member for Guildford, with myself and others, tried to regulate the nights of trotting. While trotting is a fine institution from a spectacular point of view, it is the duty of public men to realise that there is too much gambling. There is too much drinking in the State to-day. The dining car on the train to the fields is an absolute disgrace owing to the manner in which it is conducted. The leader of the Opposition can tell the House what he has witnessed on many occasions.

The Minister for Mines: Would you agree to drop out liquor altogether on the dining car?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, and would be prepared to table a motion to that effect.

The Minister for Mines: I would be very glad if you could carry a motion to that effect.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not hold wowserish opinions, but the dining car is provided for the comfort of women and children, to supply them with tea and refreshments. To-day it is not really fit to class as a tenth rate tap-room, owing to the way it is run. I hope the Minister for Railways will make a note of this fact.

The Minister for Mines: Get the local bodies on the goldfields to agree.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not concerned about them. If they do not like my views I do not

care a snap of the fingers. I am not pandering to the opinions of local bodies on the goldfields. If I were dealing with them, I would put them in their place.

The Minister for Mines: The member for Kalgoorlie might give you his opinion of the Kalgoorlie council.

Mr. LAMBERT: If they had me to deal with they would be a little more careful of what they did and said than they are at present.

Mr. Duff: That is a reflection on the member for Kalgoorlie.

Mr. LAMBERT: No; but he sometimes is a little tame in dealing with them.

Mr. Green: They are threatening to put me in the court; I do not know whether you call that tame.

Mr. LAMBERT: The ordinary bumbles in Kalgoorlie little interest me. It is a great pity Parliament, in its stupidity, delegated them so many powers as they apparently possess under the Municipalities Act. It is a great pity they could not be brought to realise their true functions as a municipal council.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The powers are all right; they do not know how to exercise them.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is time we looked a little beyond the vision we had when we stipulated what their functions should be.

The Minister for Mines: The member for the district ought to point out their functions.

Mr. LAMBERT: I never fail to point out the functions to the local authorities in my district. Much has been said about social unrest and strikes, and about the growth of Bolshevism in this State. I hope that the lying and detestable statements made for political reasons about the growth of Bolshevism in this State will be stopped. I only hope that when men make a demand for better wages and conditions it will be conceded. Men realise they have a right to better social and economic conditions. Whether the present Government remain in power or not, I hope the public men of this State will realise that, to those who have served the British Empire in any capacity, a new order of things should dawn, that we should have a brighter and better conception of what should obtain and that we should concede to the man who labours an equitable share of what he produces. Only by thinking and acting on these lines can we allay the industrial unrest which prevails throughout the length and breadth of the land. Under the Development of Mining Vote only a paltry sum was spent last year. The Minister should realise the almost limitless mineral resources of this State. He should also realise the difficulties of the industry. If it is to develop, it will require the fostering care and sympathetic treatment which should have been given long ago. In the Coolgardie district there is, unfortunately, a depression, but we have there some of the largest low-grade ore bodies existing in any part of the

country. The Minister should also see that the State battery system does not virtually preclude its profitable operation. What is the use of having a State battery as a monument rusting and out of use? I hope the Minister will take a sound business-like commonsense view of the position. Unless he is prepared to utilise the State battery system to foster mining, the industry will decline. It is safe to say that Coolgardie will peter out altogether unless we make that battery accessible by charging rates at which it will pay to operate the low-grade mines. Everything done during the last few years has tended to pull Coolgardie down.

The Minister for Mines: It must keep pace with its member.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that it does. The Minister should realise the position of that town. The warning I give would be apparent if he would personally investigate the position. Unless some reasonable departure is made from the present iron-bound system of battery treatment Coolgardie must cease to exist. I hope the Minister will not always be guided by the official heads of the Mines Department.

Mr. Duff: Hear, hear!

The Minister for Mines: I do not like this agreement between opposite sides of the House.

Mr. Duff: I have had experience of the department.

Mr. LAMBERT: While I do not desire to be over-severe on any permanent head of a department, we should have a thorough remodelling of the whole of the Mines Department. I honestly believe the State Mining Engineer has outlived his usefulness and no one has a greater personal regard for Mr. Montgomery than I have. The Mines Department would be better if Mr. Montgomery were retired. An Assistant State Mining Engineer (Mr. Blatchford) has been appointed. How or why he was appointed I have not heard. I do not know whether he was appointed under the Public Service Act. Probably the Minister for Mines can tell us.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know.

Mr. LAMBERT: He seems to have crept in. He was assistant field geologist, but to-day he is signing himself "Assistant State Mining Engineer."

The Minister for Mines: Acting Assistant State Mining Engineer.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. Is this a preliminary to the retirement of Mr. Montgomery? I do not know. Probably the Minister can tell me.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know.

Mr. LAMBERT: He is there. He signs himself Acting Assistant State Mining Engineer. Not one of the goldfields members knows anything of his appointment, why he was appointed, what qualifications he possesses to hold that responsible position, whether it is intended to retire Mr. Montgomery, or whether he is likely to step into Mr. Montgomery's shoes.

Mr. Munsie: I believe he would make a better fist of it than Montgomery.

Mr. LAMBERT: It would be almost unpardonable to deal with Mr. Montgomery in any spirit of undue hostility. Mr. Montgomery is trying to deal with the affairs of the department as best he can with his knowledge and at his present age. The Minister for Mines should appreciate the fact that if the industry is to receive any encouragement from the department, a younger and more active man who can keep abreast of affairs is needed.

The Minister for Mines: I am sorry there is no vacancy.

Hon. P. Collier: They are too old at 40 now.

Mr. LAMBERT: The man for the position should have some idea of the almost limitless resources of this State, and show it by keeping in touch with the commercial possibilities of mining and the varied mineral deposits in Western Australia.

The Minister for Mines: You have not impressed me very much in regard to Mr. Montgomery.

Mr. LAMBERT: I think that Mr. Montgomery should be retired.

Mr. Duff: He is getting too old to travel.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Minister for Mines may have his views regarding Mr. Montgomery. It is not nice for a member to have to talk about such a thing. What I have said however, represents the views of men in the mining industry in this State.

The Minister for Mines: Not at all.

Mr. LAMBERT: From a theoretical point of view Mr. Montgomery undoubtedly is a man of high qualifications. I am dealing more with his practical usefulness to the Mines Department and to the State. Let us take the Geological Department. Dr. Simpson, although not in control, has been doing unselfish and useful work. He is, however, a very underpaid official. It is men of this description, including those at the School of Mines, at Kalgoorlie, who should have an opportunity of making headway in the Service, instead of year after year grinding away at theoretical work. They should be sent away to America and England, and other parts of the world in order that they may become thoroughly acquainted with the commercial value of many of the products that we have in this State, and the methods by which they can be successfully handled. It is on account of this lack of commercial knowledge and commercial application that we cannot put to proper use the many valuable minerals we have to deal with in this State. I am not saying this to the detriment of the officers concerned, for many of them have been on the goldfields for years. The world has, however, made a good deal of progress of late. In the last four years America, particularly, has developed. Many of her natural resources have been put to a use hitherto undreamed of. That country has made enviable strides in the way of the utilisation of many minor

minerals and earths which were not previously put to commercial use. If we had a system whereby we could send our officers abroad to gain the necessary knowledge, they would become of vital service to this State. I do not know whether the acting assistant State mining engineer is going to be given a step up, but I do say that he and others should be given an opportunity of travelling so that they may become acquainted with the processes of manufacture and the commercial utilisation of our natural products, which knowledge is so essential to the general public when they go to them for advice. I only hope that the hypocrisy and humbug, which for political reasons lead persons to brand others as Bolsheviks and use other distasteful terms towards them, will cease, and that all elements in this House will be prepared to look over their own political backyards and realise that we owe a debt not only to ourselves but also to Western Australia. If they will realise that, the State will have nothing to fear in the way of general progress and prosperity.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies): The outstanding features of this debate on the Address-in-reply have been the utterances of two of the ex-Ministers. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) and the member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) recently held Ministerial positions in the Government which now holds office. The member for Canning was definite in his announcement that he intended to continue to support the Government, not because he approved of their policy or their want of policy as outlined in the Governor's Speech, but because he was of opinion that this constant change of Government was not in the best interests of the people. This feeling is widely spread amongst the people of Western Australia and members of Parliament to-day. It is, I believe, the best asset the Government possess. That feeling will carry them through the life of the present Parliament, but if it did not exist they would not last two days. The member for Irwin is the ex-Treasurer of the party which now holds office. He made a very definite statement that Ministers did not govern in Western Australia, that those who were really carrying on the affairs of State were the heads of the departments. He also said that unless Ministers, and he cared not to which party they belonged, were given the right to sack in the Government departments we would not get good and efficient administration. That remark met with a great deal of approbation, more particularly perhaps from ex-Ministers on both sides of the House. I have heard exactly the same sentiment expressed by other Ministers of almost every Government which has held office since I have been a member of this Chamber. So far, there has been no Government or Minister courageous enough to come right out and make a straightforward attempt to remedy

this state of affairs. I suggest, in these days of many political parties, that there is room for still another party, an ex-Ministerial and Ministerial party. These might drop their outside political party organisations and prejudices for the time being, and get down to this very necessary piece of work. The Minister for Mines, whom I was pleased to follow for five years when he was the Premier of this country, repeatedly made such a statement. I know he believes it to be true to-day. The remarks which fell from the member for Irwin would have been of far more use to Western Australia had he retained his position in the Government and come out in that direction while holding his portfolio. A great deal of good can be done by amending the Public Service Act in the direction indicated by that hon. member. I am afraid, however, that the same old curse of political parties is behind it, and that nothing of the sort will be done. All parties have handled the Public Service with a view to getting their votes. I agree with the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) that it is time this practice ceased and that we got down to solid business. I hope the Government will bear in mind the remarks of the member for Irwin and see that this position of affairs is remedied without delay. The member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) also had something to say about disillusioned Nationalists, the men who left the party to which they belonged and joined another, which was termed the Nationalist Government. He said that the Nationalist Government had entirely failed to fulfil their promises to the people upon assuming office. His chief objection or complaint against the Nationalist Government was that they had made no sincere effort to fight the profiteers. I must agree that if they have made any effort they have not been successful. The party with which the hon. member associates himself cannot by any means clear themselves of their share of responsibility in this matter. Had the party with which that hon. member is associated shown sufficient public spirit, and a sufficient desire to serve the people who sent them to Parliament when the invitation was extended to all political parties to come together, the position of affairs in Australia would have been different to-day. Had these gentlemen come in they would have been entitled to representation both in the Federal and State Governments, together with those whom they term Nationalist labourites. They were pledged equally with those to endeavour to keep down the cost of commodities and stop profiteering in time of war. Had they come forward then, and been straight enough to drop their party prejudices at the time, I believe without a shadow of doubt we would have been in a better and more satisfactory position in Australia both in the Federal and State Parliaments, than we are to-day. I wish to make my position clear with regard to the present Government. I express no regrets and feel none for having taken any hand in the formation of the Nationalist Government two years ago. I

am proud I did so. I can, however, see no semblance of a Nationalist Government in the Government as it is constituted to-day. In the member for Northam we have a Premier of whom I have stated publicly and privately on many occasions that he had just as little spirit and as little desire to serve the people whole heartedly two years ago as had any member of the Australian Labour party. He is a man who allowed his party prejudices to prevent him from coming in and assisting at that time. Surprise has been expressed from the Opposition side of the House as to how a gentleman who acted in such a manner two years ago, could ever have been elected to the Premiership of the State. I have been unable to fathom it myself, and I perhaps have had a better opportunity of knowing than members opposite. The Premier upon the Address-in-reply debate last session acted in exactly the same manner as the Leader of the Opposition did on this occasion. He moved a vote of no-confidence in the Government. If we analyse some of his remarks made on that occasion, we can show clearly that he was not so much concerned in the welfare of the State, or in the welfare of soldiers who were returning, as he was concerned about his endeavour to secure ministerial office if he could manage to do so. He has now been successful. Now let me show the difference between the hon. gentleman's attitude when moving a motion of want of confidence in the National Government twelve months ago, and his attitude to-day. When twitted by the Opposition, during the recent no-confidence debate, with having done nothing to force the landholders to bring their unused areas into cultivation and thus provide a means towards the repatriation of our soldiers, the Premier claimed, in reply to the leader of the Opposition, that all that could possibly have been done during the last few months by private owners had been done, for the reason that labour was not available, the men being away at the war. Now, the same gentleman, speaking last year in support of his own motion of want of confidence, said that his late leader, Mr. Frank Wilson, had intended that the work of preparing for the soldiers before their return should be proceeded with straightaway, that the intention had been that for each soldier who desired to settle on the land a certain amount of clearing should be done and a cottage built and some fencing erected. The member for Northam said twelve months ago, "We had no intention of sending these men out into the wilderness," and he intimated that because these things had not been done he was moving his motion of want of confidence. That is to say, he moved a motion of want of confidence because the Government had failed to do what he now says private land owners were prevented from doing on account of the absence of labour. This is a glaring instance of political hypocrisy. I desire to make my own position clear. I am going to support the present Government in matters in which I think they are right. The present Government cannot, however, count upon any solid or whole-hearted support from

me. There has been some comment on the action of certain National labourites in abstaining from voting on the recent motion of want of confidence. I purposely refrained from voting on that occasion, firstly, because I have no confidence in the present Government under the present leadership, and, secondly, because I have no confidence in the party led by the member for Boulder as at present constituted. As regards the latest want of confidence motion, I personally felt sorry to see the position in which the leader of the Opposition was placed by his own followers. For a motion which might have brought about a change of Government and placed him on the Treasury bench as Premier, the leader of the Opposition could get no other support than the flamboyant speech delivered by the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones). I believe I voice the opinion of every member who heard that speech when I express regret that such an utterance should have been delivered in this Chamber. Before the member for Fremantle, or any other public man, makes statements about ropes and lamp-posts and hanging, he should declare whether he himself is prepared to go personally and do that sort of thing. If he is not so prepared, he has no right to ask others to perform such actions. The danger in that kind of speech—a danger which no public man who gives thought to these questions would permit himself to create—is that it may lead weaker-minded men to take violent action.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You need not be frightened. The man who says these things never does them.

Mr. MULLANY: I agree with that. Had any such unfortunate occurrence taken place, the member for Fremantle would, no doubt, have been a couple of minutes late, as he was on the occasion of the unfortunate trouble on the Fremantle wharf. A great deal has been said about the various Premiers and changes of Government during the past few months. I shall be very brief regarding the experiences of Western Australia during Mr. Colebatch's Premiership, and regarding the unhappy episode at Fremantle. There is a desire on the part of many members, and I believe also on the part of the general public, to let that ill-starred episode pass into oblivion. Perhaps it would be as well. But there is a large section of this community vitally interested in that affair, a section who have not yet been given a fair deal. I refer to the men known as the National Wharf Workers, the men who went to work on the wharf in 1917. In this connection let me quote from a speech made by Mr. Alec McCallum at the time of the great trouble on the wharf, when a disputes committee was appointed to conduct affairs on the Labour side. Mr. McCallum is reported in the "West Australian" of the 6th May, 1919, as having said—

The test of loyalty to the Labour movement would be the amount of loyalty they gave to the decisions of the committee.

That is the disputes committee.

When the committee asked them to continue work, it wanted them to continue work. If the committee asked them to stop work, it wanted them to stop work. If it asked them to riot, it wanted them to riot; and if it asked them to stop rioting, it wanted them to stop rioting. The test of loyalty was how they obeyed the decision of the committee, which would be the will of the Labour movement of the country. If the committee thought there should be no rioting, they should accept its lead, and not the lead of anyone outside the committee. No matter how unpalatable it might be to them, no matter whether he (the speaker) offended them—and he did not care whether he did offend them, so long as he talked the truth—and no matter what they might think of the decisions of the committee, they should remember that the committee was formed of men who had the responsibility and knew the facts. If they did not accept the advice of the committee they were just as big "scabs" as those fellows who had been working on the wharf. (Cheers.) They should take no notice of a few men who might run wild. They were a very valuable section of the community, and he liked being in the movement to help them on, but there had to be intelligent control of such a big dispute as this. Its affairs must be scientifically directed, and not by men on street corners, who did not know what advice the committee had received from throughout Australia. How could these men advise them to act when they did not know the facts? He asked them to rally to the committee, and not to "scab" on it. They should trust the committee as honourable men until it failed them, and when it failed them, put someone else in its place.

I quote these remarks of Mr. McCallum because, like everyone who knows that gentleman, I have a great admiration and respect for his abilities. From his point of view, his advice to those men on that occasion was absolutely sound; that is to say, from the point of view of the industrial organisations of which Mr. McCallum was the executive officer. But I would like to ask Mr. McCallum, What of the nation while the war was on? I would like to ask him, What was the reason of the industrial trouble in 1917? Simply that the workers on the Fremantle wharf claimed that the flour which was being shipped there was being diverted to enemy countries.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That has been said since also.

Mr. MULLANY: I would like to address to Mr. McCallum the words he used regarding the disputes committee. He asked the workers who were in the best position to know, the intelligence department of the military authorities, or the lumpers on the Fremantle wharf? I say without fear of contradiction that the great majority of the men who went to work on Fremantle wharf

in 1917 were not scabs, as they are being called to-day. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones) has repeatedly stated that the lumpers made a mistake on that occasion.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The men you refer to left the wharf as soon as the lumpers came back.

Mr. MULLANY: To call those men scabs is unfair.

Mr. Munsie: I called them scabs, and always will do so.

Mr. MULLANY: I know some of these men personally.

Mr. Munsie: So do I.

Mr. MULLANY: Some of them were as good unionists as this or any other State can show. On that occasion there was no dispute whatever as to conditions or wages. The bald issue simply was whether the boats were to be loaded and despatched, whether the men would be loyal to their country, as Mr. McCallum claimed they should be loyal to the disputes committee.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They were loyal men, and their actions prove it.

Mr. MULLANY: I know that a great many of the National workers left the wharf as soon as the industrial trouble was settled.

Hon. P. Collier: All the decent ones left.

Mr. MULLANY: I will not say, all the decent ones.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Every decent one of them left.

Mr. MULLANY: I will not say that. In my opinion, a mistake was made in endeavouring to form another industrial union and have two separate unions working on the wharf side by side. Undoubtedly injustice was done to the lumpers through that. There is one man, and only one man, responsible for the unfortunate occurrence on the Fremantle wharf on that Sunday morning; and that man is the ex-Premier and the Minister now representing the Government in the Legislative Council. There has been some question raised as to where the men were recruited who undertook the buccaneering expedition down the Swan on that Sunday morning. I personally knew nothing of what was going on, and I do not believe any of the National Labour members knew that any such step was in contemplation. Without betraying any confidence—I am not in the habit of doing so—as to what occurred at a party meeting, I may say that after the trouble was all over I heard from Mr. Colebatch a detailed explanation of all that led up to his action on the Sunday morning. I shall not quote any details of his speech, but I feel that I am at liberty to make public the impression I gathered from his remarks, which I may add extended over an hour. From those remarks I could draw only one conclusion, and that is, as the "West Australian" reporter put it after the meeting, that the then Premier had not had a fair deal from the shipping companies. There is no doubt that he did not get a fair deal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The shipping companies do not give anybody a fair deal.

Mr. MULLANY: In my opinion, if Mr. Colebatch did not get a fair deal from the shipping companies, he had himself to blame, because the only person from whom he sought advice, or whose advice he considered worth following, were the representatives of the shipping companies. Hence the extremely regrettable occurrence on that Sunday morning. I cannot help thinking that in the circumstances it was opportune that the proposed exchange of seats between Mr. Colebatch and a member of the Country party in this House did not eventuate. The fact that he could not secure a seat in this Chamber obliged Mr. Colebatch to retire from the Premiership. I believe that the feeling was such that he would have lost the Premiership in any case. The fact that there was not a seat available provided a convenient excuse for the then Premier to go back to his dug-out in the Legislative Council. When Mr. Colebatch was chosen to form a Ministry he was given the right to select his own team and in that way, the present Premier (Mr. Mitchell) found himself appointed second in command. Mr. Mitchell had previously refused to come in because the leader previously had been denied the right to select his own colleagues—the practice adopted by the Labour party had been then adopted. Mr. Colebatch, when appointed leader, included Mr. Mitchell in his team, and, notwithstanding that feeling was running very high after Mr. Colebatch had made such an awful mess of the Fremantle business, Mr. Mitchell when asked to succeed Mr. Colebatch selected the latter as his second in command. How is it possible for the Government to expect a solid following from hon. members who are aware of these facts? A great deal has been said about arbitration and of course about the cost of commodities. The two subjects are very closely allied. I regret to have heard from the member for Coolgardie in this Chamber to-night the statement that in his opinion arbitration in this State is dead.

Mr. Willecock: The Arbitration Court.

Mr. MULLANY: I believe the hon. member put it that way.

Mr. Willecock: Do you think it is a success?

Mr. MULLANY: I regretted to hear the statement made that Arbitration, or the Arbitration Court, was dead.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We tried to alter it.

Mr. MULLANY: I, too, want to alter it. At both the Federal and State Labour Congresses the principle of settlement of disputes by arbitration has been reaffirmed. So far as I am concerned I am unhesitatingly in favour of arbitration as against direct action. It is known to everyone, even to hon. members on the opposite side of the House, that the advocacy of direct action means the stifling of progress. We all know that strikes as a method for the settlement of disputes were considered obsolete and were thrown overboard by the Labourites and unionists of 20 years

ago. Why? Because we came to the conclusion that whilst the strike was effective sometimes, it was too costly and caused too much suffering amongst the workers themselves. There can be no doubt that although at times strikes have been successful in bringing about a better condition of things for those who went out on strike, those who have given the subject serious thought have concluded that the cost and the suffering are too great on the workers themselves. We read recently of a famous telegram which was sent by a certain W. L. Jones to Mrs. Walsh—nee Pankhurst—in which an assurance was given to Mrs. Walsh that the workers here would eat grass before they would give in in the present struggle which was going on between the seamen and the ship-owners. But observe the wording of that telegram. I do not think it is quite fair that W. L. Jones or the member for Fremantle should be called Nebuchadnezzar in connection with this matter. Nebuchadnezzar was given credit for having himself eaten grass, but W. L. Jones does not commit himself to do so; he pledges the workers to do so—a very wide difference indeed.

Mr. Green: On a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in referring to the member for Fremantle as W. L. Jones?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Menzies may proceed.

Mr. MULLANY: I was referring to a certain telegram which was signed by one W. L. Jones and to the fact that the workers were being pledged to subsistence on grass. In no circumstances, through the effect of a strike, has it ever come about that the employers—the capitalists, if hon. members prefer to call them such—have ever been brought within measurable distance of having to eat grass. The action of the strikers possibly has affected their dividends to some extent, and some of them may have had to put up with the inconvenience of having to go without the latest model in motor cars this year or perhaps next year, or their women-folk may have had to go without a particular set of expensive furs. But never under any set of circumstances will they ever be compelled to eat grass as a result of a strike. The member for Fremantle apparently realised that it is always possible to reduce the workers of the State to such an extremity. Whilst I agree that arbitration is preferable to strikes, I am not altogether satisfied with the operation of the State Arbitration Court, not by any means, and I would like to see all parties get right together and devise a better system of settling industrial disputes. I would point out to those who in season and out of season advocate direct action, whether they go out on strike or not, they must in the end have recourse to some form of arbitration for the settlement of the dispute. Can we not do something which will bring about a more satisfactory result? In my opinion, the constitution of the Arbitration Court is such that it does not lend itself to smooth working.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do you not think that these difficulties should be settled before there is any need to go to the Arbitration Court?

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. MULLANY: I certainly do, but the section of the Act which provides that the president shall be a Supreme Court judge, is not a good one. I would not bar a judge from occupying such a position—there may be judges quite competent to fill such a position, but to insist on a judge being the president is to limit the choice too much. The environment of a Supreme Court judge is such that it prevents him from acquiring that education and knowledge which are necessary to probe into the details which arbitration court work necessarily involves. I am also doubtful whether the system of having two representatives, one of the employers and the other of the employees, sitting on the bench, is a good one. Every member of that court should be untrammelled in any way. He should be placed there to do justice, and while I have no cause for complaint with the representatives of either the employers or the employees at present holding seats on that bench, I declare that human nature is such that whilst those gentlemen are depending for support from the employers or employees, they are not being placed in a fair position. I would prefer to have one occupant of that bench, a judge of the Supreme Court or any other president, because, after all, what do we get in almost every instance, in fact in every instance? We find that on the one side the employers' representative stands up for his side, and the employees' representative is doing exactly the same for those responsible for sending him there. Then the president must come between those two. I believe that it is intended to introduce an amendment to the Act to bring about an alteration in that state of affairs. The question has been asked as to whether many of these matters could not be settled without going to arbitration. I say, yes, and I believe they could and should be so settled. Let us look at the history of the Arbitration Court in this State. Some 10 or 12 years ago the employees used to endeavour on every possible occasion to get to the court. The employers in those days were right up against the Arbitration Court and they placed every obstacle in the way of the employees reaching it. To-day we find that a reversed state of affairs exists. It is the employees who are showing the disinclination to go to the court, while the employers now go to the other extreme. They will not make any attempt to settle a dispute; they prefer to throw the onus on the court. There is provision in the Act which sets out that except with the consent of both sides, no member of the legal profession shall appear as an advocate before the court, the idea being that they should endeavour to cut out all technicalities, that the legal profession should not be entitled to get a footing in the court and perhaps unduly delay the proceedings. To-day there is something

which has even a more pernicious effect upon the Arbitration Court than would the admission of the legal fraternity. The Government are the principal offenders. We find that there are, I shall not say amateur advocates, but professional advocates outside the legal fraternity. The Government to-day have almost set up a department of arbitration, with Mr. Alcock as its chief. When a dispute comes along the head of the department immediately concerned refuses to take any responsibility, and simply hands over the case to Mr. Alcock to plead in the Arbitration Court. In the late tramway strike there was not a shadow of doubt that the men were entitled to all they asked for. On that occasion the responsibility should have been put on the Commissioner of Railways to say whether or not the demands made by the men were justified. On the other hand, I believe that, had the men accepted the advice given to them to go to the Arbitration Court, they probably would have got all that they asked for.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did not get it the time before.

Mr. MULLANY: I regret exceedingly that the Labour organisations to-day have discarded a rule which they used to enforce, and which provided that, before any union went out on strike, it had to get the sanction of the combined organisations. The practice to-day appears to be that a small organisation decides to go on strike, after which it appeals to the combined organisations for support. This does not tend to industrial peace. I believe there should be sufficient intelligence amongst the community to do away with the disastrous, wasteful, cruel and wicked weapon of the strike. It is of no good to anyone concerned, and in the interests of the workers themselves strikes should be definitely abolished. I believe that the seamen are entitled to what they are asking for to-day. But here we have an exceptional case in the demand made for improved accommodation on the vessels. It would be a difficult matter for the Arbitration Court to decide.

Mr. Munsie: Mr. Justice Higgins has definitely said that he has not the power to do it.

Mr. MULLANY: I do not think he has. I am not going to deal with the merits of that dispute, but I say that, on the broad question of arbitration or direct action, there can be no doubt as to which method is in the best interests of the workers and of the State. I do not intend to touch upon the mining industry except to repeat the remarks I made on the Address-in-reply last session. Referring to the outrageous cost of mining requisites, I suggested that the Government should get into touch with the Imperial authorities and point out the detrimental effect which the high cost of those requisites was having on the industry in this State. As far as I can discover, nothing has been done. I believe that the right method would be to endeavour to get the Imperial authorities interested, and

show to them that the cost of those requisites, mostly produced in England and Europe, is killing the mining industry in Western Australia. During the war we heard a good deal of the debt of gratitude that was owing to the gold-producing countries for the manner in which they were endeavouring to carry on their industries. In Western Australia the employers and employees alike in the industry battled hard against adverse conditions. At that time all thought that when the war was over there would be some relief. Unfortunately, however, the prices are tending to go still higher. When the Minister for Mines talks of sending out prospecting parties and developing the mining industry, I say that to encourage a man to go into gold mining while the present prices obtain is like sending men on to the land to grow wheat at 2s. per bushel. The mining industry cannot continue, except in a few favoured localities. I think the Minister for Mines should make some attempt to have the prices of mining requisites reduced. There is another little point which I wish to refer to, namely the action of the present Premier, presumably with the sanction of his colleagues, in appointing to Ministerial rank a gentleman not at the time a member of this Assembly. Also I wish to assure the gentleman so appointed that I welcome his reappearance in this Chamber and that I am not speaking on personal grounds. But I do say that to make such an appointment was an extremely dangerous precedent.

Mr. Green: He could not have won the election without the appointment.

Mr. MULLANY: Having regard to the circumstances of the Albany election, I do not know that that statement is correct. But if the Government are going to take to themselves the power to make such appointments, it may easily have the effect of turning the result of an election. It is not a stretch of imagination to term such an action a bribe to the constituency. It was entirely wrong, and I believe it has no precedent in Australian politics.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, in Western Australian politics.

Mr. MULLANY: I join issue with that. The only instance I have any knowledge of at all was the retention of Mr. Gregory as Minister for Mines and Railways for a period of three months after he was defeated at the Menzies election.

The Minister for Mines: I think Mr. Sayer was appointed a Minister before his election.

Mr. MULLANY: Well, I am sorry you should have followed so bad a precedent.

The Minister for Mines: Two good men, you know.

Mr. MULLANY: I am not questioning the quality of the men. It may be said there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent such an appointment. I believe that statement to be correct. It is provided in the Constitution that there shall be six Executive officers, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Legislative Council; but the whole spirit of that Constitution points to Minis-

ters of the Crown being members of the Assembly, with the single exception of the Minister in the Legislative Council. I think the matter has not been specially dealt with in the Constitution Act for the obvious reason that the framers of the Act never contemplated that any Government would have the audacity to make such an appointment. It was an extremely dangerous precedent and I trust it will not be followed up. In reference to the point that there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent it, it may be retorted that there is nothing in the Constitution to prevent a Government appointing an alien, even a German, to a Ministerial position. I am speaking seriously upon this point. I think it was a wrong precedent and I trust it will not be followed in future. For fear the Minister for Mines may entertain the idea that he was selected on account of his policy, or his past work, I wish to relate a little story told in a certain club in Perth. It is as follows:—The Minister for Education was asked in the club why Mr. Scaddan had been appointed Colonial Secretary before his election, and the answer given by Mr. Colebatch was that the front bench in the Assembly was rather weak in debating power and they wanted a man of Mr. Scaddan's ability there to carry Mr. Mitchell through. So the Minister for Mines can assure himself that he is now in the position of chief spruiker—he himself used the word at Albany—for the Mitchell Government. Also, judging by the initial performance put up by the Minister for Mines, when he so adroitly side-tracked the amendment moved by the member for Pilbara to the Address-in-reply, it must be admitted that the hon. member has lost none of his debating ability. Let me repeat that, whilst I am prepared to support the Government in all proposals which I think right, I do not wish to be considered a whole-hearted supporter of the Government. I do not think they have the administrative capacity to handle the affairs of the State as they should be handled. Whilst I admit that, under the present circumstances, seeing that a section of the House which might be able to put up a Ministry are not prepared to give to the State their services and abilities, it is difficult to see where we are to get an improved Government from. Personally, I should like to see a Ministry formed from the whole of the members of the House, a Ministry that might have a good chance of getting the State out of its difficulties.

On motion by Mr. Maley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.