

question for them to go into will be the existing law.

The Minister for Mines: That will not help in this instance, because the law is law.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But it is not like the law of the Medes and Persians.

Mr. Clydesdale: A select committee could merely recommend a gratuity, and Mr. Ripper has already had one. The committee could not alter the law.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. Mr. Ripper's case is a hard one and there are many other hard cases too. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) mentioned that the ganger did not receive any pension. That is quite apart from the question at issue.

Mr. Sleeman: You want to distinguish between the engineer and the ganger.

Mr. George: The ganger does not work for long periods like the engineers.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It was usual to pay pensions to civil servants who joined prior to 1904.

The Minister for Lands: That is not so; only those who were permanently employed were entitled to it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That was the position.

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Ripper worked for 27 years and yet it is contended he was not in an established position!

The Minister for Lands: I worked for 13 years before coming here and I have been in Parliament for 20 years, but it cannot be said that I am in a permanent position.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister was pensioned off when he was sent here! That was the Minister's reward for having worked faithfully before he entered Parliament. Every member of Parliament desires to see justice done to these officers, but I do not know what a select committee could do.

The Minister for Lands: The committee could do nothing. The law is against them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is a pension board appointed to interpret the law relating to pensions and to deal with various cases.

Mr. Sleeman: I notice there is no pension board for gangers.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is the sort of lip service the workers get too often. It does not mean anything to them.

The Minister for Lands: They are not kept on permanently.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the public servant knows that he is to get a pension on retiring, he is of far more value to his country; he is not always trying to find out what Ministers are doing, and try-in to meet his own Minister's wishes, as he must do if he be dependent on that Minister for his job. It serves to make him a better, freer and more useful servant than he otherwise would be. I do not quite know what will happen as the result of this proposed inquiry should it be held, but nevertheless I think it will be well to hold the inquiry.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.32 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 2nd September, 1926.

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

QUESTION—TITLES OFFICE, ACCOMMODATION.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON asked the Honorary Minister: 1, Is the Minister for Justice aware of the grave lack of accommodation at the Titles Office and the inadequacy of the present offices for the safeguarding of deeds, plans, records, etc., of titles to properties within this State? 2, Having regard to the obligation on the Government to preserve all such deeds, plans, records, etc., have any arrangements been made for

the construction of suitable and centrally situated buildings? 3, If so, what has been done and when will the erection of such buildings be commenced?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2 and 3, Plans have been prepared for new buildings and further consideration is now being given to the matter, which will be dealt with when the draft Estimates for Loan expenditure for this year have been prepared. Temporary measures have been made from time to time to cope with increased business.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £831,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.33]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Supply Bill No. 2 to pass through its remaining stages at the one sitting.

The object of the motion will be understood by members. Shortly after the opening of the session a Supply Bill was passed giving authority for expenditure to the 1st August. That authority having expired, we require authority for a further month to carry on in a constitutional manner. We have now reached the second day of the month and should like to get No. 2 Supply Bill passed as speedily as possible.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: Under this Bill the Treasurer is asking for one month's supply. It has been customary at this period of the year to ask for two months' supply, but the preparation of the Estimates is now so far advanced that the provision made in this Bill should meet the necessities of the situation. Some members might be inclined to inquire, "You are asking for £831,000 from revenue and loan funds, how is the money to be spent?" I would refer them to last year's Estimates. The money has to be spent in the manner indicated in last year's Estimates—in the payment of civil servants and other Government employees, and in the continuance of public works authorised by Parliament. The money re-

quired for these purposes to cover one month's expenditure is one-twelfth of last year's expenditure. No new expenditure of any kind is to be incurred. The expenditure for the first two months of the present financial year is slightly greater than that for the corresponding period of last year, due principally to increased interest and sinking fund charges. The revenue for July and August was slightly better than that for the same months of last year. Omitting the money transferred under the disabilities grant, the increase has been £12,769. Income tax receipts have been about £12,000 below those of last year, and dividend duties about £3,000 greater. Land revenue has increased by £6,000. The main falling off has been in railway receipts, which are £17,000 below those of the same period of last year. The railway expenditure has also been greater than that of the first two months of last year by £7,000. The expenditure for July and August, with a comparison for the same months of last year, has been as follows:—

	1925.	1926.
	£	£
Special Acts ..	571,595	608,944
Parliament ..	2,125	2,884
Premier's Department	17,464	17,051
Treasury	17,437	17,927
Forests	3,686	3,622
Lands	15,699	13,777
Mines	9,646	13,227
Agriculture	10,853	10,571
Crown Law	12,234	12,879
Police	30,360	32,420
Public Works Department	9,378	10,901
Education	97,699	99,624
Chief Secretary's Department	41,309	45,256
Medical and Health	30,197	31,754
North-West	2,805	281
Public Utilities	336,227	348,961

The decreased expenditure on the North-West is due to the North-West Department having been abolished at the end of the financial year. These figures indicate how the revenue has been expended since the 1st July, covering the period for which authorisation was given by Parliament under No. 1 Supply Bill. The expenditure for the two months has been greater than that of last year by £61,000. Of the increase, interest and sinking fund are accountable for £33,000, other special Acts £7,000, mines £3,000, and railways £7,000. The disabilities grant for 1925-26 was £353,112. This was paid to the State as follows: Nine

months in March, 1926, and one-twelfth in each of the months of April, May, and June. The Commonwealth Act authorising the grant provided that the money must be appropriated by the State Parliament. As the State Parliament was not then sitting, the amount was placed in suspense pending the presentation of the Budget.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Should not that amount be £450,000?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There has always been a special grant. Last year it approximated £100,000, which amount has to be deducted from the Commonwealth grant of £450,000. The special grant for that year was £353,112. The Treasurer intends to place the Government's proposals before Parliament in his Budget speech. Meanwhile one-twelfth of the total grant of £353,112 will be brought into revenue each month. Two months' figures were included in August, namely, £58,852, and in each subsequent month the amount will be £29,426. The amount is shown under "Commonwealth" in a special line provided for the disabilities grant. It is proposed to deal with the grant for 1926-27 in the same manner. The amount of this grant is £300,000 less the existing special grant of about £87,000 that we would receive in any circumstances. Thus the special grant for this year is approximately £213,000. The Treasurer has asked the Commonwealth for an advance covering the two months of July and August, and for the payment of one-twelfth of the total during each subsequent month. As those payments are received, they will be dealt with in a manner similar to that adopted in 1925-26. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.45]: I desire to congratulate the Leader of the House on having furnished members with a fuller explanation on this occasion than was supplied in connection with the previous Bill of a similar character. I then called attention to the somewhat meagre nature of the details given. From the Chief Secretary's remarks I gather that the Supply now asked for is based on one-twelfth of last year's actual expenditure. Further, the hon. gentleman has given certain explanations with regard to the Commonwealth Bank. I do not know whether his observations included a reference to the special allowance

recommended by the Federal Disabilities Commission.

The Chief Secretary: It has nothing to do with that Commission.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am given to understand that the special grant has been received by the Government and has been put to one side.

The Chief Secretary: Yes, put to a suspense account.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: And it is not in any way being used at the present time?

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I note that there are many applicants for that special grant. The chief claimant, and a highly important one, is the mining industry. I should like to know whether this House will have an opportunity of going into the question of the disposal of the grant on the Appropriation Bill? Certainly there are various avenues in which the money might well be applied—for example, in reduction of taxation. I have no doubt the Government will take that aspect into account, because we here are in a serious position as compared with the other States. Though the special grant has not been taken into account in making the present request for Supply, still it has an important bearing on our finances. I have no objection to offer to the passage of the Bill, because until the Estimates have been finalised by another House the Government will require temporary Supply.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.50]: I understand from the figures quoted by the Chief Secretary that £58,000 of the special grant has been taken into August revenue. According to figures published in the Press, there is a deficit of £107,000 for August. Does that £107,000 include the £58,000 mentioned as having been taken into revenue? If so, it means that without a special grant the deficit for August would have been £165,000 instead of £107,000.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4.51]: As regards the disabilities grant there is a condition that its expenditure must be authorised by Parliament. I take it that Parliament comprises both Houses. From the information given by the Chief Secretary to-day, it appears that the disabilities grant will be taken into consideration by another place on the Estimates, and will come here

included in the Appropriation Bill. If that is so, the say that this House will have in regard to the grant will be practically nil.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.52]: From the Chief Secretary's remarks it seems that in passing this Bill we shall be disposing of a part of the disabilities grant.

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Then possibly we shall have an opportunity of discussing that grant, provided it is brought forward by a special Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: That will not be done.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.53]: With Mr. Nicholson I desire to express my appreciation of the fact that a little more detail has been furnished on this occasion than was forthcoming in connection with the first Supply Bill. Though a new member, I ventured to criticise strongly the passing of a Bill for so large an amount without our having any information placed before us. Accordingly I much appreciate the fuller information given on this occasion. I had intended to say something about the disabilities grant, but that matter has already been satisfactorily answered.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [4.54]: I read carefully the speech delivered by my colleague in introducing the first Supply Bill, and I came to the conclusion that he furnished the House with all the information available at the period. The position is quite different now. Two months have elapsed since Supply was first granted, and I have endeavoured to show hon. members what has been done by the Government in the interval with that Supply. My colleague found himself at the close of the financial year, and could only give information already published in the Press some time previously as to the result of the year's operations. I am in a much better position than he was in, because I am able to give the House fresh information, which has not yet appeared in the Press, as to the operations of the last two months. With regard to the money received from the Commonwealth Government in the form of a disabilities grant, I am able to say that not a penny of it has been touched, and that not a penny of it will be touched except with the consent of both Houses. That has been definitely

agreed upon. There has been a transfer from the grant to revenue, but that was inevitable. The grant must come into revenue sooner or later. The transfer could have been postponed for a month or two, until the Estimates had been dealt with; but the destination of the grant is revenue. There can be no appropriation of any part of the grant, however, without the consent of the Parliament of Western Australia; and the Government will adhere strictly to the principle involved.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is the £58,000 you mentioned as taken into account in August for the last two months included in the calculation of the deficit?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. There has been no deception of the public in that respect. As regards Mr. Nicholson's suggestion to reduce taxation, it will be fully considered. The proposal to reduce taxation has not yet been before Cabinet.

Hon. J. Cornell: The only effective consideration of the matter will occur in another place. This House will have no say except on the Appropriation Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The opinions of this place will be carefully considered by the Government.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Chairman of Committees, Election.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.57]: I move—

That the Hon. J. Cornell do take the Chair as Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4.58]: Mr. President and hon. members. Before taking the Chair I desire to thank you very sincerely for the honour conferred upon me. It is a high honour, and made more pleasing by the unanimity of its bestowal. I desire to congratulate the Leader of the House on his return to active service and on the improved condition of his health, which I hope will continue to enhance. In placing me in the Chair you are making more or less of an experiment, following as I do the many excellent Chairmen of Committees who have preceded me. I do not hope to equal my predecessors, let alone excel them; but if

I fail in the discharge of my duties it will not be on the ground of partiality or lack of industry, but because of circumstances over which I have no control. I shall do my best, as Chairman of Committees, to preserve the prerogatives and privileges of this Chamber in the same way as I did when a private member of the House.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M.

Drew—Central) [5.0]: I desire to repeat my congratulations to you on your elevation to the important position you now occupy. I have no doubt whatever that you will prove equal in every respect to your great responsibilities, and it is a position of great responsibility. It requires infinite patience and alertness of intellect, and I am certain also that you possess a paramount knowledge of Parliamentary procedure. I am confident, too, that in every respect you will fill the position with credit. I wish you a successful career in the Chair.

HON. J. E. DODD (South) [5.2]: I, too, desire to add my congratulations on your attaining the position of Chairman of Committees. I have known you now for over 30 years and during that time I have been associated with you on many different occasions and in connection with many different societies, and it must be very satisfactory to you to know that you have worked yourself up from the position you first occupied on the goldfields to the post you now hold in this Chamber. I am sure that when you look around and see yourself surrounded by men of high professional attainments, men who have been successful in business, successful farmers and others, and realise that you have been chosen unanimously to fill the position of Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council, you must feel highly gratified. I would like to add that in the old days you were known to take a big interest in the constitution of the trade union movement. Afterwards when you became associated with the Returned Soldiers' League you fulfilled a similar function there, and when an important conference of soldiers met in South Africa three years ago under the presidency of Lord Haig, you were largely responsible for the constitution that was then framed. I can do no more than offer you my hearty congratulations.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £831,000

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate; reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Thirteenth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon.

J. W. Hickey—Central) [5.7]: May I preface what I have to say by alluding to some remarks that were made in the course of the business we have just disposed of. It is now seven minutes past five, and half a dozen speeches have been made, two of which were by the Leader of the House, and a Chairman of Committees has been elected. I again draw attention to the fact that it is only seven minutes past five. It was stated a little earlier that when the previous Supply Bill was before the House not sufficient information was given by the Minister in charge. Particularly Sir William Lathlain led that attack, and a few moments ago he said he was rather pleased to know that on this occasion more information was furnished to the House. I remind that hon. member and Mr. Nicholson, and others who have been critical in that direction, that quite a lot of information was supplied on the previous occasion, and if those gentlemen will take the trouble to look up my remarks, they will find that more information was supplied than has been given to the House this afternoon. On the present occasion I think pretty well a record has been established in connection with the passing of a Supply Bill for a large sum of money.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would point out to the Honorary Minister that under Standing Order 389 no member is permitted to allude to any debate of the same session, on a question or Bill not being then under discussion.

The HONORARY MINISTER: May I then reply in this strain, that during the course of the debate on the Address-in-reply, Sir William Lathlain referred to the fact that he was surprised that more information was not supplied by the Minister in charge of the Bill. I may perhaps have my short-

comings in certain directions, but I am not lacking in courtesy. Sir William Lathlain mentioned that, when he spoke, but I repeat that whatever my shortcomings may be I do not think I have ever been lacking in courtesy. Permit me to join the other members who have spoken in welcoming the new members to the House. The newly elected representatives have made history in other walks of life; they have played a prominent part in the public life of the State and I feel sure they will prove an acquisition to the Council. What they were able to do in the public and semi-public life in which they played a conspicuous part, they will continue to do in the higher sphere of Parliament, and as a result of their entry into this Chamber, the Legislature and the State will materially benefit. Like other members, irrespective of the opinions one might hold from time to time, and however we might differ, long association with members here makes one respect opinions and to appreciate the viewpoint of others. One gets a little attached to members who have served in the Chamber for a period of years, and therefore my welcome to the three new members is tinged with a certain amount of regret. I say, too, quite candidly, particularly is that so when I welcome Mr. Kempton, because in welcoming him to the Legislative Council I have in mind that his advent was the result of the defeat of not only a colleague of mine, but a personal friend in Mr. Moore. But while Mr. Moore was a distinct loss to the Council and to the State—all will agree with that—it will not detract in any way from my welcome to Mr. Kempton, because I feel certain he will do here as he has done in the past, work hard for every movement in which he takes an interest. My co-operation will always be with him as a member of Parliament, and I feel sure he knows well that that is so. I wish to express appreciation of the tone of the debate that has taken place in connection with the Address-in-reply. A note was sounded by Mr. Ewing, who immediately followed the mover of the Address, Mr. Gray—a rather good note. Mr. Ewing, whilst clinging to the traditions of former administrations, certainly did not withhold the credit that he felt was due to the Collier Administration so far as the work of that Administration has gone. That is the tone that I think should always be maintained in debate, and on this occasion it was certainly very satisfactory to find it adopted. Many important matters have

been discussed during the debate, but it would be impossible to follow to a logical conclusion all the arguments that have been brought forward. I have made a note of every question of major or minor importance that members have brought under my notice, and am in possession of full information with regard to them all. This information will be conveyed to members either personally or by letter. Mr. Ewing was rather complimentary in his references to the Government; he also criticised them. He admitted that the Government had done a good deal, but was disappointed they had not gone further. It will yet be proved to him that the financial position of the State is better now than it ever was. He also referred to dumping from the other States. We are all in opposition to a continuance of that system. Various Governments have failed to find a solution for the trouble, but I think something tangible has been done by the present Government. Not only are the Government carrying on group settlements, but are extending the field of agricultural production in other directions. Both the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Agriculture are full of enthusiasm in respect of developing this side of our primary industries. The Minister for Agriculture feels that at no distant date it will be possible to carry on dairying successfully in the wheat belt, and I believe that his ideas on the subject will very shortly bear fruit. The Government are also enthusiastic in regard to the Muresk College and the agricultural farms. In view of their policy for developing the dairy industry and other activities allied to farming, it should not be long before the existing dumping trouble ceases, at which time all further reference to the question should also cease. This is a practical way of dealing with the trouble. We can talk a lot, but unless we do something we shall achieve very little. Mr. Ewing, Mr. Rose and other members referred to the Bunbury harbour. I asked for a report from the Engineer-in-Chief and he has sent me the following information:—

The position with regard to Bunbury is as follows:—The removal of silt from the berths on the east side of the jetty was done by the "Sir William Matthews" prior to her removal and the necessary cleaning up, which this dredger was incapable of doing, has since and is still being done by a grab operated off the jetty. The "Sir William Matthews" was replaced by the dredger "Premier," which was occupied until the end of May in removing

the accumulated sand at the head of the break-water. Work was stopped at this time owing to winter conditions, when economic work is not possible. The "Premier" will recommence at Bunbury so soon as weather conditions are likely to permit of economical working, when the programme to which she will work will provide for improving the depth of water available in the approach to the jetty as well as at the berths themselves. The question of improved and other facilities at Bunbury is having the active consideration of the department. As a necessary preliminary to preparing a scheme for its future development certain observations as to sand travel, current directions and velocities, etc., were essential. In order to obtain this information a survey party is now at work in Bunbury. The necessary soundings are being taken to enable a dredging programme to be drawn up to provide for this year's shipping needs, and as soon as the other information is complete, designs for future harbour development will be made. Generally, it may be stated that the marked increase during the past six years in the size of the average vessel trading to Bunbury is fully realised, and provision is intended to be made for this in all work in hand.

This report will explain what is being done at Bunbury. The Government wish to do the same thing at other ports as soon as practicable. Mr. Nicholson's remarks were confined mainly to matters appertaining to the Federal Government. He also mentioned the position as between capital and labour, the trend of his remarks being that he wished employers and employees to be brought more closely together. He illustrated his remarks by referring to a speech delivered by Mr. Baldwin. I have perused that speech with much interest, as well as other remarks by the Prime Minister of England, and have endeavoured to reconcile the various statements with one another. I have also endeavoured to play some little part in endeavouring to bring about a better feeling between the two parties than has hitherto existed. That feeling is, I am pleased to say, a little better than it was. I certainly subscribe to Mr. Nicholson's ideals. Perhaps, if he were to come down a little, and I were to go up a little, we might bring about that which we both so much desire. Mr. Potter referred to the mining industry. His remarks show that members representing coastal areas recognise the important part that has been played by that industry in the development of the State. We hope as time goes on it will still play an important part in the general scheme of things. The questions he raised concerning the Bibra Lake and Coogee drainage are being investigated, and information is

in the department awaiting his perusal. Mr. Harris dealt exhaustively with mining questions. It is not necessary for me to go fully into those matters. The only complaint that has been made by him, and other members who spoke in a similar strain, is that the Government have not gone further. Mr. Brown told the House what the Government had done on the goldfields. I have no intention of dealing with the Mining Vote or going into the expenditure of that money. If there is any activity in which the Government are prepared to be extravagant, it is that in connection with mining. Irrespective of what may be said to the contrary, they are still prepared to go on in this direction. Whenever a decent proposition is put before them or their officers, it will receive sympathetic consideration. The Government are fully alive to the importance of the industry to the State. It has placed Western Australia on the map. The agricultural industry is prosperous only because of the early activities in the mining industry. If there happened to be an important development in mining, the old activity would be renewed. No criticism that is levelled at the Government on this score can be justified by the facts. The Government have shown anxiety to do all they can for the industry. Questions such as preference to unionists, political propaganda, and contributions made by unionists for political purposes will not get us much further. I thought we had heard the last of these things, but each year they come up again as hardy annuals. They certainly bring a jarring note into the debate. I have never raised any of these questions. I have had enough fighting in the past without looking for more, but I am quite ready for a fight if the occasion arises. Every member of the Council representing the goldfields has raised these points at different times. Sometimes it is preference to unionists, sometimes it is a question of contributing dues towards political funds, and at other times it has to do with contributions towards newspapers. If a man is contributing towards a newspaper, he is doing a good thing. Many organisations in the State pay a proportion of the dues into their official organs. I believe certain members of this Chamber subscribe to such organisations. What is wrong with that? The organisations do not complain, neither does anyone else. Why should people bother about such questions when the

organisation itself has no complaints to voice?

Hon. E. H. Harris: Men who are conscripted into unions object to the practice, and you know it.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: I would remind the Honorary Minister that I had to pay towards the help of my opponent and to his paper as well.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Yes; about 2s. 6d. a year!

Hon. J. E. Dodd: The amount does not matter.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Dodd, Mr. Cornell and I—I am not sure about the other goldfields members—are the products of that system, and we owe our political birth to it. That system is still in operation, whether it be right or wrong.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The difference is that you stuck to it and the others did not.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is another question.

Hon. J. Cornell: It has been brought right up-to-date.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not desire to get down to that sort of thing. I am one of those that study psychology a little bit, but nevertheless I have not yet been able to reconcile the attitude of those hon. members. I can understand some hon. members taking exception to these things, but I cannot understand—my reasoning powers may be limited, but I hope they will be broadened some day—other hon. members subscribing to a policy for the greater part of their lives and yet, because of a cleavage or break with their party on some big question, they denounce now what was responsible for their political birth. I do not understand their attitude at all, nor can I understand why it is that each successive year when the opportunity arises on the Address-in-reply debate or some other appropriate occasion, the same old story is brought up in the same old way by some hon. members.

Hon. J. Cornell: If there is one question on which I have been consistent more than upon anything else, it is preference to unionists.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The strange thing about it is that these questions are mentioned by goldfields members. Mr. Holmes always mentions it; it is his bete noir; he is obsessed with it. Preference to unionists has been advocated by

every Labour member; it has been advocated by Mr. Dodd and Mr. Cornell.

Hon. J. Cornell: Never! Neither by Mr. Dodd nor by myself. I have never heard Mr. Dodd advocate it in my life.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have, and he put it into operation, too. What is wrong with it? We insist upon preference in other walks of life, but because a navvy asks for preference, there is something wrong about it!

Hon. J. Cornell: During the long time Mr. Dodd was connected with the Miners' Union he never—

The PRESIDENT. Order!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Harris and other members referred to the question of preference to unionists generally. The inference to be drawn from their remarks was that preference was given to members of the A.W.U. above that given to other unionists. That suggestion is entirely wrong. I corrected that impression last session. I have corrected it in connection with the Labour Bureau. I have corrected it so often, that I am getting a little tired; but I will correct it once more. The members of the A.W.U. receive no preference above the members of any other organisation. Every member of a union has the same standing at the Labour Bureau when it comes to a question of employment.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is not so at Kalgoorlie.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am speaking about the policy of the Government. Our policy is preference to unionists and we have put it into operation. I appreciate the tribute paid to the Government by Sir Edward Wittenoom the other night when he gave Ministers credit for putting into operation the policy upon which they had been elected. The Government made it perfectly clear during the general elections that their policy was one of preference to unionists. The policy enunciated by the Premier at Boulder has been put into operation and every promise made by him has been given effect to. He promised preference to unionists and he promised to institute the 44-hour week. It has been claimed that the provision of the 44-hour week has been responsible for the state of the finances. The people knew at the time of the election that if we were elected, that policy would be put into force. The Government were elected on that policy.

Hon. V. Hamersley: The people will know better next time.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We will have the support of the farmers next time.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What is the Arbitration Court for?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Glasheen attacked the Arbitration Court and the awards of that tribunal. Rightly or wrongly, arbitration is the policy adopted by the various organisations throughout Western Australia. On occasions they have been told that the policy of direct action was wrong. It is interesting to note that the most militant industrial organisation in Australia today has adopted the policy of arbitration and since that policy was declared, no arbitration award affecting that union has been broken.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: To which union do you refer?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I refer to the A.W.U., the biggest industrial union in Australia. The members of that union stick to arbitration. Yet Mr. Glasheen criticised arbitration generally and the attitude of the unions. He gave an illustration regarding what he termed the arbitration award concerning the Wyndham Meat Works. In the first place, there is no Arbitration Court award affecting the Wyndham Meat Works. An agreement was arrived at by means of a round-table conference between the management and the men.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It was a matter of bargaining.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But the agreement was not an industrial award.

Hon. J. Cornell: It amounts to the same thing in the final analysis.

Hon. E. H. Harris: This House endorsed the policy of arbitration when we passed the Bill last year.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Glasheen placed before hon. members information to prove his contention that the man who cut off the head of a bullock, or skinned a beast got more for doing so than did the man who reared the bullock. Mr. Holmes interjected, "Hear, hear, that is correct."

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Your Minister said so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot accept the responsibility for what my colleague said. I want to correct Mr. Glasheen's statement.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You mean, you want to correct the Chief Secretary.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In justice to Mr. Glasheen and Mr. Holmes—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And the Chief Secretary.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Holmes should have known better. Of course, Mr. Glasheen was a few thousands out in his figures, but that did not matter when he desired to prove his statement.

Hon. J. R. Brown: No, the more lies, the better.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have the figures bearing upon the point raised by Mr. Glasheen who, in his statement, mentioned £2,000 or £3,000 too much. I will not worry the House with the mass of figures, but I have them here should hon. members desire to pursue them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Give us the total amounts showing what was paid to the men and the amount paid to the growers.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amount paid for the purchase of cattle totalled £470,000, while the wages paid amounted to £377,000. That discloses the position.

Hon. V. Hamersley: What about the cost of operating the works?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have given the totals in order to correct the impression given by Mr. Glasheen in his remarks and by Mr. Holmes by way of interjection.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Your statement does not correspond with that of the Chief Secretary.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In justice to the hon. members concerned, I admit that a typographical error appeared in the Press regarding this question; the correct figures are those I have given. In view of the inaccurate statement in the Press, I can understand hon. members drawing incorrect deductions.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The figures should have been corrected at the time.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In the course of his remarks, Mr. Dodd stressed the necessity for hospital conveniences at Esperance and educational facilities at Newdegate and Red Lake. The Government are not unmindful of their responsibilities regarding either health or education, which may be regarded as the foundation stones upon which a healthy community may be raised. I have already shown the file to Mr. Dodd indicating that as soon as satisfactory arrangements can be made with the local com-

mittee at Esperance, something will be done in connection with hospital facilities.

Hon. J. Cornell: Something has been done already. The Health Department offered £50 for a maternity ward.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I did not wish to go into details at this stage. Regarding the other request, I understand a school will be opened in the local hall at Newdegate early this month. Some difficulty is experienced in providing a school at Red Lake because the question has resolved itself there into a battle of routes. The whole problem has been referred to the district inspector, and when he decides the question of where the school should be established, educational facilities will be provided by the department. If the Government have to face the expenditure of several hundred pounds in erecting a school building, hon. members will agree that that work should not be undertaken lightly by the department. In the past we have had experience of schools being erected and in the course of a year or two, they have had to be removed to a more suitable site, or else expenditure incurred by the department in conveying children to the school. Mr. Dodd devoted most of his remarks to the Government's attitude towards miners' phthisis. I was surprised at goldfields members introducing this jarring note once more. If I had to handle that Bill again, I would handle it in exactly the same way as I did before.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And you would get the same result.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Dodd said it was too tragic a proposition to be handled lightly. I say it is too tragic a proposition to be kicked around this Chamber like a football.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Minister for Mines brought it on himself. He acted like a child.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I myself could paint a pathetic picture of the results of miners' phthisis. But instead of endeavouring to deal with this proposition in the interests of the unfortunate victims, we are brought down to this tuppenny half-penny stuff that does not get us very far. I do not know that members, other than goldfields members, are enthusiastic about this clothes line business.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Minister for Mines acted like a petulant child, and accused everybody of base motives.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The "Kalgoorlie Miner" during the controversy published the correspondence dealing with it. The report of Mr. Darey also has been published, together with the opinion of the Crown Law authorities. Despite all that the charge has been repeated during this debate that the Government have not stood up to their obligations. It has been said here that the Government did not proclaim the Act as it was introduced by Mr. Scaddan. The tragic part of the business is that the goldfields members were sitting behind the Government that did nothing at all in the matter.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It took your Government two years to get a wriggle on.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It did not take them two years.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The goldfields members sat behind the late Government and did nothing, yet as soon as something that will get us somewhere is introduced, they come along with carping criticism and try to make political capital out of the situation.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Does not the Minister know that Mr. Scaddan had to withstand more criticism than the present Government have had? The goldfields members absolutely forced his hand.

The HONORARY MINISTER: What I said on the last occasion was that the late Act took up the miner just where Mr. Scaddan's Act dropped him.

Hon. J. E. Dodd interjected.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Act the hon. member speaks about provided for certain things, but the only obligation on the Government in that respect was to find a job for a man. After that their obligation ceased. The later Act provides, not only that the man shall be supplied with a job, but that he shall be followed along, although it may cost several thousands of pounds. Where the earlier Act dropped the man, the later Act picks him up and carries him through. If he cannot work, the obligation is on the Government to carry him right through.

Hon. J. Cornell interjected.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The complaint was that the Government did not proclaim the Act. The hon. member knows perfectly well why; it was because the Federal Government had not their laboratory arrangements completed.

Hon. J. Cornell: I was alluding to the compensation clause. It was never made operative by your Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Where is all this getting us to?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Let there be no misunderstanding. The Miners' Phthisis Act of 1925 merely provides that when the principal medical officer certifies that a person, whose name is registered, is or has become unable to work at any suitable employment, such person shall be entitled to receive compensation not less than as prescribed by the scale of relief in force at the commencement of the Act under the rules of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. But the rates of compensation actually approved by the Government are not only greatly in excess of those of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, but are considerably more liberal than the rates of compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act. Under that Act, the maximum weekly amount payable to a worker is £3 10s., including 7s. 6d. for each child under the age of 16 years, and the maximum sum payable is £750. In addition, £100 is allowed for medical expenses and, in case of death, £20 for funeral expenses, the total liability not to exceed £870. Under the Miners' Phthisis Act the maximum weekly amount payable is the basic wage for the time being in the district, which, in the case of Kalgoorlie, is £4 6s., including £1 per week for the wife and 8s. 6d. per week for each child under 16 years of age. But in cases of extreme hardship this may be exceeded on the recommendation of the Miners' Phthisis Board. Beneficiaries under the Miners' Phthisis Act are also entitled to free treatment at the Government hospital, and free cod liver oil if they cannot afford to pay for it. There is no limit to the amount of compensation that may be paid to a beneficiary under the Miners' Phthisis Act, which is continued until the death of the beneficiary. Whereas under the Workers' Compensation Act the worker would exhaust the maximum of £870 at the rate of £3 10s. per week in four years nine months and ten days, in the same period a beneficiary under the Miners' Phthisis Act receiving the maximum weekly payment of £4 6s. would receive £1,069 5s. 4d.; and, should he live for ten years, he would draw £2,236 and on his death, if married, his wife's compensation would be increased to £2 per week until her remarriage or death. It is unfortunate to have to deal

with these things again, but statements have been made in the House, and one has to answer them. When, last year, the controversy occurred, the Minister for Mines put certain questions to the Crown Solicitor as follows:—

Question: In order to clear up any misapprehension that may have arisen because of the passage of the amending Miners' Phthisis Act, I should like to have your opinion on the principles embodied in the two measures. It has been stated by Messrs. Dodd, Cornell, Harris and Seddon that the Miners' Phthisis Amendment Act of 1905 constituted a breach of faith in that it reduced compensation payable to the T.B. miner from full rates of pay to the rates payable under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. Is this contention correct?

Answer: In my opinion the contention is not correct for the reasons stated in the answers to the following questions.

Question: What did the Miners' Phthisis Act of 1922 provide?

Answer: That miners actually employed in mining operations who, as the result of the enforcement of the Act, were excluded from such employment must have other suitable employment found for them; and until other suitable employment was found, they had the right to claim compensation equal to the wages they might have earned at the work from which they were excluded.

That is the point that Mr. Dodd and others have made.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: That is a mere technicality.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The next question and its answer were as follows:—

Question: If, after employment was found for the T.B. miner he lost such employment, was there still an obligation on the Government to find him further employment, or pay him compensation?

Answer: The obligation of the Government was to find other suitable employment in lieu of that employment from which the miner was excluded; and when found once and offered to such prohibited miner, the Government's duty was performed, and their obligations ceased.

I said that here last year, but it was generally thought I was wrong. Even one of my colleagues told me I was wrong. I have said sufficient to prove that I was right on that occasion, although I did not have any opinion from the Crown Law Department when I made the statement.

Hon. J. Cornell: If I split straws, you are splitting hairs.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The next question submitted and the answer were—

Question: If the T.B. miner fell ill or was unable to follow any employment, were the Government required to pay any compensation to him or to his dependants?

Answer: The section in question provided for the case of miners actually engaged in mining operations, and excluded from such employment as the result of the Act being brought into operation. The obligation of the Government was to find suitable employment once. The Act made no provision at all for sufferers unable to work at any employment, or for their dependants.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Act makes no provision to pay the present compensation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It does. No one knows the position better than do the goldfields members, and it is unfortunate that I should have to explain matters of this kind to them. They have conveyed quite a wrong impression. They know perfectly well what the Act provides and they know the object of the Act. The minimum contained in the Act is the equivalent of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund scale, but the maximum might be considerably higher. If these criticisms had emanated from members who were not au fait with the facts I would not mind, but it is not pleasant to find them coming from goldfields members, who represent practically only one industry and whose duty it is to see that the men engaged in the industry are safeguarded.

Hon. E. H. Harris: We have been looking after them, too.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have said sufficient to satisfy members that the Government have done something to alleviate the position of the affected miners. The departmental files refute the misrepresentations—Mr. Brown used a stronger term—in which members have indulged.

Hon. J. Cornell: I have not made a statement on miners' phthisis since the Labour Government took office and have not done anything with an ulterior motive.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I regret having to introduce a jarring note, but members should aim at co-operating with the Government so that the miners might secure the greatest possible benefit.

Hon. J. Cornell: The trouble is the other chap hit into us.

Hon. J. R. Brown: No, you started the game.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Holmes confined his remarks largely to the financial position and I considered them of sufficient importance to go fully into them. In some of the figures he quoted, I find he was not quite correct. He took figures from the report of the Auditor General and from other authoritative sources, but he did not make various necessary allowances and de-

ductions. He apparently overlooked the fact that the deficit in the revenue fund in 1921-25 was only £58,398, whereas in the preceding year it was £229,158. The average deficit for the three years 1921-23 was £608,074 and, therefore, notwithstanding Mr. Holmes's pessimism, a considerable improvement has been made.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you dispute the figures in the Auditor General's report?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. The hon. member in referring to the public debt at the 30th June, 1925, stated that £7,600,000 had been borrowed over and above the expenditure on public works, but he overlooked the fact that £1,566,000 of the total represented conversion of mortgage bonds under the Agricultural Bank Act. For this amount there was a corresponding asset in the advances made by the bank, and thus the £7,600,000 should be reduced to £6,134,000, which figure in turn is accounted for by loans raised for the purposes of the accumulated deficit. The fact that the State has to carry £5,861,000 in its public debt in respect to the deficit of past years is to be deplored, but notwithstanding the corresponding interest charge of £300,000, the revenue and expenditure account for the year under review practically balanced. This is an indication that the finances have vastly improved as compared with previous years. Mr. Holmes quoted the public debt as at the end of 1925, and said the increase in the debt from 1916 to 1925 amounted to £50 per head of the population. If we take a corresponding number of years, from 1907 to 1916, the increase was £44 per head. Against the difference of £6 per head it must be borne in mind that loans for soldier settlement £6,055,500, Agricultural Bank £4,365,000, group settlement £1,618,381, and workers' homes £553,244—necessary and reproductive expenditure—total £12,592,125 of the increased debt and are responsible for no less than £34 of the per capita increase. Consequently this phase of the financial position is much more satisfactory than was represented by Mr. Holmes. The hon. member also said that a considerable portion of the public debt did not carry a sinking fund. The exact position was clearly set out in last year's Budget, which is available to every member.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What we want to know is, how much is carrying sinking fund?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The requirements of the statutes for the provision of sinking fund have been adhered to. The revenue per head in 1916 amounted to £17, whereas in 1926 it was £24, but it is unsafe to take the revenue per head in two years without ascertaining the cause for the increase. Since 1916 a large amount of money has been advanced to individuals and the return of interest is correspondingly greater. This is not true revenue. Railway returns also show an increase of £1,400,000, harbours and roads £170,000, and other public utilities show increases that cannot be regarded as true revenue in the ordinary meaning of the word. Since 1916 the following amounts have been advanced for land settlement:—

	£
Agricultural Bank	1,170,083
Soldier Settlement	7,078,053
Assistance to Settlers	1,704,256
Group Settlement	2,453,965
Total	£12,406,357

The following amounts have been spent on public utilities:—

	£
Fremantle Harbour Trust ..	372,801
Metropolitan Water and Sewerage	1,321,601
Tramways and Electricity Supply	814,533
Total	£2,508,935

The items I have enumerated account for a total of roughly £15,000,000, and it would be quite easy for the Treasury to account for the balance of the £24,000,000.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is the public debt to be increased while the per capita payments are likely to disappear?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Fremantle harbour, metropolitan water supply and sewerage, and tramways and electricity supply, strictly speaking, are not Government functions. In other States they are controlled by boards or trusts having borrowing powers. If the same system applied here this expenditure would not have been reflected in the public debt. Mr. Holmes also dealt with the cost of establishing 55,000 people in the State between the years 1916 and 1925, which he estimated at £450 per head. This amount has been arrived at by dividing the loan expenditure for the period by the increase in population. As I have already mentioned, a large por-

tion of the expenditure should be borne by trusts or boards and should not go to swell the debt per head of population. A large amount was also spent on railways to serve existing settlement in the wheat belt and to augment the rolling stock to carry the increased wheat yield. A portion of the period dealt with was affected by the war and the after effects of the war extended over several years, during which the repatriation and settlement of soldiers taxed the State's resources. Mr. Holmes said that the balance sheet for the Wyndham Meat Works was not available and added—

The Wyndham Meat Works close their financial year on the 31st December. We should have the figures to the 31st December, 1925, but they are not here. The latest figures issued about 12 months ago, show that the capital expenditure on buildings was three quarters of a million, and the loss half a million. That loss, instead of being brought into profit and loss account as it should have been, was added to the capital cost of the work with the result that the Wyndham proposition, although it cost about three-quarters of a million, now stands in the books at one and a-quarter millions.

It is not correct to state that the loss, instead of being brought into profit and loss account, was added to the capital cost of the work. Buildings, plant and machinery stood in the balance sheet for 1925 at £748,070.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Before tea I was dealing with Mr. Holmes's comments. I mentioned his criticism as to the establishment of 50,000 people here between 1916 and 1925 at a cost of £450 per head. Part of that period was affected by the war, and the aftermath of the war lasted for several years. Moreover, the repatriation and settlement of our own soldiers took up the greatest part of our resources. It has to be remembered, too, that we had certain responsibilities to our own people. Mr. Holmes's criticism, therefore, is not entirely substantiated.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I merely took a period of 10 years. I did not blame the present Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member was quite fair in his criticism, but the figures I have quoted are correct, and they apply to the period which his criticism covers. Mr. Holmes also criticised the Wyndham Meat Works. It is true that he

had not had an opportunity of perusing the balance sheet for the yast year. However, that balance sheet discloses that the losses are kept separate, and not added to capital.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What have you done with the losses?

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is not the first time Mr. Holmes has criticised the Wyndham Meat Works. Mr. Glasheen also made a few remarks on that subject. Whilst it must be admitted that there have been certain shortcomings, we have to bear in mind that the works were established upon the recommendation of people who, at any rate at that time, were thought to be good judges. The reason for the establishment of the works was the desire to preserve and advance the interests of North-Western cattle producers. Even at the risk of hostile interjections, I will mention that no one was more enthusiastic in supporting the establishment of the works than Mr. Holmes himself.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is that so?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not quite sure.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You had better be sure.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not make a statement unless I am pretty well convinced of it.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You are wrong this time.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Last session this subject was well discussed, and the present Leader of the House produced correspondence which satisfied most people that the Labour Government were not the initiators of the Wyndham Meat Works. The inference is that Mr. Holmes was a strong supporter of the works, and that he would not favour the selling of them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The select committee on the works unanimously recommended that course about five years ago.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have read the evidence given before the select committee. Though certain losses are involved in the running of the works, it would be a rash man who would suggest selling them to a private company or closing them down. They were established with the object of giving the small cattle-grower of the North-West an opportunity to market his stock.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I thought the object was to supply the metropolitan area with

cheap meat. That was what you said at the time.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Perhaps so, and that introduces the question of North-Western development. Never in their history have the works been on a better basis than they are on to-day, and this in spite of what various members have said regarding little industrial troubles. There now seems to be a perfect understanding between the management and the various organisations concerned in the works. Moreover, all the pastoralists are satisfied with the deal they are getting from the works. Whatever losses are involved in the operation of the works, they are amply justified by the results to the cattle industry. It has frequently been said that the position of the Kimberleys is hopeless. That, however, is not so. As a result of consultation with people who understand the Kimberleys thoroughly, the Government have decided upon at all events one small step towards improving the position, and that is to raise the class of stock in the Kimberleys. The Minister for the North-West, whose department has recently been dissolved, has arranged with Mr. Haly, the stock manager at Wyndham, to go to Queensland and purchase 60 pedigreed bulls with the object of improving the breed of cattle in the Kimberleys. In that direction it seems to me, lies the best chance for that country. As I have shown that the Wyndham Meat Works are serving a desirable purpose, Mr. Holmes's criticism is not altogether justified. Dealing with finance, the same hon. member said that the trading concerns were being financed from trust funds.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I quoted the Auditor General's report.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Quite so. The Auditor General's report states certain things very definitely, and shows exactly where the funds have been obtained, how they are held, and by whom they are held. There is every justification for dealing with those funds as they are being dealt with to-day. When the hon. member makes a bald statement that the State trading concerns are being financed from trust funds, he is saying something that is entirely incorrect.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then how do you finance them?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The accounts of the trading concerns are kept separately.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If you make a loss you must get the money from somewhere. How do you finance them?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member knows well how these things are financed. He knows too that it is quite easy to make a statement of that kind, but that it is another matter to prove it.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But tell us how you finance them.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member knows perfectly well how they are financed. The hon. member has read the Auditor General's report and he bases his statements on that report. I base my figures on that report, but I go a little further afield, and I can prove that some of the hon. member's figures are not correct. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Burvill referred to water supplies and drainage in the Pingelly, Wagin, Torbay and Grassmere districts. I have the information regarding those matters and it can be made available, but I would mention the fact for the information of Mr. Burvill that the Government have decided to grant the request of the people of Albany respecting the appointment of a harbour board for that port.

Hon. A. Burvill: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Let us hope that that will stop their whining.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. Miles directed attention to the development of the North-West. Apart from any official connection I have with the North-West, perhaps there are few beside the representatives of the North who know that part of the State better than I do. Therefore, I am able entirely to agree with what they have said. I wish to congratulate Mr. Miles for his splendid speech made the other evening and my only regret is that a better opportunity for dealing with the subject did not offer itself. The development of the North concerns us very much. It is a big country and it is a big man's job. I can only repeat what I said previously that the question of development there involves several Governments, Imperial, Federal and State. I agree too with what Mr. Miles said, that if we cannot tackle the job we must leave it to somebody else. But I do not agree with the statements made from time to time that the Federal Government should take it over. The State Government are of the opinion that some assistance is necessary for the North. It

is a country of vast distances and big difficulties and it requires a lot of money to develop it. I have no hesitation in saying that sooner or later it will be developed and, as Mr. Kempton said last night, will become one of the jewels in the crown of Australia. Mr. Miles also referred to the Moola Bulla cattle station. There are many difficulties associated with the conduct of a station of that kind. The station was established by a Government who, in their wisdom, decided that the native population were a menace to cattle owners in the North. The station, the extent of which is $1\frac{1}{4}$ million acres, was purchased to provide food for the natives, and it has done its job, though not to the extent we would have liked. It has established this fact, that it is possible to make life worth living in the Kimberleys. Mr. Miles asked whether a bang tail muster had been made since the station was bought. He knows well that a bang tail muster is expensive to carry out if it has to be done every few years.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have they ever done it since the station was purchased?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, but the records show that the figures tally pretty well and therefore a bang tail muster is not necessary.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The books never tally with a bang tail muster.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Miles also dealt extensively with the possibilities of the Kimberleys and he referred to the fact that recently I was a tourist in those parts. I have been in the North-West under many circumstances.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I did not say you were a tourist.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Speaking as a layman, it seemed to me that part of the Kimberleys was a sheep man's paradise as referred to by the hon. member. So impressed was I with what I saw that I intend to make a recommendation to the Government to give a trial to sheep-raising at Moola Bulla. Mr. Miles also mentioned that a pressman who recently visited the North declared he was not sure that sheep would live there.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Sheep will live there if you put a dog-proof fence first.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Sheep are being bred in the Kimberleys to-day. I am not going to say that they will be sheep as we find them on the Liveringa area. If the Government take sheep to

Moola Bulla, the stock will be imported from Northern Queensland where the climate is similar, and the breed will be the best that can be produced in those parts. Around Moola Bulla and Hall's Creek the sheep are of good quality and the wool compares favourably with that of the Murchison and the South-West. Moola Bulla is an aborigines station, but there is an opportunity of placing 200 or 300 sheep on it, and showing that something can be done in the direction indicated by Mr. Miles. Instead of this being principally cattle country, it may ultimately prove to be good sheep country. In this morning's paper Mr. R. H. Underwood has entered into the arena as a champion of the North. He refers to a proposition put forward by the State Government, but the only proposition that has been advanced has emanated from the Federal Government. Whether that is satisfactory or not is another matter. Those of us who understand the North know that it must be dealt with as a separate country. It is a big man's job. I recently visited the Northern Territory. It appeared to me that the Federal officials up there had nothing else to do than play lawn tennis or some other game. If the Federal Government intend to operate in the North-West and the Kimberleys, as they are operating in the Northern Territory, I hardly think it will appeal to the people concerned. Whatever the issue may be, the people of the North will be consulted. I do not for a moment think the Minister for Works stated that a referendum would be taken up there. He said the people would be consulted, and that is what will be done. The Government realise their responsibilities, and I feel sure that the North will have nothing to lose by any action that may be taken. I am glad to know that members representing the North recognise that the Government have done something for that part of the State. Mr. Kempton referred to the purchase of the Mendel Estate. After years of agitation we were able to repurchase it under conditions that may not be agreed to by everybody. There are also agitations afoot for the repurchase of the Cockatea and the Wangundie Estates. The Government will do with regard to those estates what they did with regard to the Mendel Estate. This is a business proposition, which runs into a lot of money.

Hon. J. Cornell: We shall never get the money more cheaply.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Government are anxious to see that the young men of the State who desire to get on the land shall have an opportunity of doing so. They know the vigour and enthusiasm of these young fellows, and intend to do whatever they can with a view to repurchasing these and other estates to afford them the opportunity they desire of taking up broad acres on their own behalf. I believe the two estates I have mentioned can be repurchased at a reasonable figure. I wish to express my appreciation for the consideration that members have extended to me during the absence of the Leader of the House. Things have happened that may not have been altogether nice, but I appreciate the kindness of members towards me. I congratulate the Chairman of Committees (Hon. J. Cornell) upon his election to that responsible office, which I feel sure he will fill with credit to himself and to the House.

Question put and passed: the Address-in-reply adopted.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the President, and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.8 p.m.
