

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 27th September, 1916.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: Copy of letter sent to applicants for protection under the Land Act on the ground of military service.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TERMINAL CHARGES.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is it correct that farmers who have delivered wheat at the various sidings are to get a rebate of the terminal charges which apply to spur railways? 2, Will the same concession be granted to timber traders similarly situated, who have disposed of stocks but who are unable to get ships to remove such stocks?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Honorary Minister) for the Minister for Railways replied: 1, All goods carried over spur lines subsequent to the date upon which the terminal charge was abolished, will not pay such charge. 2, Answered by 1.

QUESTION—LAND REVENUE.

Mr. HICKMOTT asked the Minister for Lands: What is the total of land revenue received during the last four years?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: £1,355,797 6s. 3d. Of this amount £160,151 8s. 2d. was paid through the Industries Assistance Board.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS, EXPENDITURE.

Mr. HICKMOTT asked the Minister for Works: What is the total actual expenditure on the construction of agricultural railways during the last four years?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: £1,702,587 9s. 11d., inclusive of surveys, water supplies, and departmental charges.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Works: What are the principal works proposed in connection with the Fremantle Harbour covered by the estimated expenditure of £1,500,000 as mentioned in reply to my question of September 19th?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Dredging the entrance channel to 40 feet, £465,000; bell mouth at entrance, £275,000; inner harbour, £100,000; widening wharves 15 feet to cover slopes caused by increased depth—Victoria Quay £157,500, North Quay £142,500, total £300,000. In addition it may be found necessary to extend the North Mole 1,750 feet to cover the channel, at an estimated cost of £300,000; further, efficient suitable plant must be obtained. The estimated cost for hopper bucket dredge is £100,000. This would involve either—(a) strengthening the slips at a cost of from £15,000 to £20,000; or (b) provision of a small floating dock at an estimated cost of £40,000 to £50,000.

QUESTION—MEMBERS OF A.I.F. AND C.P. LANDS.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have any applications been received from soldiers enlisted in A.I.F. to have their interests in C.P. lands protected during their absence? 2, If so, how many? 3, Have any regulations or conditions been laid down for granting any assistance by postponement of payment of rents or otherwise to departing soldiers in A.I.F.? 4, If so, upon what date did these regulations receive Ministerial approval? 5, Have any applications for postponement of rents and protection of their interests during absence by departing soldiers in A.I.F. been refused and lands and moneys paid forfeited? 6, If so, how many? 7, Were the Crown Law authorities consulted as to power to forfeit

C.P. land in view of the War Precautions (Postponement of Payments) Regulations? 8, Is it the intention of the Government to lay on the table the following papers:—(a) The files in connection with all soldiers' C.P. lands forfeited since 4th August, 1914. (6) Copy of the regulations (referred to in Question 3) for dealing with these applications.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied : 1, Yes. 2, About 800 individual settlers' (embracing over 2,000 holdings). 3, There are no formal regulations, the practice being based on Ministerial instructions on questions arising from time to time. Applicants are required to comply with certain formalities, and, where the Agricultural Bank is concerned, to make arrangements for the maintenance of the improvements during their absence. 4, Instructions have been given at various times since the outbreak of the war. 5, None, where the required formalities have been complied with; but in some cases, where the Agricultural Bank has found that no arrangements have been made for the maintenance of improvements, or where there have been evidences of abandonment foreclosure by that institution has taken place. Forfeiture has taken place also in a few cases of soldiers killed in action, where the next of kin or legatees have expressed their intention of abandoning any claim. 6, About a dozen. 7, No, as the occasion did not arise so far as the Lands Department was concerned. 8, (1) The files in any specific cases named will be made available. (2) See answer to No. 3. (Copy of a letter forwarded to applicants, setting forth the requirements of the Lands Department, will be laid on the table).

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the PREMIER, leave of absence until the end of the present session granted to the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Gilchrist), the member for Albany (Mr. Price), the member for Subiaco (Mr. B. J. Stubbs), and the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) on the ground that they are on active service in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth.

[13]

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day—Amendment.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [4.41]: When the last Address-in-reply was being discussed in this House there was talk of peace on earth and good will towards men, and from the remarks of every one of the hon. members who spoke, and especially the leaders of the parties, one would gather that we were going to have a session almost like that of a mutual admiration society. The present Opposition were then in office, and stuck honourably and religiously to the compact they made, that nothing of a controversial nature would be brought before the House. We find, however, that after hoisting the white flag, as it were, asking us to adhere to the same policy, our opponents shot at us on each and every possible occasion. There was never such invective, or more in the way of insinuation thrown out across the Chamber since I have been in politics than has been thrown out by these hon. members, after their expression of peace on earth and good will towards men. I think that the unfair criticism, the unjust criticism, which were heaped upon the late Ministers made their work especially hard, and even more so than was caused by the stressful times through which the State was passing. Those hon. members who now occupy positions on the Treasury bench know full well that the position of a Minister at any time is an onerous one, and quite apart from the trouble in which the Nation is now plunged, that each one of them has his own particular share of the State's burden to carry, and yet I do not think I have ever heard anything more unfair than the criticism which was levelled at the recent occupants of the Treasury bench by the present occupants and their supporters. I am glad to know that we now thoroughly understand the position in which we stand. It is party against party and we are out to fight. My contention is that if we had still been fighting and no white flag had been hoisted, we would not have stepped aside as we did during the last session, and would have been able to give more assistance to our Ministers in this Chamber than was possible for us to give after making the compact that we honourably kept, but which was

not kept by our opponents. Many of us believed that controversial matters could very well have been debated. Controversial matters were brought on, but when we made the compact not to take a great part in these we religiously stuck to it. We were, however, there to be shot at, and we were shot at on several occasions. We found that every little tittle tattle, every little gutter talk was brought into this Chamber. Much of the criticism levelled at the then Government was the result of pavement talk. I remember on one occasion, when the then Premier, Mr. Scaddan, was speaking, he asked where the information came from. The present Premier replied, "Oh, you can hear it in the street." We can hear lots of things in the street, and we need not hear these things which are spoken of in the street. It is very easy for any one to have a convenient hearing when these things are supposed to be said.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: They draw on their imagination at times.

Mr. FOLEY: Undoubtedly that is often done. Still it is a straight out fight now, and we know exactly where we are. I believe, although a compact was entered into, and I was against it at the time, it is better now to have a straight out fight, party against party. The State will reap the benefit of the knowledge of those gentlemen, no matter what their political faith may be. This brings me to the Country party, the party that stood idly by and did nothing when they heard criticism being levelled at the Government which had done more than any other Government in Australia to help the people the Country party were alleged to be representing in Parliament. What do we find? The late Government put bread into the mouths of the people represented by the Country party, when those people were starving, and when the first opportunity presented itself, it was turned down by the members of the Country party. That was not what one might have expected from the Country party. The Labour party comprises men who had no desire to rob the wheat growing industry and who did not view that industry in any parochial spirit. They gave it all the assistance that was required and as soon as that was done, the Country party, recognising that the posi-

tion had been saved, kicked away the Labour party. The late Government gave every assistance in the way of providing seed wheat and fertilisers, paid the store bills, the doctors' and the maternity bills, and gave the country storekeeper the opportunity of getting some ready money when the private enterprise banks refused to help them. What did they then do? As soon as the Government went to their assistance, they, of course, took everything that was offered and then bit the hand that fed them. The wheat growers—and I separate them from the farmers every time—were assisted at the expense of every other industry in this State. The position of the other industries is not a bed of roses. The mining industry on the fields has been, I will not say neglected, but the hon. gentleman who occupied the position of Minister for Mines in the late Government will bear me out when I say that the money at his disposal for the assistance of mining was far smaller than it would have been had it not been necessary to provide so much to assist the wheat growers of the State. Still, we cannot blame the gentlemen who are sitting opposite. It was not their fault that the wheat growers got anything. They were clay in the potter's hands, and the potters in every instance were Messrs. McGibbon, Murray and Prowse, of St. George's-terrace, Perth, who dictated what had to be done. The members of the Country party are in as bad a position as any man in any walk of life can be in.

Mr. Heitmann: They were not even allowed to speak at the conference.

Mr. FOLEY: Here we have the position where men outside Parliament are endeavouring to dictate the policy of this Chamber.

Mr. Bolton: They have done so.

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, to a considerable extent. The gentlemen of St. George's-terrace whom I have named, dominated the members in this House now occupying the cross-benches on the Government side. These members did not have a soul of their own, and they could not say what they wished to say. The late Government would never have gone out of office if each and every member of the Country party had had only his own mind to consider. I do not say that they voted wrongly to put the Government out. More honour to those who, when there is a

principle to follow, follow it loyally. After this little song and dance business of the gentlemen of St. George's-terrace dictating the policy of our friends in this Chamber, there was a mutual admiration society meeting held at York, consisting of Messrs. Monger, Burgess and Marwick. Mr. Monger we all know, either by repute or otherwise. He declared that the gentlemen occupying the cross benches in this Chamber were no good, and that confidence in them had been misplaced. Mr. Burgess followed and declared that those members of the Country party in Parliament were of no use whatever. Mr. Monger up-ended himself again and declared that the party had been discredited by the reputation that it had in the legislative halls, and I do not include the members in this Chamber only, but in the other as well. Mr. Monger finished up by back-scratching Mr. Burgess and Mr. Marwick. Mr. Marwick and Mr. Burgess then did the God bless the Duke of Argyle trick with Mr. Monger, and when the psychological moment arrived—everything had been rehearsed beforehand—Mr. Monger dramatically walked out. Then there was something doing. The first question asked was, "Is Mr. Monger to represent York?" Mr. Burgess replied, "Yes." Mr. Monger was it, and a big I.T. Mr. Monger was the only pebble on the beach, and as soon as Mr. Burgess said that, Mr. Marwick declared that if they had different representation in Parliament they would be a different party altogether. Then they went on and on until someone said, "We do not want Griffiths in Parliament; we want Monger." Mr. Griffiths, apparently, was all right in his own way, he was not a bad sort, but Mr. Monger was wanted. They declared that they wanted Mr. Monger to replace Mr. Gardiner. Mr. Gardiner was all right, but they could not trust him. Mr. Marwick got rather mixed up at that time and apparently, not remembering what Mr. Burgess had said, declared that Mr. Gardiner was all right, and that he was the only man in the party who was worthy of a place in a Ministry. Mr. Burgess stated that there was no man in the party fit to take office. These gentlemen then migrated to Perth and had a conference with the three gentlemen of St. George's-terrace whom I have named. The

conference was held in an insurance office and everything was settled there. They did not want a big conference to settle matters; they talked over things in a business like way, and they said, "What are we going to do?" We do not know what they did say, but we do know that the goats were sold. I do not know what price was obtained for them, but I do not suppose they fetched much. Anyhow, they followed out the instructions of Mr. Monger and I do not suppose the goats brought much because they were not worth much. I do not wish to eulogise anyone, but I will say, after listening to the hon. members who comprised that party since they have been in this Chamber, the man they traduced most, the man they said they could not trust and belittle, and got the Press in every way to belittle, did more from a national spirit than all the rest of the party put together. I should not have thought as much of that member if he had voted with the Labour party and had been disloyal to his own party. Now I come to the fourth party in this House. I am now on to the lock, stock, and barrel of the fourth party. This party is hardly worth considering, but I believe this party could be put to excellent use by being sent down to the Esperance district and placed on an experimental block to settle the question once and for all as to whether there is too much salt in the Esperance lands. That would be a good occupation and the gentleman would be just as useful there as he is here.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: If I enjoyed myself as much at Esperance as the hon. member did at Narrogin when he came down to conduct a campaign I would have a good time.

Mr. FOLEY: I never conducted a campaign at Narrogin. I caught the next train back after a look at the place.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Perhaps the same thing might happen at Esperance.

Mr. FOLEY: I was picked out by the leader of the Country party when I was at Narrogin. He wanted to know what I was going to do. If the hon. member could be as important a man in the Esperance district on an experimental block as I was at Narrogin for five minutes we would not be able to get a hat to fit him. As far as the fourth party in this House is concerned, I believe I re-echo the opinions of every mem-

her, that twisters from one party to another do not last long; they are not wanted.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: What about your Colonial Secretary and Mr. Mahon?

Mr. FOLEY: As far as I am personally concerned, I have never seen one man who has gone over live too long. During the last elections for the Legislative Council there was a gentleman who occupied a position in the Upper Chamber for many years. He had a look to see which way the cat was jumping. He did not know. He pulled out sixpence and tossed it up and it came down Country party. He stood for the Country party and now he is taking on a bit of private enterprise. There is only room for two parties in this State, the Government and the opposition party. But the whole business of shuffling and twisting on the part of any person has proved the correctness of the labour leader's words for many years now, that there is only room for two parties, that is the Labour party and those who oppose. I want to leave the fourth party just for a while, but I may say that when the Government have finished with that party and got all out of him from a support point of view, he will not last very long. He may last the next election, but I guarantee that he will last only as long as the Liberal party want him to last.

Mr. Thomson: Do not be such a pessimist.

Mr. FOLEY: I am a breezy optimist in expressing that opinion. Although the Liberals wanted the support of the Country party, and tried all sorts of baits, when the Country party asked that certain representation should be given to them, the Liberals could not see their way to fall in with that idea without consulting the country.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You offered the Country party some baits at Narrogin but they would not take them.

Mr. FOLEY: It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I got it in very good authority.

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member is like the man who talks in the street. I had no authority to offer any party a bait when I went to Narrogin. If the hon. member is correct in his statement, it is only right he should tell me who the person was who told him; that is only fair. If the man who made that statement is not prepared to back it up

with proofs the statement is not worthy of any member of Parliament. The hon. member should give the man's name.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is generally understood.

Mr. FOLEY: It was generally understood that the hon. member was a labourite, but I do not think he was; it was generally understood that we were going to have the Esperance railway, but we are not going to have it.

The Minister for Works: I am not so sure about that.

Mr. FOLEY: Leaving the wreckers for awhile, I am going to deal with a few words of the Premier. In his speech the Premier gave us nothing new. When we labourites were sent to this side of the House—we did not go of our own free will—we were told that the new Government were going to straighten the finances, that they were heaven-born financiers; they would put everything right. But we have the Premier coming down with a Supply Bill just as Mr. Scaddan did. The Treasurer has gone behind with the deficit month by month since he has been in office, just as Mr. Scaddan did. When the Premier was on this side of the House he criticised Mr. Scaddan in asking for supply, but he has done the same. He has a deficit just the same as Mr. Scaddan had, and he is even riding in a motor car as Mr. Scaddan did. The only point in which the Government differ from Mr. Scaddan is, that when the gentlemen opposite were in opposition there was scarcely any retrenchment in the State, and, as much as Ministers may deny it, instructions had been issued in certain departments that the services of every man possible must be done away with.

The Minister for Works: Can you give the names of those departments?

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, I can. One of them is the State Sawmills department.

Mr. Taylor: That comes under the Minister for Works.

Mr. FOLEY: Word was sent to the State Sawmills that the services of every man who could possibly be spared should be done away with. Word was sent to the Railway department soon after the Government took office asking the heads of the branches how best they could help to straighten the finan-

ces and how many men they could do away with.

Member: Is not that a business attitude to adopt?

Mr. FOLEY: It is a business attitude, but if it was a business attitude to adopt why are my friends opposite so strong in denying the fact. If it is a business attitude they should throw their tails over their backs and tell us.

Mr. Taylor: They have no tails.

Mr. FOLEY: Their tail is sitting here. During the four and a-half years of the opposition by members of the present Government, we were constantly told about the will of Parliament being flouted, that Parliament was never consulted, but the present Government have gone further. If the late Government went four, the present Government have gone nap. Parliament passed a Bill, for the benefit of this country, setting forth that the Esperance railway should be built, but immediately the Government came into office they stopped the construction of the railway, not because of the salt at Esperance, it was because of the sugar. The Minister for Works last night said that it was not a question of salt, but that if the Scaddan Government had not spent a million and a-half there would have been money for this railway. If it was the million and a-half that the Scaddan Government spent that was responsible for not building the Esperance railway, why do not my friends be honest and take the country into their confidence and say, "You have spent the money; this railway was not on our platform; it was not part of our policy; we will be honest and say that we will not build it." In spite of the stoppage of the construction of this railway—and I may say the personnel of the Commission which has been appointed I do not altogether agree with—I trust that that portion of the State will get fair consideration. Although it does not matter a whit to me whether the Esperance line is finished or not, for I could go to my electorate to-morrow and oppose the Esperance line and it would not make one vote difference to me, but after the people's representatives in Parliament have given their word and Parliament has voted that the railway shall be built, then I say in

stopping the line the wishes of Parliament have never been flouted to a greater extent than over this business. I wish to congratulate all the Ministers in obtaining office. I am told the Minister for Mines has a lively time ahead, not from any criticism which may be indulged in on this side of the House, but the Minister for Mines will have the greatest job possible to convince his own followers that he earnestly wishes to do something for the mining industry.

Mr. Thomson: He is capable of carrying out his intentions.

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, if backed by those on this side, but he will have his work cut out to convince his colleagues and supporters that the miners are deserving of any more consideration than was shown them by his predecessor in office. The Minister for Mines won the Canning election by a substantial majority. Had we won it it would have been the greatest victory we ever had. As it is, it is one of the worst losses ever we had. But it is not going to wreck the Labour party. The Labour party has been built up on the losses sustained. However, it will be difficult for the hon. member to fulfil his promises made during the election. There are to be tramway extensions in all directions in that electorate, and the Minister's supporters in the House will be coming along with their requests for extensions in their respective electorates. The Minister promised to build bridges, but he has yet to convince his colleagues of the necessity for those bridges. I really believe that if left to himself he would cheerfully asphalt the Swan. Now we come to the leader of the Country party, described by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Heitmann) as the Bulgarians of politics—a shot, by the way, which the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) thought fit to appropriate to himself. The leader of the Country party, armed with the Labour "Vanguard," made a gracious entry into the House, putting on a good deal of dog as he did so. He brought in a dingo skin and stated that the dingo when alive had killed 283 sheep. I do not know how the hon. member could tell.

Mr. Underwood: By the rings on the dingo's tail.

Mr. FOLEY: After considering the statement made by the leader of the Country party I have come to think that Mr. Monger's remark that all is not as it should be in the Country party is about correct. The argument that a dingo had killed 283 sheep is but a poor one to use in support of a request for Government assistance, because to my mind if the owners of the sheep had not sufficient initiative to kill the dingo they were not worthy of assistance. I suppose the owner of the sheep thought that it was not his duty to kill the dog, but that it was the duty of the Government to do so. Wheat-growers throughout the State, and some of our farmers, have been spoon-fed for so long that they do not think they should do anything whatever for themselves. The hon. member touched upon a more serious question when he referred to racing and betting. He expressed the hope that the report of the select committee on racing and betting would be adopted, and that legislation would be brought in to deal with the alleged twin evils. In my opinion we will never do away with betting. If we prohibit betting by licensed bookmakers, men will bet "under the lap," and we shall have the spectacle of men going into devious places to make bets instead of going to a licensed bookmaker, from whom the Government would be receiving a little revenue. If the Government registered every bookmaker in the State more good would be done financially and morally than by adopting the report of the select committee. Many people who do not fully understand declare that bookmakers are parasites and of a low class. I have heard hon. members say that they would put them all at the Front. I know many horse-trainers, horse-owners, bookmakers, and jockeys now at the Front, and many more in camp. I want to tell my friends who wish to kill the joy in everything in life that no class in the community holds a monopoly of representation at the Front. It was a most unguarded statement for the leader of the Country party to make when he said that he would spread a net, rope in all the bookmakers, and despatch them to the Front. There are many trying to rush others to the Front with no thought of going there themselves.

Mr. Willmott: When did the leader of the Country party say it?

Mr. FOLEY: He said it in this Chamber, and it has been published in the Press as his statement.

Mr. Willmott: I know that, but he never said it at all. You cannot find it in *Hansard*.

Mr. Bolton: You may have cut it out.

Mr. FOLEY: I hold no brief for bookmakers, but all who go to the races, including the public, are alike in the game for what they can make out of it. If we were to do away with bookmakers we would still have the totalisator, which, in my opinion, is just as iniquitous a form of betting as betting with the bookmaker. As for the honour of the bookmaker, it is in most cases above suspicion. One can go to a bookmaker wherever one meets him to book a bet. So long as the parties are known to each other, each accepts the other's word. In that respect there is not in the world a more honourable class than the bookmakers. If, on the other hand, one goes to the Stock Exchange and buys, say, 100 Bullfinch shares at 2s. for delivery next day, and if next morning the shares are £2, one will have some difficulty with the broker before getting the shares.

Mr. Heitmann: Oh, no. I do not think that is right.

Mr. FOLEY: I know of such an instance of my own knowledge. Consider the proportion if bookmakers who "take the knock" with the proportion of stockbrokers subjected to the same experience, and the balance will be found to be greatly in favour of the bookmaker.

Mr. Heitmann: The bookmaker may be quite honourable, but his calling is a useless one.

Mr. FOLEY: There are many useless callings.

Mr. Underwood: That of a politician, for instance.

Mr. FOLEY: Patrons of the totalisator are robbed by that machine, for they do not get the fractions and do not get the stated odds. The totalisator should be registered by the Government, and all fractions should go to State charities. Alternatively the totalisator should pay the exact dividends.

Mr. Bolton: They do, on the unregistered.

Mr. FOLEY: The report drawn up by the select committee on horse racing was framed

on the plea that the totalisator is preferable to the bookmaker. It is a wide question and I, with many others, am prepared to argue that the bookmaker is just as essential as the totalisator. That plea was largely based on the contention that sometimes the totalisator pays £1 dividend for 10s., while the bookmaker pays only 15s. There were on that committee unthinking men who knew nothing whatever about racing, and who forgot that the winning horse might have started at ten to one and been backed down to six to four, and that the bookmaker might have been paying the odds of ten to one and so was really giving better odds than was the totalisator. We require to leave the wowser right out of our consideration of the question. Do away with betting and we will have no racing. How much better to let the Government have sole control of it all and let them register the bookmakers and totalisators. If the government of the whole thing were put in the hands of three competent officers, the State would reap considerable benefit. That will result in a system much preferable to the system prevailing in States where betting is done under the lap. Generally, I consider the best system for racing would be to control it by an Act of the Legislature. I trust that the Government, in framing their Bill, will not be led away by certain opinions expressed in the joint select committee's report, opinions expressed by men who know little or nothing of racing, much as they may know of other subjects. The hon. member whom I am now criticising also referred to officers of this State. I was sorry to hear him accuse those officers of robbery.

Mr. Willmott: I spoke of a system of robbery.

Mr. FOLEY: How can one have robbery without a system? A system may be good or bad, but it is a system.

Mr. Willmott: I said, a legalised system of robbery.

Mr. FOLEY: I consider it was a dastardly accusation against those officers. If the officers demanded money which one did not owe, one could exercise one's right of appeal to the Minister; but I am satisfied that no officer of the Government wishes to take from anyone money that is not rightly ow-

ing. Next, I wish to touch on the liquor question. Many people are afraid to tackle the liquor problem. I am on the black books of the alliance for certain opinions I hold; and I trust that I shall always hold those opinions, even if it means that my name will always remain on the black books of that body. A little while ago there was talk of a referendum on the liquor question in this State, and the same thing was mentioned in this Chamber the other night. The Attorney General has given notice of his intention to introduce a motion for the continuance of the 9 to 9 regulation. From the platforms we hear voices crying, "We believe in trusting the people, and we will give them the referendum." The leader of the National Council of Women, a lady named Mrs. Oliver, went to Mr. Scaddan's meeting at Victoria Park and asked him a question, to which he returned a straight out answer. Mrs. Oliver asked Mr. Scaddan was he in favour of the referendum; and he replied, "Yes; it is on our platform, and I believe in it, and I have always endeavoured to put it into practice." The lady evidently asked the same question of the other candidate. What that gentleman's reply was I do not know; but the alliance decided to support Mr. Robinson. At the meeting of the alliance which decided to support Mr. Robinson, there was present a gentleman who never enters into party politics. I refer to Mr. Prowse. Mr. Prowse looks at the liquor traffic from a broad national standpoint. The night before the alliance came to a decision which candidate should have their support, Mr. Prowse was there in his non-party capacity, and said, "Scaddan is no good; we must leave Robinson." Now I come to Mr. Robinson, the gentleman who was put into Parliament by the Canning electorate. As soon as he gets in, we find him giving notice of a motion for the continuance of the 9 to 9 regulation. We find the Premier side-stepping the question by every possible means. Lastly, we have the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) introducing a private Bill in diametrical opposition to the motion of the gentleman who holds the Attorney Generalship. The Labour party are absolutely solid on the referendum question.

Mr. Thomson: I am glad to hear it.

Mr. FOLEY: But the gentleman who is introducing the Bill I mentioned voted against the referendum last session. The member for Katanning voted against the referendum.

Mr. Thomson: Because I did not think the Government were sincere in the intentions they expressed.

Mr. FOLEY: There are some men who, though they are firm on the referendum, are not willing to have their ideas tickled by the prospect of a referendum on one question, whilst the referendum is to be refused on every big question. That is the point to be considered. I believe in the referendum, and I would vote for the referendum, but I am not going to be bulldozed into voting for a referendum because a few people want it on one particular question, in connection with which it would represent a mere subterfuge on the part of the Government with a view to escaping their responsibilities. The liquor question is one which should be a responsibility of any Government in office. When the second reading of the measure introduced by the member for Katanning comes on, I shall be interested to learn what is the position of that Bill from a constitutional point of view. As the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) has said, if it is a money Bill needing a message from the Governor, is that message being fixed up as well? However, being only a common, ordinary, garden Labourite, I suppose I do not understand these high constitutional questions. Whatever the result of the referendum, if a referendum is taken, no thanks will be due to the alliance, and none to many of the prohibitionists. If an alteration of hours comes about, it will be the result of the temperate people, and not of the alleged temperance people, in this community. The really temperate people will have the deciding voice. A man who does not drink at all, who has been a total abstainer all his life, is not necessarily a temperance man. I am a total abstainer; I have never known the taste of drink; but I have an aversion for most teetotallers. That may seem a peculiar thing, but I can assure hon. members that in earlier days the fact that a man was a total abstainer was

an indication that he was narrow-minded on the drink question. I suppose it is due to the circumstance of having been born in an enlightened mining community that I am a different kind of teetotaller. Another matter I wish the Government to take into consideration refers to dangerous industries. The Attorney General, having visited the goldfields, knows that mining is a hazardous occupation. If the Attorney General has not visited the timber districts, other Ministers have done so, and they can tell him that sawmilling is a hazardous occupation. In this connection I wish to point out that a schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act stands in need of amendment. The schedule provides that in the event of a man losing, say, a finger, or an eye, he shall be entitled to certain compensation. Labourites have, in season and out of season, constantly asked that that schedule should be made compulsory. What is denied to the employee is granted to the employer, as far as that schedule is concerned. If it is good enough that the employer should be permitted to compromise for a lump sum, it is only right that the employee should be entitled to sue for a lump sum. A case occurred recently of a man losing an eye, for which injury he received only six weeks' sick pay, six weeks being the period he was absent from work. That man was absolutely at a disadvantage as compared with the employer. If a worker broke his hand, it would take at least nine or ten weeks to enable him to return to work. Does not the loss of an eye entitle a man to some consideration beyond the actual time he is incapacitated for work? Surely humanitarianism has not disappeared entirely; surely the milk of human kindness still flows. Undoubtedly the schedule I have mentioned should be amended. In connection with compromising for a lump sum, there is a supposed rule that insurance companies cannot capitalise at more than 5 per cent., which would bring the compensation of £160 for the loss of an eye up to about £185. In very few instances has that amount been paid. Sometimes compensation is paid after a man has been out of work perhaps 15 or 20 weeks from injury to the eye or loss of an eye. But here we have the case of a man who, having lost an eye, is off work for only six weeks, though

he returns to work crippled for life, and placed at a disadvantage as compared with his fellow-workers. He is treated just as he might be treated had he only lost the top of his finger. Having lost an eye, the man is at a considerable disadvantage as against other workers, because employers will consider they are taking a double risk with him; and therefore he is thrown out of his usual avocation. That is a sad thing. I want the Government to do something, and I assure them that if they do it they will have the support of every member on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. Thomson: Why did not your Government try

Mr. FOLEY: I am heartily sick of telling the hon. member that we did do so. We did and we were balked every time by the Legislative Council and by the party to which the hon. member belongs. Every Labour member supported it, and every Liberal voted against it.

Mr. Munsie: So they did in this House just the same.

Mr. FOLEY: If toleration is going to be their guiding principle they will be conferring a boon on the State, and no matter what Government introduces it the members of the Labour party will all be anxious to vote for it. There is another question that I want to refer to, and it deals with the Arbitration Act. We saw recently the difficulty that was experienced by the shop assistants in their effort to get before the court. This particular union had no desire to strike; they did not want it known that they had the strike mania. Their desire was to settle their differences in a constitutional way, and they wanted to use brains instead of brawn. Every time they made an effort to get to the court, however, they have been balked, with the result that at the present time they are at the end of their tether of toleration, and it is our desire to assist them. We want to help them to approach the court, and if we can do that we shall confer a big boon on those people, and we shall at the same time be assisting towards the maintenance of peace and keeping down industrial trouble.

The Minister for Works: What is the difficulty.

Mr. FOLEY: The difficulty lies in the machinery clauses in regard to what constitutes an industry.

Mr. Gardiner: It has always been a very difficult question.

Mr. FOLEY: When Mr. Walker introduced a Bill to amend the Arbitration Act he gave an opinion, but it was not backed up in this House. Several legal gentlemen have since told me that if Mr. Walker's desire had been carried into effect it would have obviated the difficulties which exist at the present time. Let us hope that an amendment will be introduced and we shall then see every member of the House voting for it. When people show a desire to settle their troubles in a constitutional way they should be given every opportunity to do so. With regard to mining, I desire to say a few words on the subject of the recent trouble on the goldfields. A great deal has been made out of what happened recently in connection with the employment of aliens, but there really was not very much in it, and little would have been heard of it if the mine owners, through their managers, had shown patriotism. There were three men on one mine who were alleged to be enemy subjects, and to-day that number is but a bagatelle compared to what the position was some years ago. The management were getting good work out of the Britishers employed on that particular mine, but they insisted on retaining the services of the aliens. Will hon. members say that the management were conserving the best interests of their company in keeping those men there? No. Were the management patriotic in allowing the aliens to remain on the mine when it was known they were not naturalised, and were in fact enemy subjects? On another mine there were four aliens employed, and if the Chamber of Mines had exhibited the patriotism that one would have expected of them, and which they should be compelled to show at the present time, there would not have been any trouble at all. If on this question the management had granted a conference that was asked for by the men, and it should have been granted, seeing that it affected the well-being of the mining industry, there would not have been any need for the Minister for Mines to intercede.

The Minister for Works: Were there only eight men altogether?

Mr. FOLEY: There were more, but these eight men were employed on the big mines, three on one, four on another, and one on the third. The investigation in regard to the nationality of these individuals is being carried on at the present time, and I do not wish to say much in that respect. But I do desire to express the opinion that if the policy of the Labour party had been carried out there would not have been any trouble at all. There is not one mining constituency that is not held by a Labour representative, and all were asked to deal with the question of the employment of foreigners in mines. When this question was introduced into the Mining Bill some time back every Labour member voted for it, and every opponent of Labour voted against it. I defy any hon. member to disprove my words. Just to show what the employment of foreigners in mines means, in 1912 I was being ridiculed for speaking on the foreign question, and the present Premier accused me of being unpatriotic. He said that my action was not British. I wonder if he went to the Esplanade on a Sunday now how he would get on if he made such a statement there.

The Minister for Works: There was no war then.

Mr. FOLEY: When the war was not on there was no need for waving the flag of patriotism, but when one is patriotic for just what patriotism is worth, then the opinion is worth a great deal more.

The Minister for Works: They had a right to come here before the war.

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member's Government or his party started them coming here, to the detriment of the Britishers who were here. I said at that time, and it was long before the war, that every hundred foreigners in a mine was equivalent to one more gun pointed at Great Britain. There was no talk of war then, but we could see what it meant. Now hon. members wave the flag of patriotism. This is what I said in 1912, when the Mines Regulation Bill was before the House—I am quoting this from *Hansard*—

If ever the time arrives for Australians to take action, whether on behalf of Great Britain or for themselves, the action will be taken by good Australians and Brit-

ishers who in the past have been thrown aside in favour of the foreigners in our mines, and the foreigners themselves will then sit back on velvet and say, "We are not Britishers, nor Australians and therefore there is no call for us to fight."

When I uttered those words I had as big a knowledge of the foreign question as any member in this Chamber, that is to say, the foreign question as it affected mining in Western Australia. It was the knowledge that did not make it possible for me to go to the foreign quarter in my own electorate at night time. We did not at that time get the vote of a single Liberal. We had no desire to throw the men who were here into the sea. We only wanted to limit the number who should be permitted to work with Britishers. One can go to the goldfields at the present time, especially out in the back country, and find perhaps 30 good Australians leaving their employment to enlist, and their places rushed immediately by foreigners, who go there in train loads. This kind of thing is enough to make anyone wrath. We wonder that anyone talks conscription there. I took Mr. Scaddan to the Gwalia mine in 1912, and showed him that there were employed on that mine only a handful of Britishers and quite an army of foreigners. Yet when we came to this House and asked for legislation to enable us to regulate the number of foreigners who should be employed in a single mine, we received no support from the then Opposition. If the present Minister for Mines wants to earn the good wishes of the mining community he had better introduce legislation to deal with the foreign question, and I assure him that he will receive support from every member on this side of the House. When the conference that he is arranging takes place, if it is to result in any good, I trust the views which will be put forward in respect of the employment of foreigners will fall on better soil than did the views expressed by the workers at the time when Mr. Gregory was Minister for Mines. Mr. Gregory got opinions from the various unions and the Chamber of Mines as to what regulations were necessary. In 1906 Mr. Gregory consulted everybody, but he took notice of only one party, the Liberal party as represented by the Chamber

of Mines. On the file in the Minister's office—a file which has been on the Table of this House—there will be found evidence of the expenditure of many pounds of the State's money on telegrams sent by the then Minister to the Secretary of the Chamber of Mines asking him what was necessary, what time he would be at the Minister's office, and whether he could do anything else. And then the draft of the Bill was sent to the Chamber of Mines and the amendments suggested by that body are still attached to the Bill which is on the file in the Minister's office to-day. There was not one suggestion of the Miners' Union that was taken notice of. I trust the present Minister will be able to convince his supporters that the miners are acting fairly when they are asking for anything. He has had an opportunity lately of forming an opinion of those engaged in the mining industry, and if he finds it necessary at a later stage to fight his own supporters, we on this side of the House will help him in that battle. There is another matter that I desire to touch upon briefly, though at the same time as strongly as I am able to do. Everything I have said has been impersonal; all my actions in Parliament have been impersonal.

Mr. Willmott: Especially about me.

Mr. Bolton: You do not count.

Mr. FOLEY: Outside the walls of this Chamber members on this side of the House have been subjected to the worst indignity that it is possible to submit a man to by a gentleman holding the honourable position of Minister for Works in this State. We noticed in the Supreme Court the other day that a man was sued for calling another a German, and the court decided that that was a slander and a verdict was given in favour of the plaintiff. When the Minister for Works spoke at His Majesty's Theatre some nights ago he made the statement that the Labourites were Germans.

The Minister for Works: Are you sure I made it?

Mr. FOLEY: Absolutely; I have it here and I am going to read the statement to the House. The hon. member was speaking about the Labour party and preference to unionists.

Mr. Bolton: He was given an opportunity of denying it when it appeared.

Mr. FOLEY: He was speaking about the Labour party and preference to unionists, and I want to say incidentally that he is not game to say to the Federal Government that he will not give preference to unionists in any Federal work which he is carrying out. He has not backbone enough to stand against the Federal Government and refuse to give preference in respect to their work. He has got to do it; he is giving preference.

Member: Is that fair?

Mr. FOLEY: Never mind whether it is fair or not. He has not got the backbone to stand against it. Speaking of the Labour party in this State the hon. member said—

Those Germans at the Trades Hall would deny a fellow man the right to live.

I say that if the hon. member made that statement it is absolutely incorrect, and I am only sorry that the Standing Orders of this House do not allow me to give expression to what I feel.

The Minister for Works: You should be sure I said it first.

Mr. Bolton: You have not denied it.

Mr. FOLEY: That is adding insult to injury. If he did not use the words the offence is aggravated in that he did not give it denial when it appeared. That is the gentleman who prates about there being no middle course, and the one who is rising in righteous indignation against anyone who flouts him. He has placed a halo on his head, but I want to say that the individual who used those words is not worthy of the name of man. If he did not use the words he has got less manliness about him because he has not denied it.

The Minister for Works: I suppose, Mr. Speaker, I shall have an opportunity of replying?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in impugning the manliness of another member. Does the hon. member say the Minister for Works is not worthy the name of man, or that, if the Minister said those things, he is not worthy the name of man?

Mr. FOLEY: If he made the statement, in my opinion, he is not worthy the name of man; if he did not make the statement and has not denied it, then I think the same applies. When the hon. the Minister for Works was asked whether he did make

that statement he did not deny it, and he has not denied it up to the present, which makes his offence all the worse so far as I am concerned. I am putting the present Attorney General right out of this question when I say that when the Minister for Works made that statement he did so because he wanted to climb in to power on the shoulders and the backs of the soldiers who are doing so much for the British Empire at the front.

The Minister for Works: I was Minister for Works at the time; what are you talking about?

Mr. Bolton: More shame to you.

Mr. FOLEY: You were Minister for Works only temporarily; because if the election had gone against my hon. friend, the Attorney General, it would have been a case of "Here goes nothing."

The Minister for Works: But I was already sworn in.

Mr. FOLEY: And if your party had lost the election you would have been sworn out shortly afterwards. In any case you have been sworn at. I want to say this, that there is no German blood in my composition, and I do not want to prate of my relatives who are fighting at the front; but if I could have got away I would not have been here to hear any man called a German merely because he is a labourite. I would be hopping into the Germans quick and lively. Further, I may say that I did not wait until coming into this House in order to give my opinion on this matter. The very first time I met the hon. gentleman I gave him my opinion. An older and wiser man than any of us here has said that any place is the right place in which to say what is just. I want to say that this statement was not just nor fair; and if the hon. member made that statement, which I contend he did, as he has not denied it—

The Minister for Works: Do you believe he did?

Mr. FOLEY: I do believe it, and I say in these circumstances it is questionable whether he should be here at all. No words of mine could be too strong on this subject. While I am a member of this Chamber, or while I have breath in my body, I never wish to speak to the hon. member again, nor do I wish him to speak to me.

The Minister for Works: You may have occasion to regret that.

Mr. FOLEY: We are sometimes told that some men's temperaments are against them. It is said that a man is too hasty and it is not right to act without decorum. But I want to say that it was that spirit of hastiness that took our boys up the hill of Gallipoli. They did not wait for decorum. When they felt that they were in the right they rushed in; and I can assure the hon. gentleman that he is in for a rough time. In the event of his denying that statement—

Mr. Bolton: Why didn't he do it when he was asked?

Mr. FOLEY: If he did not make the statement, then I think it would be the only manly thing for him to deny it.

The Minister for Works: Do you think I was going to allow myself to be bullied by you?

Mr. FOLEY: It is more manly to admit a mistake than to stick out and say that one is in the right; but I question whether you have the manliness to do it.

The Minister for Works: That is your opinion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have already told the hon. member that he must not impugn the manliness of another member. The hon. member used the words referring to the Minister for Works that he is unworthy the name of man. That is not the proper expression to use in this House and the hon. member is now repeating the statement in another form.

Mr. FOLEY: If I have transgressed from your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I apologise to the House. I wish to repeat, however, that until the hon. member denies responsibility for that statement I have no wish to speak to him and I do not wish him to speak to me. And I shall never lose a chance outside of this Chamber to attack him on this subject, and I hope that the stigma will stick to him like a leech until he does the fair and honourable thing and either withdraws the statement, if he made it, or denies it, if he did not. That would be a great deal more manly than his present attitude. Should he do so, I might even go so far as to shake hands with him, if he would go to the newspaper and say that he had made a mistake.

Mr. Bolton: Why has he not done that before?

Mr. FOLEY: I am not my brother's keeper. I am merely telling the House what I think of him, and I am sorry to think that we have hon. members in this House who are capable of such conduct.

The Minister for Works: You are on the wrong track entirely.

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member will have an opportunity of proving that when he speaks on the Address-in-reply.

Member: Will you withdraw what you have said if you find that you are in the wrong?

Mr. FOLEY: I am not in the wrong. He was wrong in making the statement attributed to him, and if he will admit that much I am prepared to shake hands with him. I am not admitting anything.

Member: That means, that even if you are proved to be wrong you will stick to what you have said.

Mr. FOLEY: No, I will not. All I am sorry for now is that the Standing Orders do not allow me to express my sentiments; but I will take every opportunity outside of doing so in the strongest Australian language I am capable of.

Sitting suspended from 6.13 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. THOMAS (Bunbury) [7.30]: I would like at the outset to extend my congratulations to the new Ministry, that is, such congratulations as an out and out opponent can honourably extend to them. I cannot go to the extent of the fulsome flattery which was ladled out to the latest Ministerial fledgeling by his sardonic chief, but I am hoping that the Attorney General, being a new member of the House and possibly untrammelled by the traditions of the old Liberalism, may be a new and shining light to the administration of Western Australia. There are many politicians but statesmen are rare. May I hope that out of the new Ministry may arise someone who will be entitled to the name of statesman.

Mr. Underwood: Um! Yes.

Mr. THOMAS: If such can arise.

Mr. Taylor: You are hopeful.

Mr. THOMAS: I am always hopeful; I am a chronic optimist. If such is the case and he voices true Liberalism, and has in his heart a love of the people and a love of Western Australia, and makes an effort to guide the destinies of this fair young country as they should be guided, he will find on this side of the House at least one individual who will extend to him, or them, as the case may be, all the assistance that is possible. To my friend the Minister for Lands, for whom I have a very great deal of personal appreciation, I extend further congratulations. If there is one honourable gentleman in this Chamber who has won the appreciation of all sides of the House by his courtesy and by his general conduct and fairness during his membership of this House, it is the hon. gentleman in question. I am satisfied that it will be only some very grave error of judgment on his part that will cause him ever to be guided by party spite or malice. As the years have gone along we have heard from the various parties which have occupied the Treasury bench the statement that they favour decentralisation. We have been told on many occasions that the greatest evil which can overtake a young country like Western Australia is that we should indulge in a centralisation policy. The head will grow bigger than the body, consequently the best development of Western Australia must be effected. The Liberal Government have made a statement that they propose a policy of decentralisation and yet at the late election, which I do not propose to discuss, I find that the hon. member who was successful in the contest for the Canning promised the members of his constituency an expenditure of something approaching £2,000,000.

The Attorney General: I did not say any such thing.

Mr. THOMAS: I have only been informed to that effect and I saw it stated in a very reliable journal, the *Vanguard*, that the hon. member had made a promise that he would bring about an expenditure in the Canning electorate of something like £2,000,000. I accept the hon. member's assurance, however, that it was not so.

The Attorney General: The sum of £120,000 was the utmost that was involved.

Mr. THOMAS: If he did make that suggestion it was an intolerable proposal. If he had made it, it would only have been a piece of political birdlime because it would not be possible to carry out such a promise.

The Attorney General: Why discuss something which did not take place.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member has given me his assurance and I have accepted it. He does not mind my making a few comments on the possibilities of the question, I hope?

Mr. Underwood: How much were the bridges to cost?

Mr. THOMAS: If such an idea had been in the mind of the Minister and there was some evidence of it—for I understand there were two or three bridges to be put across the Swan river—it is not in keeping with the policy of decentralisation, quite outside any part the Attorney General may have taken in the election. I have nothing further to say in connection with that election because it is no use raking up old sores. There was one thing that I do take exception to in connection with the election, but not so far as the Attorney General is concerned. I take exception to the attitude of the "All British Association." In that organisation there are many men of the very best intentions.

Mr. Underwood: You are easily satisfied.

Mr. THOMAS: I am satisfied that there are men amongst them at the head of affairs, who have very good intentions, but there are some individuals amongst the members of that association who are not worthy of the name of "All British." They have indulged in tactics in connection with this matter, and have made scurrilous attacks upon the ex-Premier, which are un-British in character and unworthy of the commonest scum of the State. It is smudging the fair name of "Britisher" to associate with it the names of such miserable individuals who have been guilty of such scurrilous conduct. Whatever Mr. Scaddan's faults may have been—and I am prepared to admit that he has faults—it cannot by any means be truthfully alleged against him that he was anything else but a true patriot, that he did anything else but love Western Australia as it has been the privilege of few people to love

this country. I believe him to be British at heart, and I am prepared to believe were a sacrifice to be demanded of him for his country he would as cheerfully make that sacrifice as any other loyal man in Australasia would do. So much for the scurrilous crowd who for political purposes made this abusive attack upon the late Premier. Mr. Scaddan is a man who has served his country well and is prepared to serve the Empire in the same way. Is it fair that he should be attacked by the low down individuals such as these I have referred to and have aspersions cast upon his character, and have it scattered broad-cast to the world that he is a sympathiser with Germans or anything German? I do not think that the Liberal party had anything whatsoever to do with such scurrilous conduct, for to do so would not be worthy of the traditions which they hold. Such conduct too is unworthy of British associations within Western Australia, and if the members of that association only knew the character of some of the people who are running it they would disband it immediately. During his speech delivered at the commencement of the debate the Premier devoted a very large portion of his time to a criticism of the trading concerns started by the Labour party. I do not think I am unjust when I say that the Premier was hardly fair in some of his criticism. He presented us with a new set of figures which would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to confirm or deny. He drew conclusions which I do not think were justified.

The Minister for Works: You have had the balance sheets.

Mr. THOMAS: That is right. I do say that whatever the criticisms may be there is one outstanding fact that remains, that for good or evil, the opinion of Australia, and a big percentage of other parts of the world is turned towards the political control of many avenues of trade by the Government of the country. It was the out-spoken, pronounced will of the people when the Labour party came to power that certain trading concerns should be introduced. I believe even to-day, although some of these ventures have been comparative failures for the time being—

although little mistakes and errors have crept in, as they have done in any business concern the world over—there is a firm conviction on the part of the people that with time and experience many of the avenues which have been open to State enterprise could be kept open with advantage to the State and the advantage of the citizens as well. I think it would be a great pity indeed if, for party purposes or for party spleen or because of an aggressive feeling on the part of the present ministry, if any of these trading concerns which have been started should suddenly be stopped. I really believe that so far as we have gone these trading concerns should be given a fair, square, and honest trial. It is a great principle—one which has been very dear to the hearts of many people of the country. Some of these trading concerns have been successful; some have had little trials and tribulations; but there are many big business ventures which we have in Western Australia, which in their early and initial stages did not succeed but which ultimately returned vast profits to those concerned in them. We have our timber mills which have been a source of profit throughout the whole of their operations, that is according to the latest statements I have seen. It must not be forgotten that a question which stands even above the small profit is this—that during the bad and strenuous times, which during the past two years we have gone through, private trading concerns have closed their doors. But these timber mills have kept going and have given employment to hundreds of our citizens at a remunerative wage. It seems to me that in the vast asset we have in our forests in Western Australia it is a fair proof that they should be retained for the benefit of the workers of the country and for generations to follow after. Under State control I am satisfied that the industry could be run properly. The proper control of our forests and the maintenance of them for future benefit could be instituted, and this would enable us to reap in the future all the benefits of that vast wealth for our citizens and at the same time assist in keeping this country going. In initiating this trading concern the Labour party have had some difficulty. They have been

sailing in uncharted seas. There are many hidden rocks which they have not always been able to avoid. But we have gained experience, though better methods in some instances could be introduced, and I entertain the hope that those trading concerns may not only in the near future see the turning point in which there will be a profit, but I hope in the days to come they will be of material assistance to the revenue of Western Australia. There is no use in condemning them because they are socialistic enterprises, because many of our greatest statesmen have said to-day we are all socialists. It is only a question of degree. There is no hon. member who does not believe in State railways. There is no member of the Country party who does not advocate additional railways run by the State. There is not an individual member who objects to our State education. One of the proudest boasts we have and one of our finest accomplishments is our system of free education. Then it is only a question of degree as to how many or how few we shall have. We are all in a measure socialistic. Even the Minister for Works, who is gazing at me so seriously, is in his heart a Socialist.

The Minister for Works: I must have some good in me.

Mr. THOMAS: I believe the Minister for Works has some good in him sometimes, but he unwisely hides it. Underneath however, there is much that is good. In connection with the trading concerns we have had a very fine example set us. Before the war broke out we had the example in England when the manufacture of munitions was carried on almost exclusively by private enterprise, and for some little time Great Britain relied upon private enterprise to produce the need in the way of munitions for not only England but for her Allies who were in need of assistance. What do we find? That the system of private enterprise broke down in no time hopelessly. It was totally inadequate. We find Mr. Lloyd George coming to the front; we find him taking over factories and we find him organising under Government control, spreading the works, nearly the whole of them under Government control, with the result that to-day, we are told, not only have the Allies got a sufficiency

of munitions equal to that of their opponents but probably superior. This has all been due primarily to State control. If in the hour of the Empire's danger, when it seemed that the fate of the Empire was trembling in the balance, the Imperial Government forsook private enterprise and turned to State control with success, it does seem that there is an argument in favour of that in the interests of better organisation, and in the interests of the people as a whole. Therefore, we should give a fair trial to those ventures we in this State have undertaken and if they are good and wholesome we might extend the field. The member for Guildford (Mr. W. D. Johnson) pointed out the other evening in connection with the brickworks, that we had reduced the price of bricks to the consumer by £1 per thousand.

Hon. J. D. Connolly (Honorary Minister): That was contradicted.

The Minister for Works: I will give you the figures.

Mr. THOMAS: At the time the brickworks were started the price of bricks in Western Australia was abnormally high. Of course it may be a coincidence that as soon as the State brickworks were started the price came down, but even if we lose a trifle in the first year in conducting those works, if we are saving to the Government and to the private consumer thousands of pounds, it is a fair proposition for the Government to protect the citizen, because they are then increasing the work of the community.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: The works had the effect of regulating the price.

Mr. THOMAS: During the stormy times of last session, when land Bills were passing through this and the other Chamber, and the Country party were in the zenith of their optimism, and the Labour party were criticised for their want of sympathy towards the farmers, those who sat on this side of the House were loud in their advocacy that a broader policy of land development should be introduced in Western Australia and that we should give more liberally—goodness knows we gave our all—towards the struggling farmer. The Labour party went out of office and, shall I say, an unholy alliance was formed between my bucolic friends and the Liberals,

from which it appeared, when the first negotiations were being carried on, that the Country party, after having milked the Labour party dry, were likely to receive some benefits from the Liberals, who were anxious to fill the seats of the mighty and at the same time draw the emoluments attached to the occupancy of those seats. Promises were made but where does the fulfilment come in? I think my Machiavellian friend, the Premier, has sold the Country party a pup. Out of the fair promises which were made we find that a Commission has been appointed with vague and nebulous powers. This Commission is going to sit from now until they have prepared a report, and even after they have returned their verdict, which I fear will not carry very much weight in Western Australia, it is problematical as to whether much good will accrue from it. Not that I do not think a Royal Commission is desirable, but without wishing to make any comparisons or cast reflections upon the individuals composing that commission I may say that I have not the confidence in them that I would like to have that they have the power and ability and knowledge to give to the Parliament of this country recommendations that will be of permanent value and help to solve the vexed problem of how to make farming a success. I hold that the Government were wrong when they did not include some Parliamentarians on that commission, because we have within the walls of this Chamber, and also the other place, members who have been sent here as the direct representatives of the farmers. To-day we have seven or eight gentlemen who are the choice of Western Australia, who represent all the intellectual capacity that it is possible for the farming community to select.

Mr. Underwood: Alleged to possess.

Mr. THOMAS: Perhaps I should have said alleged to possess.

Mr. Underwood: Monger did not allege anything about it.

Mr. THOMAS: I have not paid much attention to what Mr. Monger said. But whilst these gentlemen are here representing the farming industry, and I do not claim to agree with their views, they have been, selected by the farming community of this

State to represent them, not a single one of them has been thought worthy of taking a seat upon the Commission. I venture to say that we are belittling the authority of Parliament. While it is possible to go outside and select any individual to sit upon a Commission such as the one I am referring to, there is not one member of Parliament, apparently, fitted to take part in the deliberations of the Commission. If Parliament had been given representation on the Commission, that representation would have been invaluable to our subsequent deliberations. We would have had the opportunity of going through all the details here first hand and to learn the wishes of the farmers through the Parliamentary representative and when the verdict recorded in the report was presented to us, there would have been at least one man *au fait* with all the particulars of the report, on whom we could have fallen back, and he would have placed a fair statement before this deliberative Assembly.

The Minister for Works: Do you think the Commission then would have carried more weight with the public?

Mr. THOMAS: I am not concerned about that. I am concerned only as to the result, that is the passing of good legislation for Western Australia. I have not such a poor opinion of Parliamentarians as to think there is not one man in Parliament who is not fit to offer an opinion on a most vital question that is going to affect the destiny of Western Australia in the future. If there is not one man in this Chamber fit to occupy a seat on the Commission, then there is no one in this Chamber who is fit to be a member of the Parliament of the country.

The Minister for Works: I think it would be an invidious position for a member of Parliament to occupy.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Better to be invidious than useless. The Commission's report will be useless.

Mr. THOMAS: A member of Parliament by his training, by the fact that he is in touch with the people so frequently, and by his experience in studying Acts of Parliament, possesses a knowledge which in a case like this would have helped him to see points more quickly than the individual

without previous experience in the directions I have named. I think it is a great pity that at least one member from each House of Parliament, as well as five or six, or even seven, others if necessary, the best brains that money could buy in Western Australia, or out of it if necessary, was not selected to fill a seat on the Commission. We are tackling the biggest problem, the one great basic problem we shall ever have to tackle in this country. We want to gather together by any means and any expense the weight of evidence that will direct us towards making our farming lands a success and the farmers prosperous. Then we shall have laid the foundation stone of Western Australian prosperity for all time to come. The action of the Government has belittled the institution to which we belong. We must have lost faith in our Parliament because we say to the country there is not a man here with intelligence, integrity or ability who can sit on that Commission. But we pick up some outsider, put him in the position and allow him to waste 12 months and then come back to Parliament with a report, which may not win the confidence of any section of the community. The present Government on coming into power were face to face with the great possibilities. I have felt all along, and particularly since I have had an opportunity of meeting a number of farmers, that the question of the development of the farm lands of this country has never been thoroughly and properly tackled by any Minister who ever sat on the Treasury Benches in Western Australia. There has been that lack of local knowledge, that lack of detail, that lack of friendly appreciation of the real difficulties of the struggling farmer. If I desired to pick out a man to become a successful Minister for Lands I would say to him "Go out into the highways and byways, and meet the farmers in every section of Western Australia for the next six months. Do not meet them at formal gatherings where the modest individual cannot express an opinion: meet them in their home life in a friendly way and have an opportunity of hearing their views, the minute details of their troubles, gradually you will absorb from them a knowledge of their difficulties, their thoughts and their failures, and

having learned from all of their experiences you would be able to build upon the basis of their experiences a structure which will be a success and make for the prosperity of our country." That has never been done in this State, and it will never be done, because probably of the bugbear of party politics, because it is always party and ever will be party, and success does not depend on the justice of a policy but on the way in which we reach the people. Leaving that question for a moment, I want to take exception to the credit which has been claimed by the Ministry for the fact that they have once more reverted to the old system of carrying fertilisers over the railways for a charge of a farthing per ton when it costs the country a penny per ton to carry the fertilisers. On the surface, this may appear a somewhat generous action and the right thing. I would not so much complain if it were only being done to assist the farmer who is a little bit behind, if it were only being done to assist the man who is struggling on the land and has yet his way to make. But such is not the case. While the struggling farmer no doubt benefits in a small measure, so also does the wealthy and successful farmer who is in a position which entitles him to pay a fair thing for the carriage of his goods. He also reaps a part of the benefit.

Mr. W. D. Johnson : He reaps the whole benefit,

Mr. THOMAS : Probably the whole. And the result is that the whole of the people are compelled to carry a burden in the way of taxation in order to give a benefit to people who do not need it. The people have to carry taxation to make up the £30,000 which this concession will cost the country. A better plan would be to make a fair and honest gift to the farmer who is struggling and needs it, and to make the wealthy settler pay as every other member of the community has to do for the services rendered by the State. I have, on the floor of this House on more than one occasion, appealed to three successive Ministers who have occupied that position during the five years I have been a member of Parliament. I have pleaded with what little ability I may possess for

some consideration to be extended for the development of the South-Western portion of Western Australia. Mr. Bath gave me every sympathy. In a kindly, gentlemanly way he gave me fair promises. His successor, the member for Guildford (Mr. W. D. Johnson), also gave me some more promises. He said a lot of nice things—that he believed the lands in the south-western portion of this State were excellent, superior to much of the best land in the other States. But all I got was promises. While millions have been spent in assistance to farmers in their wheat area, practically nothing at all in five years has been done to assist the development of our south-western territory.

Mr. Willmott : Hear, hear !

Hon. J. D. Connolly (Honorary Minister) : The member for Guildford told us the other evening that he carried out every promise he made.

Mr. THOMAS : If I had any desire for a passage of arms with the hon. member, I would remind him of another promise he gave of what he was going to do for the development of the South-west by way of harbour works at Bunbury. From the day he took office until he left he gave me promises and nothing more. I think in three years he spent £3,000 on that work. When he came to Bunbury he said, "We want big men with big ideas to carry out big works." A feeling of pride ran down my spine and stimulated my nervous system as the people cheered him as the man who was going to do these great things. Every time I get an opportunity, whether it be on the floor of this House or on the public platform, I am going to stick to this question of the development of the South-West until, if I have the power, I shall have centred public attention on this matter in such a way as will force any Minister or any Government in power in this country to give attention to the development of the South-West. In that territory we have a certain rainfall over an area as large as whole of Victoria, with a climate which is most healthful ; but while millions can be spent on the dry areas of this country, where it is problematical, very doubtful indeed, whether success will ever come, in this other area where there is a possibility of closer settlement and intense

culture and every prospect of building up successful happy homes, what have the Government done? Not a single thing. It is true we have an irrigation scheme at Harvey, which cost, I believe, something like £40,000. Some time ago, I advocated in this House a scheme for closer settlement and ready-made farms. I had consulted all the best authorities available on this subject, and as a result of their ideas, I suggested a scheme based on the lines laid down by my friend, the ex-leader of the Country party (Mr. James Gardiner) who has adopted the system of ready-made farms in the Midland district. I urged on this House that we should go in for the closer settlement of the South-Western area, we should take an area say of 40 acres of good land, put up a ring fence, clear as much of the land as our experts suggest, and build a modest little home on the land. Having done all these things and made a number of farms ready for occupation, in order not to allow anyone to exploit the Government, we should appoint a board, one member of which should be a representative of that part of the State, to select from among the applicants the individual most fitted to make a success of mixed farming and intense culture. We should place those individuals in those homes and give them a clear run for five years without the payment of one brass farthing in rent to the State. But I would make a condition, that the settlers should make certain improvements during the five years, so that the clearing and improvements effected would make the holding more valuable at the end of five-year term than it was at the beginning. At the end of the five years I would capitalise the whole thing, and would then give the individual 30 years in which to pay for it. But there is one bedrock principle I would include. I have noticed that in the wheat areas the farmers have been assisted by the Agricultural Bank. They have been assisted with money and after that has been exhausted they have applied for assistance by way of fertilisers. Then they appeal to the Industries Assistance Board, and by every avenue assistance is sought from beginning to end, until it has become a question of one continual and successive appeal for help and still more

help. I am satisfied that it is against human nature to build up a section of the people to be always trying to lean on the Government. By such a means you are sapping their virility of character and bringing into existence a body of people who will for ever plead and beg so long as the public purse is open. Therefore, I would make one bedrock condition, that the first assistance in providing a ready-made farm should be the last and only assistance. I would say to a man "Go on the land. There is a ready-made farm and a good home provided for your wife and family; but remember this: you must succeed or get out and make room for some other man who will." It is no good going on always helping a man who is a failure. Nothing fails like failure in the same way as nothing succeeds like success.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Where are you going to get the money for your interest bill?

Mr. THOMAS: The interest bill for five years would not be much. I asked the hon. the Premier in the last Parliament for £10,000. I estimate that for that sum 20 to 30 ready-made farms could be established. But make it £20,000, £30,000 or £50,000, so long as we have some definite scheme for the development of that portion of the State; and I plead earnestly with the present Minister for Lands that he will give me that opportunity. The expenditure over the first five years would not be large. I would not charge the settler anything for those five years, and at its termination I would capitalise the whole thing and then give him 30 years in which to pay for it.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: He would hang on for five years and then clear out.

Mr. THOMAS: As I said, I would also stipulate that certain definite improvements should be carried out during the term of five years, so that at its end, if the man leaves the holding it will be of greater value than when he took it up. We have one irrigation scheme in the South-Western district, and it promises to be a big success. We have in the Collier River great possibilities for another scheme. If I remember rightly, it is computed that the first weir to be put in would give us sufficient water to irrigate from 2,000 to 3,000 acres. If

another weir were to be put in higher up it would provide sufficient water to irrigate from 5,000 to 10,000 acres. By putting in a third weir we could conserve sufficient water to irrigate 40,000 acres of land—one of the finest gravitation schemes of irrigation in Australia. Picture the possibilities with an adequate rainfall during the major portion of the year and the blessings of irrigation for the remaining period! What limit could there be to the productivity of that area with all these grand possibilities? We are sending men out on to other areas to starve, and nothing is done, or ever has been done, and I sometimes fear that nothing ever will be done. The cost of the land varies from £3 to £30 per acre. We have had it told us often enough that we are sending a million per annum out of the country for dairying products. As the outcome of this proposal for closer settlement I want to see Western Australia get that million pounds per annum which is going to the Eastern States. My idea is that this scheme should be initiated in colonies where good land is available. Wherever there are successful farmers in the South-West they are to be found on small holdings.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Picked land.

Mr. THOMAS: And I want them to have picked land; there is plenty of it not being used to-day. I want the Government to extend the system of providing the settlers with first-class dairy cows—not necessarily first-class by breeding, but by test as the highest producers of milk and butter—and by a system of elimination gradually to get rid of what indifferent animals the farmers have. The Government should also provide them with stud stock. The farmer would be paying a small amount per week to the Government for the use of the dairy cows. I wish to see that system introduced with this scheme. The farmer could pay back his few shillings per week and make a good profit for himself. Provided the Government put in the right dairy herds and the right stud stock the result in five years time would be that we should have the finest dairy herds in Australia, and have the dairying industry established and bringing wealth and prosperity to the State. What saved Victoria in the days of her trial and difficulties?

Nothing but the dairying industry. I earnestly appeal to the Minister to give some attention to our portion of the State where there lies an infinitude of possibilities, where there is a fair beautiful province to be developed, where there are possibilities of making homes and successful farms, possibilities that lie nowhere else in Western Australia. Let Ministers cease the waste of money, let them cease adding more to the profligate waste of the past, let them turn attention to the portion of the State where success can be achieved, let them spend some money there, if only sufficient to demonstrate that that success is achievable. I trust that the Minister's term of office will see something accomplished, something done. I had expected some light and leading from the leader of the Country party when he addressed the Chamber the other night. I had expected to hear from him some explanation of the connection between the agrarians and the—

Mr. O'Loughlen: Bulgarians.

Mr. Willmott: I ask for the withdrawal of that most offensive word. I strongly object to this party being called Bulgarians in the House; I will myself try to deal with any man who applies it to them outside.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not rise to a point of order and then make statements. He takes exception to the term Bulgarians as applied to his party.

Mr. THOMAS: I did not use it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I made the interjection. It has been made 20 times in the House and no exception taken to it. It has been permitted by you. The hon member's wounded dignity has come a bit too late.

Mr. SPEAKER: The mere fact that I have permitted it does not make it permissible once the hon. member takes exception to it. The term has been used three or four times, but similar terms are frequently applied here. For instance, one party will refer to another as "the Trades Hall Party," and now we have a party referred to as the Bulgarians. I have understood in the past that such terms were mere pleasantries. However, the term "Bulgarians" is to-day just as offensive as was the term "Germans." Everything depends on the circumstances, and if objec-

tion is taken to the term it must not be used.

Mr. THOMAS: I am sorry that anything should have occurred to disturb the serenity of hon. members. I was disappointed that the leader of the Country party did not offer some explanation to the House as his reason for having deserted this side to join another party on the Government benches. He gave a certain amount of support at different times to the Labour Party, and suddenly, for reasons which I cannot understand, he deserted us, took up another position in the House and has remained silent, offering no explanation to the House or the country why he did so. Surely in adopting almost a new attitude and a new frame of mind the leader of a party should have the courtesy to explain why he has done so and what he hopes to gain in the future. However, as the leader has not done so I hope some other member of the Country party will proffer an explanation. I expected also that on the questions of land administration and the development of any portion of Western Australia the leader of the Country party would have had something to say.

Mr. Willmott: When there is a royal commission sitting?

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member was silent. He knows not how long the commission may sit, but by the mere offer of a commission—in the appointment of which his party has been slighted—he is drugged into a somnolent silence.

Mr. Piesse: In what way has the party been slighted?

Mr. THOMAS: Because no member of the Country party has been appointed on the commission. Evidently the Government do not think much of the ability of the Country party.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you not agree with the Liberals?

Mr. THOMAS: Yes, in that respect I do. The leader of the Country party, in the course of a somewhat flamboyant utterance which, if it did nothing else, conduced considerably to the gaiety of the House, produced amongst other things, wrapped in a *Vanguard*, a huge dingo skin. But while the hon. member, in that peculiar melodramatic style he has cul-

tivated, was wafting this skin before the House and trying to get some sympathy, hon. members broke into laughter, and the leader of the Country party said "You laugh; you should weep." Well, I think we should, for the only thing that speech could have been expected to produce was tears. We are told of a measure proposed by the Government in the nature of a redistribution of seats Bill. I have been given to understand, in reading the Colonial Secretary's speech, that it is to be quite a decent measure. It seems they propose to introduce something that will be just and equitable. For my part, if it is a fair, just and equitable proposal, calculated to do equal justice to all, they can count on my vote in carrying the measure into effect. That is, of course, if it is fair and just, irrespective of party and creed. If it is a decent, honest measure I will vote with the Government in putting it on the statute-book. I propose to say a word in respect to the Taxation Department. The member for Nelson (Mr. Wilmott) has been criticising the department, and, while he may have stated an extreme case, I think some measure of criticism is the department's due. I know a number of people who have just grievances against the autocratic methods of the department. There is a young fellow in business in Bunbury who has been known to me for 13 or 14 years as a strictly honourable man. He made a little mistake in his income tax return. When questioned he gave the freest and fullest details. The department went back for many years. The amount involved was £20. They inflicted a 100 per cent. fine on him, and then wanted to charge him interest on the money as well. This has been going on in Western Australia for a number of years. Another gentleman in Bunbury who was attacked in the same way—the Taxation Commissioner wanted to assess his income at 100 per cent. extra—took the opinion of an important firm of solicitors in Western Australia, and they told him that the Taxation Commissioner had no such power; that he had only the power to take a man before the court and let the court deal with him, or to inflict a fine or 10 per cent. if the return were delayed. For years past the Income Tax Commissioner has

been exercising a form of terrorism, and has been compelling men who desired to avoid the publicity of the law courts to pay huge sums which they never had any right to pay. The Commissioner has often almost converted an innocent man into a criminal, simply because the tax-payer did not understand every detail of the Income Tax Act. I think it is time that the Premier gave some consideration to this matter, and did something either to alter the Act so as to give the Commissioner power to do what he has been doing, or else compel the Commissioner to refrain from extorting money from people whom he has no right to bill. To give the Income Tax Commissioner autocratic power to do what he wishes is absurd. I honestly believe that if the question of the moneys extorted from taxpayers in days gone by were brought into the law courts, the Government would have to disgorge thousands of pounds. One matter with which I must deal is the question of our returned soldiers. I have noticed in my own electorate that, either through carelessness or through some fault of the Defence Department, men have been struck off the pay list who are totally incapacitated from earning a living. There is one case I have had in hand for two or three weeks, without as yet obtaining any satisfaction. The man is married, and bed-ridden, and has not a shilling. It seems to me that we are thumping the drum and waving the flag, and talking of the glories of patriotism, to incite our citizens to go and fight for the Empire, and that when they come back they are too soon forgotten and too little is done to make the path easy for men who have done so much for Western Australia. I think that the extreme of leniency should be shown, and that where there is a question of any description the man should be maintained, and suitably maintained, until such time as he is well enough to take up his ordinary employment. Instead of that, I know of a young fellow who has returned with his nerves absolutely shattered and broken—he is apparently fit physically, but quite incapable of following any occupation. The Military authorities have offered that young fellow 5s. per week. Five shillings per week for a noble defender of our country! Five

shillings per week for a man who has held the trenches in France and in Gallipoli, one who has shown all the heroism which has won deathless fame for Australia! When that soldier returns a wounded and shattered hero, 5s. per week is good enough for him to live on. If something better is not done, I shall be ashamed for my country, ashamed to think that we offer such a pittance to a man who has offered his life for us. Is it a fair thing? Further, I understand that the maximum allowance for a totally incapacitated soldier is only 30s. per week. Thirty shillings for a man who is maimed and incapacitated for all further occupation! A man may have lost £4, £5, or even £10 per week to fight for the Empire; he does his best; he is a hero in the fight; and when he comes back wounded and unable to help himself, we say to him, "You are a noble fellow; you are a hero; we will give you thirty bob a week; grow fat and prosper and accumulate wealth; live for the rest of your days, a wounded hero, on thirty bob a week." Australia ought to be ashamed of it. A man who goes to the war loses a leg or an arm, as the case may be, and, when he returns incapacitated from earning his living, he should be enabled, if he so desires and is fit to do so, to marry and rear a family, being maintained by the State so long as he lives. It is the very least portion of what we owe to him, the very smallest return which we can offer.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: That will have to be done before we get conscription in Australia.

Mr. THOMAS: I noticed that Mr. Holman, Premier of New South Wales, stated that if the Federal Government did not make provision for the returned soldier, the New South Wales State Parliament would do it.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: That is impossible.

Mr. THOMAS: I say it is not impossible.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: What chance have we of getting taxation for that purpose through the Legislative Council?

Mr. THOMAS: Does the hon. member mean to tell me that if a proper appeal were made to the people of Western Australia for power to impose taxation for this

purpose the Legislative Council would dare to refuse to pass it?

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Why lift the burden off the Federal Parliament?

Mr. THOMAS: If we cannot move the Federal Parliament, then a certain duty rests on us; and I for one am anxious, if the opportunity offers, to move that the House make better provision; provision to enable the soldiers to live in decency and comfort when they return to Western Australia once more. I would do the best in my power to secure that.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: You will have your chance when the conscription campaign comes on.

Mr. THOMAS: All things being equal. I am out for conscription. I believe that conscription is the only just and fair method by which we can carry on the war.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: What would you do with the dependants?

Mr. THOMAS: I would tax until it hurts, and then tax again until it hurts more. I think undoubtedly that anyone with the soul of a man who remains at home while his brother is fighting at the Front should be prepared to give, and give, and give, until he is living on the bare pittance that his brother is living on in France to-day.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Why not submit the two questions to the people at the same time—the question of conscription and the question of providing for dependants?

Mr. Heitmann: One question is not dependent on the other. You can have the one without the other.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: The two questions are absolutely inter-dependent.

Mr. THOMAS: Before I take the platform to use any small measure of ability that I possess to advocate conscription, I want to be satisfied that there is going to be a fair measure of conscription of wealth side by side with the conscription of human life. The millionaire's countless millions are not of as much importance to me as the life of the individual soldier. Conscription of wealth is not going to give us men; but it is going to give us the power properly to equip and maintain those men and to look after their dependants properly. If we are going to conscript the nation bare of its men. I do not care if at

the same time we conscript the last available shilling as well as the last available man. The man who objects to that is not worthy of the name of patriot. I do not think we have given our soldiers all the credit that is due to them. I think that something in the nature of a patriotic motion might have been placed before us, to show our Western Australian fighters that while we are here arguing our petty little disputes and differences we have not altogether forgotten the men who line the trenches, the men who form the far-flung battle line of Australian soldiers, the men who are standing for victory and honour. We should send some message Home to them that the Parliament of Western Australia honours them and appreciates the noble sacrifices they are making on this country's behalf.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They will not do anything more if you give them 5s. per week.

Mr. THOMAS: I am prepared to table a motion affirming that returned soldiers should be well treated; and, if need be, I am prepared to stump West Australia at my own expense to advocate to the people that that should be done. I would like to add, in conclusion, that I trust the hostilities now in progress in Europe, the awful carnage, and the loss of millions of human lives, will soon cease. I trust the time is not far distant when, on German soil, beneath the folds of the grand old flag we all honour, some of our Western Australian brothers who are in the Expeditionary Forces will be present to hear the unconditional terms of peace dictated to a smashed and broken enemy.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [S.40]: I congratulate the member for Bunbury on the concluding portion of his speech. I certainly think it is time we did something for our soldiers. When our soldiers return and the country reverts to normal conditions, these soldiers should not have occasion to reproach themselves, saying, "What fools we were to go and do our bit." The late Attorney General (Mr. Walker) in his speech made a great point that we should provide for the soldiers, and I interjected pointing out that his party had been in power for two years while the war was in progress, and I asked what they had done. I am sorry to

say that up to date there has been only saying what should be done, and it has finished at that. I think it is up to the State to do its part. We in Katanning have inaugurated a scheme for dealing with our local men. In fact, I may claim credit for having initiated the scheme for looking after our local men on their return. I trust that out of any moneys which may be received for the repatriation scheme the local committees will receive from either the Federal or the State Government pound for pound for the money locally raised. Up to date various congratulations have been offered in this House, some of them sincere, and some perhaps a little lacking in sincerity. I wish to congratulate the leader of the Opposition on being leader of the Opposition for the time being. I also desire to congratulate Mr. Angwin on account of the honour which has been conferred on his son. We have heard repeatedly from various speakers that the great bulk of the men who are fighting for us belong to certain trades unions. I am pleased to say that there are as good Liberals and as good Country party men, and as good Labourites as well, fighting shoulder to shoulder in the trenches and, I think, teaching us who remain behind a lesson by which we might well profit. We have heard a good deal of the sins of all parties, but there is one thing when men go into the trenches—all political differences, apparently, are sunk, and the men unite in the one aim and object to fight so as to bring this war to a successful issue. I can quite understand that those hon. members now in opposition are feeling somewhat hurt at having to leave the Treasury benches. Judging by the remarks which have fallen from them they are taking the position very badly. When this (Country) party had the privilege of sitting in opposition we were always asked to give constructive criticism, and so far as I am concerned I honestly endeavoured to do so. I think that the present Opposition with their experience of over 4½ years in office should be in a position to give a little more constructive criticism than they have given in their speeches up to date, and a little less of the other sort of criticism.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: You have had more constructive criticism in the speeches delivered in this debate than ever before from an Opposition during the last four years. Take

the speech just delivered by the member for Bunbury, the whole of it was constructive.

Mr. THOMSON: Certainly the speech by the member for Bunbury may have been, as the hon. member says, wholly constructive, but those of his predecessors were not, none of them delivered speeches such as could be described as constructive criticism. I think the members in Opposition should abide by the decision of the people, should accept the present position of affairs and do what they can to help the present Ministry.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: The present Ministry have not been elected by the people.

Mr. THOMSON: To point to the results of the various elections which have taken place recently is I think a fair reply to that.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Two elections out of 50?

Mr. Angwin: Do you include the pocket boroughs?

Mr. THOMSON: I am not taking any regard for pocket boroughs, but those electorates in which there has been a straight out fight.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: The Northam pocket borough for instance.

Mr. THOMSON: I want to be fair in my remarks; but it seems to me that judging by the speech of the leader of the Opposition he appears to be most anxious to know how the Premier proposes to overcome the financial difficulties, pointing out that we have a large deficit.

Mr. Angwin: He is going to fund it.

Mr. THOMSON: Seeing that those members now occupying the Opposition benches were directly responsible for the whole of this large deficit—

Mr. W. D. Johnson: No, there was a deficiency when we took control.

Mr. THOMSON: A deficiency of a million and a half?

Mr. W. D. Johnson: No, but a deficiency which increased month by month until it reached its present dimensions.

Mr. THOMSON: It seems to be bordering on the humorous that the leader of the Opposition should now expect the present Administration after only eight or nine weeks in office to be in a position to show that they had already effected large economies and started to reduce the deficit.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: We were told we were going to get financial reform. We have not had one reform except the sacrificing of revenue.

Mr. THOMSON: The leader of the Opposition made a strong point that the Premier intended to retrench and reduce wages.

Mr. Angwin: He started.

Mr. THOMSON: I give the Premier credit for having what I call sound business common sense, and it would not be common sense on the part of any Government to go in for wholesale retrenchment and reduction of wages. I know members opposite would like the Ministry to adopt such a course. They would then be in a position of saying "We told you so." And they hope by the continual repetition of this statement to make the people believe that it is the intention of the Liberals to reduce wages and enforce retrenchment. So far as I am concerned, no vote of mine will be cast in favour of a proposal to reduce wages. In existing circumstances those people on wages of between £3 and £4 per week, under the abnormally high rate of living, have a very difficult task to make ends meet, and I can assure Opposition members that in me they have one who will not support a policy of reduction of wages.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: What about retrenchment?

Mr. THOMSON: So far as retrenchment is concerned, there is retrenchment and retrenchment. The duty of those administering the various departments is that if a work is completed then the men engaged on that work must go, just as would happen in the case of a private employer. For instance, if I have a work on hand, when that work is completed I cannot afford to keep the men going for more than a week at most; and the same thing applies where the State is concerned. We must administer the affairs of Western Australia in exactly the same way as we would run private concerns. It is remarkable that both the Federal and the Labour parties have as one of their planks to reduce the cost of living. I regret to say that hitherto they have not been successful. I am not blaming them for that.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: We did keep the cost down while we had the Royal Commission.

Mr. Angwin: Which you strongly opposed.

Mr. THOMSON: I did not. I take the strongest objection to that remark. If the hon. member will turn up *Hansard*, he will see that I stated my opinion in this House that it was necessary we should have some such commission. We were told when Federation was being discussed that it would reduce the cost of living; but it is remarkable that ever since the inauguration of the Federation the cost of living has steadily increased.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: It is world wide, not confined to this State.

Mr. THOMSON: I know it is world wide. Yet we hear the occupants of the Opposition benches laying the blame for it on the party supporting the Government. When they say that the policy of the Government is to down the working men I think that is a deliberate misstatement. It is doubtful whether, even with the increased wages of recent times, the married man is much better off to-day than he was before the increase were granted.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: He is worse off.

Mr. THOMSON: I believe he is. What remedy have you got for that position?

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Control food prices.

Mr. THOMSON: Any policy of controlling food prices must hurt the farming community.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: It would not.

Mr. THOMSON: We have heard a good deal about the State enterprises, and our friends opposite have alleged that much of the criticism of those enterprises has been unjust. I do not propose saying much about these State enterprises beyond remarking that if they are all what our friends opposite claim for them, there is no need to worry over the State trading concerns as events will prove their establishment to have been right. Any enterprise entered into by the Government should be for the benefit of the whole State and not for any particular part of the State. Take the meat and fish shops. So far as I can judge, those benefited only the consumers in the metropolitan area; they are certainly of no benefit to the people of my district. It has been shown that the fish proposition was a losing concern, and I think the Government was

exercising common sense in deciding to close it down. With regard to the sawmills and the implement works I have stated my opinion as to these when sitting on the other side of the House, and I now repeat that if it be proved they are sound business propositions I would not advocate shutting them down.

Mr. Angwin: You realise, I suppose, that they have passed through a very trying period.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not prepared to say I would scrap those concerns—there is too much State money already involved—but they must be dealt with as business propositions on business lines. The leader of the Opposition stated that when members of the present Administration were looking for avenues to effect economy they dealt only with those concerns which affected the people of the metropolitan area and gave all the benefits they could to the country members, and pointed to the fact that the Government proposed leaving the implement works alone as a bribe, in his opinion, to the Country party. Surely that hon. member must realise that the implement works employ a large number of men, and that by keeping them open the Government is serving the interests of the working men. In other words, if the implement works were closed down it would injure the working men. I think there has been altogether too many insinuations cast. We should be fair and square by each other.

Mr. Angwin: You did not believe in that principle when you were sitting over here.

Mr. THOMSON: I have always been fair. I supported the late Government when I believed them to be right and when I believed them to be wrong I voted against them. I have endeavoured to be fair and just and so long as I have the honour to be a member of this House I will try to be just.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: We must always have been in the wrong.

Mr. THOMSON: There is no doubt about that. I desire to congratulate the hon. the Attorney General upon his splendid victory and also upon the good work he has done up to date. I am glad to see that the Attorney General has made such a good start. The leader of the Opposition when criticising the Attorney General for having made so many

promises made the statement that he had fulfilled all these promises. I want to remind him of at least two promises he made which he did not keep.

Mr. Heitmann: You put him out too soon.

Mr. THOMSON: He had plenty of time to give effect to the promises to which I refer. I think it was in 1912 that the hon. member, who was then Minister for Works, made a tour of my district in company with the late member, Mr. Arnold Piesse. He then promised the people that he would have a survey made.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: I promised that I would recommend a survey, and I did so strongly to the Government.

Mr. THOMSON: He made a promise that he would have a survey made; that promise has not been kept.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: I could not make a promise; Ministers cannot promise expenditure. The only promise I made was that I would recommend it, and I did so strongly.

Mr. THOMSON: You certainly led the people to believe that they would have the survey. When we were discussing the re-pricing Bill some of us wanted to have the provisions of that measure dated further back than 1910, and the late Minister made a definite promise that if there were any anomalies which required to be rectified they would be attended to. I brought one matter under his notice, and under the notice of his department, and I got a reply that it was not provided for in the Act.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: It was not an anomaly in the opinion of the Board.

Mr. THOMSON: In the opinion of the board it may not have been, but in the opinion of the man who is suffering it is a very decided anomaly, and he has been fighting the department for years.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: And his claim is not a just one.

Mr. THOMSON: I maintain that the claim is a just one, and I trust the present Administration will give him justice.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: I believe the department's side is the correct one.

Mr. THOMSON: That is the most unfortunate thing about these things. If an officer of the department once places it on record that in his opinion the man has had justice dealt to him, the officers that follow

simply reiterate the statement which has been made by the first officer, and the man in question has a very poor chance of getting justice. The case which I have in mind is that of a man who has been dealt with very unjustly by, and I hoped that the Minister who gave his assurance, that where an anomaly was found to exist it would be rectified, would have had something done for him.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: There are hundreds of anomalies which were rectified.

Mr. Green: I should have thought the hon. member would have stopped crying when he got on that side of the House.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not aware that I have ever cried or am crying at the present time. I trust that when the present Attorney General does lay down the reins of office, which I hope will not be before seven or eight years, it will not be said of his administration of the Mines department what was said by the goldfields of the previous administration of the late Minister; they say on the goldfields "He did not do any harm."

Mr. Heitmann: You know he did well.

Mr. THOMSON: I am only quoting what the papers say.

Mr. Heitmann: I never mind what the papers say.

Mr. THOMSON: The *Kalgoorlie Miner* made that statement.

Mr. Green: You never saw the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. You have been reading the Canning election rubbish.

Mr. Heitmann: That only refers to the amount of money spent in the industry.

Mr. THOMSON: It was in the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. That paper made the statement that he did no harm.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It referred to the Government and not to the Minister for Mines.

Mr. THOMSON: I will confine myself to saying that I trust when the present Government go out of office it will be said of them that they attempted something and certainly achieved something. The leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. D. Johnson), the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) and the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), and I think other speakers on that side of the

House, dealt with the action of the Country party in supporting the present Administration. They made a great song about the reduction of manure rates, and the abolition of district railway charges. The member for Pilbara stated that the Liberals sold themselves and their constituents for eight votes. I am proud of the fact that the Liberal Administration since they took office carried out two of my election planks, namely, the abolition of district railway charges, which in my opinion were always unjust and iniquitous, and reduced the manure freights below the old rate.

Mr. Heitmann: Would you carry miners' materials at the same rate?

Mr. THOMSON: If there was the same amount available.

Mr. Lambert: They pay very little because the cost of fertiliser has popped up so much per ton.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: So it has.

Mr. THOMSON: That is not due to the fact that manure rates have been lowered. The price of fertilisers would have gone up in any case owing to the war and the cost of bringing them here.

Mr. Green: There is a Government in power which will not disturb the superphosphate people now.

Mr. THOMSON: We have heard a great deal from members opposite about imposing upon the worker and the rest of the State, and losing the sum of £100,000 in revenue owing to the reduction in railway charges on manures, the district railway charges, and the reduction of rates on railways under construction.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: I think that is an under-estimate.

Mr. THOMSON: I am merely quoting the hon. member's figures. We did not hear any complaints from the farmers when the old Administration placed upon the railways an impost of £120,000, represented by the increases given to the railway men. I do not think that members sitting opposite—

Mr. Green: The Premier objected strongly.

Mr. THOMSON: I am dealing with farmers. I have heard no objection on the part of the farmers to the men being given 9s. a day, and very few of the members on

this side of the House have any objection either. The present Administration propose to assist farmers by reducing their freights, but I would say that many farmers do not earn 9s. a day and have not done so for the last two or three years.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: There is no analogy. The service of the individual to the Railway Department is undoubtedly worth 9s. a day, and they get their full value at 9s. a day, but the super rates are a direct loss to the community, who are paying for that loss.

Mr. THOMSON: That is only a matter of opinion. When £120,000 was added to the railways there was no fuss made by the agricultural districts. I think they might at least give the farmers a fair deal in this matter.

Mr. Angwin: I know one farmer who said he wanted more work and less pay; it was a man down your way that said that.

Mr. THOMSON: As far as these railways are concerned, if we were to carry out to the full the argument of the leader of the Opposition, that the further inland one gets the more one has to pay until ultimately the whole of the man's crop would be sold up in freight on super, I say that the time is coming when each Administration that is in power will have to take into the very fullest consideration the adoption of the zone system.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: We did introduce that with the manure rates. After a given distance it was a farthing a ton per mile.

Mr. THOMSON: There is only one way to open up the country and that is by building railways. We are not going to encourage people to go out back if we are going to add terminal charges and increase their rates to such an amount that it will be impossible for them to carry on farming successfully. We have heard a good deal about the Esperance line. I do not say that I altogether agree with the action which has been taken by the present Administration, but if the district is all that members opposite claim for it, so far as the commission is concerned they will have nothing to worry about. They should welcome the commission, because if that body when submitting its report points out that the district is all that hon. members claim for it the railway will be built at once.

Mr. Green: Is that ever done with any other railways?

Mr. Lambert: Will the hon. member support a similar move for every other agricultural centre which has come into question?

Mr. THOMSON: I am not going to be side-tracked in that way. A railway was promised for years in my district, and I hope to get it soon. If the district in question is all that members claim for it they have nothing to worry about.

Mr. Angwin: The railway in your district would have been started if we had had the rails.

Mr. THOMSON: The late Minister for Works promised me that. When that line was passed the department had ample sleepers and also had rails which had been taken away from the Great Southern line, which the Minister for Works promised would be put into the construction of the railway. Unfortunately, they were taken to some other portion of the State, and the settlers in this particular part of my district have not had the conveniences they should have had.

Mr. Angwin: Where were the rails taken?

Mr. THOMSON: They were not placed in the Nyabing extension line.

Mr. Angwin: They were changed with Leonora rails, in order to bring down heavier rails for the Wagin line.

Mr. THOMSON: Dealing with the Industries Assistance Board, I congratulate the present Ministry upon the prompt action they took in decentralising that board. When the Bill was introduced I pointed out that those who were coming under the provisions of the Industries Assistance Board were mortgaging themselves body and soul, lock, stock and barrel. Unfortunately that has proved to be the case.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: I wish I was amongst them.

Mr. THOMSON: It is said that the road to Hades is paved with good intentions. The late Minister for Lands in my opinion must have a good many yards of paving on that particular road. His intentions were possibly good, but he went absolutely against the wishes of his officers and he certainly went against the wishes of members of those districts who claim to know something about

the matter when he decided on the policy of centralisation so far as the Industries Assistance Board was concerned. It was absolutely impossible for that board to deal with farmers in anything like a just and equitable manner from Perth.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Time will prove.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes. I claim that the policy which has been inaugurated by the Minister for Lands and Industries was the only possible one which would meet with success. The farmers now are being dealt with promptly, and we know that with a good many of the farmers it would have been better for the country if they had been told that their business was not a paying proposition, and that it would be better to cut the loss.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: The farmers' applications have not yet dealt with. Wait until the next month comes along and we get the next rain. If we do not get rain there will be no applications.

Mr. THOMSON: The Industries Assistance Board was brought into existence to assist the farmers, and yet farmers came to Perth to have their business dealt with and hung about the offices for a long time in order to get attended to. This system does not reflect great credit upon those who were administering the board.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Those who came down were those who made applications which could not be agreed to, and they tried to get other means to force the board to agree.

Mr. THOMSON: That statement is absolutely incorrect, and the member for Guildford (Mr. W. D. Johnson) knows it. He knows that so far as this board is concerned, right from its inception, it was nothing but chaos. It is common knowledge that they had a large room which was piled up with letters and this room was called the pool, and it took them weeks to sort out the letters and place them on record. I know farmers who had no hope of getting a reply at all.

Mr. Angwin: How long ago was that?

Mr. THOMSON: It was only recently.

Mr. Angwin: The board is in charge of the same person again; he has been put in charge now.

Mr. THOMSON: During the passage of the Bill I maintained, and I have maintained ever since, that the only way of giving the farmer justice is to have an inspector visit each man's farm and deal with each case on its individual merits. That course will pay the country, will save it thousands of pounds. I will give a case in point as regards administration. A farmer in my district applied to the board for eight tons of chaff. He was able to procure the chaff from a neighbour whom he had had to assist in the cutting of it, moreover, he had to supply his own bags and do his own carting. The chaff was inferior, and he secured authority from the board to purchase it at £6 10s. a ton. Hon. members may judge of the farmer's amazement when he received from the board an account for the chaff at £10 10s. per ton. I drew the Minister's attention to the case, and he said, "Of course, we have struck a flat rate." A flat rate may be a very good thing; but any system of administration which inflicts on a struggling man an extra expense of £32 over and above what the chaff actually cost may be to the satisfaction of the late Minister for Lands, but certainly does not represent justice. I hope that case, as well as several other cases, will receive better consideration from the present board than has been given in the past. Bulk handling of wheat, of course, we have advocated for years.

Mr. Angwin: And you will keep on advocating it for years longer.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not propose to deal with that subject at the present time except to express the hope that the new Government will give earnest consideration to bringing the system into operation as soon as possible. Further, I trust that the present Administration will grant to Albany a harbour board. The people of Albany are desirous of handling their own affairs. At Albany last year there was the spectacle of a differential rate on wheat. The port of Bunbury was able to show an apparent saving of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per bushel. Under the present system the people of Albany have to deal with the Railway Department as regards Albany harbour. That harbour being a paying proposition, the Railway Department are not anxious to give it up. I hope, however, that the Government will seriously consider the establishment of

an Albany harbour board. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter) asked a pertinent question as to the cost of enabling the Fremantle harbour to receive the large steamers which are coming to Australia. The Minister for Works said the cost would be about 1½ millions.

Mr. Angwin: That is 1½ millions additional.

Mr. THOMSON: I would suggest that the million and a half be saved for the time being. Let the authorities make use of the harbour at Albany, which is capable of taking steamers up to any size; and let the authorities re-introduce the old port rates. Secondary education is a matter on which we all feel keenly. I had the honour of bringing the subject before the House last session, and I am pleased that the present Minister for Education recognises the absolute necessity of encouraging secondary education. In my opinion, it will be a success only if it is made compulsory. Moreover, country districts should have the same facilities in this respect as the metropolitan area has. Under the present system all the benefits of secondary education are practically confined to the metropolitan area. It is true that the goldfields, having large centres, enjoy some privileges in this respect, but the towns along the Great Southern Railway, for example, are utterly deprived of those privileges. Speaking as the father of growing boys, I certainly consider that my children have the same right to facilities for secondary education as boys in the metropolitan area; and I trust money will be found for the establishment of secondary schools in country districts. I am pleased that the Government propose to abolish the bookmaker. From the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) we had this afternoon a gallant defence of the bookmaker; but I consider that the bookmaker neither toils nor spins, and therefore I certainly favour the totalisator tax. In this connection I wish to read an extract from the *Sydney Referee*—

During the past year the New Zealand Government derived over £100,000 from about 250 days' racing—a number not greater than we shall have in and within three hours train ride of Sydney during the coming year. What the Government of this State (New South Wales) is mis-

sing—and has missed—would be difficult of computation, but the fact that bookmakers are now paying something like £80,000 yearly in license fees to bet at meetings within the 40 miles' radius of Sydney alone suggests it must be something enormous. The sum mentioned does not even carry with it admission to a race-course, and as bookmakers have to expend several thousands for themselves and their clerks in that direction it will be gathered that even before they stand up to bet they jointly contribute nearly £100,000 annually to clubs in the metropolis. I am merely calculating bare license and admission fees, and keeping well under the mark all the time. Of course, the public provides this money, and on top of it a living for fully 450 bookmakers, who follow their calling in Sydney. These facts give some slight idea of the magnitude of betting operations at metropolitan meetings, and to people in New Zealand it is incomprehensible that Government after Government of New South Wales should resolutely avoid taking advantage of such a great source of revenue.

Here is an opportunity of raising money. The bookmaker is not a producer; in my opinion, he is a parasite and lives by fleecing the public. I certainly consider that the Government in proposing to adopt the totalisator and abolish the bookmaker are taking a step in the right direction. The Government also propose a tax on amusements, which has always had my support. I have previously stated in this House that when the Government are looking for revenue and propose to impose taxation, the first taxes should be put on superfluities, and not on the necessities of life. It redounds to the credit of the present Administration that they propose to do something which will assist the returned soldier. As I have previously said in this House, it is our solemn duty to provide for the returned soldier; and the Premier has done right in proposing to inaugurate an amusement tax and earmark the proceeds for the returned soldiers.

Mr. Heitmann: Why should we tax the man going to a picture show any more than the man who keeps the money in his pocket?

Mr. THOMSON: The member for Geraldton can do as he thinks fit.

Mr. Heitmann: It certainly is not just.

Mr. THOMSON: It is just. Amusements are not a necessity. Recently Katanning had a visit from Worths Circus, which took over £400 away from the town. A great many people who paid 6s. admission to that circus would have thought they were being robbed if asked to pay anything like that amount to see a local show. The tax on amusements is a fair and just one, and it will have my support when it is submitted here. I am sorry that the question of the income tax has not been dealt with. Speaking purely for myself, I consider that we should reduce the present exemption to at most £100. My object in advocating that exemption is to reach the single man and the single woman. There are thousands of such men and women without responsibilities, and they could well afford to pay a small income tax. In order to meet the difficulty of the married man with a very limited income, I would advocate an exemption of £25 for each child, in place of the present exemption of £10. As I think most married men know, a child cannot be maintained for £10 per annum. At any rate, I have not been able to do it. I hope the Government will see their way to amend the income tax exemption in the manner I have suggested, which would mean an additional source of revenue and would impose taxation only on those able to bear it. With regard to the Royal Commission to inquire into the parlous position of agriculture, I consider the Government were wise in keeping politicians off the commissions. Had any member of Parliament been appointed to the commission, there would have been a howl of indignation from one end of the country to the other. It would have been said that the Government were finding a job with extra money for a member of Parliament. I have every reason to trust the present Administration. I have every confidence in the new Government, and I also believe the country has every confidence in them. There is a greater feeling of confidence in the country to-day since the change of Administration.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Where?

Mr. THOMSON: The Canning election proved that. There is a feeling in the coun-

try that the affairs of this State are going to be conducted on sane, sound business lines; and I believe that if a general election occurs soon—members on the other side seemed to be anxious for an election before the seven-weeks adjournment—this side of the House will come back with an increased majority.

Mr. HUDSON (Yilgarn—on amendment) [9.28]: Having already spoken on the Address-in-reply, I wish to add a few words with regard to the amendment. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) and the last speaker made particular reference to the provision being made, or which should be made, for returned soldiers. In the course of my previous remarks in this debate I stressed the fact that there was a depletion in the funds provided for that purpose, and I urged that something should be done at once to place the matter on a sound basis. On reading the newspapers to-day I find, however, that an appeal is being made by the Returned Soldiers' Association for employment for about 70 men. Further, to-day's newspapers report a conference held for the purpose of doling out charity to returned soldiers in order to keep them during the period they may be out of employment. That is a scandalous position, and one which ought to be dealt with properly, and dealt with immediately. The Labour party have been twitted by the last speaker with having done something to relieve the distress. The position, however, was quite clear; and it must have been present to the hon. member's mind when he twitted the leader of the Opposition with not having done something during his term of office. Whenever an attempt was made by the late Government to introduce taxation, it was blocked by another place. The hon. member knows that it was futile to make any effort in that direction. For the repatriation of soldiers a quarter of a million has been allocated by the Commonwealth Government and another quarter of a million has to be made up by the States in proportion to population. Something like £6,000 or £7,000 has to be made up by Western Australia. To my thinking, that is not sufficient, and we must have some form of taxation to provide the amount to which the State is committed. I am sorry to find that there are so many returned soldiers out of em-

ployment. We will require to have fairly heavy taxation pretty soon. It should come almost immediately. The leading article in the *West Australian* this morning indicated that any time will do for it, and in the same journal prominence was given on Monday last to a letter by J. A. Bronsdon, in the course of which it was stated that "after the war" would be time enough for taxation. In my opinion that will be too late. As the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) has indicated, the Labour party passed a resolution in April last as follows:—

That this Council urges the Federal Government to exercise its powers, contained in the War Precautions Act, to conscribe all wealth for war purposes, seeing that money for the efficient equipping of troops is of greater importance to the Commonwealth than the welfare of the interests of owners of wealth.

That resolution has been attached to a circular which has been sent throughout the State. The circular reads as follows—

1. We most earnestly bring under your notice the above resolution which clearly shows the goal at which the Labour party is aiming.

2. The immense increased taxation of those who have any property in money, land or stock, during the last three years, and especially during the last year, seems to be completely ignored in the above resolution and treated as if were non-existent, and a demand for direct taking by legal force is clearly outlined. The present land, income, and probate taxes are already "Conscription of wealth," but this does not even enter into the minds of those bent on spoliation and confiscation.

3. We have thought it wise in these circumstances to make an appeal to those who are being specially attacked, in the hope they will agree to contribute to a fund which will enable the Liberals of Western Australia to make a determined effort to prevent the objects of the Labour party being attained and provide for fair and reasonable security to all.

4. A permanent committee has been appointed, consisting of Messrs. S. Burt, W. T. Loton, A. C. Gillam, W. Burges, D.

Forrest, and Sir John Forrest, to make this special appeal and to control the expenditure of the money to the best advantage in furtherance of the propaganda and the other work of the Liberal League throughout the State.

5. The established organisation of the League seems to us the best and most economical channel through which to carry on the proposed work, and we suggest that the permanent committee be authorised to make such grants from the fund to the League from time to time and subject to such conditions as the committee may think fit, reserving full liberty to the committee to utilise the fund in any manner calculated to advance the objects thereof.

6. It is simply suicidal to sit still and do nothing. We all owe a duty to ourselves and our dependants to take some action to defeat this policy of confiscation and injustice which is so plainly declared.

7. Contributors to this fund will be registered as members of the Liberal League and will not be asked to contribute in the ordinary way to the funds of the League.

8. We send you a list of promised subscriptions by ourselves and hope you will add your name to the list for such sum and for such period as in view of the gravity of the position, you think fit.

The circular is signed by John Forrest, Sept. Burt, and W. T. Loton. Those gentlemen have agreed to subscribe each £100 per annum for three years. That is the patriotism of a permanent committee proposing to dictate the policy of this country through the Liberal League. I think it is scandalous that such a circular should be sent out in troublous times such as these. It is calculated to work irreparable mischief, and the suspicion that might be raised in the minds of people may work some danger to this community. I trust the Premier, or other Ministers, before the debate closes will repudiate the insinuation cast upon them in that circular to the effect that they are the tools of this patriotic permanent committee, and assure us that they intend to do their duty to the returned soldiers and those dependent on them.

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [9.36]: Following a custom I have always set myself in Parliament, I do not purpose addressing myself to any of the measures foreshadowed in the Address-in-reply. It will be quite time enough to do so when those measures are before the House. Neither do I purpose delivering a policy speech. His Excellency did not desire that I should attempt to do that, and therefore I am not going to follow in the footsteps of other hon. members and say how I really think the country should be run. I hope we shall hear many more speeches such as that delivered by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) a short time ago. It was a pleasure to listen to that speech. It was full of fairness, and full also of constructive ability. My mind goes back to the opening of this Parliament. I would like to repeat what I then said, as follows:—

In these circumstances, therefore, I think the common sense of the community is going to demand from this Parliament the elimination of party lines and ask that every man in the House shall give the very best in him in order to meet the difficulties in the interests of the State.

Does not that seem a promise that any decent man would have given under these circumstances? Is it not a promise that any decent citizen would have expected to be kept? Yet for keeping that promise I have been pilloried by the Press from one end of the State to the other. I find that the honest words I spoke here were twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools. I take all the opprobrium of that because I have just that ordinary manly decency which says that a man's word in Parliament should be as sacred as a man's word in his private life. When I cease to keep that standard I shall cease to respect myself, which to me is of more import than the respect of my fellows. Having said that, let me turn and see what the late Premier said. He said this:—

My position is that so long as I am pledged to a definite policy, and a definite party, I will positively decline to retain office by the support of a third party, which may or may not, as suits the whim of its members, continue to support me,

which may at any time withdraw its support from me.

And now, under these circumstances, we are accused, as a party, of turning tail. If my word cost me what it did cost me to keep, I venture to say the word of Mr. Scaddan is equally as reliable. He said, "I will not remain in office if I have to remain there with the support of a third party." Then, why throw sneers at the position which this party occupies when the leader of the Labour party told me, who kept my word right through all the hard time, right up to the time Labour ceased to have a majority—why throw sneers at us?

Mr. Carpenter: I complained, not of you, but of somebody outside.

Mr. GARDINER: I am not concerned at what anybody outside may think.

Mr. Walker: That does not absolve the party.

Mr. GARDINER: No amount of sophistical reasoning will convince me that when words are honestly given they ought not to be honestly kept.

Mr. Walker: That is not the question at all.

Mr. GARDINER: We have had other sneers thrown at us. We have been told we are ungrateful. I supported that party honestly because I believed it was big enough to realise the difficulties of the State, and my only aim was to help that party in those difficulties. Surely, if the Government recognised that the farming industry had a claim on the community, as it had, and recognised that claim, they recognised it as an act of justice, as an act of right. They realised that the agricultural interest was so interwoven with the prosperity of the State that they had to give it, and as big men they did give it, justice. If there was justice in the demand—and I venture to say that the Government then in power would not have given us what we asked if they had not thought there was justice behind the claim—why should there be any cause for gratitude? I have yet to learn that the dispenser of justice has a right to a halo, or that the receiver of justice need go down on bended knees in gratitude.

Mr. Underwood: But he should appreciate it.

Mr. Walker: And he should not misrepresent it.

Mr. GARDINER: I think that on every occasion in this House when I considered anything was being done for those men I appreciated it and said so. We know that the full expression of gratitude would be the eighth wonder of the world. Somehow or other my thoughts go back to ten or eleven years ago when I hear these things, and I remember a small party of six Labour members supporting the Ministry in which I had the honour to be Treasurer. Three of them are still members of this House. It has been repeatedly stated that those six members got a greater number of permanent planks of the Labour platform placed on the statute-book of Western Australia than have ever been put there since. Yet on the first possible occasion at the next election they turned out the James Ministry and went into power with the help of four Independents. Therefore it will be seen that history does repeat itself. I can quite understand the soreness of the Opposition members to-day, but they do not feel half so sore as we did on that occasion. As now, it was then a question that there should be only two parties here which caused the split. Opposition members say now that there should be two parties and that one of these should be the Labour party. I say there should be only one other party, that is the Country party. I do not think that at the present juncture we shall be doing any good for this State by continuing to throw mud at one another.

Mr. Walker: You should look to the other side of the House when you say that.

Mr. GARDINER: There are greater issues before us, and it becomes a question of whether we are going to do a man's work in a man's way or a man's work in a kid's way. Turning from that, this party has had a good deal of opprobrium thrown at it by the Press. Yet we have done the greatest deed that any party ever performed in its life, if we are to believe all that we read in the Press. We have been the means of giving to this State a Government not of ordinary human capacity, but one which, if they had their rights, should be placed high on Mount Olympus. If one may go back in

mythological knowledge, the Premier has all the virtues of Achilles. I am afraid his opponents will be looking around for his vulnerable herb. The hon. the Attorney General is a modern Atlas holding up the mining world, and a few bridges over the Swan. We come to my old friend, the Minister for Lands. He is like Jason going down into the Valley of Colchis, and returning with the golden fleece. I believe that fleece was made from merinos. Then we get further down, or higher up, and we have the Minister for Works who, the papers said, was going to be not only Argus, that he was not only to have the hundred eyes of Argus, but he was going to perform one of the twelve miracles which Hercules did, he was going to clean out the Augean Stables. The Minister for Railways was like old Auteaus—every time he hit the ground he gained strength. But the climax came when they were passing out the flowers to the Colonial Secretary. He was to be Aneas the Good, carrying out old Auchisis on his shoulders. But there was one thing the papers forgot to tell us and that was how this team of immortals was going to procure the golden apples of the Hesperides. Whatever may be said of this party, a party which is likely to come in for a fair share of abuse—and when you abuse this party you are going to get something from me every time. We stand in a position which gives us the security of good Government for this State, and I will tell the House why. Too frequently members sitting behind the Government are bound by party; all too frequently they see their Government doing things which they would like to criticise, but they are tongue-tied from party reasons. When we agreed to support the Government we did so on the condition that they carried out that policy of administration which they had enunciated while in Opposition. I would give the same promise to this or any other party, that so long as they did that they would have no more loyal supporter among their own members than they will have from the members of this party. But if they do not carry out that policy the Government can be absolutely certain they are going to meet with the sternest criticism in this House from the members of this party. It is ut-

terly impossible, as we know, to run a mill wheel with a stream that has passed by. This is supposed to be a business Ministry, and I am sure it has those qualifications. A business man has no time for a manager who continually tells him how badly the other man ran his business. I think the public of Western Australia are getting too tired of being told how badly the others have done. The Government is going to be judged in the eyes of the public and in the eyes of this party, not by what they have promised, but by what they do; and so far as that is concerned, I tell the Government that it is time for them to get going and doing. A business man has got no use for a man who does things the day after to-morrow which ought to be done to-day. So far as I am concerned the Government will have every possible assistance from this party to get busy and that as quickly as possible. Never mind the other party. I wish, having been a Minister of the Crown myself, that a little more charity could be shown towards actions of past Ministers. I have long held the opinion that every other man is as honest and clean as myself. If a man who has been a Minister of the Crown looks back over his own past he will, unless he is suffering from a swollen head, see some things which at the time he thought to be just which appear ridiculous in the light of later events. If we be charitable in that respect, there will be no necessity for any blood to be spilt in this Chamber. This country is right in the middle of a time when any man who is worth his salt wants to give absolutely the best that is in him. I do not care which side of the House he is on. That should be the ambition of every member of this House; that is my ambition—to be of some service to the State. If I cannot be of any assistance to the State in this House there is ample opportunity and room for men who can be of assistance outside of the House. There are one or two things of which we should take concern. Let us look around. It has been said that the concessions given to the farmer are likely to deplete the revenue, and that the general public must pay for that. I should like to ask hon. members opposite is it not true that there have been some measures brought in by them which have resulted in losses for which the general public had to pay, and yet which

they honestly believed were for the betterment of the class which they represent.

Mr. Carpenter: Nothing was ever done by us for the purpose of purchasing-support.

Mr. GARDINER: A purchasing price takes many forms. There are many things which you have done which at the time you thought were absolutely correct, but which brought a burden on the taxpayer. I do not say that you were not right in those cases. You were undoubtedly right, and we are undoubtedly right. I will tell you why. During this time of war and depression the primary producer in this State has had a very hard time. He has produced about three million pounds worth of wealth upon which the general community have lived in decent comfort whilst the man who produced it has starved. I am going to raise the standard of living for the primary producer if I can. If I can assist him, the primary producer shall have a living wage for all he produces in this community. I am going to fight for that, and to fight that they shall have a court organised in the same way as the Arbitration Court, which shall fix a living wage for the primary producer and give him a profit out of what he produces just in the same way as every other man has a right to go into that court and ask for a living wage. No one can deny the wage-earner the right to do that, and the agriculturist pays for that living wage in different ways. He pays for it in every article of machinery he uses. He carries not only the increase to the employee but also the profit on the increase, and the position will be this: that whatever taxation the country may give him the primary producer is going to hand it back to the country. But I am determined, if it is at all possible, that the primary producer shall get a living wage, thus ensuring a living wage for every portion of the community. That is what has been done by the Government in the appointment of the Commission. That is the beginning which will enable us to get down to bedrock, and know where we are. Nothing has been done in the negotiations between this party and the Government which can but reflect its influence on the earning of a living wage for every section of the community. Does any man want any greater

incentive to stand up for a party which stands for that? I will take all the sneers so long as I can advocate that which I believe will benefit the whole of the community.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: You have taken the wrong way for doing a good thing.

Mr. GARDINER: I have several times seen very good things done in a wrong way, and also many things that were not good have been done in the right way. It may be that we have chosen a wrong means, but whatever we have done represents an honest attempt and intention to better the condition of the class we represent, and that has been your aim for the past five and twenty years.

Mr. Taylor: That is the aim of everybody.

Mr. GARDINER: More particularly it has been one of your aims and your creed, the betterment of the condition of the people you represent. That is your creed and it is mine.

Mr. Bolton: Then you are supporting the wrong side of the House. You will never get it over there.

Mr. GARDINER: So far as I am concerned I do not care which side of the House I support so long as I am satisfied that I am doing some good for Western Australia. There are one or two things which trouble me. The first is the question of the Esperance railway, and the question of salt in the soil. If there is anything more than the salt of the land behind this, I hope the Government will take this House clearly into their confidence. If it is a question of funds, let it be told straight out that this is a question of funds. I cannot lose sight of this, that behind anything that we may do is not the question altogether of this railway, but it may be a question of the broken hearts of the people we have settled there, and they count more in my scheme of humanity than anything else. If it is a question of funds and these men are agreeable and say that they will go into another district if we give them the same circumstances, then let us put them there. Their lives and their outlook are more to me than anything else. When we come to the question of accepting testimony, it is no good quoting Mr. Mann to me against Mr. Sutton or Professor Paterson. Mr. Mann does not count much with me against the other two gentlemen I

have mentioned. So far as I am concerned, let that clearly go. I can remember that in Victoria they were saying, "Shall we carry on with the mallee?" and to-day it is bringing £8 or £9 per acre.

Mr. Carpenter: That is so.

Mr. GARDINER: The member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter) will recollect that a man would have been considered a madman to have gone into the Pinnaroo, yet to-day it is one of the biggest wheat-producing centres in South Australia. I do not want any risks taken when these risks involve the lives of the citizens of the community. I would now like to say a word or two on the question of the soldiers. It seems to me that we are up against problems and one wonders what is the best way to get over them. That is what ought to agitate the best thoughts of this House. I have lately been sitting at the seat of giving. It is no mean thing to be a citizen of this State, for the heart of the people in this State to give in this cause is phenomenal. I have had repeated and continual lumps in my throat, (and I am a pretty hard citizen), since I have been there. From the highest to the lowest the people have shown that where the comfort of these soldiers at the front is concerned, and where they have good cause to know that the money is being properly administered, they are ready to give. With me comes this dire thought. We are a quick nation to forget. I am afraid that 12 months after the war a one-armed returned soldier will not get employment if there is a two-armed able-bodied man available to do the work. No matter what we are giving to-day, if we feel there is a responsibility thrust upon us to look after the wives of these soldiers who have gone to the front, and think there is a responsibility placed upon us as a State to provide for those who come back into our own State, then over and above what the Commonwealth may do, I think that now is the time, if we are going to take on this responsibility, when we should do it. Now people recognise the sacrifice that those men have made, and now is the time when we should take action. Twelve months after the war is over, if we start to try and impose taxation for this purpose, from one end of the country to the other people will make an outcry. To-day from the highest to the

lowest people recognise that it is the one thing we should do. I say quite voluntarily that if they will give me back my boy they can take every bean I have got in the world and I will start afresh from scratch.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.5]: I must first thank members generally for the courtesy, consideration and encouragement shown towards me as a new member. I can only repeat the words of the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) and say, that during the time I occupy a seat in this House I hope that I shall endeavour to be scrupulously fair to all parties in debate. I hope I shall never come to the time when it will be necessary for me to indulge in any personalities, such as I heard in the earlier part of this discussion. I desire to join with others in complimenting Ministers upon obtaining their present position. Also I desire to refer particularly to the Minister for Mines. We had the Minister for Mines in Kalgoorlie the other day. Without any wish on my part to give any undue credit to the Minister for Mines, I will say, as one being somewhat connected with him during the recent trouble there, that he did show a considerable amount of confidence in his own opinion and ability, in the first place, to settle the trouble, and in the second place, the greatest willingness and desire to do so. That in itself, I believe, influenced those who were connected with this unfortunate alien trouble in the belief that the trouble would have an early settlement, and that the difficulties would be soon got over. I also say to the Minister for Mines that, while the position of parties is such and we find the Liberal Administration in charge of the affairs of the State, I will, irrespective of all party feeling and considerations, unless it conflicts with our own special policy, to the utmost of my ability and energy assist the Minister in dealing with his departments. He can have that personal assurance from me, that no trouble or energy on my part will be too great to be expended in assisting him whenever he requests my services or requires my aid. As has been rightly said by the Premier, the mining industry must for some considerable time play an important part in the development and commercial life of the country. If he is sincere, and I believe he is, I would tell him that

there are many avenues in which he can show his sincerity in his attitude towards that industry. Irrespective of the commission or board which it is the Premier's intention, I understand, to create to inquire into the best means of developing the mining and mineral industry of the State, there are many ways that it is possible at the present time to give this industry proper encouragement. We have in this State a considerable amount of money invested in the great goldfields water supply scheme. At the present time I do not think that a proper attitude has been taken towards that great scheme, and that it is not being properly utilised and harnessed in the manner in which it should be utilised and harnessed for the assistance of the gold mining industry. We find that a prospector who is prospecting a small show, and in the initial stages of his work requires all the assistance and encouragement he can get, is being charged an extortionate amount of money for his water supply. It is not later on that it matters so much his being charged for his water to this extent, but in the early stages when he is just beginning to crush. In my district alone, the Coolgardie constituency, there is a dozen large, well-defined known lines of reef which admittedly require development and Government assistance. When I was a boy in Victoria my own father was on a mining board, probably 25 years ago. In that year the Government of Victoria spent in the drilling of basaltic deposits alone about a quarter of a million of money. I do not blame the Liberal Administration in particular, but it seems to be the fault of successive Governments that the prospector in particular in the mining industry should to a great extent have been discouraged in his operations. No matter what may be said of the ex-Minister for Mines in his administration of the department, and no better Minister ever sat in that office, I believe he had a sincere desire to assist the industry quite apart from his legislative acts. His administration will stand as a credit to him and this is re-echoed right throughout the goldfields of the State. He showed a sympathetic desire to assist in the development of that great industry. There is one thing that might be done, however, and

that is in regard to the water supply. The Water Supply Department wants 7s. 6d. a thousand gallons for water before they even turn on the tap. We have water running over the Mundaring weir. It would not hurt the Government to try the experiment, when a new show is being opened up, of turning the pumps on of this great water scheme another revolution or two per minute and give the deserving prospector who is helping to develop the country free water and some encouragement. In that way I think they would get very great benefit for the State.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: You have had it as low as 3s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. a thousand.

Mr. LAMBERT: True. Three shillings and sixpence as the hon. member, knowing the conditions there understands, is altogether too high and exorbitant. It is impossible when a man is starting on a small show and possibly putting all his money into it, for him at the end of the month to meet the water bill during the initial stages of his crushing. I ask the Minister for Mines to note the fact that boring plants, of which the Government have many, can be utilised where the geological conditions are favourable, in possibly locating valuable bodies of ore. In the Coolgardie district one can find half a dozen instances where private individuals, especially in the present position of affairs, and owing to the war and the Stock Exchanges in Australia, would hesitate to take on the initial stages of prospecting shows of this sort. But if the Government would utilise their boring plants and possibly reserve certain lands, I believe in the immediate vicinity of Coolgardie it would be possible to open up mines which would prove of great assistance in the commercial life of the town and of this State. I would like to make a brief reference to the Esperance lands and the subject of that railway. I also embrace the agricultural commission suggested by the Premier. I regret that the Government have seen fit to take up a certain attitude towards this Esperance railway. I am not prepared to say that there is not an excess of salt contained in the Esperance land. It seems to be a peculiar time, however, to drag out this in-

formation. As a matter of fact, no man can state with any authority or definitely that these lands are worthless unless he is an absolute expert. My remarks on this agricultural commission apply equally to every other portion of the State. I hope the Premier will, in considering the agricultural development of this State, take into account a couple of very important basic factors. First we have the climatic conditions which vary according to the locality. In many places we have a limited and uncertain rainfall, and I believe that in a greater proportion of this State there is more or less impoverished soil which requires scientific handling to build up. I believe that there is only one class of people who can deal with this soil in a proper manner. I believe that the only person who can deal with this soil is the scientist, and I say that with all due deference to the commission, which has been appointed. In my opinion, the commission should have been one mainly of scientists. Who gave us the one factor which has enabled us to grow wheat in this State, but the scientist? Who gave us superphosphate? It was not discovered by any prosperous farmer, it was discovered by a scientist and developed by science, and there are no other means of coming to any right conclusion upon the proper development of the soils of the State except by the employment of scientists. The Government have no right to promiscuously grant money to all the agricultural areas of the State. I should lay it down as an absolute principle that no money should be granted to a farmer unless that farmer was prepared to accept advice and till his soil under the proper direction and guidance of scientifically trained men. That is the only way to tackle this industry. The deficit in this State can be traceable to a large extent to the succeeding crop failures in the agricultural areas.

Mr. Wansbrough: That is not due to the farmer.

Mr. LAMBERT: In this connection let me say that I am charitable in my disposition towards the farmer. I do not blame him for getting £200 or £300 if a foolish Government will give it to him. I blame the principle of giving a man money promiscuously and allowing him to throw it away on

land that is not suitable for the crop he is endeavouring to grow. A farmer is only a farmer and a successful farmer within the four corner pegs of his own allotment. He is not a successful farmer on the other fellow's allotment. If I clear 50 acres of land to-morrow, the only man who can lay down the proper routine for me to follow is the man who knows the constituents of the soil, and I say it is a scandalous shame to go on consistently courting failures and breaking farmers' hearts by giving money away in the manner which has been done in the past. Let the Government of this country spend their money in a thorough and an efficient manner. Let us copy one of the nations we are absolutely despising to-day and rightly so too; let us copy their methods, let us harness the science and knowledge which has been developed during the past half century as applied to agriculture and we shall not find then so many broken-hearted farmers as we can find in our State to-day. These remarks apply to the Esperance lands and I do not know that Mr. Mann's determination as to the salt contents of the Esperance soil is conclusive. Mr. Mann may have gone there and taken certain samples for probably a different purpose than to ascertain the quantity of salt contained in the soil, but as to whether it is deleterious to growth I do not suppose Mr. Mann would offer an opinion, and I hope, for the good of this State, the Premier will avail himself of every opportunity to get scientific knowledge during the investigations of the Royal Commission. Much has been said about the reduction of the rates on superphosphates, and although I am representing a mining constituency, I believe that the agricultural industry should be tackled earnestly, and I hope in every way the Government will display their sincerity by fostering and assisting it. We have great known deposits of phosphatic material in this State. Have we ever tried the acidulation of it? Although it may give to the State an absolutely valuable asset, I have never heard of that having been done. Let the Administration go in for the manufacture of superphosphates in the State and assist the farmers. I believe a mistake was made in not putting up State superphosphate works.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: If we had put up superphosphate works instead of implement works we would have been better off.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have often thought so, and when speaking to members of Parliament years ago I suggested that the State should enter on the manufacture of superphosphates, and I pointed out that the soil in Western Australia was no good unless it was backed up by the addition of superphosphates in some form or other. Even in connection with the refuse from the abattoirs the Government find it necessary to sell the whole of it to fertiliser agents and they increase the cost of it to the primary producer one hundred or a couple of hundred per cent. Every pound of blood and bone which comes from the abattoirs must first go through the hands of an agent before it reaches the farmer.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: He is a middleman.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is a trading concern. It is something which the Government possess but they call tenders for it and sell it to a man who mixes it up to a known formula, and then disposes of it at a profit of 100 or 200 per cent. Any Government that is sincere in its attitude towards the agricultural industry should not allow that kind of thing to go on, and it is to be hoped that they will try and stop this very unnecessary and roundabout way of supplying farmers with fertilisers. I would like to say a word or two on the question of conscription. At the present time in this supreme moment of the nation's peril, I believe that a man who would make political capital out of another's convictions is an absolute cur. He is a man who, if he had the opportunity, would desecrate the graves of our own fallen heroes. My attitude will be shown in no uncertain way. I am behind Mr. Hughes, and I will be behind him until I find that he is a traitor to the cause of labour and to the cause of democracy. I believe Mr. Hughes is in possession of certain knowledge, and whether it costs me my political existence or not I will stand behind him in any means that he may suggest in order to get the physical and material strength to assist the Homeland at the present juncture. It is all very well for people to talk about conscripting men for home defence, but where is home defence to-day? If

is on the sacred ground of the Allies; it is not in Australia. The sphere of operations is, thank God, removed from Australia, and the man who will not serve behind a rifle on the ground of the Allies would not serve behind a rifle in Australia. The man who is prepared to live behind the shelter and protection of a rifle should be prepared to shoulder one when called upon to do so. I hope that the Federal Government will summon up all the physical and material strength required to win the war. I believe we shall win, in fact. I have not the slightest hesitation in feeling that we shall win. In conclusion, I wish to say that I hope the present Ministry, if they remain at the head of affairs in Western Australia, will remember that they have an obligation to those returning soldiers and let them feel with confidence that those who are in control of the Administration are trying to do their very best to put the returned soldiers back into the commercial life and industry of their country.

Mr. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [10-28]: In common with the other members I desire to say a few words on the Address-in-reply. I have been goaded to some extent into this position by the remarks which have come from the Opposition benches in connection with the attitude of the Country party in sitting behind the present Government. Before referring to this matter, however, I would like to say a few words in connection with the Industries Assistance Board and the change brought about by the present Administration. The leader of the Opposition the other evening stated that the farmers were better off under his Administration than they are at the present time. They were to a certain extent, but no discrimination was shown. The leader of the Opposition, in criticising the re-organisation of the Board by the present Government, referred to the parts played by the various officials of the old board. In my opinion, the leader of the Opposition, in eulogising Mr. Morris and Mr. Oliphant, unintentionally cast a reflection on another member of the old board, the original member, who had to do all the work, Mr. Camm. To my thinking, Mr. Camm was the only man on the old board who had a grasp of the situation. Mr. Camm, by his unfailing courtesy and his perception of the wants

and requirements of the settlers affected, did much to relieve the situation. I venture to assert that had Mr. Camm been allowed to continue in the capacity of practical manager of the board, even with the present additions, much more satisfaction would have been given. Few members of this House realise the actual position which various members of the Country party had to adopt relatively to the board. Individually I have been nothing more or less than a commission agent for clients of the Industries Assistance Board during the last two years.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Without fee.

Mr. Angwin: Agent without commission.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes. I am occupying the place of, and taking away money from, men who, I know, in some instances have established offices here for the very purpose which I have fulfilled.

Mr. S. Stubbs: You took the bread out of their mouths.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes. While carrying out this obligation cast upon me as representative of a large number of Assistance Board settlers, I came in contact with all the members of the board; and I say the greatest mistake made in connection with the board was the appointment of men like Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton, whose other occupations did not allow them to give sufficient time to the affairs of the board, so that practically the whole of the work fell on Mr. Camm. Had Mr. Camm been allowed a sufficiency of officers to conduct the affairs of the board, I venture to say that the muddle and chaos which resulted in connection with accounts would never have occurred.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Oh, nonsense!

Mr. Angwin: Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton were supplied with all the officers they required.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Mr. Paterson and Mr. Sutton were otherwise occupied than in connection with the board.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Mr. Camm got all he wanted.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Mr. Camm may have had all he wanted; but, so far as the board members were concerned, Mr. Camm, as a positive fact, did more to relieve the situation, and had a more thorough grasp of the position, than any other member of

the board. In holding up Mr. Morris and Mr. Oliphant, the leader of the Opposition cast a reflection on Mr. Camm. Coming in contact with that gentleman as I did, I say no member of the board could have been fairer or more just to the settlers than Mr. Camm was.

Mr. S. Stubbs: All the members of the board were fair.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes; but I did not like the action of the leader of the Opposition in holding up two gentlemen as against another.

Mr. S. Stubbs: All the members of the board were perfectly fair.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: But I say one member was more courteous, and did more, and realised the position better, than the other members. In connection with the reorganisation scheme adopted by the new Minister, I wish to sound a note of warning as to the standard which he has fixed for settlers receiving assistance. I understand instructions have been given to the inspectors to see that no farmer, no matter what his circumstances are, receives a greater allowance for food supplies and maintenance than 9s. per day. Nine shillings per day sounds very well; it amounts to £2 14s. per week. On the other hand, we had the late Attorney General (Mr. Walker) yesterday landing to the skies the fact that men represented by the Labour party are entitled to £3 and £4 per week. That being so, I say the man on the land is equally entitled to similar amounts, and that 9s. a day is not a fair thing for a man with a family on a farm.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: There is no comparison possible between a wages man and a farmer. The farmer is building up an asset, while the wages man is building up nothing.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: From that aspect I say the farmer should be treated on the basis of the asset he is building up for the board, and that a miserable pittance of 9s. or 5s. a day—some of the farmers are down to 5s. a day—is utterly unfair.

Mr. Angwin: Some people in business are getting nothing at all.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The farmers have had nothing for four or five years.

Mr. Angwin: That is their own business.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I wish to point out to the Minister controlling the affairs of the board at the present time that on the average farm in the eastern areas to-day water carting is an occupation in itself for one man. Unless a fair amount is allowed for wages, trouble will ensue. The Minister has issued instructions that wages are to be allowed only for a certain period of the year; that is, during the harvest, about eight weeks. Such an allowance is useless. During the summer the average farmer I have in mind requires a man to cart water, so that he can keep his crop going and thus safeguard the board's asset in the shape of fallow land, and so forth. I do hope suitable inspectors will be selected; but I have been given to understand, as the result of a recent visit to some of my constituents, that the inspectors are, in some instances, not giving the satisfaction I speak of. On the other hand, there are inspectors who understand the situation and deal fairly. I am not exactly holding the Minister responsible for this, because it is utterly impossible to get a body of inspectors who will thoroughly understand the situation. I do, however, ask of the Minister that when complaints come along they will be treated as they should be, and investigation made, so that all the settlers under the Industries Assistance Board will get a fair and equal deal.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Administration by inspectors was tried, and failed.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The leader of the Opposition contended the other night that one district might fare well under a certain inspector, while another district under a man more rigid, and perhaps without understanding of his business, would not receive the same good treatment.

Mr. Angwin: Perhaps the rigid man is the man who understands the business.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I desire to comment upon the fact that in the Premier's speech not a word was said about public works.

Mr. Munsie: Hear, hear. I noticed the same thing myself.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I regret it because the future of this State depends largely on the development of the agricultural industry insofar as railway construction and so forth is concerned. In

that connection I wish to draw the attention of the House to a long discussed project, namely, the proposed railway to provide facilities for the Dale settlers. In 1911 the then existing Railway Advisory Board visited this country and reported upon it. The report was highly favourable. I wish to say right here that for the last two years I, in conjunction with the member for Pingelly (Mr. Hickmott), have been working to bring about the consummation of this long-promised and much-needed railway. I will quote some opinions of the Railway Advisory Board on the project. The board said that the principal object in view was to shorten the distance of the journey from the Great Southern railway to Fremantle. The next object was to serve, as far as possible, existing and probable future settlement on the area under review; also to relieve the traffic on the northern portion of the Great Southern railway, and to provide a shorter route to a port for the wheat areas eastward of Narrogin and Brookton. They said that the proposal would bring Fremantle within 89 miles of Brookton, as against the distance of 130 miles now obtaining—a saving of 41 miles. Those were the main features which appealed to the board. The board went so far as to recommend the construction of portion of this line in connection with another proposal, in which I understand the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) is interested, namely, the proposed railway from Narrogin to Pingelly. When we take into consideration the saving of freight which will be effected to settlers east of Brookton on the Great Southern railway, or one might say as far as Bruce Rock in an easterly direction, and south from Corrijin to Wickopin on the present Wickopin-Merredin line, and again from Brookton to Popanyinning on the Great Southern railway, a saving of a distance of 41 miles to all settlers producing in that area, that argument in itself affords a strong factor in favour of the line required by the Dale settlers. Then again, the settlers who are intimately concerned in this proposition have waited upon the present Administration when previously in power, and also the Labour Administration, and both Ministries promised that these facilities should be granted. I understand

that it is the intention of the present Government to appoint another advisory board to report on the question. I am altogether averse to that proposition. I look upon boards as expedients for shelving awkward questions. As I have said, the settlers in this locality have for many years been agitating for this railway and have obtained promises from both present and past Governments. So far as the past Government are concerned, there is, unfortunately, no record of their promise on the file. The late Premier went so far as to promise that at least 35 miles should be constructed. I will do the late Minister for Works the justice of saying that he admitted the Premier had asked him to take steps to have the survey made. I am going to impress on the present Government the necessity of fulfilling their predecessors' promises in this regard.

The Premier: We did not make any promise.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes, in 1911, at Bunbury, the hon. member himself promised to build 25 miles of that railway from Brookton. It was included in his policy speech.

The Premier: I would like you to produce a record of that promise.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I can do so, and will do so later on. In any case the necessity for making provision for future development warrants the construction of this line, because we have there a magnificent area of land suitable for closer settlement. Then there is the recompense due to those settlers who pioneered that country 60 years ago. This should be taken into consideration. They have been there all these years, in some instances the son succeeding to the father, and still they are thirty miles from a railway. There is no other part of Western Australia quite equal to this area. Certainly to-day a portion of it which should be under cereals is carrying stock. I understand that Mr. Commissioner Connor has recently been through the district and expressed highly favourable opinions regarding it. When one takes into consideration the much discussed question of the settlement of soldiers on the land, what better proposition could be found than that afforded by such an area, so close to the chief port of the State?

Besides the fact that this large rich area is under cultivation, the board points out that there is there a considerable tract of useful unsettled country, and in addition, a fine forest of wandoo, while the development of the district will render accessible a useful tract of jarrah country. The estimate of the cost is given; it is very low. The grades are set out as a minimum of one in 40 and a maximum of one in 70. I have particularly drawn attention to this matter because I promised that I would take it up where my predecessor left it. Both of us have given support to the Government of the day, but the continuance of that support is conditional on the provision of proper facilities in that district. That brings me to the criticism of the Opposition. The member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) said the Country party were willing to forego and forget much for the sake of achieving the goal and winning something. That is just the position of our party. We have foregone a lot in the past with the object of bringing about better conditions for those whom we represent, and we hope to secure even more in the future than we have in the past. So far we have been winning all along the line. We won much from the late Government, and are very grateful for it. As the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) pointed out just now, we are not pledged to any party, but are independent of both. The question of whether we shall continue our support to the present Government depends entirely upon what the present Government do. The member for Kanowna exhausted his vocabulary in denunciation of the party occupying the crossbenches. Chagrin was the dominant note of his utterances in respect to the Country party. Insinuation and misrepresentation were the weapons of his attack. I feel it is incumbent upon me to resent some of the insinuations made by the hon. member. I do not know that I have anything further to say on that subject, but I should like to make a few remarks on the agricultural position generally. In this regard the action of the Government in appointing a Commission has been subjected to some criticism by the members of the Opposition.

Mr. Angwin: From the Country party too.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I do not know of any from the Country party. I have every faith in the gentlemen who have been appointed to that Commission. I believe that they have the ability to tackle a question of this sort. We have men on the Commission representing the wet areas and also the dry areas. I know Mr. Padbury, who is a member of the Farmers' and Settlers' Association, and is a strong supporter of the Country party. I have no reason to doubt his qualifications. Mr. Venn, too, has a thorough grasp of the requirements of the industry in the South-Western portion of this State. Mr. Clarkson is another member who, I believe, has the necessary ability. If I had any complaint to make against the personnel it might be against the appointment of Mr. Giles; but I realise that Mr. Giles is a business man and also that he is very conversant with the stock aspect of the agricultural question generally, and that is an aspect which must be taken into consideration.

Member: He is a farmer too.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I understand he is not farming at the present time. The Esperance Lands Commission has also come in for considerable criticism, and here again I am in accord with the Government. I believe the gentlemen who have been appointed to that Commission, if any good can be done, are just the men to tackle the proposition and the men who will give us a fair and square report. As we shall have an opportunity of discussing the report later on, I will not say any more on that subject just now. In my opinion the question of the salt in the soil is really a bogey, because I know that two-thirds of the wheat areas of this State carry salt in the soil in equal proportion with the soil in the Esperance district. Therefore I shall await their report with interest, and I trust the House, when the report is presented, will deal with it in a manner which a subject of such importance deserves.

Member: What about the delay.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It is better to have a little delay at present than to continue to induce men to go on to the land which may prove unsuitable—and that is what will prove to be the case if the allegations made against the soil prove to

be true. If the reports concerning the soil are true, it is not possible for anyone to operate this land as a farming proposition. I have all along been a supporter of the railway, not as an agricultural proposition but as a much needed means to the people of the goldfields of reaching the coast. I realise, however, that this is no time for the building of railways to pleasure resorts. We as a party, and I as a member of the party, support the appointment of the Commission, and I trust that the report of the Commission will bear out the conclusion I have come to, that the land is suitable for agricultural settlement. I should like now to congratulate the Premier upon his decision to continue the Yilliminning-Kondinin railway.

Mr. Angwin: He will have to get rails first.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I believe there is a reasonable prospect of his getting them in January.

Mr. Angwin: In February.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: This line should be continued. At the present time there are something like 42,000 bags of wheat stacked on the side of the railway which is 30 miles distant from the existing line. I think the decision of the Government to go on with the construction of this line is a wise one, and I regret that the late Minister for Works in his wisdom should have shifted the plant to another district. It was a crying shame that these settlers who had been waiting for years and years on the strength of a distinct promise of the railway should be disappointed.

Mr. Angwin: Other districts had been promised first.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: But why incur the expense to the State of removing the plant after the line had been started?

Mr. Angwin: Other lines had been started first and promised first.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Who promised them?

Mr. Angwin: The country was promised that the building of railways would be started in the order in which the Bills were passed by Parliament, and that promise was carried out.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I understand an agitation is on foot to induce the Government to establish silos for the bulk hand-

ling of wheat in at least some of our ports.

Mr. Angwin: They will need to be careful.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I agree that the Government will require to be careful, but that is more than the previous Government was in respect of some of their undertakings.

Mr. Angwin: We have had experience. I say the Government need to be cautious.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I hope that something will be done towards inaugurating the bulk handling of wheat in at least two or three ports. Something can be done in this direction even this season, something on a small scale which will be useful in connection with the introduction of the complete system later on. I understand that there is plenty of timber available, that the State saw mills are clogged up with it. What better use could this be put to than a beginning for the introduction of bulk handling? This question of the bulk handling of wheat is one of the most important to the future prosperity of this State which any Government could tackle. I venture to say that there is no undertaking which the Government could put in hand, outside of railways, which would do so much towards relieving the burden of the farmer than the inauguration of bulk handling. Unquestionably it is a good scheme.

Mr. Angwin: It is questionable whether it is good.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [10.57]: I wish first to congratulate the members of the Ministry on their election to office, and to say that those measures I believe to be for the good of the State will get my support. I regret that they have made such a bad start by stopping the Esperance railway after it had been sanctioned by both Houses of Parliament. I think that action was taken simply in the interests of centralisation. If we desire to see our State prosperous we should, in my opinion, endeavour to open up as many ports as we can. I gave my vote in favour of the Esperance railway simply because I wished to see another port opened in this State. I knew what had happened in regard to the Murchison. Geraldton was the only port for the Murchison district, but before the people of Geraldton could get proper facilities there they had an enormous

battle to fight. Had the port of Geraldton had the consideration years ago to which it was entitled, it would have meant that the whole of the requirements for the Murchison district would have been landed at Geraldton and trucked from there to the Murchison, which would have meant a great saving. It was because of this that I supported the Esperance line. I supported it on the authority of the various reports which were laid on the Table of this House. The statement has been made that the report by Mr. Mann was suppressed by the previous Government. I am quite satisfied that the whole of the files were on the Table, for the member for Kalgoorlie called my attention to them at the time, and to Mr. Mann's report. Previous to that, I also had a circular from the Esperance Land League. I know that it went forth that Mr. Mann's report was suppressed, but I also know that it was with the file. In the face of that, it ill-became any hon. member to say that he had not an opportunity of perusing the file. When the Minister for Works introduced the Esperance Railway Bill probably he did not go into it fully with regard to the salt in the soil. The papers were placed on the Table of the House and were there for perusal.

The Premier: Did you read Mr. Mann's report on the papers?

Mr. CHESSON: I saw it. It did not interest me so much seeing that I represented a Murchison seat at the time. I did not go fully into the question. The member for Kalgoorlie called my attention to it at the time. I also know that the late Colonial Secretary in another place went fully into the matter. I am satisfied that if we take the analysis of soils in nearly any part of Australia, we should find that there was a small amount of salt in them. In the district I represent we have fresh water in the dams, of which there are several large ones. When the dams dry up, one can see a certain amount of salt in the bottom. I think that water offers the best opportunity for judging whether there is salt in the soil or not. If there was an undue proportion of salt in the ground the water in the dams in the locality would soon go salt. With regard to the question of centralisation, we all know the trouble that people in the outback

parts have to get things done through Perth. The same thing applies to every State in Australia. The outback centres have not the same advantage that people in the cities have if everything is centralised in those cities.

The Minister for Works: Did you see that report on the file?

Mr. CHESSON: Yes, the member for Kalgoorlie brought it under my notice.

The Minister for Works: It was not on the file when it reached the Premier.

The Premier: It was not in existence on the file and we could not find the report. The original was never there and only copies are now obtainable.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: Possibly only copies were available.

The Minister for Works: There was no original or copy on the file, as the Premier got it.

Mr. W. D. Johnson: There is a copy there now. Where did that come from?

The Minister for Works: It must have come from some other place.

Mr. CHESSON: With regard to the treatment the Labour party has received at the hands of the Country party, I say that everything possible was done for the farmers by the late Government that could be done. I do not say that any party in power would not have done likewise. It was necessary owing to the drought that some assistance should be given to the farmers, and the late administration did whatever was possible in the way of providing facilities for them.

Mr. Thomas called attention to the state of the House; bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. CHESSON: The members of the Country party are in a position to dictate to either side of the House. They hold the balance of power. If the Liberals do not give them what they require they are in a position to turn them out as they turned out the Labour Government. There was very little gratitude shown by the Country party towards the Labour party. When they could not get anything more from the Labour party they turned the Labour Government out of office and put the Liberals in. They have now got the terminal charges on railways abolished, and have got a reduction of the charges on

superphosphates, and these according to the leader of the Opposition amount to something over £100,000. That is a big consideration for a start. Whilst they hold the balance of power I think the members of the Country party are quite right to support the party which gives them these concessions. The time will come when that party will have to take a share in the Government of this State. The farmer appears to want every assistance that can be given to his own particular industry but is not prepared to assist, it seems to me, secondary industries. Primary and secondary industries should go hand in hand. It ought to be patent to every individual that if we can get a big manufacturing population in this State benefit will accrue to the farmer. He would thus have a local market for his wheat. At the present time we can see large stacks of wheat lying at North Fremantle and to a large extent being destroyed by mice. With a big manufacturing population it must follow that there would be a larger amount of wheat consumed locally. It would, therefore, be better for all concerned. The farmer should try and encourage secondary industries so that all the implements which he uses may be manufactured within the State. With regard to the electorate I represent the pastoral portion of it is in a fairly flourishing condition. There has been a very good season there and big prices have been obtained by the pastoralists for wool. The mining industry around Cue and Day Dawn is also fairly prosperous. A new town has lately sprung into existence called Jasper Hill, formerly known as Pinnacles, where some 60 men are employed and where a community of about double that number is supported. The mine there has a plant which is automatic from beginning to end. The country in the Cue district is developing well. The Big Bell is one of the biggest propositions in the State. It is 19 miles West of Cue and the owners of it have an up-to-date plant on the mine. The trouble which is being experienced, however, is in regard to water, and the time will probably come when they will have to make an appeal in that direction to the Minister for Mines. The owners of the property are Messrs. Heydon and Chesson, the latter

a brother of mine, who I suppose have done more for the Murchison district than any one else. They are at the present time making a big effort to find the necessary water to keep the plant going, and if they succeed they will be able to keep 50 or 60 head of stamps going on the treatment of over 5,000 tons of stone a month. If the time comes that they will be compelled to make an appeal to the Minister, I am satisfied that they will receive sympathetic attention. I believe that the sympathy of the Minister is with those people who invest their own capital in the manner that the owners of the Big Bell have done. With regard to the tax on development work carried on in mines, I think it is nearly time that the House took a stand and made an effort to bring about its abolition. In developing a mine it is necessary to sink a shaft and to drive, and at the present time a charge is made on that work. I contend that if mine owners do not keep development work well ahead, the life of a mine is very much shortened. The only tax that ought to be imposed should be a tax on results and not on development work. In connection with mining also, assistance should be given to the prospector who, having obtained good results up to a certain depth, finds that he is not able to go further for want of funds. The only assistance that can be obtained at present is from the Mines Development Vote and one must have a decent asset so that the Government can lend money on it. In New South Wales if anyone is exploring new country assistance is given to the extent of so much per foot for exploratory work, and it is nearly time that Western Australia, being the biggest mining producer in the Commonwealth, should follow that example. When anyone has a show on which machinery can be placed there is no need to go to the Government for financial help; there are those who are quite prepared to assist in the erection of a plant. I am a great believer in the employment of State steamers on the North-West coast. If we build railways in the agricultural areas, we should also be prepared to provide steamers to bring down the produce from the distant North and North-West. We know what has happened here since the war began.

In consequence of the high freights prevailing, many of the steamers departed for the Argentine, but not before they had exploited the people of the North-West. That is the kind of thing the Government should prevent and it is possible to prevent it by employing State steamers on that trade. With regard to the question of conscription, the House will probably adjourn within a fortnight to assist in the referendum campaign. Personally, I intend to vote yes; but I do not propose to advise the people to do what I myself am not able to do. I am over military age and, on account of that disability, I have no doubt, if I went before the military authorities, I would be turned down. I shall, however, advise those in my constituency who are able and fit to enlist, provided, of course, that ample provision is made for them on their return. Our experience teaches us that there is always plenty of enthusiasm at a time like the present, and that people can always be induced to subscribe liberally to funds. In the electorate I represent over £2,000 has been subscribed towards the various patriotic funds, but the time will come when the war will be finished,—and I hope that time is not far distant, and that we shall be successful, as I have not the slightest doubt now—and all our attentions will have to be devoted towards caring for those who have returned maimed and wounded. Up to date I am sorry to say practically no provision has been made for returned soldiers. I know of a young man in my constituency who came back partly disabled, and who is getting a paltry 5s. a week. Is that an inducement for any young fellow to go to the front? Something should also be done in connection with the foreigners who are in the State. What do we find at the present time at Day Dawn? That it is practically full of Italians, who have no intention of fighting, and who are satisfied to remain there. I consider that machinery should be provided to conscript these subjects as well as the people of the State. On their return there should be ample provision for the men conscripted and also for their dependants. Those are my views on the referendum, although, as I have said, I shall vote yes. If any announcement is

made that capital and wealth, or income over and above a certain amount sufficient to live on, will be conscripted, I shall do my level best to induce the members of my constituency to vote yes.

On motion by the Minister for Works debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.24 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 28th September, 1916.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Trans-Continental Railway.—Correspondence between Federal and State Governments during the last twelve months. (Asked for by Hon. A. Sanderson.) 2, State Children Act, 1907.—Amendment of Regulations. 3, Health Act, 1911-15.—Plantagenet Road Board.—Adoption of Model By-laws. 4, Dog Act, 1903.—Regulations to come into force on 1st day of January, 1917.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by COLONIAL SECRETARY leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Hon. A. J. H. Saw (Honorary Minister) on account of military service.