

The Minister for Mines: You know that Macfarlane's factory can afford to pay the increased railway freight and still be in a better position to compete with the country factory.

Mr. TROY: Even supposing that is so, what has that to do with the principle? I run a farm near Murchison. I can send my chaff to Murchison cheaper than farmers who are 50 miles further away. Why should I be penalised because my situation happens to be more favourable? I am prepared to pay and do pay the same rate for the same mileage and the same service as any other individual. Why penalise me?

Mr. Mann: I saw the Commissioner of Railways and his reply was that Macfarlane was at an advantage inasmuch as the country factories had to pay a greater rate on the butter coming to the city than the farmer had to pay on the cream.

Mr. TROY: The Northam butter factory can send butter to the goldfields and out-back districts cheaper than the Perth factory because it has an advantage in that way. The Geraldton Butter Factory will sell butter on the Murchison because it gains an advantage over other factories in so doing.

Mr. Mann: The great market is in the city.

Mr. TROY: I do not care about that. Because I happen to be situated in a certain part of the State why should I be called upon to pay a greater freight for my products than people who are situated elsewhere? The Railway Department ought not to be used to impose disabilities upon one set of citizens against another set. Of all things this Government should stand for freedom of trade and a fair deal all round, and I shall be glad to hear the explanation of the Minister for Railways upon this question. What the country needs to-day is not only an optimist but a prudent man. I can see no sign of prudence in the Governor's Speech. That is my complaint. All I can see is a long list of platitudes, excuses, and complaints about what has happened on the other side of the world. There is no policy for the future. Things are bad, and we have to take the necessary steps to face the bad times that are ahead of us. The Government should outline the action they propose to take so that the House and the country may know what it is. I have asked the Premier if he will find new markets, and exploit other parts of the world to replace the markets which are no longer available. He should refrain from spending money on immigration without system. There are hundreds of people in the country to-day who cannot make a living, and the country because of the restrictions of trade is not in a position to carry a lot of immigrants. I want to know from the Government how they will find work for all the immigrants they tell us are coming here. Are they going to put them on the land, and have they the capital with which to keep them there until they

become producers? If they are not to be put on the land how will they be provided for, and if they are put on the land what will be the policy in respect to finding markets for their products? That is a fair and reasonable question and any prudent and progressive Government should be able to give the House some lead in the matter. Things will be worse in this country than they are to-day. We have not yet reached the turning point. I welcome immigration provided the country is in a fit state to receive it, but to throw thousands of men to-day on the labour market and make no provision for them is not in the best interests of the country. I suggest that when the Premier has an opportunity he should tell the House how he proposes to arrange to provide other markets to replace those which have collapsed, and to provide work for the people in Western Australia as well as for those yet to come. That is my chief concern so far as the industries of this country are affected.

On motion by Mr. Money, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th August, 1921.

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

QUESTION—TRAMWAY EXTENSION, SOUTH PERTH-COMO.

Capt. CARTER asked the Minister for Railways: When is it proposed to start the construction of the South Perth-Como tram extension?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: When the necessary material comes to hand.

QUESTION—RAILWAY PASSES, BLINDED SOLDIERS.

Mr. CORBOY asked the Minister for Railways: Will he, when renewing passes for blinded soldiers, endorse such passes "Available for attendant also"?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: No application for this consideration, which should be made to the Secretary, Premier's Department, has yet been refused.

QUESTION—EDUCATION, A SCHOOL HOLIDAY.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What schools were closed on the 10th August? 2, Did the headmasters receive the necessary official permission?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Junior Technical School and Perth Boys'. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT STORES INSPECTION.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Premier: Will he allow a committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, consisting of three retired merchants, to inspect Government stocks in the Government Stores and report generally on the system followed?

The MINISTER FOR MINES (for the Premier) replied: If it is desired that a committee or commission of inquiry be appointed, notice of motion should be given in the ordinary way.

MESSAGE—ASSENT TO SUPPLY BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read assenting to Supply Bill (No. 1) £1,640,320.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRIBUTING.

Ministerial Statement.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [4.40]: With the permission of the House I desire to make a brief statement with regard to tributing on mines. Hon. members will be aware that a Royal Commission is now sitting to deal with the question of tributing. From that Commission I have received an interim report stating that in view of the fact that a considerable percentage of the tributing agreements now existing expire at the end of September, and in view of the further fact that the Commission is not in a position to submit a definite recommendation in time to allow of an amendment being made by that date in the Mining Act Amendment Act passed last session, it would be inadvisable to take any action in that direction pending the continuance of existing agreements to the end of this year. I desire to inform hon. members

that although this is not in strict conformity with the Act passed last session, I propose, in accordance with the Royal Commission's recommendation, not to take any action until the end of the present calendar year.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [4.41]: In the first place I wish to join in the congratulations expressed by the old members of this House to the new members. I shall endeavour to pass on as quickly as possible to the subject of debate. In doing so I have to ask myself, what is the object of the debate on the Address-in-reply? It is quite possible that the debate may be made profitable to the Government as well as to members. It affords members an opportunity of expressing their ideas on the general, broad policy of the Government. On the other hand, it gives the Government an opportunity of gathering, if I may say so, the best ideas of all the members of this House. The best business man is frequently not the most brilliant; and so it is with Governments. A Government may not be brilliant, but yet if Ministers have the best capacity to make use of the ideas of other people, they can be the most successful Government. That is their opportunity. It is up to every member of the House—and from the expressions of opinion which have been heard from all sides of the Chamber I feel sure that hon. members generally share this view—to give any Government of the day the best of his ideas with a view to helping the State out of its present financial trouble. In the very first paragraph of the Governor's Speech we have that most important subject, the deficit—a subject which in itself is quite sufficiently important to occupy almost the whole of this debate. Notwithstanding the fact that the present debate is not one on the Estimates, yet we are entitled to deal with the subject of the deficit, so far as regards the why and the whereof of the huge shortage which this State is up against. Let us make no error: it is not the Government of to-day who are up against the deficit, but all the people of the State of Western Australia are up against the financial position. We must acknowledge that to wipe out the deficit quickly is a matter of utter impossibility. Indeed, the deficit is increasing yearly. Nevertheless, it must surely be possible to put an end to the increase of the deficit; and, having once stopped the drift, we should be able to reduce the deficit. I am not one of those who acknowledge that the present state of our finances is due to the war. If we analyse the position we must recognise clearly that Western Australia was drifting prior to the war. The moneys received by our State and by our people during the period of the war did not fall short of the corresponding receipts before the war. Never in the history of this

country have the wool growers received so much money for their wool as they did under the system which came about as a result of the war. Similarly the wheat growers of Western Australia realised increased prices for their wheat under that system, as compared with that which previously operated. That being so, it is useless to sit down and say that the results were due to the war, and that in the course of time, things will right themselves. To follow that course is to adopt a very dangerous attitude. It has been said that when we get additional population, the position will rectify itself. We may not get that increase in population which we expect. We must accept the position as we find it to-day, and we must cut our coat according to our cloth. We must act as if the present position is to continue. With that end in view, and although it may involve the repetition of many matters which have been mentioned in this House during the past three years or more, I deem it my duty to call attention to the matters to which I refer. I do so in the hope that it may lead to a saving on account of the State finances and to some improvement in conditions generally. For years one question has been ventilated in this Chamber, and had the suggestions which were put forward from time to time been acted upon, and the result been what we have been led to believe would be the case, there would have been a saving of thousands of pounds to the State. I am referring to the question of the duplication of departments. Hon. members repeat matters so often that they are apt to fire of the repetition. Until such times as the necessary reforms are accomplished, it is our duty to repeat the suggestions we have to make. We are assured that the duplication of the Federal and State Taxation Departments represents a saving of £20,000 per year to the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You must remember that it was not the State that caused the duplication.

Mr. MONEY: If it was not the State, who was it that agreed to the amalgamation?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Both State and Federal Governments.

Mr. MONEY: Exactly; they were both parties to the amalgamation. So that it must represent a saving to both the State and the Federal Governments.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We had better let them have everything.

Mr. MONEY: If that amalgamation had been accomplished five years ago, on the basis of the saving of £20,000, a loss of £100,000 would have been saved to this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You should agree to unification at once.

Mr. MONEY: In any case, there is a distinct saving to the State. If amalgamation is good for one department, it is good

for another. We still have two Electoral Departments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is unification that you want, all right.

Hon. P. Collier: Hand over everything to the Commonwealth.

Mr. MONEY: If there is to be a saving to the State, I agree that these amalgamations should take place, and to that extent unification will have my support.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You would not say that in public at Bunbury.

Mr. MONEY: Most decidedly I would say that at Bunbury. I am not advocating unification by any means. We were told by the Premier that the State rights have been fully safeguarded in connection with the amalgamation of the State and Federal Taxation Departments. If the State rights can be safeguarded with regard to one department, why can they not be safeguarded under other such amalgamations?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then give them the lot.

Hon. P. Collier: If the State rights are so safeguarded, the results have been shown in the fact that officials, who have been employed in the State department for years, have been put aside and men from the Eastern States have been brought in to fill their places.

Mr. MONEY: If it is good to amalgamate—

Hon. T. Walker: You have not proved that it is good to amalgamate these departments. We may live to regret it.

* Mr. Johnston: The amalgamation effected represents a good saving.

Mr. MONEY: Hon. members apparently did not hear what I said at the commencement of my remarks. I said that if it is agreed that it will represent a saving of £20,000 to the people—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Premier did not say that. He said that that would be the saving to the State funds but not to the people.

Mr. MONEY: Surely the State is the people.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The people have to pay the taxes.

Mr. MONEY: Are hon. members here to try to distinguish as between the State and the people? I am disappointed at that interjection.

Hon. T. Walker: You as a lawyer know that there is a difference between State funds and the people of the State.

Mr. MONEY: I simply mention this matter and I am satisfied that if the State rights are safeguarded under the amalgamation, the people of Western Australia should never have been saddled with this extra burden.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I believe in constitutional methods; you do not. That is the difference between us.

Mr. MONEY: The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), dur-

ing the course of remarks he made in this Chamber, referred to the unsatisfactory position regarding the financial arrangements between the Commonwealth and the State Governments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I never mentioned it.

Mr. MONEY: I have a note about that point; I cannot peruse and read "Hansard" during my speech. For years past there have been complaints that Western Australia has not received a fair deal from the Commonwealth.

Hon. T. Walker: Neither it has. I certainly agree with you there.

Mr. MONEY: If that be so, and our finances are suffering in consequence, surely it is time something was done.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Hand them over to the Commonwealth.

Mr. MONEY: A Federal convention is to be held in the near future and I think this is a fit subject for discussion at that gathering. I hope this subject will be thoroughly investigated and if it can be shown that we are suffering by reason of the existing arrangements, efforts should be made to have our wrongs righted. A third matter which has been stressed in this Chamber from time to time, and which is undoubtedly a subject of the greatest importance at the present time, relates to the railways. From the statements by members, it seems pretty well agreed that the trouble in connection with our railways is the excess mileage in comparison with our population. That being so, I trust that endeavours will be made in the near future, not to settle land at a distance from the existing railways, but to encourage closer settlement along the railways already constructed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Will you support a tax on the unimproved land values?

Mr. MONEY: I will not go into the question of how this closer settlement is to be encouraged. When members are agreed that it is in the best interests of the State to see that all the land along the existing railways is fully developed, it will be time to discuss details as to how that is to be achieved. It will be then for the House to decide that aspect.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What methods do you think should be adopted to bring that result about?

Mr. MONEY: It is useless to go into details until the House has decided that this should be done.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are one of those who will have to decide the question.

The Minister for Agriculture: You should give notice of such a question.

Mr. MONEY: There is one other matter regarding the policy of Western Australia at the present time, and that is the question of administration, which requires considerable thought. I look upon the administration of the affairs of State as somewhat similar to an electric current.

Hon. T. Walker: There is not much electricity on your side.

Mr. MONEY: We may secure current from a generating station and use it for certain purposes, but the use of that current becomes more costly the farther one goes from the station. So it is with the administration of affairs of State. For my part I cannot see how the North-West can possibly be administered successfully from Perth. If we are losing a percentage of our finances, and if we are compelled to shoulder the extra cost of administration, entailing in consequence somewhat inefficient administration, this is surely a subject that should be dealt with by members at a later stage.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Although you say that with regard to the North-West, you believe in administering the Taxation Department from Melbourne.

Mr. Underwood: What are we losing in regard to the North-West?

Mr. MONEY: We have the Government machinery in Perth and we lose on account of the distance. If we have to go 1,000 miles when administration is good for 50 miles, we lose 950 miles in travelling and so on. I am simply giving expression to my opinions, which may not coincide with those of the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). I believe that administration at such a great distance is too costly, and that under such conditions we cannot do justice to the North-West, or give satisfaction to the rest of Western Australia.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Why did you extend the pastoral leases, then?

Mr. MONEY: That is another matter. I think we in Western Australia should learn a lesson from the Romans in connection with the development of our new country, and thus gain a realisation of the necessity for satisfactory roads. In every country that necessity is recognised except in Western Australia. To-day we are suffering from the want of good roads more than from the want of good railways.

Mr. Lambert: The worst road in the State is that from Bunbury to Busselton.

Mr. MONEY: They are exceptionally bad in the South-West. In dealing with the finances of the State, however, it does not do to distinguish too much between the people's money and the State finances, because in the long run they are one and the same. It is useless to receive in one pocket a payment for produce if, through the rotten state of the finances and excessive taxation, we have to pay that money out and a little more as well. We have to row together, for the Government and the people are in the same boat. Reverting to the question of good roads, however, it is within my knowledge that the roads in districts where it is most difficult to construct them, have cost twice as much for materials during the past 20 years as they should have done. That has arisen from the one cause, namely the want of co-operation with the Railway Department. We had a most interesting meeting in the South-West

recently where information on this point was obtained. In some instances material has been placed on the roads for from 1s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per cubic yard. In other districts where the roads are more difficult to construct, the cost has run up to 12s. per cubic yard. With the assistance of the railways, however, and with the material costing the same price, it could have been placed on the roads for one-third of the cost I have mentioned. In consequence of the lack of co-operation there has been a distinct loss to the people and also to the finances of the State. The methods adopted in the past have been wasteful and the results show that the roads have not been constructed as they should have been. We have progressed to some extent but we have not yet arrived at full co-ordination between the efforts of the local authorities and the Government departments. However, I hope that full co-ordination of effort will be achieved in due course. We cannot afford to delay in this matter much longer. It may not appeal to hon. members that savings under this heading will do very much to help the State finances. On the principle, however, that "many a mickle makes a muckle," so it is with the State finances. It is the collection of the different savings, small though some of them may be, that leads to effective work in rectifying the financial position. I wonder how often we have been told, by people who know, of the necessity for lime in the South-West. Members in this Chamber have used expressions in regard to the South-West which have not been altogether agreeable to people living in that part of the State. That may have come about from repeated pointing to the necessity for lime for the development of agriculture in the South-West. A few years ago this House passed a measure giving a concession over Lake Clifton. In that Bill provision was made for the delivery of lime of a certain quality at 10s. per ton. I should like to know if it is possible even to-day to obtain a single ton of lime under the conditions laid down in that measure. The farmers of the South-West have been put off year after year in their demand for cheap lime. This want of cheap lime has been one of the biggest obstacles in the South-West.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are not the concessionaires supplying it now?

Mr. MONEY: No, so far as I can gather not a single ton of dry lime has been delivered from the works. I was not in the House when the measure was passed but, as one reads it, the lime to be supplied for agriculture is burnt lime.

Mr. Lambert: No, it is not.

Mr. MONEY: I say it means burnt lime.

Mr. Underwood: You are wrong.

Mr. MONEY: Then, according to hon. members, the farmers were to accept lime just as it is taken out of Lake Clifton? If that is so, the price should be, not 10s., but something much nearer to half a crown. I am referring

to this as an illustration of the inevitable delays in the provision of promised facilities.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Is there anywhere else in the State where lime can be purchased at half a crown?

Mr. MONEY: In New Zealand it is supplied at 5s. per ton, and we have to compete with New Zealand.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Then if it costs 7s 6d. per ton to produce, you want it at half a crown?

Mr. MONEY: It has not been delivered even at the price stated in the Act. Even at that price it would be used to a very large extent.

Mr. Lambert: I can take you to a deposit of hundreds of thousands of tons of lime which could be loaded into ships at a shilling per ton.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. MONEY: Another lack from which we are suffering is that of drainage. Promises have been accumulating for years, but very little has been done. We have sustained huge financial losses for want of this and that promised facility. Another direction in which we suffer economic loss is the marketing of our products. Consider the potato crop. At one period of the year we produce potatoes in such abundance that the local market is over-supplied. The individual grower cannot make provision to protect the crop, with the result that the potato moth comes along and 50 per cent of the crop is lost. To lose the results of production is worse than not to produce at all. Not only the grower, but the State also, suffers great loss for want of that facility. If that waste could be saved, it would mean very greatly increased production of potatoes in the following year, because the growers would have more money to put into their enterprise. Not only could the State become self-supporting in the matter of potatoes, but it could grow potatoes for profitable export. We have not sufficiently recognised that our farming methods are not up to date. The productivity of that portion of the South-West already served by railways could be increased 50 fold or even 100 fold by the adoption of improved methods of farming. It is acknowledged that we are deficient in trained farmers; yet we have not an agricultural college. If we want to train our youth, we have to send them to the Eastern States. It is not creditable to past Governments that they should have neglected the provision of an agricultural college. Although I am a firm believer in economy, yet it is sometimes necessary to spend something in order to get back something larger. Even to-day nearly £1,000,000 goes out of the State every year for potatoes, butter, hams and bacon. We have been sitting back all these years and doing very little beyond putting one railway here and another there. We never finish the job we begin. One of our greatest disabilities is the making of a start

and getting no farther. If we had good roads and drains and improved methods of farming, our railway system would be paying well. We must pay more attention to the finishing of the undertakings we begin. I very much doubt whether the success of our promised immigrants will be all that we desire. If we are to achieve success with them, it will only be by placing them on land served by railways.

Mr. Clydesdale: Start an instructional school.

Mr. MONEY: I do not mind what it is, so long as it will give the required results. Our task will never be finished until we endeavour to finish it. Never was there such opportunity in Western Australia for a man to show his statesmanship. It is only when difficulties confront a man and he has to get his back against the wall, that one can determine what he is made of. No man ever achieved anything unless he made up his mind to do it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: A Government without an Attorney General could not be expected to make good.

Mr. MONEY: That is a matter for the Government to settle. I have put forward these several questions because I am convinced we shall have to pay more attention to those parts of the State which enjoy the utilities for which we owe so much in loan money and interest and sinking fund, those utilities, those business undertakings, which are to a large extent responsible for our financial position. We all recognise that we have been suffering from the errors of judgment or want of efficiency in that department which has carried out so many of our big public works. It must be acknowledged.

Mr. Pickering: It is so obvious.

Mr. MONEY: I am not saying anything against the Minister for Works, but it is so very obvious that we have been suffering severely in this direction. Can anyone forget the Perth septie tanks, the Wyndham Meat Works, the Bunbury Harbour Works, the Harvey drainage scheme? In addition to these, many more, no doubt, if investigated by an impartial tribunal would be shown to have been carried out to the disadvantage and the extravagant cost of the people of the State. How do we know that all this is going to be altered? Are steps being taken to prevent a repetition? Have we any table showing the cost of administration in respect of works already accomplished? This matter should have the closest investigation. We cannot recover what we have lost, but it is our duty to see that the loss shall not recur. If we take no steps now, it becomes our own fault. On another point, perhaps hon. members will not be so ready to agree with me: I wonder how much time we have wasted, and what we have cost the State by not adhering strictly to the subjects of debate in this Chamber.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is no restriction in this debate.

Mr. MONEY: I am not referring to the present debate in particular, but to debates of the past, which we cannot alter. Improvement is necessary for the present and for the future. If we could look more into the future, and treat the past simply as an index of warning for the future, I think it would result in a marked improvement. I mention this because there have been introduced into the debate on the Address-in-reply subjects which have no bearing whatever on the deficit. One hon. member spoke for an hour and another for three-quarters of an hour without uttering one word with reference to the Governor's Speech or the deficit. I shall always support any effort to bring about a limitation of speeches.

Mr. Pickering: That is not included in the subjects for discussion.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The member for Sussex does not approve of the limitation of speeches.

Mr. Pickering: No, by Jove, and you will realise it presently.

Mr. MONEY: With the idea of keeping the subject of the deficit well before the House, I would have the amount posted above your Chair, Sir, regularly every month. Money is being sent out of the State to Tasmania and Queensland. If we cannot stop this money going out of the State any other way, why not have a Tattersall's sweep on the amount of the deficit for the ensuing month and thus retain within the State a lot of the money which is now sent away. I think this would be a good idea, and make the people interested in the question. The deficit is undoubtedly the most important question with which we have to deal. When so much money is being sent out of the State for sweep purposes, we ought to make an effort to retain some of it. We try to deal with questions such as the deficit not too seriously, because undue worry might tend to operate in the wrong direction. I was pleased to hear the offers of help from both sides of the House, and if members only act up to their promises to assist to cope with the deficit, that end is possible of attainment even now, bad though the position is. Frequently we hold up America as an example. Although there may be many things in America which we do not admire, we cannot withhold our admiration for American efficiency and despatch. Applying a typical American saying to the problems confronting us and so urgently in need of attention, I would say "Do it now."

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.17]: As a new member I desire to thank the older campaigners who have extended to me, in common with other new members, their congratulations on my presence in this Chamber. I join with other members in congratulating the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) on the unique position she has attained of being the first lady to be returned to a seat in any Parliament of the Commonwealth. I believe we shall reap some advantage from the pre-

sence of ladies in this Chamber. I say for the ladies that they could never make as many mistakes as my own sex has been guilty of in matters of legislation in the past.

Mr. Pickering: That is a rash statement.

Mr. MARSHALL: I regret that I do not agree with the hon member, but probably he is not married.

Mr. Pickering: Oh yes, I am.

Mr. MARSHALL: It has been very interesting to me to note how many members on the Government side have endeavoured to impress on the House that they enjoy freedom of action and opinion irrespective of their political party. I do not think it matters much to anyone whether those members are bound or not, but we shall soon see where they stand when reforms designed for the benefit and progress of the State are brought before the House. It is quite unnecessary for any member to say whether he is tied or free. So much time has been devoted by members to the endeavour to convince us that they are not bound that I have been forced to the conclusion there is some ground for the charge, and I am satisfied that the public will come to the conclusion that there is an ulterior motive behind their efforts to maintain that they enjoy absolute freedom of action.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr Pickering: We did not make the assertion.

Mr. MARSHALL: Of course the hon. member would not do so. Whatever mistakes I may make in my endeavour to place my views before the House and the country, I hope will be overlooked by older members who are accustomed to face attacks which must be embarrassing to a new member. The views of some members on the Government side of the House regarding the deficit are rather discouraging. It has been said that if we all pull with the Government and give the best that is in us to the country at this time, we shall succeed in wiping out the deficit. Similar statements were made in this House three years ago. I read the reports of many speeches delivered in this House during the last Parliament, all in a similar strain. Now I would like to ask members, "Have we accomplished it?" We have not. Our deficit has continued uninterruptedly; it has increased rapidly, and I agree with the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money) that this is one of the most important problems we have to face. Some members here, who hold views different from mine, have come to realise where the trouble originates, but they seem to have some horror of tackling the problem. Reference has been made to the amount of capital eaten up by that particular section of the community who do not apply themselves to one minute's usefulness in the interests of society in the course of 12 months. I refer to the middleman. The producer and the consumer are not getting a fair deal, and therein lies the trouble. If we tackled that problem

and sought a remedy even by nationalising the means of production, distribution and exchange, I believe the economy effected would not only wipe out the deficit, but leave a large margin to credit. This would be a far better policy than the one we have been adopting and as a result of which the State has been falling further and further behind. It is the duty of every member to support the Government in any action which is calculated to be in the best interests of the State. I am desirous of doing this, but difficulty would arise if the policy of the Government did not coincide with my views. In that event I could not promise my support. Two men may hold different opinions; they desire to go in opposite directions and each thinks he is right. It is impossible for two such men to pull together. If the Government bring down proposals which are not acceptable to this side of the House, they cannot expect my support. I doubt whether the Government will bring down any proposal to prevent the exploitation of the community by the middleman who is robbing the consumer and the producer alike. The middleman is of no use to the community. He is an idler and a parasite, and the sooner we legislate against him and compel him to do his day's work, as other people have to do, the sooner we shall get down to the bottom of our trouble. Statements have been circulated throughout the State that the financial troubles of the Government are due to industrial disturbances. I want the Government to explain why it is that, while thousands of bushels of our wheat rot on the Fremantle wharf, bread is being sold at such a price that it is hard for working people to secure bread to-day. Will the Government explain why it is that, while cold storage and freezing works, not only in this State, but throughout the Empire are crammed with meat, a majority of the workers can hardly afford meat on account of the high price? The Government should tell the people why millions of bales of wool are being held up and kept out of use, pending the manufacturing of a value for the wool, while at the same time we cannot buy woollen goods because they are so expensive. I want the Government above all things, to tell us why in this land of full and plenty there should be hunger and destitution. I am an industrialist from an industrial centre, and I wish the Government to understand that these matters are agitating the minds of the workers. Upon the industrialists, the success of the State depends. If there is no inducement for them to work, if the little pinpricks they are suffering are allowed to continue, the men will cease work, and once this occurs, the trade and commerce of the whole State which naturally brings revenue to the Treasury, will be dislocated. The Premier and other members have endeavoured to explain to the House the cause of the deficit. While the Leader of the Opposition was speaking numerous interjections were made by members on the cross benches that the State's deficit was due to industrial disturbances.

The Premier himself interjected that the chief cause of the deficit was traceable to industrial disturbances, and he actually quoted the amount of the loss, which was a big sum. I am satisfied with the Premier's explanation, but what I cannot understand is that, when the Treasury received an unusually large amount of revenue, it was ascribed to prosperity. Does this imply that industrial disturbances were responsible for the creation of a big deficit and were also instrumental in bringing about prosperity? There is an inconsistency somewhere, and this can be put right no doubt by those people who have the necessary facts and figures at their disposal. This is the only conclusion I can arrive at; there is a link missing, and it should be found. I wish to protest against the declaration of the Government that they have done all they could to foster the industries of the State, particularly that appertaining to mining. As an industrialist of 22 years experience I can speak with some degree of authority upon the question, and I trust the Government will take into consideration the suggestions I have to offer. Certain reforms are essential in order to bring about an expansion of the mining industry. If it had not been for the goldfields of Western Australia many people would have held less comfortable positions than they hold to-day. When I see the decline that has taken place in the production of gold, notwithstanding the assertions of the Government I can only conclude that they have killed the goose that laid the golden egg by choking it with hot pollard. As a fact the Government have not done anything in particular to foster the industry, but have done very much in the direction of taxing it out of existence. We know that production from our mines has decreased. There is a section of the Mines Regulation Act which states that the owners of mines shall keep certain medical requisites on hand in case of fatal or minor accidents. I believe the Government are sincere in their desire to preserve the lives of the miners in Western Australia. They have become a valuable asset to the State. Experienced miners and prospectors are becoming so scarce that it may soon be necessary for the Government to get a specimen of them to put in the museum. This shortage of men is due to the fact that the Government have not given them the necessary consideration in the past, and have not seen meted out to them that justice which their arduous occupation warrants. I have been unfortunate enough, as a first aid man, to witness four fatal accidents in Western Australia. The position that arises when a man is seriously injured down one of the mines is really deplorable. If any hon. member were to witness one of these accidents I am sure he would be greatly upset. The Government have not seen to it that proper provision is made for an injured man when he comes to the surface. In all such cases

there should be some small clean chamber, equipped with surgical requisites, kept in proper order and condition, always ready for emergencies. Under present conditions an injured man is brought up from underground. He is rolled up in dirty flannels or a dirty pair of trousers from the orange room, and taken to the hospital for treatment. It is true the regulations provide that certain surgical requisites shall be always on hand, but the nature or the number of these requisites is not clearly laid down. The result is that the most that is kept at the mines to-day for this purpose is a bottle of Three Star brandy and a little waste in the locker. I have seen the comrades of a stricken miner rushing hither and thither in their anxiety to render aid to him, and be able to find only dirty vessels and dirty waste with which to bathe and clean the lacerated wounds on the body or the skull. It is only by good fortune that we have not buried some of these men through septic poisoning. Very little expense would be involved in the erection of a small chamber. The surgical requisites should be kept clean and tidy so that a man who is brought up badly injured may receive prompt and efficient attention. This question is of vital importance to the industry, and I hope the House will give early consideration to it. The system of rising in mines is one of the most dangerous that could be adopted. It is possibly a little cheaper to rise than to sink a winze, but if the system were abolished it would not mean much extra expense to the industry. When it comes to a choice between the Wooroloo Sanatorium or the Karrakatta cemetery and the lives of our citizens, the Government should not hesitate. They are in duty bound to protect those lives. Most hon. members will know that one can put in a winze as conveniently as a rise, but that the latter method is cheaper than the former, and is usually adopted by the companies. During the times when miners were plentiful the mine owners used to say that it was cheaper to get miners than it was to get timber. They placed a smaller value upon the lives of their employees at that time than they do now. Times have changed since then, and companies have become a little more humanitarian in their views. The matter, however, is agitating the minds of the miners to-day. Unless it is attended to the industry will come under the control of unscrupulous men who will foist further burdens upon it. One experienced man is as good as, if not better than, three inexperienced men. There are one or two sections of the Mining Act which have become obsolete, and therefore are out of touch with the industry. One of these sections deals with the power that is vested in the Minister for Mines. I am not making any personal attack upon the Minister, but I say that the system is bad. In Victoria the sole authority is not vested in the Minister. There are mining leases in this State, containing valuable ore channels, which are

being held up under all forms of exemption, some under the concentration of labour provision, and some under other provisions, according to the money which has been expended upon them. There are individuals who seem to be endeavouring to hang up the industry by continual applications for exemption. There is one man in particular who seems to have been very successful in holding up a group of leases for eight years. His manager has admitted that there is valuable ore upon them, but he refuses to work them because it is desired to sell the leases and obtain the lion's share of the capital and shares involved in the sale. After years of idleness in connection with the leases this man on the 20th March last secured a further six months' exemption from the Minister. We should eliminate the possibility of such action being taken in the future by following the example set, I think, under the Victorian Act. Under that Act, if the registrar or warden has not dealt justly with any application for exemption it goes to the Minister, who has the right to refer it back to the registrar or warden pointing out where, in his opinion, proper consideration had not been given to the application. Unfortunately, continual changes are taking place amongst those holding the office of Minister. This makes it possible for a Minister who desires to be agreeable to certain individuals to be the means of leases being held up and of depriving the State of revenue. The man to whom I am alluding in connection with these leases is well known, and is the most fluent impostor I have ever met. No facilities are offered to prospectors to find out the value of shows or mines which have already been worked. Apparently there is a record in the Mines Department showing the value of ore that goes over the plates, but it goes no further. If a prospector wishes to find out anything about a show in Kalgoorlie he has to hunt all round the country to get the information. I admit that it is possible to ascertain the exact value of a mine, and it would be available at the Department if they would add to the value of the ore passed over the plates the value of the sands and slimes. When a company has ceased to work a mine the management should be compelled to leave a record of the amount of work done in the mine so that prospectors may be able to ascertain, without great expense, the information they desire in connection with it.

Mr. Boyland: The Government are issuing a book upon this very matter.

† Mr. MARSHALL: A great deal has been said about the demands of labour driving capital out of the State. I do not think that the demands of labour are doing as much harm as some of those individuals who make a living by boosting up certain ore channels and reporting them to contain values which are not there. We have had examples of that sort of thing in connection with Bullfinch, and more recently at Hampton Plains. At the latter place we were supposed to have 62 miles of ore channel carrying high values,

and the result was that people started rushing hither and thither to get into those speculations, and a good deal of money also came from the other States, when suddenly it was found that there was nothing at Hampton Plains. That kind of thing is not fair to the people of the State, and neither is it fair to the Government, because when a genuine line of reef is discovered, and capital is required to exploit it, it will be quite impossible to get it. The Government should see that flotations of this kind are not carried out, at any rate not until such time as the State Mining Engineer has presented his report on what has been found. On the publication of such a report, if the public are still keen on investing, then it will be their own affair. The Government should not permit particular individuals, who have never done anything else but exploit the public, to appear on the scene on occasions such as these and carry on the flotation of companies with the sole object of gain to themselves. The Government, of course, are not in favour of centralisation, but I wish to show that this is induced by existing legislation and especially taxation. I intend to refer only to that part of the taxation which deals with the rank and file. It is a remarkable thing that no allowance is made for those people who go out for the purpose of developing the industries of the State. If an employee or a worker in the metropolitan centre, in receipt of £300 a year, is compared with the worker on the goldfields at the present time, earning a similar wage, we soon find out which of the two is the more seriously affected. One has all the comforts that civilisation can offer. He enjoys city life and its recreations, such as the ocean beach and the river in the summer, and he has also the best of food—clean, fresh and wholesome. The workers on the goldfields do not enjoy such privileges.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Where?

Mr. MARSHALL: On the Murchison.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is plenty of fresh beef up there and it is cheaper, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is dearer, and we do not get our vegetables on the Murchison until five days after they have left Perth.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why do you not grow them up there?

Mr. MARSHALL: We would readily grow them if the Government would condescend to give us water clean enough to enable us to do so. So far as these people are concerned—I am speaking more particularly of those who go out into the back country—they should have a great deal more consideration than is extended to them. At the present time they receive none at all. The Government declare that they are against centralisation and at the same time if a worker starts to go out into the back blocks to develop the industries of the State, he is persecuted by the Government from the moment he goes through the turnstile at the railway station. I would like the Government to take into consideration the difference in the lives led by the people who work in the far out gold-

fields and those who are more comfortably situated in the metropolis. It is no use my dealing with taxation as it applies to the prospector. Hon. members are aware of the inequity of this tax and while the State tax is not as bad as the Federal tax, it is certainly bad enough. I am glad to see that the Government intend to introduce a Bill for the purpose of treating the prospector fairly in this regard. On the subject of prospecting I heard it said by an hon. member last night that, in his opinion, no more Golden Miles would be found in Western Australia, and that so far as he knew only one had been allotted to each State. The Lord must be a cursed individual if he has done as the hon. member says. We have a vast undeveloped interior, but it is known in many places to be highly auriferous, and I and many others still have great hopes that not one but many golden miles will be discovered in Western Australia. Unfortunately, the system adopted by the Government in regard to the encouragement of prospecting is absolutely useless. What can a man do with £1 a week and equipment, for that is the extent of the help which the Government give. It is impossible to get single men to go out prospecting. Moreover, the single young men know nothing about prospecting. Prospectors are middle-aged men and men of advanced years, who have had vast experience, and these are the men on whom we must depend. They have to go out into the wilderness and if they receive only £1 a week, what are they to do for their wives who are left behind? The Government must act more liberally if it is desired that prospecting shall be carried out in a systematic way. A sum of at least £3 a week should be given to a bona fide prospector. Until that is done we need not expect any result. That brings me back to the assertion I made in regard to the Government and the policy of protecting industries and working for their expansion. I desire to reveal the amount of consideration given by the Government to two of the finest copper belts in the State at Ilgarri and Cammerina. The prospectors developed those leases in the pioneering stages and while the price of copper was high, and in order to get the best value they could for their labour, they took the trouble to classify the ore to send to Fremantle. It was ore which carried a big percentage of metallic copper. This procedure cost a considerable amount and I am sorry to say that when it came to railing the ore from Meekatharra to Fremantle, it was singled out by the Railway Department for preferential treatment, and freight was charged according to the high value. This was backloading so far as the Railway Department were concerned, and the only expense was that connected with the consumption of coal and water. The trucks would have had to be taken back to Fremantle in any case. I would like to know why the department went out of their way to inflict a penalty on these pioneers to the extent of 62s. 7d. when the scale provides that copper

ore of a value of £30 per ton shall be carried at 26s. 6d. This is not the way to foster an industry. It was mentioned by the Premier the other evening that it was his intention to assist the miners who had been unfortunate enough to contract the malady which is peculiar to the industry by providing land for them in the south-western part of the State. I do not know why the Premier has such a love for the South-West. I suppose he could tell us if he would. But I would remind him that the unfortunate men who have contracted miner's complaint are not in a fit condition to do what the Premier suggests they should. There are able-bodied men who should be chosen for this particular work. The Premier could select immigrants to develop the South-West. In my opinion it would be a wiser policy for the Government to resume leases adjacent to some of the goldfields railways, cut them up into fair-sized blocks and put the afflicted men on those. In this way the railway revenue would benefit and the occupant of the lease would, whenever he felt so inclined, go out prospecting. Who knows but that in this way some new and important discoveries might be made? Hon. members have taken some credit for the establishment of the Woorloo Sanatorium. I admit that there is every reason to be proud of the manner in which that institution is conducted, but I hold that very few cases from the goldfields need be sent there. The Government should see that a medical examination is made of those engaged in mining operations every six months, and when the first symptoms of the complaint show themselves, the men should then be removed to a different sphere. In that way the disease would be arrested and there would be no necessity for providing accommodation at Woorloo. I am quite in accord with all that was said by the member for Gaseoyne (Mr. Angelo) regarding the development of the North-West, and also regarding the development of the pastoral industry, which is practically paralysed. It is time the Government took up the question of North-Western development with every degree of seriousness. That procedure would prove cheaper than the system they have adopted. The pastoral leases of the North are held not by individuals or by companies, but by combines and trusts. It is a gross iniquity and a crying shame that any section should be allowed to hold up the natural heritage of the children of Australia. Those pastoral leaseholds are the property of the State, and only need to be resumed. The holders of those areas took them up knowing that the Government could resume and would resume; and I say the Government should resume, and then give preference to Australians, while also preparing lands in the North for immigrants. I am very much in favour of the taxation of unimproved land values. That subject has, I understand, been discussed here previously. Outside it has been discussed by practically every organised body that is interested in the progress of Western

Australia. What I have said about pastoral leaseholds I apply also to other leaseholds. I look upon the whole of the lands of this country as the natural heritage of the children of Australia; and I refuse to be a party to permitting any exploiter to use the land to the detriment of its rightful owners. The land exploiter, the land monopolist, is the greatest criminal at present to be found in this State. I would support any measure designed to force such monopolists to let the land pass to the people, who will apply labour to it, and thus produce wealth for the benefit of the community as a whole. It is not exactly a pleasant ordeal to be making one's first effort in this Chamber. By the time I have been here as long as various other members, I may be as great a nuisance to a new member as those hon. members are to me. Still, they have treated me fairly well. No matter what my views are, or what the views of other members may be, other members have a right to voice their opinions, and I have a right to voice mine. Finally, let me say that as an Australian I want to leave this country a better and a happier one than I found it upon entering it.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [6.4]: During the whole of the period that it has been my privilege to represent the Sussex electorate in this Chamber, I have never heard such a deluge of congratulations as have been uttered this session.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Are you going to perpetuate them?

Mr. PICKERING: I am not. When I look around the Chamber and miss the faces of old companions—leal men and true—I deeply regret their absence. I know very well that the new members will, after the next general election, be very pleased to see themselves back in their places here, just as I feel pleased to-day. But we are too ready to welcome the new and to forget the old. Several of the members whom we have lost from this Assembly are worthy citizens, and have served the State faithfully and well for many years. We hear no expressions of sympathy with them, but only congratulations to the new members. It would be absurd for me to fall on the neck of the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan).

Mrs. Cowan: Hear, hear!

Mr. PICKERING: The member for West Perth knows just as well as I know that to my lot fell the distinction of being the one member of the Western Australian Legislature who had the courage to vote against the admission of women to this Parliament.

Mrs. Cowan: That was because you could not help it.

Mr. PICKERING: It was not a matter of compulsion with me; I exercised my choice when I took my seat on the "No" side of the Chamber on the occasion in question. My vote was cast from choice and from conviction. In the former member for West Perth, the then Attorney General, we lost a very able

representative. In my opinion, the Government, in losing their Attorney General, have suffered considerable and serious damage; and, as a result, this House is going to find itself in a serious dilemma.

Mr. O'Loughlin: The Government do not think so, or they would have appointed a lawyer to follow the late Attorney General. The member for Bunbury could fill the position.

Mr. PICKERING: Various questions arose in this Chamber upon which the Assembly had to rely entirely upon the interpretations of the Attorney General. I regret to say that in more than one instance the former Attorney General's interpretations proved not to be correct. Then, how much more difficult will our position be without the advice and assistance of an Attorney General! However, I hope I am a good sport, and although the attitude I adopted towards the recent change in the Constitution met with defeat, I must stand up to it. Accordingly, I must join other members in welcoming the lady to this House.

Mrs. Cowan: That is very nice of you.

Mr. PICKERING: I say it because of the force of circumstances. Personally, I have a great admiration for the member for West Perth.

Mrs. Cowan: Oh!

Mr. PICKERING: I recognise that the lady has exercised her talents to the advantage of Western Australia in those spheres which peculiarly belong to women. The only difference in the present situation is that I do not consider the sphere in which the lady now finds herself is one that belongs to her sex. I never was a believer in petticoat government. I may perhaps be permitted to reply to the adverse criticism which has fallen from various members on the Opposition side of the Chamber regarding the Country Party. With the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall), I must say that the matter is not one which is vital to the legislation of this Parliament. Still, when certain imputations are cast upon the party with which I am associated, I think it necessary that they should be refuted. I claim to know the Country Party from its initial stage. As a matter of fact, with the late Mr. M. H. Jacoby, I can claim to be a father of the Country Party. I fought for "politics for farmers" from the moment that the Farmers and Settlers' Association started in this State. From the very inception of that body I was interested in its platform and its constitution. Seeing that I have been so intimately associated with the Country Party, it is only natural that I should know the constitution and the platform and the conditions governing our work. The platform was framed in consultation with representatives of the industry for which we particularly stand, and with regard to which we have all along been practically united. Accordingly, there is no reason whatever why any member of the Country Party should entertain any objection to signing the platform and observing its tenets. We of the Country

Party were right in entering the arena of politics. This is demonstrated by the vastly increased representation of the Country Party in this Assembly. Next, I wish to draw the attention of hon. members to the influence which the Country Party have had upon this House.

Mr. Munsie: We know it pretty well.

Mr. PICKERING: From your lips, Mr. Speaker, and from the lips of the various Premiers we have had in this House since I have been a member of it, and also from the lips of the Leader of the Opposition we have had candid admissions that never in the history of this Chamber has the conduct of business here been so satisfactory and so amicable as of late years. I say that that satisfactory position is entirely due to the advent of the Country Party to this Assembly.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It was always so.

Mr. PICKERING: Why, then, should those remarks have been made?

Hon. P. Collier: I have said those things ever since I have been in Parliament.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Those remarks are hardy annuals.

Mr. PICKERING: I shall not at this stage deal further with the imputations which have been cast upon the Country Party by certain hon. members opposite. The most important subject confronting us to-day is the question of the State's finances. All hon. members recognise that. When we realise that the indebtedness of Western Australia amounts to £46,822,000, apart from a deficit of five millions, we feel almost appalled. When we add to that indebtedness the Commonwealth's indebtedness, which is in the neighbourhood of £800,000,000, surely we have some reason to pause and to think. Although we are here as State legislators, we are nevertheless confronted with the financial problems that confront the Commonwealth, because any increased taxation which follows in the train of Commonwealth indebtedness must find its reflex in this State. We are all shareholders in the Commonwealth. Therefore the position confronting us is much more serious than it has been represented by members who have spoken before me in this debate. The position of the State finances has frequently been enunciated by hon. members; but it is only by taking into account the appalling indebtedness of the Commonwealth that one can realise how very serious indeed is our position as a State. The Premier in his communications to this Assembly has held out anything but encouragement to members. I quite anticipate, in view of the Premier's statements, that the deficit which will be reported for the current month will prove to be this State's record deficit for one month. I think we can count upon that.

Mr. Munsie: Surely this month's deficit is not going to be bigger than last month's?

Mr. PICKERING: Yes. I expect the deficit will be greater this month than it was last month.

Hon. T. Walker: Have you any information to justify your making such a statement?

Mr. PICKERING: We have had no solution of the financial problem offered by any member up to the present moment, in my opinion. Now I will give the solution.

Mr. Munsie: We will get it now.

Mr. PICKERING: The solution—which nobody has, so far, been game to come up to—is drastic retrenchment, and increased taxation, both indirect and direct, and reduced public works, further expenditure in this direction being absolutely restricted to undertakings of a remunerative character.

The Minister for Mines: We shall have to close down.

Mr. PICKERING: Absolutely. That is the only solution of our financial difficulty—practically a go-slow policy. So long as we expend money, our indebtedness is going to increase.

Hon. T. Walker: Why, you are an I.W.W.!

Mr. PICKERING: Every suggestion emanating from any member of this Chamber for the construction of a public work in his electorate—the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) with his tramways, for instance; or the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter) with his proposed improvements to the tramway system—

Hon. P. Collier: Or the Margaret River railway.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes; or the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money) with his extensive harbour scheme—

The Minister for Mines: Or the extension of the Busselton jetty for another mile.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, certainly.

Hon. P. Collier: You will have that jetty linked up with the Bunbury wharf before long.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. PICKERING: Regarding the suggestions which I have been making, in respect of the financial position, I am prepared to admit that if the suggestions I have placed before the Chamber were carried out in their entirety, it would mean the closing down of the business of Western Australia. It is not reasonable to suppose that such a thing would happen. It is obvious, however, judging by the views which have been expressed by members on both sides of the House, that the general feeling is in favour of drastic retrenchment in our Civil Service. During the last Parliament, when we were discussing a Bill to provide for a board in connection with the Civil Service, I emphasised the necessity for a reduction in that service, and announced that, in my opinion, the percentage by which the Service should be reduced was in the neighbourhood of 33½. The Premier on that occasion virtually gave an assurance that retrenchment would be effected. In the Governor's Speech I think some reference is made to the retrenchment that has taken place during the past few years, and I think the total number given was 206. If

that number of civil servants have been retrenched, the action taken so far is in no way commensurate with the seriousness of the position. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) gave an instance the other evening as to the way in which civil servants in a certain Minister's department filled in their time. If the statement by that hon. member is true—and I do not see why we should doubt its accuracy—it must be obvious that there is room for considerable retrenchment. I recognise that no proper scheme of retrenchment in the Civil Service can be brought about until we have a readjustment of the public offices. Although the position of the State finances is so parlous to-day, it would be good economy if immediate steps could be taken to secure the proper housing of our public departments. The considerable time that is wasted in travelling between different departments, spread as they are over the whole of Perth, and the cramped and awkward conditions in which officers are working, must be obvious to those who have anything to do with departmental matters. Let anyone go to the Lands Department to secure information, or to pay rents. The experience of such a person is merely the wandering from one rabbit warren to another before he is able to get any attention. This question has been brought under the notice of Parliament so many times that perhaps members of Parliament really believe in the arguments they have brought forward from time to time. Despite that fact, no attempt, or at least no considerable attempt, has been made to improve the position. It is to be hoped that when the new Commonwealth Post Office is completed and the State Government get possession of the present post office buildings, something will be done in the matter. I would suggest that the entire block including the Perth Town Hall buildings, as well as the present Post Office, should be secured and the whole practically re-built on lines of up-to-date public offices. If we centralise our public offices in that position, it will mean a great saving in the cost of administration as well as great convenience for the general public. I have indicated the necessity for drastic retrenchment in our Civil Service and I think the Government should give evidence of their earnestness in that direction, because Ministers know that they have behind them almost every member in this Chamber.

Mr. McCallum: Not if the retrenchment is confined to wages men.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not know if the member for South Fremantle excludes wages men from the term "Civil Service." I was referring to all Government employees.

Hon. P. Collier: Your proposal is to reduce the Civil Service by 33½ per cent.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, and I am prepared to say that the heads of departments should be the first to be dealt with.

Hon. P. Collier: You mean the Ministerial heads.

Mr. PICKERING: Some of these officers who are in charge of departments have been there for years, and have not yet given evidence of their capacity to deal with the matters coming before them for attention. If hon. members require any definite information to prove that point, I would refer them to the correspondence dealing with public departments. Before I became a member of Parliament and when I was deciding to settle on the land, it was a matter of the utmost difficulty to obtain a reply from the Lands Department to communications which I sent them. So much was this so that I was compelled to bring the matter under the notice of the then Premier, Sir Walter James. I have had a good deal to do with the Civil Service since those days, and I have noticed very little improvement.

The Premier: I do not think you should criticise the Civil Service in that way. You were a civil servant yourself once.

Mr. PICKERING: That is so, but the time I spent in the Civil Service was only long enough to enable me to look about for something better to do. I was only in the service for three months on two separate occasions. I confess that the remuneration was too small for my luxurious habits. I do not desire members to think I am advocating low pay for the Civil Service. I do not want to see that by any means, but rather that the Service should be adequately paid. At the same time, I want to see efficient service in return for adequate pay. I am convinced that we are to have increased taxation imposed upon the community; I cannot see how we can escape it.

Mr. Corboy: We shall put it on the producers' super first.

Mr. PICKERING: Let members cast their minds back to the time when I spoke on the question of the tariff. I put forward what I considered were very good arguments against protection.

Hon. P. Collier: We were all impressed.

Mr. PICKERING: My speech was not very long, but it was a very able one. It was so able that no member had the temerity to criticise it.

Hon. P. Collier: You silenced us all.

Mr. PICKERING: They were not equal to diagnosing my arguments.

Hon. P. Collier: You knocked me out.

Mr. Lambert: You are not a bit conceited.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) was not behind the door when conceit was ladled out.

Mr. Lambert: But it is not the only thing I possess.

Mr. PICKERING: Referring to the tariff, however, it must be borne in mind that the increases which have recently been passed by the Federal Parliament, mean a total collection from the Australian community of another 11 million pounds per annum.

Hon. P. Collier: That is why the increases were passed; it was to secure more revenue.

Mr. PICKERING: There was no voice in this Chamber to support me when I protested against the iniquity of the Federal Government's proposals.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Your colleagues in the Federal Parliament have a voice in the matter and they could have rejected them.

Mr. Corboy: Why did not the members of the Country Party in the Federal House, who have the balance of power there, use their influence against these proposals?

Mr. PICKERING: All I can say is that if I had been in the Federal House I would have used my power to the best of my ability.

Mr. Corboy: I do not doubt that.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not lack the courage to voice my own opinions.

Mr. Lambert: Your opinions should never be carried beyond Busselton.

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member is much too narrow in his outlook. Members should have regard to the serious effect the increase in the Federal tariff will have on the State's policy of immigration and land settlement. It must be obvious that the increase will be passed on to the settlers in connection with essentials for their trade. Other sections of the community receive consideration under that head, for tools of trade are admitted free, but the farming community have to pay to the full for everything they use. I do not desire to burden members with a dissertation on the subject of the prohibitive tariff in connection with Australian affairs. The stage is rapidly being approached, however, when it will be impossible for the country to stand up under the load of direct and indirect taxation. The fiscal policy of Australia to-day is not protectionist but prohibitive, and the consequent result is that in a very short time we will reach that stage where importations will cease. This country cannot go ahead without revenue, and if we cannot secure revenue through the Customs, we must find other means to secure that revenue. The only other means available is in the direction of direct taxation. We shall then be in the anomalous position that through a prohibitive tariff we shall be forced to pay direct taxation.

Member: And we will have to pay double freights back again.

Mr. PICKERING: That is so. So far as Western Australia is concerned we will get very few benefits, if any, from the tariff. The industries which have been established in Western Australia are few and small. We are building them up as best we can, but owing to the Commonwealth Constitution, we are not in a position to give that assistance which we would like to afford them. The consequence is that the industries which are well established in the Eastern States will overwhelm those which we are endeavouring to establish in Western Australia. The whole trend of advantage lies against this unfortunate State of Western Australia and in

favour of Victoria and New South Wales. In these circumstances it must be obvious that increased taxation will have to be faced in Western Australia. We already have a Bill indicated in the Governor's Speech which will amend the Taxation Act. I suppose that means an increase in taxation.

Hon. P. Collier: There is a Bill to deal with stamp duties as well.

Mr. PICKERING: Furthermore both the State and the Commonwealth have large loans which will mature between now and 1927. These loans will have to be met by fresh loans.

Mr. Underwood: The sinking fund will help us there.

Hon. P. Collier: We will redeem a four per cent. loan with $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. money.

Mr. Underwood: About 10 million pounds' worth of our loans have been bought back through the sinking fund.

Mr. PICKERING: Members lose sight of the fact that our finances are largely affected by the Federal position, though at the same time the Federal Government have not this wonderful fund which we have to relieve the position. Those loans will have to be met at a greatly increased cost. That is the position we have to face. I said that we should reduce our public works policy to the bare bones of necessity. If we are going on with an extended public works policy at the present cost of borrowed money, it is evident that we shall over-capitalise every work we undertake, just as the farmer who is improving his property at present is over-capitalising by reason of the abnormal cost of the material used. There are certain works to which this Parliament is committed. Are we, as members representing different electorates to which those works are promised, going to press the Government to give immediate effect to those promises? For instance, will the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) press for the immediate construction of the Esperance railway?

Hon. T. Walker: Certainly. It will be a profitable undertaking.

Hon. P. Collier: Like the Margaret River railway and the subsidised woollen mill.

Mr. PICKERING: I suppose the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) will insist upon the immediate carrying out of the Geraldton harbour works. Then we have the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money), who wants to see a little work done at the Bunbury harbour. So modest was he to-night that he refrained from stressing the urgent necessity for giving effect to the broad policy of improving that port. What is the attitude of those several members? Will the member for Bunbury demand, with a pistol at the head of the Minister for Works, the immediate fulfilment of all past promises? I venture to say that hon. member will be the most persistent of all. Yet there is no more earnest advocate than he of a policy of economy. There is, or was, on the Estimates a considerable amount for the improvement of Bussel-

ton. This I consider a most important work, and I can assure hon. members that if they are going to be persistent in their demands for the fulfilment of past promises, I also will do my utmost to see that the allotted money is expended in my electorate.

Mr. Angelo: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. PICKERING: No, and I am not going to pose as an angel. If members are prepared to make sacrifices, I am prepared to do the same. I am here representing my electorate.

Mr. Lambert: I thought they had had enough of you.

Mr. PICKERING: According to the election returns, the hon. member's electors have very nearly had enough of him. Ministers have repeatedly said that they cannot be economical in administration unless they have the assistance of members. What does that mean unless it means that members should relax their demands? There are many public works under consideration.

Hon. P. Collier: There is the metropolitan water supply.

Mr. PICKERING: And the South Perth tramway, quite unwarranted, and the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) wants an extension of the trams to Fremantle. The most modest member of the House in respect of demands is the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert), and his modesty is due to the fact that his town is in such a condition that it needs no improvement. The approximate interest bill on Commonwealth loans amounts to 52 millions per annum. In view of the seriousness of our position, hon. members should give their best assistance to the Government in the endeavour to tide over this period of stress in which we find ourselves. Whilst it may be necessary to construct certain long-promised works, we must hesitate before undertaking any further commitments. The Premier has given the South-West considerable prominence in this debate, and that prominence has been endorsed by members on both sides. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) made an eloquent oration, advocating the interests of the South-West. I am glad to know I have the support of that hon. member. The development of the South-West, as the Premier pointed out, is not going to be a cheap undertaking. I can endorse everything the Minister said, because I have had a good deal to do with its development. Years ago, when first I was developing my own property, the Premier, then Minister for Agriculture in the Moore Administration, came to Busselton and told us how easy it was to clear, that we could clear our land for £4 per acre. In spite of all the advances since made in the system of clearing, I think the Premier would not be prepared to repeat that assertion today. I told him then that he did not know what he was talking about. The Premier has estimated that each settler will require assistance to the extent of about £800, a very modest estimate. If we

are to satisfactorily settle the South-West, it can only be done per medium of partially improved farms. The settlement of the South-West must be done on systematic business lines, and not by bringing out immigrants devoid of knowledge of local conditions. The only satisfactory way of dealing with the problem is to be found in the system of group settlements in small areas. The Premier suggested that drainage and other work could be carried out and made a charge against the settlement. I am with him. But if he wants to render the settlers happy and contented, he will require to give them the facilities necessary to contentment and happiness. Years ago it was the practice of the Public Works Department to afford assistance in the provision of agricultural halls on the pound for pound basis. That has had to be cut out. If we establish these group settlements, we must afford them proper facilities, such as schools, halls, and postal and telephone conveniences. If we plan our settlements on the group system we can more cheaply provide those facilities than would be possible over scattered areas.

Hon. T. Walker: But, of course, you will forego all that on the score of economy.

Mr. PICKERING: Even if we were to settle that portion of the State represented by the hon. member, it would be necessary to provide the same public facilities down there.

Hon. T. Walker: But you want me to forego the railway.

Mr. PICKERING: I am dealing now, not with the Esperance railway, but with the policy of settlement. It cannot be satisfactorily carried out unless—

Hon. T. Walker: You spend money.

Mr. PICKERING: Some money, of course, must be expended.

Mr. Johnston: Some localities, I understand, have secured agricultural halls on exceedingly favourable terms.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not know of any.

Mr. Johnston: What about the Margaret River hall?

Mr. PICKERING: The Margaret River hall was not provided on the basis suggested by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston). However, I think that hon. member for drawing attention to this matter, because I desire to make a brief explanation. The Editor of the "Sunday Times," with his usual generosity, and in a desire to accord an unassailable reputation to members of Parliament, gave publicity in his newspaper to a statement regarding the Margaret River hall. He published a wilfully misleading article by some anonymous correspondent. I wrote to the editor, telling him what I thought of him, and stating that if he or his authorised representative would come to my office, I would place my files at his disposal, and furnish every information in connection with the hall. I concluded by saying that, having regard to his usual want of courtesy, I did not expect to get any reply. Nor did I.

Hon. P. Collier: Take out your "ad."

Mr. PICKERING: The position in regard to the hall was this: I was approached by some of my constituents, who asked me to see if I could obtain from the Minister for Works, free of cost, the old school building and quarters at Karridale. The Minister for Works had already promised to sell the buildings to my constituents for £50 per building. I suggested to the Minister that, in view of the assistance which past Governments had given in the provision of halls, he should forego the £50. He agreed. Those buildings were in danger of fire at Karridale, for there was nobody there to protect them. When I came to measure those buildings, I found they were not large enough for the purpose intended, the timber not being long or strong enough for the building desired, and so I advised my constituents that they would require to expend some money in acquiring additional suitable material. At the same time I pointed out that in my opinion, in view of the settlement taking place, it would be a pity to touch the buildings at all. That was the whole position. In any scheme of immigrant settlement in the South-West it would be almost necessary that some assistance on the lines of the Industries Assistance Board should be provided.

Hon. T. Walker: More economy!

Mr. PICKERING: I am pointing this out to members so that they may know where they are when—

Hon. T. Walker: They have to meet those big loan bills.

Mr. PICKERING: I am pointing out what in my opinion it means. The South-West has had no advantage under the present Industries Assistance Board, and when I have made application to the Minister for assistance in this direction, I have been flatly refused, not because it was not proper to assist the South-West under the Industries Assistance Board, but because it was not the policy of the Government. If the Government intend to undertake a system of settlement such as is suggested, it will very likely be necessary that assistance on the lines of the Industries Assistance Board will have to be extended in this direction.

Mr. Corboy: Send Monger up and the Government will do it.

Mr. PICKERING: We all realise the necessity for increasing our population, and the only way in which this can be done to any considerable extent is by a sound policy of immigration. I am not at all satisfied with the policy that has been carried out by the Agent General. It has come to my knowledge that certain tenant farmers approached the Agent General a little time ago—I think there were about 12 of them, who had a total capital of about £20,000—and sought information as to what country they could purchase in the South-West. Through the dilatoriness of that department, or through lack of knowledge which the department possessed, they had to be turned down, and they went to the Argentine and settled there. If there is any truth in this statement, it is a very serious reflection on the Government.

The sort of people we want in this State is the tenant farmer. If we can get some tenant farmers with capital of £800, £1,600, or £2,000, we shall be taking on a very profitable sort of settler. I have been informed that instead of the staff of the Agent General going to the districts where tenant farmers are engaged in their occupations, they spend their time in such towns as Manchester, there trying to get immigrants for the farming settlements of this State.

Capt. Carter: Do you know how many West Australians are on the Agent General's staff?

Mr. PICKERING: I cannot tell the hon. member. When the Government made the appointment of the officer in charge of immigration, I lodged an emphatic protest. That appointee, members will remember, was Mr. Rushton, secretary of the Railway Department.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He is starved on his salary, too.

Mr. PICKERING: I said at the time, and I still contend, that the appointment of an officer to control immigration should be that of a West Australian with farming experience. Mr. Rushton was the appointee.

Mr. Teesdale: Taylor had had farming experience.

Mr. PICKERING: If it was necessary, after the appointment of Mr. Rushton, to appoint another man, then the Government were duplicating the work. I still maintain that what is necessary in this department is a West Australian—and I would say a West Australian born—a practical farmer, to personally examine and interview every applicant for settlement in this State.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Stick to the gropers!

Mr. PICKERING: By the time I have finished my remarks, I think the hon. member will realise that I am a much truer West Australian than a good many in this State. I hope that the Government will insist upon a proper examination being made of all immigrants to see that they are physically fit for the work they are going to undertake. We do not want brought to this State people in indifferent health. We do not want paupers brought to this State if we can possibly help it. We want people who are likely to make good from the jump as nearly as possible. I do not want to see brought here people who are likely to compete in the town industries. I am strongly opposed to anything of the kind. I wish to see our own people filling town billets if there are any town billets going. I do not believe it is possible to get a better type of settler than the tenant farmers from the British Isles. I hope the utmost attention will be given to this question, instead of wasting time in exploiting the towns and cities of England. Frequently from my place in this House I have voiced my belief in a policy of child immigration, and I am glad to be able to announce, for the information of members who do not know it, that recently there have arrived a number

of child immigrants under the Fairbridge Farm School scheme. I have been informed that they were a splendid class of boys who will make good West Australians. I believe in this class of immigration because the children have an advantage over adults in that they grow up in the environment in which they are expected to live and they imbibe Western Australian ideals and thoughts. I wish to deal with the question of the roads policy of this State. I have given considerable attention to the roads policy, and I am convinced that it is absolutely necessary some improvement should be made on the present system as soon as possible. We have had the ordinary road boards in operation, I suppose, since the time of responsible Government if not before, and we know that the result of their jurisdiction is a very unsatisfactory main road system throughout the State. The State of Victoria passed an Act entitled the Country Roads Act, 1915, and from what I can understand of that Act it is one which, with slight amendments, might well be adopted in this State. It permits of the formation of a board of control and the raising of funds for dealing with the work it has to undertake. It would relieve our present road boards of their main road responsibilities, and place the main roads in the hands of competent engineers, with the consequent result that whatever road was formed would be formed on the most up-to-date lines and with the best material available.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Who pays for it?

Mr. PICKERING: The Act is rather an intricate one.

Mr. J. H. Smith: The ratepayers have to pay for it.

Mr. PICKERING: They pay their proportion.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It is taxation without representation.

Mr. PICKERING: I would commend this Act to members for their perusal. They will realise that it has many good points. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) is a road board member of great experience, and I know that there is an element of distrust existing in the minds of road board members as regards this particular Act. When I tell members that this Act has given so much satisfaction in Victoria that the State of Queensland has chosen to adopt it almost in its entirety, it must commend itself at least to the careful consideration of members. We have to find the money to make the roads, and it is admitted that under the present system we cannot do this. Therefore we have to devise means to bring about that end. I think the Victorian Act does provide better means at any rate than those which exist at the present time in Western Australia.

Mr. Lambert: Would the road in front of Parliament House be made?

Mr. PICKERING: I think that could be done if the Minister in charge of the license fees from the motors deducted sufficient to put that roadway in repair. In connection with the development of the South-West, it

will be necessary for a considerable amount of road work to be done.

Mr. Underwood: That is the chief industry there, making roads.

Mr. PICKERING: It is a very profitable industry to the community.

Mr. J. H. Smith interjected.

Mr. PICKERING: It is done much more economically by the road boards than any work carried on by the Government. The road system in the South-West is not what it should be, and not what it could be made under a measure such as the Victorian Country Roads Act. I wish now to deal briefly with the question of forestry. I realise that I have on the Notice Paper two separate notices of motion dealing with this question but I do not propose to anticipate any arguments that I intend to advance when those motions come before the House for consideration. I would like to draw attention to the fact that the Premier, when replying to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, dealt somewhat extensively with the forestry question, and I regret that he did it in such a way as to still further mislead members of this House. It will be remembered that I asked the Premier whether he would lay the files on the Table of the House. He said he would do so with the exception of the Conservator's personal file. I have yet to learn that the files have been laid on the Table.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss that question as he will be anticipating motion No. 15 on the Notice Paper.

Mr. PICKERING: The Premier has made a certain statement on this subject. If members turn up the Votes and Proceedings, they will see that the Premier, in his reply, said he had no objection to placing on the Table all the files with the exception of the Conservator's personal file. Have those papers been placed on the Table? I have not heard any mention of this having been done. If the Premier has no objection to laying them on the Table, why are they not here? The files would enable members to appreciate the true position as I know it to be. Since I made a few remarks on this subject, I have taken the opportunity to see the Solicitor General. While I was there—the Conservator of Forests was also present—we debated the question as to whether the regulations did or did not apply to the extended concessions and leases.

Mr. Mullany: Did you go there in company?

Mr. PICKERING: No; but if we had done so, I would have been prepared to admit it.

Mr. Mullany: That is quite all right.

Mr. PICKERING: There was nothing underhand about it; the hon. member need make no error on that point.

Mr. Mullany: I was interested to know; that was all.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not want any imputations cast. I rang up the Solicitor General and said I wanted to know the real posi-

tion as regarded the two sub-paragraphs of the Act. He told me that under the section the existing concessions and leases, when they come to be renewed, cannot be brought under the regulations, except only with regard to hewing. The only thing which can be brought under the section is hewing.

Mr. Underwood: Who told you that?

Mr. PICKERING: The Crown Solicitor.

Hon. P. Collier: I do not think there is any doubt about that.

Mr. PICKERING: The Minister, in introducing the Bill, distinctly stated that the concessions and leases would come under the same conditions as the permits.

Hon. P. Collier: With regard to the payment of royalty.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is anticipating a notice of motion which stands in his name. It reads, "That all papers in connection with the extension of Millars' concessions, including the personal file of the Conservator of Forests, be laid upon the Table of the House." The hon. member is dealing with the extension and is anticipating the motion.

Mr. PICKERING: I am referring to what the Premier said in his reply to the Leader of the Opposition, and surely after the Premier has been allowed to deal with this question, I at least have the right to deal with what he said. I cannot see any reason why I should be precluded from dealing with the Premier's remarks, and I do not wish to do anything more than that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not remember the Premier having said anything about an interview at which the Solicitor General and Conservator of Forests were present.

Mr. PICKERING: I shall refrain from referring to anything beyond what was actually stated by the Premier.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine his remarks to that.

Mr. PICKERING: He said that the money clauses were wrong and that the amount which the Conservator was receiving was too great. The question of our forests is not one for merely a year, but it is one for future generations. Are we going to exploit our forests in the interests of a private foreign company or conserve them for future generations of Western Australia? It is difficult to avoid personalities in this controversy. I do not wish to attribute anything mean or paltry to anyone, but merely to be straightforward and say that I intend to fight for the future generations in this State against any foreign company desirous of operating here.

Mr. Lambert: It is not right to say that Millars are a foreign company.

Mr. PICKERING: I say that, meaning foreign in its ordinary sense.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not entirely a foreign company.

Mr. PICKERING: The Premier stated that whilst we must conserve our timber areas for all time, if it came to a question of exporting timber, and we had to wait

for, say, 100 years before the timber could reach an exportable stage, it would be better to export agricultural produce. Fruit trees with crops every year would, he added, be better than a karri tree coming into use in 150 years time or so. Then there was, he said, the question of regulations which were regarded as all important under the Act; that without the regulations the Act would not pay and there would not be any control over the forests. I would point out that if the extensions were made on the lines indicated they would be absolutely invalid. The Premier went on to say—

This is how they are made to-day: the Minister approves of the regulations and they go through Executive Council, after which they are put into operation.

They cannot come into operation owing to the fact that the regulations have no effect upon the concessions or leases.

Mr. Simons: There is no law for a combine.

Mr. PICKERING: No.

Mr. Simons: That is why the Conservator is being sacrificed.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) said we must consider whether Millars would carry on the affairs of this country. He is a little inclined to twist to-night. When I take up an attitude of defence in the interests of the State he seems rather inclined to champion the interests of Millars. The other night in this Chamber he definitely challenged their position.

Mr. Lambert: I did not challenge their position.

Mr. PICKERING: He said we must consider whether Millars would carry on the affairs of this country. They are already carrying on the affairs of this country, to a large extent.

Mr. Simons: They are controlling a big section of the affairs of the country.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes.

Mr. Lambert: I would join issue with you in stopping them if I could.

Mr. Mann: Are they not finding employment for a considerable section of the people?

Mr. PICKERING: The Premier said the Bill was passed by the House, and not by Millars. The member for Coolgardie interjected that they were seeking to run the country before the Bill passed. The Premier went on to say—

I do not know what the hon. member means. I expect a lot of timber men came up here and discussed the Bill with hon. members at the time, but I do not know that they influenced the House very much. I think the amendment that gives Millars the right to a renewal was proposed, not by a private member, but by the Minister.

That is so. The Minister boasted that he had spent a considerable amount of time in perfecting this clause. It is a very diffi-

cult and awkward position for a member to be in when he finds himself obliged to cast an imputation upon anyone. I have heard it rumoured that certain prominent solicitors in this city were also solicitors for this company. If they have in the course of their business subordinated the interests of the State to their own, I am not going to have any sympathy for them. I am making inquiries to find out who were the solicitors for the company. If I ascertain that my suspicions are correct, and how it was that the House was misled, I shall have something very important to say upon the matter.

Hon. P. Collier: There have been firms of solicitors in the past who have done this.

Mr. PICKERING: We have only to throw our minds back to the time when we had the most eminent legal authority of the State as a member of this Chamber, and we had the benefit of his advice, with questionable results. On this particular clause I am satisfied the House was misled.

Hon. P. Collier: Their clients had the benefit of their legal knowledge in this House.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Coolgardie said, to resume my quotation from the debate, that they were pretty successful—referring to private members—in their lobbying. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) interjected that if the Government's interpretation of the clause was right, it meant that the then Attorney General misled the House.

Mr. Simons: His clients came before the interests of the House.

Mr. PICKERING: That is my opinion. The Premier said that Millars had a perfect right to cut the matured timber. They had paid for the right and were paying today. Apparently we have to sit down and see posterity lose that which is absolutely essential to every phase of their livelihood. I cannot understand hon. members not rising up against such an iniquitous proposition. Do they realise the importance of our timbers to the country? This is one of the most vital things that can possibly affect the State. Here we are bartering away our interests to a foreign company for a mess of pottage. I do not understand members' lack of interest. I hope the House will have the matter thoroughly investigated and see where we stand.

Hon. P. Collier: According to the strict interpretation of the Act a company which is other than a Western Australian company is a foreign company.

Mr. PICKERING: That is the legal term, and I am speaking of a foreign company in that way.

Capt. Carter: It must surely be treated as having a different meaning in the House.

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member has made one speech on the Address-in-reply. The Premier went on to say—

It is to be remembered that after the present leases expire Millars will have to

pay such royalty as is prescribed by the Conservator.

And that is all. They will have to change from the lease system to the royalty system. The Premier went on to say—

I wish the House to realise that after the present lease expires, Millars and others who get renewals will pay just as much as any other permit holder would pay.

But the lessee though he may not pay royalty will not be subject to the regulations applying to permit holders. The Premier went on to say—

The State will not lose a penny of revenue. If there be any timber left to cut after their present leases expire, and if they had no rights whatever, would any member say to a company having their mills already erected, "Take your mills away. Someone else will pay just as much royalty as you will pay, and so they can erect their mills and cut out the timber"? Of course, the House would not permit it.

Hon. P. Collier: The Act says that the regulations which apply to permits shall not apply to leases and concessions.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not view the matter in that light.

Hon. P. Collier: The Act says "No disabilities."

Mr. PICKERING: The Act may say that, but when the Minister in charge introduced the Bill he said they would be subject to the regulations. "Hansard" shows that clearly.

Hon. P. Collier: Unfortunately the Act does not say so.

Mr. PICKERING: That may be so. The Minister misled us. If the House has been misled, it has a right to reverse that policy and say that it will preserve the forests for our future generations. The member for Coolgardie interjected that we should not allow their commercial interests to interfere with the policy of the country. The Premier replied—

Millars do not interfere with the policy of the country at all. If Millars or any other people invest money in this State and obey the laws of the State, they ought to be protected so long as they behave themselves and do what is right by the State.

Capt. Carter: Would you say that this is wrong?

Mr. PICKERING: I say the Government would be wrong in extending concessions to Millars along lines which are not in the best interests of the State. I am not worried about the interests of Millars. What worries me is the position of the future generations of this country. The forest area all over Australia does not exceed 25 million acres. The Premier said that we must first think about our own requirements. Our own requirements are a mere flea bite to what we hope will be the requirements of future generations. If we have no timber left here to form into packing cases, containers, etc., and for various other purposes, what is going to be the position of the people of the State?

Hon. P. Collier: We have to consider Australia's requirements also.

Mr. PICKERING: Let me pass on. With regard to buffet cars, I asked some pertinent questions of the Minister for Railways, and the replies he made were somewhat illuminating. He pointed out that of the three cars constructed only two were operating, and that one of these was operating at a considerable loss. The Minister did not say whether the Commissioner had taken into consideration the haulage costs of the cars over the system, or whether the loss or profit made in connection with these cars was simply a matter of a business transaction concerning the edibles that were distributed from them. I shall have to ask the Minister further questions upon the matter. I wish to reply to one or two statements which have been made by members with regard to the Country Party and its policy. The member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) seemed to reflect upon us in the matter of the Gold Buyers' Bill. I wish to make my position clear regarding the mining industry. Whatever my association may do in the matter, I am going to stand for the interests of mining in general, and for the interests of the prospector and any other miner I can possibly help. If I support the Gold Buyers Bill I will do so because I believe that the Bill is in the best interests of the mining industry.

Hon. P. Collier: I do not question the merits of the Bill; only the method by which it has been forced upon the Minister.

Mr. PICKERING: I recognise that every section of the community has a right to representation in the Legislature. If the Chamber of Mines, which represents a large section of the mining industry, cannot get a Bill introduced by any other means than through the primary producers, I must come to the conclusion that we are justified in introducing a measure of that nature.

Mr. Munsie: Do you know what its contents are?

Hon. P. Collier: They had the Bill before them and went through it clause by clause, and sent it to the Minister with instructions that he should introduce it.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think there is any Bill that is drawn up in the interests of those that it will affect that is not first considered by those interested.

Hon. P. Collier: This was drawn up by the Chamber of Mines, sent to your executive, and transmitted to the Minister.

Mr. PICKERING: This Bill is not an original Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, it is.

Mr. PICKERING: It is new to the House, but not to the other States.

Hon. P. Collier: It is an original Bill.

Mr. PICKERING: It is practically identical with the Victorian Act.

Hon. P. Collier: It is original in the files of the Mines Department.

Mr. PICKERING: In this State, but it is not an original Bill. It is practically the same as the law already existing in Victoria.

Mr. Mullaney: Would it not be wise to reserve comments upon the Bill until we get it?

Hon. P. Collier: We will offer those when we do get the Bill.

Mr. PICKERING: The Leader of the Opposition desired to cast contumely upon the party to which I belong.

Hon. P. Collier: The conference is discussing the Grain Elevators Bill to-day, although we have not got it yet here.

Mr. Munsie: By what right do they get it before we do?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. Collier: The conference is discussing the Bill before we have an opportunity of doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. A. Thomson: The statement is incorrect.

Hon. P. Collier: The paper says so.

Mr. A. Thomson: Do you believe what the paper says?

Hon. P. Collier: I would rather believe the paper than you.

Hon. T. Walker: Do you consider it a constitutional act to submit the Grain Elevators Bill to the conference before it is brought down to this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. PICKERING: I am not in a position to state whether the assertion is correct or not. I have not attended the conference, and therefore do not know what the conference is doing.

Hon. P. Collier: You are reported to have been there.

Mr. Munsie: You were there this afternoon.

Mr. PICKERING: I cannot be there, and be in my place here as well. But I want to deal with the Leader of the Opposition, who, unfortunately, is dealing with me. The hon. gentleman seems to think that the position of members on these cross benches is somewhat ignominious. There is no one in this Chamber, or in the Country Party, who has a longer or more intimate acquaintance with the movement than I have. When we formed our constitution, we looked round for a model on which to base it; and we discovered that the best model was that upon which the Labour Party had built their constitution. That is the basis upon which we built ours.

Hon. T. Walker: What a long way you have departed from it!

Hon. P. Collier: Your architecture has not been good.

Mr. PICKERING: At all events, we adopted the same principles. If there is anything wrong with our constitution, then it must also be wrong with the Labour Party's constitution. I admit that we have found it necessary to amend our constitution from time to time. I am quite prepared to admit anything that is well-founded in the allegations of the Leader of the Opposition. But I am not ashamed of my attitude with regard to the party to which I have the honour to

belong, nor am I ashamed of that party's executive.

Hon. P. Collier: That is honest; that is not like your deputy leader, who denies facts.

Mr. PICKERING: If we have the advantage of such an executive as the Country Party possesses, we should be foolish not to accept the benefit of any information that executive can give us. I am not standing here to say that I know everything and can do everything. I am prepared to stand here and receive information and advice.

Mr. Simons: Even when the whip is cracked.

Mr. PICKERING: We do not get much cracking of the whip.

Hon. P. Collier: What does Mr. Glasheen think of your association?

Mr. PICKERING: I believe that that gentleman—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Sussex will address the Chair.

Mr. PICKERING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall be very glad of the opportunity.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PICKERING: Some reflection has been cast by members opposite, more particularly by the Leader of the Opposition, with regard to the repurchase of improved properties for soldier settlement. In my opinion, the policy adopted by the Premier in that regard is very sound. Many members have said that a wiser policy would have been to settle the soldiers on Crown lands. I believe I am safe in saying that the Government, in repurchasing estates, have secured the improvements at a much less cost than they were effected at, and certainly 50 per cent. cheaper than they could have been carried out to-day. If the soldier settlers have this big advantage to start with, surely that is something on which we should congratulate the Government, and not something for which we should blame them. If we had been in earnest as regards settling our soldiers on Crown lands, we would have taken that matter in hand during 1914. The present Premier came into power during 1919, after the war was over; and he could not possibly be expected to adopt then measures which should have been adopted in 1914.

Mr. Underwood: They were adopted before the present Premier came in, adopted by the previous Government.

Mr. PICKERING: At all events, I contend that the policy of repurchasing estates was best in the interests of the returned soldier. I care not who introduced that policy. It has been alleged to the discredit of the present Premier that the policy was introduced by him.

Mr. Underwood: It was not.

Mr. PICKERING: If we can settle our Crown lands between Port Augusta and Karriwale on the lines laid down by the Premier, it will be an excellent method for the settlement of the South-West generally. However, the problem is very difficult, and requires very careful handling. As regards the

returned soldiers, the best that we could give them was, in my estimation, not too good. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) said that the Country Party had done little or nothing for the South-West. I join issue with the hon. member on that point. Since I have been in the Country Party—and that is getting on for four years—the South-West has not, I think, had cause to complain on the score of representation. During the time the predecessor of the present member for Nelson was in this Assembly, that gentleman also did his utmost to advance South-Western interests.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Tell the House something you have done for the South-West.

Mr. PICKERING: All along we have been fighting to help the fruit industry.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Tell the House what you have done for the industry.

Mr. PICKERING: We have endeavoured in every way to improve its position. We have sought to assist the fruitgrower to get cheaper containers for his product. With the assistance of this Assembly as a whole, we did a great deal to get the British embargo on fruit removed.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But the State Sawmills are charging double price for fruit cases. That is the work of the Country Party.

Mr. PICKERING: We have taken a considerable interest in the question of potato-growing, and we have done much to forward the development of the dairying industry. The Country Party have supported every effort made here by me in those directions.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It does not amount to too much.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) drew some comparisons between the Premier and Mr. Monger. I am not here to fight Mr. Monger's battles. In my opinion, any comparison between those two gentlemen is ridiculous. The Premier of this State holds a position in which he represents the people, and for holding which he receives certain remuneration. On the other hand, Mr. Monger is doing all his work entirely gratis, and, indeed, to some considerable extent he is paying for the privilege of doing that work. Mr. Monger does not in any way desire to interfere with the Premier's functions, no more than, I suppose, the Premier desires to interfere with Mr. Monger's functions. If Mr. Monger can, through his influence with the primary producers, in any way assist the Premier, then I am sure Mr. Monger will be only too ready to apply his efforts in that direction. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) alleged that the farmer pays no income tax. I do not know where the hon. member got his information, but if he turns up the Act he will find that the farmer pays whichever of the two taxes, land or income, is the larger. If his income tax is larger than his land tax, he pays the income tax. I view with much interest the advent to this Chamber of the member for South Fremantle. I listened very

carefully to the able speech of that gentleman on the Address-in-reply. I endeavoured to read into that speech an earnestness and a truth as regards the desire expressed by the hon. member to help in the settlement of the difficult industrial problems which confront this State, and will confront it for some time to come. One of the hon. member's interjections during the speech of the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) was that the chief object of his care was the worker. Those were the words of the member for South Fremantle. If we are in earnest about the industrial question, we must also, I think, have some care for the other side that is concerned. I hope that that interjection of the member for South Fremantle does not represent a retraction of the assurance which he gave the House regarding his attitude towards industrial questions. I should be indeed glad to know that an hon. member who has had such an intimate association with the industrial side of this State, is prepared to give the House his best assistance and the best fruits of his experience towards the settlement of the disputes which we are likely to encounter in the immediate future. Let me, however, read an extract from the "Daily News" of yesterday, which may have escaped the notice of the member for South Fremantle—

The secretary of the railway workers, who are very discontented at the retrenchment schemes of the Government, has authorised the publication of resolutions passed at a special meeting of the union last week. The first gives the opinion that the present Labour Party is no longer any use to the working class as a means of gaining emancipation for that class. The others read:—“(2) We believe that as long as capitalism lasts so long will the conditions of men, women, and children of the working class become more intolerable.” “(3) We claim that only a revolutionary party aiming for the complete overthrow of the present system is of any use to the working class.” “(4) That we are not in accord with the action of the Labour Government in paying £1,775,837 interest on the railways while the members of our class are being retrenched and left to exist on semi-starvation rations.” “(5) That we get in touch with all unions in the railway service with the intention of holding a mass stop-work meeting to discuss retrenchment.” “(6) That this meeting expresses its profound disgust at the Government's action in retrenching workers while leaving untouched the reservoirs of wealth which they at the last election promised to tap.” “(7) To call upon the Government to withdraw the notices of dismissal and to so pool the work as to give all a share.”

I do not think that such an attitude as that is likely to lead to peace.

Mr. Munsie: But that did not occur in Western Australia.

Mr. McCallum: That emanated from a man who has been repudiated by the Labour movement.

Mr. PICKERING: The paragraph is headed "Revolutionary Queenslanders, Government condemned, Dissatisfied Railwaymen, Extraordinary Resolutions; Townsville, Tuesday."

Hon. P. Collier: Does not the hon. member know that those headings are merely inserted by the local sub-editor?

Mr. PICKERING: I wish to say that in my opinion there is no form of government more adapted to the British Empire than that which exists in the British Empire to-day. I cannot conceive of any other system by which the Empire can possibly be governed. It is impossible to conceive that a President of the British Empire should be elected out of the multiplicity of countries over which the British flag flies. Therefore, anybody within the British Empire advocating a revolution would be a fit inmate for the lunatic asylum of his particular State. People who talk revolution in Australia—

Hon. P. Collier: What do you mean by revolution?

Mr. PICKERING: The total upsetting of all existing conditions.

Hon. T. Walker: Let us have your definition of the word.

Mr. PICKERING: By "revolution" I mean the upsetting of the conditions under which the British Empire exists.

Hon. P. Collier: The conditions to-day represent a revolution compared with the affairs of 50 years ago. A revolution means "change"—that is all.

Mr. PICKERING: That is so.

Hon. T. Walker: It is merely the turning of a wheel.

Mr. PICKERING: That may be so, but I do not think that is the type of revolution that is referred to in the telegram I have quoted. I want to congratulate the Government upon the adoption of the policy of a wheat pool. The member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson), when dealing with this question, gave members some useful information. He said that he had travelled through Siberia, Russia, and Roumania, and had seen some of the most wonderful wheat country in the world. He forecasted that as soon as normal conditions returned in those countries, Australia would be confronted with serious difficulties in the disposal of her wheat. I think that was the effect of what he said.

The Minister for Mines: He does not remember it so he cannot contradict it.

Mr. PICKERING: I was glad to hear the member for Claremont say that he was in sympathy with the extension of the wheat pool. I believe it is absolutely essential to one of the most important industries of this State that the wheat pool should be continued. I trust it will be continued on such lines as will be equitable to everyone affected.

Capt. Carter: On better terms than in the past.

Mr. PICKERING: I admit they can be improved and if I can do anything along those lines, I will render every assistance possible. With regard to the North-West—

Mr. Teesdale interjected.

Mr. PICKERING: I intend to deal with this subject because I know as much about the North-West as some North-West members know about the South-West.

Mr. J. Thomson: Question?

Mr. PICKERING: Some of those North-West members who have been criticising the South-West of this State should take more care before they enter upon adverse criticism. Most of the members representing the vast territory of the North-West have joined up with the Primary Producers' Association and, in consequence, our knowledge of the requirements of that part of the State has become much more intimate. Whatever the members of that association can do to assist in the advancement of the North-West it is our bounded duty to do. I view with much concern some of the schemes that have been advanced by North-West members. I know the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) is optimistic regarding the cultivation of bananas. I have heard adverse reports bearing upon the banana industry at Carnarvon. If there is any truth in the statements I have heard, I must hesitate to give my endorsement to any scheme for setting aside 20,000 acres for the development of that industry. I want to know from the remaining North-West members who have yet to speak on the Address-in-reply how they propose to attract settlers to their part of the State, and how they propose to hold them there. I have no personal knowledge of the North-West, but those who have lived there for many years, have informed me that it is not advisable for anyone to go to the extreme North after they have reached a certain age.

Member: At 60 years of age?

Mr. PICKERING: No, I believe the age was about 30. It is absolutely necessary that the North-Westerns should be more careful regarding the policy of land settlement in their part of the State than it is necessary for us in the South-West. I am sorry that some members have been advocating little States. I have no time for the "little State" movement. I am willing to admit that there may be industries in the North-West which would possibly receive greater development if there were a State up there, as, for instance, the development of the Yampi Sound iron deposits. I do not know anything about that particular matter, but the member for Claremont made a great point regarding the attitude of the Queensland Labour Government. I would like the North-West members who have yet to speak to give us some concrete scheme furnishing a solution of the problems confronting us with regard to their part of the State. It is of little avail to speak "full and by"; we want to get down to bed-rock so as to determine what can be done.

The Minister for Mines: The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) proposes to establish banana growing and you oppose that.

Mr. PICKERING: I do so because I have heard reports to the detriment of the industry at Carnarvon. I have heard that the water there is brackish, with the result that bananas cannot be grown. Regarding the "little State" movement, I am opposed to too much notice being taken of it. I have taken a keen interest in the Federal Government and the development of that form of Government. After very careful investigation concerning the position of this State, I am at a loss to discover any way in which Western Australia has benefited by entering federation. If it is proposed to subdivide Western Australia still further, what will be the position of this State? If Australia is to be cut into 40 or 49 States, what will be our position?

Mr. Angelo: I do not think anyone advocated that.

Mr. PICKERING: I know that you want all from Carnarvon to Pilbara to be one State.

Mr. Angelo: I never said anything of the sort; that is your imagination.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Bunbury (Mr. Money) is favourable to a subdivision in the South-West, presumably with Bunbury as the capital. I do not know what the member for Albany (Mr. Seaddan) would have to say to that proposal.

The Minister for Mines: What about Busselton?

Mr. PICKERING: Until I am assured that Busselton is to be the capital of a State I will not be a party to any such proposal.

Mr. Simons: With the member for Sussex as Premier?

Hon. T. Walker: Esperance will have to be a capital too.

Mr. PICKERING: I hope that members will take notice of our present position in relation to federation before they proceed with their advocacy of these smaller States. Such a policy has to be viewed with grave suspicion.

Mr. Angelo: Has anyone advocated the North being a separate State?

Mr. PICKERING: That has been the suggestion.

Mr. Angelo: You are totally wrong.

Mr. Latham: He has been reading about New South Wales.

Mr. PICKERING: I am glad to have the assurance from the member for Gascoyne that he does not advocate such a policy, and I will be glad to receive a similar assurance from the member for Bunbury. In conclusion, I want to deal briefly with one of the most important problems confronting us at the present time. I refer to the question of industrial relations between employer and employee. As it was at the commencement of the last Parliament so it was at the commencement of the present Parliament; no mention was made of this most serious subject in the Governor's Speech. It is questionable whether some improvement can be made in the existing Arbitration Act. Now that we have

in this Chamber a gentleman who has been so closely associated with the industrial position in the past, he might assist us in the direction of improving the Arbitration Court, and so help it to become more effective. Everyone is most anxious that the industrial relations should be improved. There is no prospect of any advancement in that direction until this problem is more or less solved. Industrial strife and social hatred do not appeal to me in any way. I shall be pleased if by some change in our policy of settling disputes or by amending the Arbitration Act, more amicable relations between employer and employee can be achieved. This is one of the most important questions to which we can give consideration. I shall be most grateful to assist in arriving at a satisfactory solution of a problem, the solution of which will be in the best interests of this State.

Mr. HERON (Mount Leonora) [9.55]: I hardly know whether I am a new member or an old member. I had a long life in Parliament last session, namely two long nights. I take it, however, that as this is my first attempt to address this Assembly I shall be regarded as a new member. At the outset, in common with the Leader of the Opposition, I would like to congratulate the Premier on again being elected to that position. After facing the electors on the 12th March, the verdict of the ballot box showed that, in the opinion of the electors, the time was not ripe for the Labour Party to assume control of the Treasury benches. The voice of the people also decreed that the Government were to be made up of a conglomeration of parties. In looking over the faces of those who occupy the Treasury benches, I can see no one there I would prefer to Sir James Mitchell as Premier of the State. I, therefore, compliment him on again being elected to that position. Secondly I would like to congratulate the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) on being the first lady to be elected to a Parliament in Australia. I do so for two reasons: in the first place, it was the Labour Party who paved the way for the entry of a lady into this Chamber. At all conferences I have attended for years past our platform has included a plank advocating equal rights and full citizenship for women. I am pleased to be connected with a party who made it possible for a lady to be elected to this Parliament. Secondly, I think that the member for West Perth is a member of this Chamber partly by reason of the vote of the workers in her electorate. Knowing that we had no direct Labour representative standing for West Perth, I know that not many workers were likely to vote for the late Attorney General, and, that being so, they would vote for the present member for West Perth. I think she is on the wrong side of the House. That I judge from her remarks in the House and from conversations with her. The reforms she aims at will not receive much sympathy from members on her side of the House. I am not going to occupy

time in talking of the constitution of the various parties, but I shall briefly refer to matters concerning the party to which I belong. I stand to support our platform. For a number of years it has been my privilege to assist in formulating a policy for the masses. Other members on this side had the same privilege before coming to the House, and since being here they have had the privilege of attending Labour conferences. We have heard something of outside domination. In a closely restricted sense, it is justified; justified to this extent, that if I neglect to do my duty by those who sent me here, I expect to be carpeted for it. So, too, with other members of our party; if they fail to support the party's platform in the House, they will be carpeted by their electors outside. Beyond that there is no outside domination whatever. One or two members on the Government side have endeavoured to belittle the masses. If we on this side did not raise our voices in protest we would not be worthy of our position. The deputy Leader of the Country Party told us what the leaders of our party should do. He challenged them to advise the workers to accept lower wages. I have been connected with the Labour movement for many years, and I know that on nine occasions out of ten the leaders do point out to the rank and file what is best for them to do. They give the unionists the benefit of their opinions. But it is the members of a union, not the leaders, who have the right to say what they will do. They say, "If the employers will not meet us, we will take such and such a stand." When the majority decide to make a stand, it is only the appointed leaders who are permitted to lead them.

Mr. Munsie: And they have to abide by majority rule.

Mr. HERON: That is so. On many occasions strikes have occurred against the advice of the leaders, and thereupon the leaders have bowed to the decision of the majority and led the strike. Would a leader be worthy of his name if he did otherwise? The deputy Leader of the Country Party did not know what he was talking about when he said the leaders should advise the men, for I know that they have been doing that for many years past. That brings me to the difficulties on the goldfields at the present time. For a number of years we worked for less than a fair wage. The men eked out a living as best they could, and when the condition of affairs became intolerable they went to the Chamber of Mines and asked for a conference. After lengthy negotiations the request was granted. At that conference the men asked for a minimum of 15s. per day. But the Employers' Federation and the Chamber of Mines would not grant any relief. They turned us down and told us to go to the Arbitration Court. Being law-abiding citizens, the men went to the Arbitration Court and, after a long fight, secured an increase in wages and a lot of privileges which were not asked for at the conference. No one will say that the miner is not entitled to the best that is

going. There are only two resorts awaiting the miner who stays long enough in a mine—either the sanatorium at Wooroloo or the Old Men's Home at Claremont. The miner is entitled to the best award the Arbitration Court can give him. No one in the community is better entitled to an annual holiday than is the man who has to work below. What was the attitude of those who had to pay the new award? How many men have had the privilege of working under that award? From Kalgoorlie to the back country, everybody who could get out of paying under that award has done so. The Lancefield mine closed down, and those men who were working there were thrown out by a wave of the hand and had to seek employment elsewhere. In my own district we had the unfortunate fire, and so the workers there have never come under that award. By the last papers I had from there I saw that the company does not intend to rebuild. Why? To defeat the award. I do not think the decision rested with those in control in Australia. I am sure the local manager had nothing to do with it, and that even those representing the company in Kalgoorlie had nothing to do with it. Who, then, said that the worker should not have the benefit of that award? None but the Jews in London decided that the mine should not be rebuilt until the return of normal times. I dare say that under the Act they are entitled to certain privileges but, seeing that the insurance company had to bear the brunt of that fire, and remembering that it is a profitable mine, I say that the Jews in control should be forced to rebuild, so that the men might have the benefit of the long-awaited award. That brings me to the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Boyland). I listened attentively to his remarks the other night. I cannot reconcile the position he holds to-day with that which he held two or three years ago. To-day he sits here practically the direct representative of the Chamber of Mines.

Mr. Boyland: That is untrue; quite incorrect. I sit here a free man, freer than are you.

Mr. HERON: The hon. member is a Nationalist. Who voted for him? Not the workers. He may have had a percentage of workers supporting him, but they did not put him into the position he holds. His thanks are due to those representing the employer class. Therefore I say I cannot reconcile his position with that which he held three or four years ago as leader of the workers. The hon. member says he is a free man. In the course of the next month or two he will have an opportunity to show whether he is free and whether he stands for the worker.

Mr. Boyland: I shall show more freedom than you.

Mr. HERON: The hon. member, being a Nationalist, thinks he will be able to get everything he wants.

Mr. Boyland: You were a Nationalist, were you not? Where are you to-day?

Mr. HERON: I can assure the hon. member that his hopes will be shattered in this

House. I repeat that I have had very little experience as a member of Parliament, but what little I had in the closing days of last session convinced me that we cannot expect too much from the members on the Government side of the House. I was here when the Mining Act Amendment Bill dealing with tributing was going through its last stages. The provisions of that Act, I might mention, have never been given effect to. The mine owners simply say, "We have the mines; you have the Bill. We are keeping the mines." When the measure was going through, we were discussing the only clause likely to be of assistance to the tributer. This clause provided that where the tributers had entered into an agreement for a certain period, the agreement should be made retrospective. A vote was taken and the clause was declared carried on the voices. A member of the Country Party, who evidently had had no mining experience, called for a division, and although the benches had been almost empty all night, some members not having been in the Chamber for five minutes, when the bells were rung and the whip was cracked, did members vote for the clause which would have assisted the workers? No, they ranged themselves behind the Government and defeated the clause. Although the present member for Kalgoorlie says that he represents the workers, he will find that his hopes will be shattered. I repeat that the hon. member is a representative of the Chamber of Mines and that I cannot reconcile his present position with that of a few years ago. A few years ago the hon. member was stricken with miner's phthisis, and I am honestly sorry for his bad state of health to-day. When he was stricken with that disease, who assisted him? Was it the men he is supporting to-day?

Mr. Boyland: No, nor the workers either.

Mr. HERON: Was it the workers whom he deserted?

Mr. Boyland: They never assisted me.

Mr. HERON: I do not want to enter into private matters—

Mr. Boyland: You can go into anything you like concerning that.

Mr. HERON: I know who assisted him and who did not. This brings me to another member who was in the Labour Party at one time. Last session he was an Independent; this year he ranks as a National Labourite. I refer to the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). I have not had an opportunity to visit the North-West—

Mr. Latham: He has received his salvation, you see.

Mr. Corboy: His damnation.

Mr. HERON: The member for Pilbara referred to a man who was drunk while at work. We have been reminded during this debate on the Address-in-reply that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones, and I think this applies to the member for Pilbara. He is not in a position to

throw stones. I have not been long in this House, but I have seen sufficient to satisfy me that the hon. member should not throw stones. He should have been the last one to be guilty of this. The hon. member is one to whom the workers gave an opportunity to better himself. He was one whom the workers sent here, and thus was given an easier living than they enjoyed. Yet to-day he takes the opportunity to belittle those workers who in the first place sent him here.

Mr. Boyland: Not a bit of it.

Mr. HERON: The interruptions of the member for Kalgoorlie do not interest me.

Mr. Munsie: Anyhow, the member for Pilbara went a good way in that direction if his speech in "Hansard" is to be believed.

Mr. HERON: Two or three years ago, when the workers required a strong hand to guide them, the member for Pilbara, had he done his duty, would have remained with them and given them the best advice of which he was capable. He would not have left them and taken every opportunity to throw mud at them and kick them. The workers gave him his chance to rise and he should have stuck to them. I suppose we should not expect too much from him. Perhaps we cannot expect anything better from him than the remark he made the other night. The hon. member even went so far as to say that if it came to the worst he would support coloured labour for the North-West. I suppose that is all we can expect from him. One day during the period of the railway strike, I happened to be travelling to Fremantle when the subject of the strike was under discussion. The strike leaders, the disputes committee, and the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) were mentioned, and an ex-member of this House remarked, "They ought to be shot or deported." The name of Mr. Panton was coupled with that of the member for South Fremantle, but I was in a position to know that it was against the wish of both of these men that the strike occurred. I know they did all in their power to avert a strike. I know that they would have done anything in their power to arrive at a settlement. The men, however, had the right to say whether they would strike or not, and by a good majority they decided to strike. The member for South Fremantle was their paid official, and when they decided to fight for better conditions, it was his duty to fight and do his best to obtain the conditions they sought. That was all these leaders were doing. They were doing what they were paid to do; they were doing more than some members of this House do, namely, the work they were paid for.

Member: Speak for yourself.

Mr. HERON: I have known occasions when this Chamber has been almost deserted. This is not a fair thing to the electors. If members of this House did their duty as well as the strike leaders did their duty, the State would be the better for it. The Labour movement

is misunderstood. The member for South Fremantle could not have stopped the strike. Had he failed to carry out orders, he would have been replaced by someone who might have been a bigger menace to the community. I have been returned to this House as a representative of a mining community, a representative of the out-back where I have lived practically half my life, where I have engaged in the occupations of miner and prospector and in business. Therefore, I think I am in a position to speak with a fair knowledge of what my district requires. We have been informed that there is plenty of work and no unemployment. As one who knocks about and meets those who have to seek employment, I know that this statement is incorrect. In every centre of any importance to-day, there are unemployed. Even in the city itself, there are hundreds of men walking about, men who are prepared to work but who cannot get work. A meeting of unemployed was held and a deputation waited on the Premier who told them to go and clear land. A large number of the unemployed cannot clear land. If members of this House through some unforeseen circumstances were thrust on the Labour market, they would not like to be told to go and clear land. I am satisfied that they would not make enough to keep themselves, much less a wife and family.

Mr. Latham: I hope you are not referring to the member for West Perth.

Mr. HERON: I think she would be well able to keep herself. I can speak with some experience of the land, and I say that if I were thrown out of work and the only thing before me was to go out clearing land, I would think twice before accepting the work, not that I would be unprepared to work, though my physical condition might lead members to think differently. I have been accustomed to hard work all my life, but clearing land is a different proposition from what most men have been used to. It is not a fair proposition to ask men with a family and a home in Perth to go to outback centres and clear land. They would have to wait a certain time before they received any payment for their work.

The Premier: They get paid for what they do.

Mr. HERON: I am sure the Premier would not like to start clearing land.

The Premier: I would not mind at all.

Mr. HERON: They have to make enough not only to keep themselves, but to keep up a home in Perth. Although the Premier says there is plenty of work in the country the Government should do all in their power to make available some other class of work in which these men could be employed. There are numbers of tradesmen who have taken many years to reach a certain standard in their occupation, men in the Railway Service and the Civil Service of the State, who are not fit to go upon the land.

The Premier: The civil servants are not only fit, but they have gone on the land.

Hon. T. Walker: Some of them, not all.

Mr. HERON: Some of them.

The Premier: Most of them.

Hon. T. Walker: There have been failures and successes.

Mr. HERON: A strong and able man can generally adapt himself to new surroundings. There are many men who have been in the Service for years and are not physically able even to chop firewood. On the present cost of living they could not make wages either for themselves or their families.

The Premier: They can, and do make good wages.

Mr. HERON: Seventy-five per cent. of them could not do so.

Mr. Munsie: They don't do it; that is the proof of it.

The Premier: I will bet you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier cannot bet here.

Mr. HERON: They cannot be expected to do it. They have never been used to hard work, and it is not fair to ask them to start now. It is the duty of the Government to do what they can to relieve the situation.

Mr. Latham: You do not think our race has deteriorated to that extent?

Hon. T. Walker: It has, and you are trying to import other people to take their places.

Mr. HERON: I recently read an article in the paper showing that practically half the population of the State was living in and around the city.

Mr. Mann: Two-thirds.

Mr. Munsie: In the metropolitan area, not in Perth.

Mr. HERON: The Government do not encourage these people to live outside that area. The man in the country is far more heavily taxed than the man in the metropolitan area. If he goes to the fields he is faced with increased freight and fares, which are even greater than for those who live in the country. Every article he requires has to pass over the railways either through the city or other parts of the metropolitan area. The man who lives in the agricultural districts is not so badly off in this respect as the man who lives on the goldfields, because the former grows his own vegetables keeps his own cows and enjoys other privileges which the goldfields man cannot enjoy. Even on present rates the taxation upon the people of the fields is unjust. When the Government send a civil servant to the goldfields they pay him a special allowance of 1s. 6d. per day in addition to his salary. I would advocate that no one receiving under £300 should be taxed at all. If a man is only receiving £300 on the goldfields he should also get that allowance. That would bring the salary of a goldfields man up to £330 before he was subject to any tax.

The Premier: Let everyone off.

Mr. HERON: It would perhaps be fair to expect people in the metropolitan area to live on £6 a week. The great cry is that wages are too high and are killing our industries.

Some time ago a deputation waited on the Premier with regard to the building of workers' homes. Although we have our own saw-mills, our own brickyards, and manufacture cement at reasonable rates, the Premier told those who waited upon him that he could not build workers' homes at a price that would enable the worker to pay interest on the amount of his purchase. Where does the high rate of wages come in? If a man possesses a horse he is obliged by law to provide housing accommodation for it. If this has to be done in the case of a horse it is surely reasonable that a human being should live in his own house. It was suggested that to remedy the position we should invite the workers to accept lower wages.

The Premier: Who said that?

Mr. Munsie: The deputy Leader of the Country Party, and yet he wants 9s. per bushel for his wheat.

Mr. HERON: The deputy Leader of the Country Party said we should do our best to bring down wages, notwithstanding that the workers cannot even now afford to buy their own homes. Have the workers' wages gone up first and caused this increase in the cost of living, or has the cost of living caused the workers to make an effort to catch up to it? The cost of living went up first and the workers tried to go up too. Members of the Country Party and others now advocate that there should be a reduction in wages. We are told that we should instruct the workers not to fight. We were told that if we gave our wives a vote we should not have so many strikes. Why should we so belittle the wives of the "dinkum" workers?

Hon. P. Collier: They have not any less wisdom than their husbands.

Mr. HERON: It has been said that this vote would save them a great many hardships. Did anyone say that our soldiers should not go to the front and fight? Did not their going cause plenty of hardships and privations to their wives? There is suffering and hardship to-day as a result of their going to fight. We know we have to go short when a strike occurs.

Mr. A. Thomson: Do you think a strike is beneficial?

Mr. HERON: Our object is to ensure that some benefit will accrue to those who come after. I remember when wages were low in the Eastern States and the conditions of life were hard. What kind of a legacy did the parents have to leave their sons and daughters in those days? All they left were debts, and their children had to face those debts when they came to start out in life. I spent 20 years of my life on the fields when conditions were very hard, and I followed many avocations. I was the secretary of a union and of a friendly society and was also in a business where I was instructed by the boss to serve no more goods until people had paid their accounts. Wages were not high enough to live on in those days. The father of a family of six or eight children had nothing to leave when he died. He should have been getting a reas-

enable wage, which would have enabled him to leave enough for his children to make a start on their own account. Later on when the children of such parents began to think of getting married they had nothing to start with, and so the struggle went on. And yet members opposite, who have plenty themselves and do not know what it is to want, say we should advocate a reduction in wages. We would not be worthy of the name of men if we did so. If members opposite did their duty they would advocate a reduction in the cost of living. I heard the member for York interject the other evening that we did not live on bread.

Mr. Latham: I said bread did not cost you a great deal even with the increase.

Mr. HERON: I should be sorry to see the time come when the workers had to live on bread alone. The price of wheat not only affects the price of bread, but it affects the bacon factories, the poultry farmers, the dairymen, and countless other people. I have here a letter from one of my electors, a man over 70 years of age, who while living on a pension is trying to eke out an existence by rearing poultry. He cannot make a success of that because of the high price of wheat for his poultry. Last night, or the night before, the president of the Primary Producers' Association said, "I am going to fight the Trades Hall if I stand alone;" and he received applause from all around the hall for making that statement. I suppose the member for Katanning, the deputy Leader of the Country Party, was one of those who clapped; and still that hon. member tells us that we should recommend the worker to accept a lower rate of wages. As regards taxation, the Minister for Mines and Railways has intimated that the Government intend to bring down a measure which will relieve the mining industry and the prospectors of some portion of their burdens. A prospector may be going out to-day without having had a return for years. Such was my own experience. Now, if I went prospecting again to-morrow and found anything that I could sell, or from which I could obtain a fair return during the 12 months, the Commonwealth and State Governments would step in to grab a large share of my earnings. If a show is sold, the two Governments between them take about 60 per cent. of the proceeds of sale. I am pleased that a Royal Commission was appointed by the Federal Government to go into the question of taxation. I believe that the promised amendment of our State law is one effect of the inquiries of that Federal Royal Commission. The Governor's Speech makes reference to good rains on the goldfields. There have been good rains, and the present time is opportune for the Government to do all they can towards assisting the prospector to go out. There is now plenty of water and also plenty of feed for the horses the prospector must use. The Government should go a little out of their way to assist the prospector at this juncture, considering the low ebb of mining in this State.

True, a few new shows have been opened up; but there has been nothing in the nature of a sensational discovery. Therefore the Government should help the mining industry along. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Mines for the assistance which he has rendered to my electorate since I have been member for Leonora. However, it was explicitly stated that this assistance was being given only in view of special circumstances. My electors are grateful to the Minister. On the first occasion he had to obtain the sanction of his colleagues for what he proposed to do; and I thank the Government as a whole for their generosity in that connection. The concession was a special one, granted in view of a disastrous fire which had occurred in the district. Let me urge the Government to grant the prospector assistance to a greater extent than £1 per week. As the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) said, the prospector is not usually a young single man. Young men cannot, as a rule, be induced to go out prospecting. Generally, the capable prospector is a man of middle age; and in nine cases out of ten he has a family to look after. Therefore an allowance of £1 per week is not reasonable.

The Minister for Mines: Previously he got nothing at all.

Mr. HERON: Quite right; but that is no reason why the allowance should not be raised now. With a view to getting more genuine prospectors out, men who will give of their best, I would advocate an allowance of £2 per week. The Government should also establish local mining boards in centres of any consequence. These boards could advise the department from time to time of suitable men prepared to go out prospecting. Under present conditions much time is, unfortunately, lost in making application and in waiting for the department to reply; the correspondence passes backwards and forwards for some considerable time. Local mining boards, knowing something of prospecting and of mining, would assist to prevent any undue delay. Men thoroughly qualified to sit on such boards can be found at the various mining centres. I am glad if steps are being taken to establish such boards; I had not heard previously that such was the case. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Boyland) spoke of using the rails between Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie to push along the construction of the Esperance line. I also hope that the Government will adopt that expedient.

The Minister for Mines: They are 60-lb. rails.

Hon. T. Walker: They are not too good for the Esperance line.

Mr. HERON: A question was recently asked by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) regarding the rendering of Government assistance to men prepared to go on the land in the Esperance district. A reference was made to the use of traction engines for the benefit of such settlers. The Premier stated that from advices he had received he thought horses would be more suitable.

But are the Government prepared to put teams on for the purpose of assisting the settlers? I have interviewed the Premier repeatedly in regard to this matter. After the first disaster at Gwalia, I was one of those who waited on the Premier. The disastrous fire at Kalsoorlie caused a revival of the Esperance lands project. I know of men in my electorate who are prepared to spend a few pounds in settling on the Esperance lands if the Government will assist them by furnishing plant to roll the land. Of course I do not suggest that a plant should be furnished to each settler. The settlers could be placed close enough together for one plant to serve several of them. While one man was burning off, another man could be rolling his land; or settlers could co-operate in the matter. In my opinion, some arrangement should be made by the Government, so long as there is no railway extending into that district, for settlers' requirements being transported at reasonable rates. Otherwise, settlers without teams will not be able to obtain the goods which they need. The Government, having delayed the construction of the Esperance railway so long, should make it their business to see that men desirous of settling on the Esperance lands get settled there quickly, and have reasonable facilities for obtaining their requirements. As to the Bills forecasted in the Governor's Speech, I shall not go through them, more especially those which do not affect my electorate. I am disappointed to observe an omission from the list—namely, a Bill for national insurance. The time is ripe for the Government to initiate such a system. That brings me back to the remarks of the member for Kalsoorlie (Mr. Boyland) regarding the Mine-workers' Relief Fund. That fund has done a wonderful amount of good. However, I agree with the member for Kalsoorlie that the fund has largely outlived its usefulness. Owing to the decline in mining the subscribers are not there, and therefore the money is not available to meet the liabilities which are being incurred. Some hon. members will advocate the abolition of the fund, but I am not prepared to do so until such time as the Government have something to put in the place of the fund. Possibly a system of national insurance will meet the case: I am not positive on that point. The decline in mining has reached such a pitch that the fund cannot, in any case, continue much longer. I was disappointed to hear the member for Kalsoorlie declare that the secretary to the fund was receiving too large a salary.

Mr. Boyland: I did not say that. What I did say was that the secretary's salary should not be increased while the beneficiaries were being asked to live on 12s. 6d. a week.

Mr. HERON: Even on that statement I am rather disappointed, for I know from experience that the secretary is a very able man. When a good servant gives of his best, he should receive of the best. I am quite prepared to admit that the revenue of the fund has very materially decreased.

It has been found necessary to raise contributions. While the revenue has decreased, the work of the secretary has increased. There were a very few men who had to come upon the fund at the start but the numbers were increased very largely, involving a great deal more work. I would advocate a system of Commonwealth insurance, but seeing that we have so little voice where matters connected with the Commonwealth Parliament are concerned, the next best would be State insurance. I would make it compulsory so that there would be no necessity for collectors to go round collecting the dues; the employers should deduct the money for insurance from the wages of their employees. If that were done, it would relieve the Charities Department of a lot of calls which are at present made upon it. There are many who do not make provision for the bad times ahead. Some do, and they have to pay for those who do not. The Government should bring in a system of State insurance and make it compulsory.

The Minister for Mines: Would it not be preferable to get these men away from the mines before the necessity for advances from the fund arises?

Mr. HERON: I agree with the Minister that it would be a good thing if such a scheme could be brought about. When I was 18 I was only given till 30 to live.

The Minister for Mines: You have spread out a lot since then.

Mr. HERON: That is so. It is my good fortune that I escaped the full effects of miner's complaint. I got out of the mines and worked hard on the surface on the sands and slimes. At any rate, the outside work saved me from going to the Wooroloo Sanatorium. At the same time the suggestion made by the Minister would only affect the miners; it would not affect many others outside mining who become a charge upon the Charities Department. If men are not prepared to make provision for themselves, the Government should be prepared to force them to do so. The Government should take into consideration the question of the cost of living. We know that a Commission was appointed to deal with this problem, but it has not resulted in the cost of living being kept down.

Mr. Angelo: It is falling every day.

Mr. HERON: In some directions, perhaps it is, but I do not think the hon. member who has interjected will say other than that we are paying too much for meat at the present time.

Mr. Angelo: Quite so, but even that will fall.

Mr. HERON: But in the meantime the people are being robbed. The Government should see that the consumers are protected. I was pleased to see that according to the Governor's Speech, the Government intend to introduce a Bill to deal with hospitals. I hope the Bill will make provision for the hospitals throughout the State, for that is a very necessary move.

I know the difficulties we have to face in the country to keep our hospitals going. In my electorate we have a hospital second to none in the State. It has been a matter of great difficulty to keep the hospital open; therefore, I hope this Bill will help to relieve the position. Another Bill mentioned in the Governor's Speech is the Constitution Act Amendment Bill. I hope that Bill will have the effect which I desire. I trust that under that measure the number of members of Parliament will be reduced. The Labour Party have for years advocated that the Upper House should be reduced, or done away with altogether. A considerable amount of time is wasted in this House but there is more wasted in another place.

Mr. Corboy: They do not waste it there; they go away and waste the time.

Mr. HERON: The Minister for Agriculture referred last night to the necessity for putting the land alongside the existing railway lines into full use. I regret that no Bill is being brought forward to deal with this question. We have advocated for years past the imposition of a tax on unimproved land values. I think members generally agree that it is essential that such a measure should be introduced. I am disappointed that no Bill is to be brought forward by the Government. I will not touch upon the other Bills mentioned in the Governor's Speech for we will have an opportunity of discussing them later on. I would like to refer to the Railway Department, however, for we know from the speeches delivered in this Chamber that our railways are not paying, and we also know that a number of trains have been cut out. Some trains have been cut out in my electorate and no one has objected to that. Economy has to be practised and something has to be done to rectify the finances of the State. In bringing about such a reduction in the number of trains, however, consideration should be given to the comfort of those who have to travel over long distances. I refer particularly to the goldfields express which arrives in Perth on Sunday morning. The last time I travelled by that train I found that, during the concluding stages, it had been converted into a suburban train. Leaving my electorate at 7 o'clock one morning we expect to reach Perth at about 9.30 next morning. Many people who travel that long distance cannot afford sleepers, in consequence of which they have a very uncomfortable ride. The discomfort of the ride is accentuated during the last few miles owing to the suburban traffic.

Mr. Mann: It only involves about seven minutes extra.

Mr. HERON: You do not travel second class; you travel first class in comfort.

Mr. Mann: That does not affect the time taken.

Mr. HERON: It takes more than seven minutes and as the hon. member travels first class he does not appreciate what it

means to the poorer people. Just when the long distance passengers are busying themselves straightening up their luggage, preparatory to leaving at Perth, they are interfered with by the passengers from the suburban stations. In addition, this alteration hangs up other trains either in Perth or outside the central railway station. I am living at Cannington at the present time and the alteration has meant that our train is often hung up either at the central station or at East Perth. Some change should be made and the convenience of long distance passengers consulted.

On motion by Hon. T. Walker, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 23rd August, 1921.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £1,640,320.

QUESTION—RETRENCHMENT, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY asked the Minister for Education: 1. Is it the intention of the Government to retrench a number of railway and other Government employees and officers? 2. If so, what is the approximate number of employees and officers to be so retrenched? 3. What is the approximate date of such retrenchment taking effect? 4. Have the Government considered the question of finding productive employment for men so retrenched?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1. So far as departments in the Public Service are concerned, every effort is