

Germany and in other parts of the world, it is quite possible to happen here. There are just as many lamp-posts and just as strong ropes in Australia, and men cannot be perpetually starved or goaded into submission by the cutting off of means of nourishment from them and their families. The Government have to learn their lesson. Not that I think whatever action they take will save their lives, or the life of the system which is practically dead.

Mr. Lambert: You mean their political lives?

Mr. JONES: Yes.

The Minister for Works: Now we breathe again.

Mr. JONES: The present Government have to administer affairs in the interests of the combines, employers' federations, and Chambers of Commerce of this State. That is their function.

Mr. Angelo: And yours for the Trades Hall unions.

Mr. JONES: Yes, I do a little propaganda for them because they represent the brains and bulk of the community. The more the Government allow industrial unrest to grow, the more they permit discontented and dissatisfied men to be toiling in the various corners of the State, the more harm they are doing to the cause in which they are working. I suggest that the gold-fields trouble should be settled right now. I suggest it is the only way in which they can avert temporarily the coming revolution.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Amendment (No-confidence) put and a division taken with the following result:—

| | | | |
|------|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | 11 |
| Noes | .. | .. | 22 |

Majority against .. 11

AYES.

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Mr. Angwin | Mr. Lutey |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Troy |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Walker |
| Mr. Green | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Jones | Mr. Munsie |
| Mr. Lambert | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Mr. Angelo | Mr. Mitchell |
| Mr. Broun | Mr. Money |
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Pickering |
| Mr. Davies | Mr. Pilkington |
| Mr. Draper | Mr. Robinson |
| Mr. Durack | Mr. Scaddan |
| Mr. George | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Harrison | Mr. Willmott |
| Mr. Hickmott | Mr. Hardwick |
| Mr. Hudson | (Teller.) |
| Mr. Johnston | |

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

[4]

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

| | | | |
|------|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | 23 |
| Noes | .. | .. | 12 |

Majority for .. 11

AYES.

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Mr. Angelo | Mr. Mitchell |
| Mr. Broun | Mr. Money |
| Mr. Davies | Mr. Pickering |
| Mr. Draper | Mr. Pilkington |
| Mr. Durack | Mr. Robinson |
| Mr. Foley | Mr. Scaddan |
| Mr. George | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Harrison | Mr. Underwood |
| Mr. Hickmott | Mr. Willmott |
| Mr. Hudson | Mr. Hardwick |
| Mr. Johnston | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Mr. Angwin | Mr. Lutey |
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Troy |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Walker |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Green | Mr. Munsie |
| Mr. Jones | (Teller.) |
| Mr. Lambert | |

Motion thus passed.

House adjourned at 9.23 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLEMENT, PASTORAL LANDS.

Hon. J. MILLS asked the Minister for Education: Will the Government exercise the powers conferred on the Minister for Lands under Section 30, Subsection 2, of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1917, and, for the purposes of soldier settlement, reserve from further leasing to pastoralists all land within 50

miles of a railway or coastline, the extended leases not having yet been issued?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The question is receiving consideration.

QUESTION—LANDS CLASSIFICATION.

Hon. H. CARSON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Have the Lands Department finished the classification of the lands in the Avon Valley? 2, If so, what was the cost of the work? 3, Is it the intention to have similar classification for other parts of the State?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, £6,208 19s. 1d. Area classified 2,563,241 acres. 3, Not at present; every surveyor will be needed for other work.

BILL—SUPPLY, £1,561,500.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable a Supply Bill to be taken into consideration before the Address-in-reply is adopted, and passed through all its stages in one sitting. Question put and passed.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to cover the requirements of the State for the first three months of the current financial year; that is, until the 30th September next. In estimating the amounts required on the various accounts the practice has been to take one-fourth of last year's expenditure; that is to say, Consolidated Revenue, one-fourth of £3,407,000, equalling £850,000; General Loan Fund, one-fourth of £1,395,000, equalling £350,000; one-fourth of the Government Property Sales Account expenditure of £185,000, equalling £47,000, and one-fourth of the Lands Improvement Account expenditure of £58,000, equalling £14,500. Further, there is, to cover temporary advances made on the public account, a sum of £300,000. The Bill is the usual Supply Bill introduced at the beginning of the session, and it is the intention that before this period of three months has expired, the Annual Estimates of revenue and expenditure shall be submitted to Parliament, in the consideration of which Estimates hon. members will have an opportunity of dealing with the finances of the State generally. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban): I am well aware that it would be unusual, and perhaps considered unseemly, to initiate on this Bill a discussion on finance; and I do not propose to do so. But I do propose to ask hon. members whether they wish first of all to understand, and secondly to control, public expenditure. That is the question I ask hon. members to consider. I

say that under the procedure which is proposed by this Bill we shall have no opportunity during this session either of understanding or, much less, controlling public expenditure. I beg to remind hon. members of the words used by the leader of this House when he first took charge of it, three years ago, in 1918. This is what the hon. gentleman said—

The intention of the present Government in regard to finances is to restore full Parliamentary authority. I think I could not express our policy in that respect any better if I spoke for half an hour. We desire in all things to restore the authority of Parliament.

The hon. gentleman said that three times.

In every respect it is the desire of the Government to restore the authority of Parliament in dealing with the finances.

That is pretty clear. Even the man in the street could understand that statement. But what happened? I am going to take last session. I do not wish to initiate a discussion of the finances on this Bill, and I hope no one else is going to do so, but I do say that now is the time for us to take counsel together to see how we are going to get this Parliamentary control over the finances of which the leader spoke three years ago. This is what the hon. gentleman said last session, on the 28th August, when introducing a Supply Bill. Let me say at once that I am not making any charge against the hon. gentleman of deliberately intending to mislead the House. First of all, it would not be in order to make such a charge; and secondly, if it were possible to do so in your presence, Mr. President, I would not do it. But I do contend—and this can hardly be contradicted—that by not looking ahead a little, by not considering the circumstances of the case, the leader of the House is compelled, and compels us, to do things which it would be very much better if we did not do. On the 28th August, I say, he moved a Supply Bill and not in a speech of two or three minutes, as is proper in ordinary circumstances, but in a speech which occupies nearly a couple of pages of "Hansard." In the course of that speech he said—

The debate on the Address-in-reply is the opportunity to deal with finance—

That is perfectly true.

and finance in detail will be placed before Parliament in the form of the Annual Estimates within a very few weeks.

That is on the 28th August, 1918. Now, to go on with the story, we reach the 30th October, 1918, and this is what the hon. gentleman said then—

When I introduced the first Supply Bill earlier in the session, it was anticipated that the consideration of the Estimates would be completed by the end of the present month, and, consequently, the amount of supply asked for was only sufficient to carry on till October. It is now clear that the Estimates will not be completed until some time next month.

That would be November.

Consequently, a Bill is necessary to provide for one month's supply.

Up to that point everything was in some kind of order. But what came next? This is the point I wish to emphasise, both here and outside, that the Appropriation Bill came down on the 20th December at 20 minutes past 12 at night and was finished at 3.14 a.m. The Loan Bill, for three-quarters of a million, came down at 3.14 a.m. That is practically all the control we had over the finances of the country.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: But you ran away and deserted me that night.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I did so deliberately. I said I was not going to do business under those conditions, and I went home to bed—a very proper thing to do. In the same circumstances I shall do exactly the same thing again. I feel convinced that hon. members wish, and I hope they are determined, to stop this kind of thing. One of the reasons for our financial position is that we do not understand it and have not time to understand it. One cannot get a grip of it between 12 o'clock midnight and 4 o'clock in the morning. Unless a protest is made in clear terms to the Government, we shall have very much the same experience again. It is necessary that we should take control of the finances of the State, as the Government have signally failed to control the position. This is neither the time nor the place to outline the suggested plan of campaign which I hope to put before members later. On this question of finance, here is an opportunity, not to discuss the policy or the administration of the Government—because, as the leader of the House has said, the Government must have the money, and this is not the time for a financial discussion—but it is the time to tell the Government that this Chamber is determined this session to see that members and the outside public have the fullest opportunity of discussing and fully understanding the financial position. When we have done that, I feel it is highly probable that we shall be able to take control of the affairs of the State.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply): I entirely agree with almost everything Mr. Sanderson has said. I can only assure him that the Colonial Treasurer is doing everything that is possible to have the Estimates ready at the earliest moment.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES, ELECTION.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): I move—

That you do now leave the Chair for the purpose of considering the Bill in Committee; and that the Hon. J. F. Allen do take the Chair as Chairman of Committees.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East): I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West): I desire through you, Sir, to thank hon. members for the honour conferred upon me in appointing me Chairman of Committees.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from 7th August.

Hon. J. MILLS (Central): In the Governor's Speech reference is made to repatriation. I think it has been generally understood that, as far as possible, men would be repatriated in the districts from which they enlisted. That course has not been followed. In the province I represent are hundreds of men who wish to settle on the land in their own districts, but nothing has been provided for them, the whole of the repatriation activities having been centred in the South-West. The repurchasing of land for repatriation while we have so much Crown land is, in my view, bad business. If we were to ask an astute business man outside the State what he thought of a State that, with 624 million acres, of which only 22 million acres were alienated, repurchased alienated land in order to repatriate 20,000 men, he would say that either the country or the administration was rotten. And he would be right. The South-West has been painted in rainbow colours by the Premier and by the Press. Why did not the present Premier, with his colleague of 10 years ago, Sir Newton Moore, discover that district instead of discovering the wheat belt? Had they done so we should have had ample butter supplies to-day. Is it not passing strange that men like the Forrest's, the Bunbury's, the Rose's, the Hester's, the Carey's, and the Mitchell's, who are all natives of the South-West, left it to go elsewhere to make good?

Hon. E. Rose: They all went back there again.

Hon. J. MILLS: Yes, after they had made their money elsewhere. The South-West has been held for 80 or 90 years, yet notwithstanding the latent wealth of this land of Goschen, there has not been anyone down there with sufficient enterprise to develop it. I am prepared to admit there are good patches in the South-West, but the proportion of bad land is very much greater than that of the good. I have heard it said by one born in the district and who lived there for 30 years, that the good land down there was like the eyes of a potato, the balance being bad land. To pack

men-like sardines on estates repurchased at a price of £3 per acre means that, over 20 or 30 years, the cost of the land will really amount to £7 or £8 per acre. Except for the homesteads, in most cases the men will have no earning power whatever. They are dumped down with a first cost of about £1,000. Then in addition they have to pay interest on money borrowed for developmental work, for their plant and for their homes. They have to provide the whole of this. Until they have an earning power, how are they going to live? For six months they are to have sustenance at the rate of £2 2s. per week. Is it possible in a country like the South-West for a man within six months to create an earning power sufficient to pay interest,—the interest is capitalised for the first year—bear the cost of maintaining a family and meet innumerable other incidental charges? To-day there are some 2,000 men on the Industries Assistance Board, and if the Premier persists in his policy of sending men to the South-West in unlimited numbers, we can look forward to having the number of men on the Industries Assistance Board increased four-fold within the next two years. For the man thus placed in the South-West will have to find interest on capital aggregating perhaps £2,000, and to provide against what Mr. Lynn calls "hardy annuals," in the shape of dog tax, wheel tax, roads board rates, vermin tax, land tax, and income tax, State and Federal. Last session I advocated the throwing open for soldier settlement of pastoral leases along the railways and near ports. I still think I was right. If we put a man on 20,000 acres of Murchison country, he will carry 1,000 or 1,200 ewes and, with freezers at the nearest port, he should send in from 600 to 800 lambs, except during infrequent drought seasons. His lambs, at the minimum of 10s., would bring him from £300 to £400, and he would in addition have the wool from his ewes, representing at least another 6s. per head. This estimate is essentially a conservative one. Probably his return would be a couple of hundred pounds greater than I have shown. He would get that return within one year of embarking upon the holding. Compare that with the South-West. What will be the earning power there? It will take from five to seven years before he can produce a case of fruit worth 5s. at the siding. On the pastoral land, however, in one year his income will be between £600 and £800, and all the work necessary can be done by himself. This certainly appeals to me as one of the best means for repatriating our men. It is all very well for the pastoralists, holding this land for such a long period as they have done, to decry it and say that men will starve if they go there. That game has long been played out and the people are alive to the real position. If people are asked who the wealthy men of the State are the reply will always be that they are the pastoralists. That is strong evidence that this particular calling is a lucrative one. I asked a ques-

tion as to whether the Government would withhold from re-leasing these lands near the railways and the coast line, and the leader of the House, in reply to my question, says that the matter is under consideration. I contend that these lands should be reserved for soldier settlement. There is nothing very definite in the answer except that the matter is receiving consideration. In 1917 it was made possible for all pastoralists, notwithstanding that they had many years still to run, to surrender their leases, and re-apply for them. That was a cruel injustice to the men who were away fighting for the country. These men should have been consulted when they returned as to the advisability of re-leasing their country, but they were not so consulted. We have only to turn to the feverish haste with which this Bill was passed through. The land regulations I have here say—

If the application is approved the rent shall be payable by the lessee at the rate reserved by the original lease. That reserves to the Minister the right to approve of the lease or otherwise. The regulations go on—

If the lessee declares his acceptance a new lease shall be issued to him accordingly, and the original lease shall by force of this Act be surrendered.

It is impossible to issue new leases, although this Act was passed in 1917, until the value of the lease is known. To-day they are being appraised, but the work has only been in hand for a few months. I doubt if any result of this work has yet reached the head office. In the circumstances it is open to the Government, if they choose, to withhold all lands within 50 miles of a railway or the coast line. Unless they do this they must take the consequences. Soldiers who are returning are alive to the value of these lands, and they want them. They have fought for them, and they deserve them, and the very best that we can give to them. If the present Government will not agree to withhold from further leasing these lands, we will compel them to do so. This will be done, I feel sure, and I shall have much pleasure in assisting in the matter. Less than 100 miles from Geraldton there are two squatting properties divided by a railway. I refer to the line that goes to Cue. On one side of the line are 450,000 acres and on the other side 550,000 acres. These properties are held by two men, and are within the coastal rains. What justification is there for allowing those two men to hold between them one million acres for 30 years, adjoining a railway, and running parallel to that railway for some 25 miles? There are also 21 million acres in the Central Division of the State within 50 miles of the Cue railway. These could be cut up into 21,000-acre blocks. At pre-war prices the fencing would cost £500, that is for 2,000 chains. Only half of this would be charged to one man, because the properties would be connected. Allowing for there being three

wells and windmills on the properties the sum of £200 may be set down to cover this. A thousand ewes, at a cost of 12s. each, would come to £600, and rams would cost about £50. For a house or a home the sum of £50 should be allowed, and for horses and plant £100. This gives a total of £1,250.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is for re-settlement?

Hon. J. MILLS: Yes. The whole of the country from one end to the other is fenced and watered by means of windmills. The Government would, of course, pay for these improvements. I do not suggest putting soldiers on the land in a way that would deprive the pastoralists of what belongs to them, but I suggest that they should be paid in full. They are all secondhand fences and wells and windmills. That price will, doubtless, be reduced considerably, probably to £1,000, which is not excessive for one man to carry. In Bunbury, a first class farm costs £1,000. In cases of this kind the money advanced would be repaid in seven years, and I am of the opinion that in some cases the money would be repaid in less time than that. What chance have men in the Bunbury district, where the cow farms are, of returning the money in seven years? In all probability it could not be done in 70 years.

Hon. E. Rose: Do you speak from experience?

Hon. J. MILLS: Yes. Along the Wongan Hills line there are two or three stations, and through one of these the line passes. I notice on the working plan that these leases are marked "withdrawn from sale." These lands are within the South-West Division, and according to the Act the Government can resume them at any time. They can give notice to the occupier and hand them over to anyone they choose. The Government, however, are doing nothing in the matter. It so happens that the land belonged to Mr. Burt, of St. George's-terrace, who, apparently, is of more importance than the soldiers who have fought for the country. I wish to impress on the Government the necessity for opening up some of the lands in the north. The men who lived there before the war, and for most, if not, all their lives, are not going to be dragged down to the South-West amongst the forest areas to work under conditions they do not understand. It is the duty of the Government to see that they are afforded facilities for settling where they have lived their lives already. With regard to conditional purchase land, for years before the war, the farming community was very dissatisfied at the prices charged by the Government. After pressure had been brought to bear by the different bodies the price of first class land was fixed at a maximum of 15s. an acre. Before that the minimum price was 10s., and the maximum anything the inspector might choose to fix. The price of 15s. for first class land is satisfactory. I would point out that two acres of first class land should keep one sheep for twelve months. It is not first class land if

it will not do so. The minimum price fixed for third class land was 3s. 9d., with a range up to 6s. 3d. It takes six acres of fair average quality third class land to keep one sheep for six months, and it does that, generally speaking, very badly. The price of third class land is usually about 4s. 9d. or 5s. an acre, as it may be fixed by the valuer. It will, therefore, take about 30s. worth of third class land to keep one sheep for six months, against, say, 25s. or 30s. of first class land to keep one sheep for twelve months, and keep it well. I am at present viewing the matter from the grazing aspect. From the agricultural point of view there is no comparison. I hope the Government will consider this and see the advisability of reducing the price. At present anyone can apply for land and the rent is deferred for five years. A lot of water will run under the bridge in the course of five years. The regulations will be amended before that time, and the land reduced to its proper value. There should be no minimum for third class land. If it is worth one penny an acre it should be sold for that amount, and if it is not worth anything it should be given away. The maximum price would be quite sufficient if it were fixed at 2s. 6d. I hope the Government will bring down to Parliament the land regulations in order that members may deal with them. Some amendments are necessary, not only in the interests of the men already on the land, but in the interests of the soldiers. A promise was made, I believe, last year that measures dealing with this question should be consolidated. At present they are unintelligible to most of us, because they have been amended so often.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North): I should like to express my regret at the loss sustained by the House through the death of our late President. I had the pleasure of knowing him for at least 35 years, and would say of him that he was one of those old English gentlemen we sometimes find in these outposts of the Empire. One had only to know him to appreciate him. We are indeed fortunate in having in you, Sir, such an able successor to fill the important post of President of the Legislative Council. We know your capabilities for discharging the functions of office. We know your ability and your honesty of purpose. We know all this from past experience of you. Looking into the future we also know that if we attempt to go outside the four corners of our Standing Orders we shall receive a rebuff that will be justly deserved. I am also glad to see amongst us again Dr. Saw. It is men like Dr. Saw, who sacrificed their personal interests in the cause of the Empire and for the good of humanity, who have tended to make the Empire one worth belonging to. I am especially glad to be able to welcome back Dr. Saw because he is one of us—he is one of the proper of this country of whom we might well be proud. The loss of the President has brought among us a representative of labour. I am sure, however, that he will not be here long before he realises that this

Chamber represents all sections of the community, and that he will fall into line and will find that he is in the right place. Sir Edward Wittenoom said that the hon. member perhaps came here to curse, but would remain to pray. The correct quotation, however, would be that he came here to curse and he remained to pray. I should be sorry to welcome the hon. member as a representative of one section of the community; I hope we will never reach the stage where any one section has control of this democratic House. I am satisfied that he will not be here long before he realises that he is a representative of all sections. During the recess there have been many changes in the Government of this country, so many changes in fact that it is impossible to fix responsibility on any one person. We shall have to forget the mismanagement of the past because of the fact that we are not able to place responsibility on the shoulders of any particular person. It is idle to attack any one Treasurer because we do not know which Treasurer is responsible for the drift. We cannot tackle even any one member of the Ministry because there have been so many changes that we are not aware who is responsible, but I am bound to say that I predicted what has happened, namely, that we should have a deficit approximating £2,000 a day during the last financial year. I was then charged by the leader of the House with being practically a traitor of the country of my birth for making such an assertion. I can only refer hon. members now to last year's deficit which divided by 365 will give us something like £2,000—the amount of our daily deficit during the last financial year. It should also be remembered that the revenue for last year was £322,314 more than that of the previous year. That additional revenue has been spent and still we had a deficit of £2,000 a day. The total revenue last year was approximately 5 millions sterling, yet we are told that the salvation of the country lies in increased taxation. Do hon. members expect 300,000 people to provide a revenue of some five millions a year and then expect the country to prosper? Personally I am satisfied that we cannot save this country by taxation. What will save us is work which very few people appear to be inclined to do—work and increased production. Probably the newly elected member for West Province will say that we can save the country by an amendment of the Constitution, by which amendment the Upper House will be abolished, or if we cannot abolish it, to make it more democratic.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Oh, abolish it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I will abolish it if anyone will show me that the necessity has arisen for it. Why should this House be abolished? Is it because we have done anything that is not to the country's interest? Is it because we have singled out one section of the community for any special injustice? Is it because this House has treated returned soldiers improperly? What did we do last year? We fought the democratic Chamber,

—so called because it is elected on an adult franchise—because in connection with the Forest Bill we insisted that the hewers, who had left their work in the forest and had gone to the front to save the Empire and to save those forests as well, should be allowed to go back to the forests and take up the work where they left it.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: We had to fight the other House over that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes. Irrespective of whether the forests were destroyed or not, we claim that if it had not been for those men the forests might not have been ours. We told those men when they were going away, that when they came back they could take up their work again, and this House insisted upon that pledge being honoured. Take the amendment of the Land Act last session, and we find that the same thing happened. This House fought the other Chamber on the question of allowing soldiers to go on to pastoral leases. Yet we are told that the soldiers now insist upon an amendment of the Constitution so that they may be given votes for this House. All I can say is that any soldier who returns and who avails himself of the opportunities given to him by the Federal and State Governments, can soon qualify to be an elector for the Legislative Council. If he does not qualify and is not prepared to become a bona-fide resident of the State why should he have preference in the final destinies of the country? If we are going to have equity and justice we must get back to the old saying that the man who pays the piper shall call the tune. The returned soldiers deserve well at our hands. They will get fair and equitable treatment at my hands under all circumstances, but I think when they ask for work, and when they ask to be put back into employment and so given another start in life and we offer them an amendment of the Constitution instead, all I can say is that we are offering them something that they do not want. To go back a couple of thousand years and quote scripture, we can compare the position to what the Nazarene said when he complained of the way in which some of the Christians had been treated. He said he asked for bread and they gave him a stone. The returned soldiers are asking for another start in life and some sections of the community are offering them an amendment of the Constitution.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Dr. Aberdeen was asking for this.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: And they ought to get it, too.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Is that all we are going to do for the returned soldiers? The Mitchell Government are doing now what should have been done three years ago. The Lefroy Government should have prepared the way for them to take up land. That, however, was not done. I admit a start has been made now and that it is never too late to mend. I am pleased to know that the Premier has begun in the right direction.

In referring to the new Premier I would like to say that in my opinion the Premier and his team, as at present constituted, form the best Government we have had, at any rate during the past three changes, and that it is the best that can be selected from the Legislative Assembly as that Chamber is at present constituted. It is through no fault of his own that the Premier is starting three years late. He is beginning where the Lefroy Government should have commenced when they assumed office. Still he has to be careful about starting in the right direction. I have told him—and I am entitled to express an opinion,—that so far as the South-West of the State is concerned there is plenty of good land, but I will not be a party to allowing returned soldiers to go there to get lost in the South-West swamps. That land should have been surveyed and classified three years ago. The contour of the country should have been taken, while drainage should also have been carried out and everything got ready for the returned soldiers. So far as returned soldiers are concerned, hon. members will agree that it is everyone's desire that they should be treated in the best and most equitable manner. Another proposal has been made to send soldiers away out on that stretch of unoccupied pastoral country between the Murchison and Gascoyne. It is only a few weeks since the surveyors were sent to report upon the country. They are classifying it and also looking for water. That work is being carried out by the Mitchell Government, but it should have been done three years ago, and the country if it is any good at all—

Hon. J. Mills: It is not.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know whether it is or not. I have told returned soldiers that, in my opinion if it had been any good it would have been taken up years ago, but instead of the Lefroy Government making investigations three years ago nothing was done until the Mitchell Government came into office. My advice to returned soldiers has been that, if they have any idea of taking up that country they should put in their applications and then go somewhere else and work for 18 months. I do not blame the present Premier for the delays. He is starting out in the right direction, although he is starting three years late, and that coupled with the fact that the men who have returned have given up four of the best years of their lives to their country, I am not going to be a party to putting them on any area unless they have a reasonable prospect of success. Mr. Mills has dealt with the Land Act. I am bound to say that I am not at all satisfied with certain matters which have come under my attention in connection with the administration of the Land Act. I am told that there is an attempt to get behind the provisions of that Act—those provisions which deal with the maximum of a million acres. I can only tell the House what I have told pastoralists, that if they attempt to

evade that proposal regarding the million acres, I shall not advocate their cause in Parliament. An honourable understanding was agreed to by both Houses with the pastoralists, and the maximum in each division was fixed at a million acres, and the surplus land was to be made available for others in the community or for returned soldiers. In the following session of Parliament an amending Bill was submitted extending the period in which the pastoralists were to sell the surplus land. In other words they were able to hold the excess area until 12 months after the expiration of the war. So far as I am concerned, I am not prepared to go so far as Mr. Mills and if there is any attempt on the part of the pastoralists to get behind the intention of Parliament they cannot expect me to advocate their cause. This is undoubtedly a wonderful country. I have travelled through it from one end to the other and know it as well as any member of this House. If people would work and produce, this is the finest country on God's earth. Turn where we will, to the Kimberleys in the Far North, which in the last 35 years have never known a drought, we have some of the finest cattle-producing country in the world. Take the country from Murchison to Broome, where sheep can be bred as well and as economically as in any part of the world. It is subject to droughts, unfortunately, and is suffering from one at the present time, but we possess that great sheep country second to none in Australia. From Geraldton south, we have our mixed farming and agricultural areas all awaiting development and waiting for people to work them. Take the great goldfields, the timber, coal and pearling industries—the last named worth £300,000 a year to the country. All these are waiting for men to work them. But a very small percentage of the community seems inclined to work and, until they do work, we shall not get the country developed, or enjoy the cheap living which we should. Why is it that a very small percentage of the community appears to want to work? Why is there an element of defiance to law and order amongst the community? Simply because those charged with the affairs of the country have not dealt with them in a statesmanlike manner. Things have been allowed to drift and drift until the people have practically got out of hand. There is not only the financial drift but the defiance of law and order, which has to be stopped. Who is going to stop the drift? It will not be stopped until there are a few more ink bottles thrown at a few more Premiers, until some statesman is prepared to go over the top, as our men did on the Western Front, and then, when that leader is found, the right-thinking people of Australia will be prepared to follow him.

Hon. J. Cornell: The men coming back will go over the top.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Australia is looking for someone to lead it and to say "That is right" and "That is wrong." When someone comes forward to lead them, he will get a following, and he will have as his fol-

lowing the right-thinking men of the community. We have in Australia a Commonwealth Arbitration Court and a State Arbitration Court, maintained at huge expense, and I understand it is illegal to strike. But everyone is striking. No one is working, and when they won't work a beneficent Government comes along and feeds them.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Speak for yourself.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No one in the community works harder than I do, not because it is necessary for me to work, but I consider it is part of my duty to help towards production and the payment of taxes. I could not go to the war for several reasons but I could stay at home and pay unreasonable taxes, and I do so year in and year out and never murmur. Our Federal and State Arbitration Courts are maintained at huge expense, but no one will go to the court. It is illegal to strike, but still men strike and the whole business of the country is held up. Take the tramway strike. Was not it the duty of the Government to say to those men—"You are holding up one of the business concerns of the State; there is the Arbitration Court go and get your award and get it made retrospective"? Why do not they insist upon the law being carried out, or repeal the Arbitration Act? But no, the whole tramway business is held up for weeks and every thing is brought to a standstill and then the Government give the employees what they want.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: They could have got a better deal from the court.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The more reason why they should go to the court. But they will not go to the court. This defiance of law and order is due to the fact that not only the Government here but Governments in the Eastern States will not enforce the law, and we have reached a stage when the Arbitration Act must be enforced or repealed.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Nero said that.

Hon. J. Cornell: And did it, too.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Our State steamships have been tied up in Fremantle harbour for weeks past. The seamen are out on strike. Yet no one has attempted a prosecution.

Hon. J. W. Hickey interjected.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the hon. member had to buy meat in Perth he would find the price such that one would be justified almost in rebelling against it. What is the cause?

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Law and order.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must not interject so much.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Because the seamen will not bring the meat from the North to the South. We have our supply of beef in the North. There are tens of thousands of cattle in the Kimberleys. Many of them were mustered up to be shipped south and had to be turned loose and may be brought down next year. Meat should be cheaper in Perth to-day than in any part of Australasia. I would almost say than in any part of the

world. The Government are buying cattle at the Wyndham Freezing Works at 2½d. per lb. for the best cattle Australia can produce. I know what I am talking about. The fifth quarter is worth 1½d. per lb. The meat is costing the Government 1d. per lb. Allow 1d. per lb. for handling the beef and 1d. per lb. for freight to Fremantle. That would bring the price to 3d. per lb. for meat at Fremantle, which to-day is costing 1s. per lb.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Why was it not cheaper when the boats were running?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am not going into ancient history. I am dealing with facts. I can tell the hon. member why it is not landed at Fremantle at 3d. per lb. to-day. I have a report of a conference I was asked to attend in 1916, when Mr. Scaddan was in power. The Government were up against it in connection with the Wyndham Freezing Works and they called in some men who were acquainted with the business, myself included. The works, they said, were nearing completion. I asked, "What are you going to do with the meat?" The reply was the Government were going to bring it to Fremantle. I asked, "How are you going to bring it to Fremantle?" The reply was they did not know. I asked, "What are you going to do when you get it to Fremantle?" and added, "You have not a foot of cold storage at Fremantle." The matter was discussed and it was recommended that portion of the State steamer "Kangaroo" be insulated. The manager of the State Steamships was present and told us that one portion of the vessel could be insulated to carry 1,000 carcasses of beef and another portion to carry 3,000 carcasses. The advice was to insulate the "Kangaroo" and build cold storage at Fremantle. That was in 1916, and, if the Government had carried out that advice, they would have been able to land the best meat at Fremantle for 3d. per lb. Since then, Governments have come and gone and nothing has been done. The "Kangaroo" has not one foot of insulated space in her. What has she been doing? She has been used to profiteer in foreign waters.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Then it is the fault of the Government and not of the seamen?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We have other ships here and the seamen will not work them. When the Government enter upon an enterprise like this, they assume that the business of the country will be carried on. Then, if a strike comes along, they should be able to say to the men concerned, "If you will not work go about your business and we will get someone else." The Government are buying the prime beef at 1d. per lb.; it could be treated for 1d. per lb. and, if the cold storage had been available at Fremantle, it could have been landed there for a total cost of 3d. per lb., and if the Government sold it at 6d. per lb., or one half of the price at present ruling, people could have afforded to pay it instead of being asked a price which is likely to drive them to revolution.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: You are an advocate of State enterprise?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Private enterprise can develop this country and is prepared to develop it, but what is the good of starting private enterprises? As soon as works are started, there is a strike. No one is prepared to work; no one attempts to enforce the law; and until we come to some understanding that people will work, private enterprise will shut its pockets. A great number of people in this country want the Government to borrow money and spend it. I am not referring to any one section, but to all sections of the community and, as the Government spend the borrowed money, they want to participate in the plunder. Men employed in various jobs publicly declare that they will get the highest wages and the best conditions and work as little as they can. How can we develop the country in this way? Until men realise that they, as individuals, must help to produce and further the development of the country, there is no hope of cheap living, or of saving ourselves from bankruptcy. Judging by the Governor's Speech the salvation of the country is to be found in price-fixing. Will the Bill provide for fixing the price of bread? There is already legislation for this, Federal and State legislation, and that legislation is the cause of the dear loaf to-day. Negligence on the part of previous Governments is the cause of meat being sold in Perth at 100 per cent. more than it should be. How can we reduce the price of meat? No meat is being brought down. The meat is there in the North, but there are no facilities for bringing it down—no insulated steamer space, to the need for which I drew attention in 1913. Are we going to fix the price of sugar? It is already fixed by the Commonwealth. Are we going to fix the price of butter which is produced in the Eastern States? The Eastern States will fix the price of butter. The only time when we shall be able to obtain cheap butter is when we have the South-West full of dairy cows. How are we to fix the prices of overseas commodities? The prices are fixed before those commodities arrive here. If we fix a margin of profit which will not encourage the importer, he simply will not import, and we shall be faced with a bare market. We hear a great deal about profiteering, but the worst profiteer of all is the man who says, "I am going to get all I can in the way of wages and I will do as little work as ever I can in return." Such a man is loyal neither to his State nor to his children if he has any, for he must know that the only way in which he can help to develop the State and make it prosperous is by earning what he receives. The high cost of living and the high cost of production in this State are due to the fact that the great body of men here are not attempting to earn the money which they receive, overlooking the fact that every man who loafs on the job is putting up the cost of production and that unless he is prepared to do his part, under the most favourable conditions, we can have neither development nor cheap living in this country.

Hon. A. H. Pantou: We have the best set of workers in the world, and you know it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We have heard a good deal about profit sharing, about the system of participating in profits. The only means towards the attainment of that end is to revert to piecework. Put a man on the wharf and tell him that if he shifts 10 tons of cargo he will receive 10s., and if he shifts 20 tons he will receive 20s., and if only five tons he will receive only 5s. Similarly, pay the bricklayer who lays 500 bricks per day so much, and pay the man who lays only 250 bricks only half of that. I am satisfied that, if only someone will lead them, the people of Western Australia are prepared to stand up for the right, and when they do that, might and right will be with them. The great majority of our people think on the right side. It is the irresponsible men who will not work that are making a noise, and the sooner they are put in their place the sooner shall we have progress and development in this country. From the Governor's Speech I observe that—

It is the purpose of the Government, so far as financial conditions will permit, to endeavour to cope with the difficulty of unemployment by the establishment of developmental works, and to encourage private citizens in the pursuance of a policy of confidence and enterprise.

That reads very well. I hope the leader of the House will enlarge on it when replying. If the Government are prepared to encourage private enterprise and maintain the law as stated in the Speech, development will follow. The Speech continues—

The construction of freezing works in different parts of the State is expected to lend stability to our pastoral industry and to contribute to the general introduction of the sound system of mixed farming in our agricultural areas.

That also reads very well, and I may at some future time have a good deal to say on the matter, which, however, opens up too large a field of discussion to be covered at the present juncture. The Speech continues—

My Advisers are increasingly impressed with the great possibilities of further settlement and development of the North-West, and recognise the responsibility of ensuring to that part of the State adequate and reliable facilities of transit.

What does that mean? Are the cattle in the North to be brought down by flying machine or on their legs or by steamers having insulated space? It is time for the Government to declare either that they are going to put an adequate transit service on the North-West coast or that they will let someone else do it. Apart from one or two Labour representatives. I was the only man in this House who championed State steamers for the North-West coast. I championed the plan because the State could not give the North railway facilities, and because we could no longer allow the shipping combine

to stand between the producer in the North and the consumer in the South. Much as I dislike State enterprise in general, I advocated a State Steamship Service in this connection. My socialism, let me explain, begins and ends with the prevention of monopoly. When the State steamers were proposed, the shipping monopoly on the north coast had been in existence for 25 years. For that period the Northern producer had been handicapped, and the only way out of the difficulty was State owned steamers. However, the selection of the State steamers was such that no man could have made the enterprise pay or run the steamers to time.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Why did not the hon. member recommend State freezing works?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is another monopoly. Put one of the American meat companies at Wyndham, and what sort of a price are the pastoralists going to get for their products, and who is going to be induced to take up the country that is lying there awaiting settlement to be squeezed by the American combine? There again is a matter in which the State established freezing works, rightly. However, judging from experience, the State will have to adopt more business-like methods at Wyndham, or else the incubus of the freezing works will be more than the public can carry. The fact remains that, worked properly, the freezing works will be an outlet for the product of the State. Moreover, there are millions of acres of the best cattle country in Australia in the immediate vicinity of the freezing works, awaiting settlement by the soldiers.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: What is the difference between the State selling the meat and selling sausages in a shop?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The trouble with the Scaddan Government was that they bought not only steamers, but also cattle, and then started butchers' shops. Further, they deliberately held cattle at Robb's Jetty, and put only so many on the market; this in order to boost up the price and make a profit. That was the Scaddan Government's method of cheapening the price of meat. As a matter of fact, the Scaddan Government cornered the market and put up the price of meat in order to cover up some of their other expenditure. They made a profit on the people's meat in order that they might cover up expenditure in other directions. The meat that is costing the Government one penny per pound in the Wyndham Freezing Works to-day, they can take to London for another penny, making a total cost of three-pence per pound; and that meat is worth in London to-day 8½d. per lb.

Member: The Government do not buy the cattle at twopence per lb.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Government pay 2½d. per lb. for the cattle; and the odds and ends, the hides and so forth, are worth one penny half-penny. Had the Labour Government adopted the advice I gave them years ago, meat would now be

selling in Perth at 4d. per lb. wholesale. If the "Kangaroo" were on the coast fitted with insulated space, she could go into Wyndham as an oversea ship, and could go thence to Fremantle, discharge the beef, and take from Fremantle a cargo of flour, etc., to the far East, and after discharging that, go to Wyndham for another cargo of meat, and so on. I have been associated for 30 years with the meat trade, and I know something of the subject. When the Labour Government came into power, they asked my advice, and I gave it; but four years afterwards I found that nothing had been done. I am not looking for trouble, but I have told the present Premier that if there is anything in this country which I understand and on which the Government desire my advice, that advice is absolutely at their disposal. Further, if there is any returned soldier who desires information about the country in the north or south, or what he ought to do, my advice is given freely. As regards the Premier, I am pleased to say that he is not the Mr. Mitchell of four years ago, who would not listen. To-day Mr. Mitchell will listen to advice if it is given honestly and straightforwardly. With regard to finance once more, there is no difference between a State and an individual. If an individual is in financial difficulties, he has to work in order to get out of them; and it is the same with a State. I believe that the intentions of the Mitchell Government are honourable. As regards Mr. Mitchell himself, I have a great admiration for his energy and enterprise. He has lived his life amongst us, and there is no one can point a finger of suspicion at our present Premier's honesty of purpose. Personally I am prepared to give him a fair run. But I have told him there must be no more of this camouflage, no more of telling us that everything in the garden is lovely. I have told him to tell the people the worst, to tell them what is ahead, not to come along with misleading statements, for the day for that sort of thing has gone.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Did you tell him to tell them not to be too reckless in expenditure?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES I have endeavoured to put questions before the House as they appear to me. I am prepared to forget the past and follow anyone who is out for good government. The first principle of good government is the maintenance of law and order. Men prepared to go over the top and say "This is right, therefore we are going to do it" will find tens of thousands of people prepared to follow them, and I shall be one of their followers.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East): I wish to add mine to the expressions of regret at the death of the late President, and also I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on having attained to the position of President. Many congratulatory remarks have been showered upon you, and I am quite sure that not only in experience and training, but also temperamentally, you are well qualified to occupy the position. "Temperamentally"

means a great deal. I know you will require considerable patience and forbearance in regard to other members of this Chamber, and I am gratified in the knowledge that you are well endowed with those qualities. I also wish to congratulate Dr. Saw on his return from the Front. I have already congratulated Mr. Panton on his election to this Chamber. The debate has been very illuminative. The Governor's Speech makes reference to many interesting subjects, and a number of speakers have referred to other subjects not contained in the Speech, but equally interesting. I believe that Sir Edward Wittenoom struck the real problem with which not only this State but the whole world is faced, namely, the industrial problem. Many questions with which we are confronted arise from the undoubted industrial unrest spreading across the world. I do not view the industrial problem as certain other members do; I do not see why we should apply the cane exclusively to the toilers. This Chamber, which boasts that it is fair to all, has left out one section of the community which certainly has a very big say in causing the present industrial unrest. For instance, some people, when referring to an industrial problem, refer invariably and almost in the same breath to strikes and industrial disruption. They hold that a strike is the cause of all the trouble in the country. I know of no evil which advocates of big businesses cannot charge up to strikes. From conversations I learn that some of the captains of industry in this Chamber realise the seriousness of the position and are prepared to deal with it, prepared to make concessions, believing as they do that concessions have to be made. I wish to remind them that the strike about which they have so much to say is not the cause, but merely one of the results, of the industrial unrest. If ever we have to deal with the question seriously, we shall have to go a little deeper to arrive at the cause of the trouble. We are not going to abolish strikes by the newspaper expedient of writing leading articles seeking to defame those participating in the strikes. Until we can remove the cause, industrial trouble will continue. I do not know that we need go outside of Australia in considering this world-wide problem. The particular problem we have to solve is the setting of our own house in order, and the seeing if arrangements cannot be made to get over the difficulty in Western Australia. Something has been said of the tramway strike. Mr. Holmes considers that the policy of the strong hand and the whip should have been brought into operation, and those men sent back to work; that what was required was a Government prepared to tell those men to get back to their jobs. He said they ought to have been told to go to the Arbitration Court. Surely Mr. Holmes must know that is exactly what the strike was about. The men struck for the privilege of getting into the Arbitration Court. Eventually they got the concession from the Government, but it took the Government seven weeks to awaken to the position. Even to-

day the difficulty has not been finally settled. When the men get into the Federal Arbitration Court the decision of the court will be the decision in connection with the tramway strike.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why have they not gone to the State Arbitration Court?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Because they are a Federal organisation and so have the right to go to the Federal court. No one but an idiotic employer adopting coercive methods would dream of hanging up an industry in an attempt to dictate to the men as to which court they should approach. In private employment all Federal organisations have a perfect right to go to the Federal court, and no employer objects to that principle. I propose later to have something to say about the State Arbitration Court. The workers have less confidence in the alleged justice meted out by the State court; they prefer the Federal court.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Why not send the seamen to the Federal court?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I will explain the point of view of the seamen later; I do not propose to be drawn off my course just now. The clerical workers in this State had a dispute with the Federal Government. Certainly they must have had a serious grievance to have indulged in this pioneering strike, as it really was. It puts heart into one to know that the clerical workers of this State had sufficient nerve to challenge the Federal Government. The clerical workers, again, were on strike for the privilege of getting into the Federal Arbitration Court. They objected to the Federal Government attempting to prejudice their pending case by reducing wages. All they did was to maintain their condition pending their case being heard. The clerical workers, I suppose, are now amongst those who defied law and order. They went back to work on the same conditions as before, after the Federal Government had taken six or seven weeks in which to think over the position. Then we had the wharf lumpers' dispute. As a matter of fact, those men have gone back to work under their old conditions, that is to say, they have not revolutionised the system under which that industry is being carried on. I am not prepared to say that the system should not be revolutionised. However, those men have gone back to work under the old bad conditions to which they were accustomed. Many have seen fit to censure the head of the then Government for the action taken in connection with that dispute. I admit that he appears to have been badly advised by certain red-raggers amongst the big business men, but I will give him this credit, that when the tragedy approached, he was the man to cry Halt! I find that in certain circles credit is given to him for having taken the action that he did in going down there; and those are the very people who turned round and heaped discredit on his head when he took the really creditable action he did in putting an end to the trouble.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: There is one dispute in which we have been interested during the last few months, and that is the dispute in connection with the firewood cutters on the Eastern Goldfields. In the early stages there appeared to be a general desire that this business should be settled without a cessation of work. I agree that from the public point of view that is so. I also wish to show that everything that could possibly be done by the men was done to settle that dispute without a cessation of work. It has been apparent for some months past that, when the present agreement under which the wood cutters and wood companies were working, expired, there would be a difficulty. The companies had received notice that the men would refuse to go on under the old agreement. They took every possible occasion to have a new agreement made without ceasing work. The Government were notified, too, in good time, and a proposition was put to them with the object of providing an alternative method of getting the firewood in the event of the old system breaking down. In July representatives of the Union waited upon the then Attorney General. Their proposition was that the State forest areas should be made available, and that the Government should put in a spur line so that the men could themselves, if necessary, supply the mining companies with firewood. As usual, they received a promise that the matter would be considered, and, presumably, it has been under consideration by the Government ever since. The men met the representatives of the firewood companies before the cessation of work and put their proposition before them. I mention this to show that the intention was that the men should continue to work, and an agreement be ratified whilst work was going on. The firewood workers realised what the cessation of work would mean, and made every endeavour to come to an agreement whilst going on with their work. The firewood companies representatives, however, told them distinctly that they would not discuss the question of wages or terms for cutting under which they were working. There is another point in connection with this. On several occasions it has been asked why these men did not go to the Arbitration Court. It has been agreed that their case could not be settled by the court. The greater proportion of these firewood workers are not working for wages. The companies have a concession to run a railway line through the bush. The cutters obtain a license to cut the wood and sell it to the firewood companies. All that has taken place so far as this dispute is concerned is that there is a disagreement over the price. That happens in the commercial world every day in the week. It is not a case that can be settled by the court. The fact remains that the men had to cease work. All the pressure that could be brought to bear on both parties has been brought to

bear on them, and on the Government as well to induce them to move in the matter. The Government in the early stages did not show themselves really alive to the position. So far as the firewood companies and their representatives are concerned, they consist of some of the shrewdest business men in the State, and in the previous disputes that have occurred the firewood companies have come out on top on every occasion. Simply by sitting tight they have managed to pass on to the mining companies whatever increase the men have received. After they got all they could from the mining companies they began to milk the Government, and to get better terms from the Government, on the plea that they could not possibly make the industry pay under those conditions. The increases in the past have not been borne by the woodline companies, but by the mining companies, and by the Government as common carriers. The position was possible in this case, because the wood getting industry is a key industry, or rather it is possible because they have control of the transport connected with the industry. When the transport in connection with an industry is handed over to a private company this is the kind of thing that is likely to occur. Now we come to the question of the cause of the dispute. Many people merely saw that there was a dispute on and that the men had ceased work. The fact remains that this has been working up for the last three years, almost for the whole time that the men were working under the agreement. The old problem is again facing us, and the recent settlement shows where the real difficulty lay, namely, in the increased cost of living to those who are carrying on the industry. Some time ago the representatives of the men and the companies met. Afterwards a statement was made by the men, and also by the Premier, who was visiting Kalgoorlie at the time, from the point of view of the Government. A representative of the Chamber of Mines also made a statement. So far as the wood companies are concerned, after the others had set out the position, all they had to say was that they noticed the negotiations had been concluded. The representative of the wood companies stated that he did not think any good purpose could be served by making a statement of the position at that juncture. In times past the representatives of the wood companies merely had to sit tight, knowing that pressure would be brought to bear, and on account of the mining industry suffering and the whole of the goldfields and the industry being hung up, all they had to do was to hold back, and someone else would devise ways and means of getting over the difficulty. That was what happened on this occasion. The Government should take a lesson from this by reason of the fact that these woodline companies, because of their concessions, are in a position periodically, when the agreements terminate, to hang up the industry, as has been done on three occasions previously. Whilst the

present system exists and they are allowed this concession, that is liable to happen at any time. The men on this occasion, when they met the companies, made a certain proposal which has now been agreed to, I understand, which shows that the real difficulty was in regard to the increased cost of living. That was the real cause of the present dispute. Several weeks ago they said they were prepared to go back under the old agreement so far as the cutting rates were concerned, provided they could be supplied with the necessities of life at the rates existing in 1916 when the previous agreement was made. Until yesterday the negotiations have been fruitless, as the companies refused to agree to the terms. I believe, however, that arrangements have now been made whereby work will be continued under that offer. There is something else which may be of use in the future, and that is the fact that when the men proposed to form a co-partnership society for the cutting of the wood and have it carried by the Government, it became necessary to provide horses and drays for the purpose. When the men first went about getting these things they had good reason to believe that they could obtain them, because they had so many offers to that effect. But it was found that horses and drays were not to be obtained. When big companies, such as these woodline companies operating on the Goldfields, start out to hang up an industry there are no half measures adopted; if they cannot do a thing themselves they will stop anyone else from doing it. So far as that industry is concerned, we will have to be careful at the termination of this agreement lest the same difficulty should crop up, because the power has been given to the firewood companies to hold up the industry on the goldfields. I would have said more on this matter, but for the fact that a settlement has been arrived at. No end of wealth has been lost to the community at Kalgoorlie by reason of this cessation of work. It is difficult to estimate how long it will take for the people to get over this loss. It is the duty of the Government to endeavour to alter things so that it will be impossible for the companies in the future to hang up the industry as they have done in the past. Since we are dealing with industrial matters, I would like to mention another strike. As Sir Edward Wittenoom says, it is a question which has to be faced, and it is just as well faced in this Chamber, because occasionally both sides should have a say in the matter. Although Mr. Holmes says he is prepared to give a fair deal to everyone, I wish to point out that in those matters the parties concerned are the parties who say what they consider is a fair deal.

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

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I regret that Mr. Holmes was not here when I mentioned the fact that so far as the wood companies are concerned this matter does not come within the jurisdiction of the court. The men are working under the conditions

favoured by the hon. member. They are piece workers and independent workers, getting wood and selling it at a certain price to the woodline companies. There has been a disagreement over this price.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Would not the court deal with it?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I do not think the court can do so.

The Minister for Education: The reason why it could not do so was because they were not registered under the Act.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Whose fault is that?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: They were in this position: that if any other company could get a concession to run a railway line anywhere in that direction they would be just as much at liberty to sell their wood to the one company as to another. Going from the dispute which has been settled, and for which settlement we are deeply thankful, to the one that has not yet been settled—that is the shipping strike—naturally the people who are suffering as a result of that strike are not inclined to go deeply into the causes thereof. They have certain facts manufactured for them and they examine them each morning at breakfast and note that the seamen of Australia still refuse to listen to reason, the reason, of course, being that they still refuse to accept the point of view of the other side.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: They refuse to go to the Federal Arbitration Court.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I will come to that shortly. In connection with this, Mr. Wallace—the member for West Sydney who took the place of Mr. W. M. Hughes when he deserted New South Wales and went to Bendigo—delivered a speech in the House of Representatives on the 3rd July last. Mr. Wallace was well acquainted with all the circumstances, and I would remind hon. members he was speaking to men who knew the position, and that gentleman would have just as much chance of putting up a fictitious case in the Federal Parliament as any hon. member would have in this House, which would not be an easy matter. Therefore, the statements he made were statements which could be confirmed. He pointed out that there were four points of grievance so far as the dispute was concerned, and in regard to two of them, and two important ones, the Federal Court had not the power to deal with them. That brings me to the position set up by Sir Edward Wittenoom. Why cannot the men continue to work and settle their disputes while at work? The Navigation Act was passed in 1912 or 1913, and that Act made provision for better accommodation for seamen on board ship. Unfortunately, however, that Act has not yet been proclaimed. It was considered an urgent matter then, but for various reasons, the Act, which would have dealt with at least two points in regard to this dispute, never received assent. It would have been possible under that Act to provide better accommodation for seamen, and Mr. Wallace in that re-

gard pointed out, when dealing with this question in the House of Representatives—

The sleeping accommodation is in some cases not fit for a dog. Imagine a man turning into a bunk 6ft. by 3ft. wide and 4ft. between bunks, which is, as some one has said, too big for a coffin and too small for a grave.

He made that statement in the House of Representatives and it was not contradicted. Mr. Jowett, who followed Mr. Wallace, agreed that the accommodation on the coastal steamers, in many instances, was wretched. Again, another point in dispute is that of compensation. The present Navigation Act, which is not proclaimed, contains a provision whereby seamen can be paid compensation just as that which workers on land enjoy today. Naturally we want to know why it is that the seamen should not have the same facilities, so far as compensation is concerned, as those who work on shore?

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Are you sure they have not got it?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: They have it to a certain extent, but not to the fullest extent. Mr. Wallace stated further in the House of Representatives—

Should the judge of the Arbitration Court make an award in the matter of compensation, it would prove null and void if a seaman received his injury outside the three mile limit, whereas if it were amended as I have suggested, it would apply wherever the ship might be. There are other anomalies that require to be removed.

I just wish to point out that, in advising the seamen to go to the Arbitration Court, it would be all very well if any attempt had been shown that there was a desire to provide means whereby they could go to the court and have their grievances redressed, because it is not a question of wages altogether, it is a question of conditions. The whole thing, however, was argued out in the House of Representatives and there were many interjections, and Mr. Wallace proved that the Arbitration Court could not deal with two of the main grievances so far as the men were concerned. Owing to the agitation on the part of the seamen, provision was included in the Navigation Act for the purpose of regulating the conditions of the men. Now, however, six years having elapsed without the Act having been proclaimed, the seamen have lost respect for that constituted authority which passed the measure.

Hon. J. Cornell: The shortage of shipping is the only reason for not proclaiming that Act.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: That reason no longer exists. It would mean a certain amount of expense on the part of the shipping companies to remodel their accommodation. They still adhere to the idea that the 6ft. by 3ft., which is too big for a coffin and too small for a grave, is good enough for the seamen. Then if a seaman by force of argument cannot induce a shipowner to improve the conditions, he must adopt some other means, and he is showing that he is deter-

mined that the conditions which he requires shall be brought into operation. The seamen working under those impossible conditions, which have been explained, have a perfect right, if there is no possibility of getting what they require by constitutional means, to have recourse to direct action such as has been adopted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The proclamation of that Act will mean the exclusion of all but Australian shipping on the Australian coast.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I quite understand that. Even if that were so I presume that the Act, unlike the laws of the Medes and Persians, is not unalterable. Those who were responsible for it recognised that difficulty, and I suppose it was on that account that the Imperial Government advised that it should not be proclaimed, but that there should be some law to regulate the conditions under which the seamen were working. There is another matter which shows the attitude of the Federal Government towards the seamen and which also shows how the men have exercised patience and forbearance. During the war they were promised a bonus. They agitated for that bonus for 18 months, and during that period they continued to work, because they were told that the safety of the nation depended upon the seamen and that on no account must they cease work. They continued to work and continued to argue, and at the end of the 18 months it happened that they argued too long, because immediately the Federal Government agreed to pay the bonus the armistice was signed and the men did not get their bonus. So far as the present negotiations are concerned, I am not one of those who support the extreme measures which are advocated by the secretary of the seamen's union. At the same time, not knowing Mr. Walsh, I cannot assume what his point of view is, and I am not going to apologise for him or excuse him. But I can say that I do not believe in those methods. In the first place, I do not believe in them, because, from my point of view, I do not think they are successful, and I do not believe in adopting methods which are not likely to bring about the result which is desired. My experience of negotiations is that, instead of making a statement as Mr. Walsh has done, and if reports are true, such as the president of that organisation is reported in this morning's paper to have made—from the point of view of negotiating between the two parties, that is exactly the method to adopt if you do not desire to achieve success. To make a statement that you are going to compel a man to do something at the time you are trying to persuade him to do that which you wish him to do, will not bring about success. The seamen have been particularly long suffering and I do not think for one moment that the agitators who are given all the credit for bringing about the dispute had nearly as much to do with it as the people are prepared to give them credit for. I believe that it was the conditions under which the men were working which were responsible

and the fact that the law did not provide means for getting over the difficulty. It is the men themselves who are standing out now because they are determined to get what they are after. They are now standing out, as we have been told, because they are being incited by agitators. The claims of these men are so just that if the negotiations were carried out in a more practical manner, I am confident that a settlement would have been arrived at before to-day. I have been told also there is a difficulty in regard to the Director of Shipping, and that had it not been for him, and the autocratic attitude he has adopted, it would have been possible for the companies to have settled the dispute themselves. Be that as it may, to those who say we should adopt constitutional methods I say also, if we are to have courts clothed with power to settle disputes, we must see that they have full power, and that there shall not be cases such as these which tribunals shall not be competent to settle. Before men are advised to go to a court it should be established that the court has power to deal fully with their case. There was another industrial dispute in New South Wales. This is a matter again upon which there has been a good deal of misrepresentation. Mr. Lynn will be interested, because it concerns coal mining. The coal miners, after going on strike, had their case decided by Judge Edmonds and an award was given which was to operate during the war. Under its terms, the men received an advance and the companies were allowed to charge 8s. per ton in consideration of the advance in wages, but with this proviso—the men had to agree to continue under that award during the period of the war and the companies were under an obligation to have their books examined by the Commonwealth Auditor to see that the 3s. advance was justified. During the currency of this award, the men ceased work and immediately there was an outcry that the men had broken their agreement by so doing. They knew that under the agreement the companies were doing particularly well and, as business men, they considered they were entitled to some of the spoils. The companies were doing so well that they refused to submit their books to the Commonwealth Auditor and the men said that the companies, having broken their part of the agreement, they were justified in breaking theirs. To show that the companies were not exactly starving during that time, the share list of several gives evidence. In the case of the Newcastle mine the shares advanced from 100s. to 165s. during the currency of this agreement. From that it does not look as if the companies were on the verge of bankruptcy. The Newcastle-Wallsend advanced from 160s. to 275s. and there are others which made similar upward moves. The men were justified in seeing that the companies kept to their part of the agreement. When the men had to keep their part of it, surely the companies should not be absolved; yet all the blame was thrown upon the miners. The Commonwealth Commissioner for Taxa-

tion in a report published in the daily Press on the 21st December last stated—

By far the most profitable concerns in Australia were the mines of New South Wales which produced 151 per cent. profit to capital in war time as against 54 per cent. in pre-war days.

There is an instance of another dispute which evokes no end of criticism from upper circles.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Did the men get still more and did the companies charge still more after that?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: When it comes to a business deal, the men have no possible hope because the crowd that do not toil can spin a pretty good yarn, and they find ways and means of bluffing even the Commonwealth Commissioner of Taxation. This is fast becoming a part of the stock-in-trade of companies; how to bluff the public and so arrange things that their real profits are not disclosed. It is becoming a fine art. For the benefit of Mr. Lynn, I will read an extract from the "Argus" of 19th June of this year. That paper realises that the profits which are being made are becoming a source of considerable dissension among the general public and tenders the following advice to companies—

In business circles the tendency is growing to add to capital account some portion of reserve fund, which in most cases represents the undivided profits of a series of years. Such a transfer increases the solidity of the institutions concerned by imparting permanence to what may be an important asset from the point of view of the creditors. By capitalising reserves used in the conduct of a business, its real earning capacity can be better disclosed, and dividends to shareholders can be distributed without exciting the envy of less affluent members of the community.

That is how they do it. Dividends can be distributed without exciting the envy of the less affluent members of the community. There is a touch of smug patriotism about this—

In times of general unrest it is undesirable to create the impression of profiteering.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Is that from the "Worker"?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: It is the "Argus" that advises the general community to work harder and advises those that advertise with them how to fool the men they have just advised to work harder. The harder the worker toils, the more they put the cane on him, and use their short-handled whip to prevent him from noticing how he is being fooled. This advice would have been more effective in the form of a circular to the Chamber of Commerce telling them not to be so foolish as to flout their big dividends in the faces of the less affluent portions of the community. It should have been a secret memorandum to the real big people of Australia telling them not to incense those they are profiteering and robbing. When people

talk about general unrest and say they have a panacea for industrial ills, these are questions which will have to be faced. Instead of telling men to work harder, improved methods in industrialism will have to be adopted. This "hard work" advice has interested me very much lately. I have been taking stock of the advisers of the "hurry up" policy. Mr. Pilkington, K.C., member for Perth, recently made a statement, of which great notice was taken. The "Daily News" did him the honour of writing a leading article dealing with his remarks. This is what he said—

We must set to work and produce commodities of which there is an awful shortage.

Hon. J. Cornell: Fancy Pilkington working.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Fancy the energy he would put into it. It reminds me of the old quip, "See how we pull!" as the fly said to the oxen. Mr. Pilkington continued—

If you are loafing you must stop it at once and work. The task is a heavy one. I can imagine how he feels it. He is an optimist, too. There is work to be done and he is sure he can find men to do it.

The task is a heavy one, but not one that we cannot meet if we choose by patient work and economy. If we do what we ought and can do it quickly and cheerfully we can bear the burden, but, if we continue to loaf and spend capital as we are doing to-day, we will find the burden will become intolerable.

The "Daily News" comments on this advice—"Mr. Pilkington is unquestionably right." He has solved the problem—more work. The Minister for Education got in well ahead of Mr. Pilkington. Some years ago he advised me to tell the workers of this country that if they wanted to save during war time they would have to work harder and longer hours and for less pay during the war period.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Your Government cut down hours and pay.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: They did not cut down the rate per hour. Lloyd George, in the Old Country, gave similar advice. He is satisfied someone has to work harder. Mr. Hoover has now come on the scene. He says the worker must work harder, and Mr. Beeby, of New South Wales, who used to work at one time, says the way out of the difficulty is hard work. Mr. Holmes got in rather late this afternoon, but he also voiced the same sentiment.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: What does Tom Walsh say?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I am not acquainted with him, but after close association with the shipping combines, I fear he has become demoralised and does not work. All the large newspapers throughout Australia, like the "Argus," tender sound advice to their readers as to a way out of the difficulty, and that advice is to make the other fellow work. Hard work is the solution. This "hard work" doctrine interests

me immensely. I am trying to show that the policy of telling the other fellow to work hard is not the only policy to be adopted if we are to overcome the problem. Take the farmer. My experience is that the farmer works hard—God knows he works pretty long hours. But if he fails I do not think anybody suggests that it was because he did not work hard enough. As a fact, the difficulty often is that the farmer has worked too hard, but has not worked in the right direction. There has been a lack of method and organisation about his work. Take the big businesses in this city. Is it suggested that those businesses are organised by everybody flying about with his coat off and having a busy appearance and earning the reputation of being a hard worker? In my opinion, misdirected energy is the trouble, rather than lack of energy. My experience is that when a concern is not paying, the best method is not to rush round and tell everybody to get a wriggle on. On the other hand, it is for those who are directing the concern to find out where the trouble occurs. If the worker is not being put effectively to work, then surely it is up to the top dog, the captain of industry, to devise better and more effective means of directing the energies of the community. I do not think it can be claimed that Australian industry is organised on anything like scientific lines. There is huge waste in Australian industry, not only as regards production, but particularly as regards distribution. Let me give an illustration. I worked in a mine on the eastern goldfields, and the treatment cost per ton on that mine was, roughly, 30s. The mine was worked into such a state that it could not possibly pay. Either there had to be a revolution in methods of treatment and in methods of management, or the mine would have to close down. How would that mine have got on if the manager had merely run round putting the spur into the workers to do more? It would have closed down ten or 15 years ago. That, however, was not the course the manager adopted. In our gold mines we have one instance—there may be more, probably there are—of Australian industry being organised on the most scientific methods. The gold mining industry of Western Australia, I believe, can compare with gold mining under similar conditions in any other part of the world. For instance, at Cripple Creek, in America, there is similar ore to that found at Kalgoorlie, and the treatment costs in Kalgoorlie are no higher than those at Cripple Creek. I would like to believe we are as up to date in regard to other industries as we are in regard to gold mining. In the case of the mine I refer to, the whole of the plant was remodelled—at a considerable cost, I will admit—and the treatment cost then fell from 30s. per ton to 20s. The mine is still working to-day on very low-grade ore. I should say that those who provide the brains of industry in Australia had better endeavour to devise ways and means of effectively putting men to work and bring-

ing our industries into line with those in other parts of the world. I believe also that the time has come when those working in our industries must be given more say as to the manner in which the industry is conducted. For instance, the present trouble in the shipping industry might have been obviated had the employers shown more consideration in regard to the conditions under which the men work. But they absolutely refused to listen. They had men working under conditions which would be eventually destructive of self-respect, and, naturally, the breaking strain has been reached. If we are to have industrial peace in Australia, more consideration will have to be shown on the part of the employing class than there has been in the past. The difficulty is that the employers will not realise the problem. They will not believe that men are dissatisfied with their conditions until something desperate happens, and then the mischief is done. If the employers devoted more time to dealing with the causes of strikes than to suggesting to Governments and strong bodies to come along and deal with the workers who have got out of hand, we would have more industrial peace and prosperity here. I have not this evening dealt with our old friend the profiteer. I have refrained from doing so not because the subject is threadbare. The profiteer takes good care that the subject does not grow threadbare, for he provides fresh instances every day. Whatever there may have been in the way of slowing down in Australia, the Australian profiteer has not slowed down. The difficulty is that where production is cheap those who need the product unfortunately cannot obtain it except at an exorbitant price. Here again, if we are to make it possible for industry to exist we shall have to find better methods of distribution. That is also the case in other countries where industry is supposed to be organised on the most scientific lines. In the American boot trade, by instituting the Taylor card system, the cost of production was kept down to the very lowest point, and undoubtedly boots were produced more cheaply. But as a result there was over-production, and the cost of distribution went up to such an extent that the article, although produced at a less cost, was sold at a higher price than ever to the general community. The user of the goods requires them at a reasonable price, and is entitled to get them at a reasonable price. Where high cost and over-production exist simultaneously, there is something radically wrong with the system. So much for the hard work view. I do not go too much on this hard work theory, and I think it is about time that those who supply the brains, the captains of industry, should devise improved methods not only of production but particularly of distribution. One other matter I wish to refer to, because it was touched on by Mr. Lynn in his very breezy speech. He spoke as a democrat, but acted in quite a different character. It is most remarkable

how people are prepared to take credit for something that has been done, as for instance the fact that in the Commonwealth every citizen has a right to vote for a representative in the Commonwealth Parliament. Mr. Lynn said that everyone in this State has the right to vote. I asked him whether he considered that right; and, seeing that he might be led into a trap, he warily required me to give notice of the question. Mr. Lynn has not yet answered the question, for the simple reason that if he is going to give credit in this respect to anybody it means that he approves of that franchise. He does not, in fact, believe that every Australian citizen should have equal voting power for representatives in the Parliament of the country. As regards this Chamber, I do not know whether it is inferred that I am one of those who came here to curse and remained to bless. I have every respect for the members who compose this House, and I would like to see them better employed than in allegedly reviewing something that takes place in another Chamber, particularly when, as Mr. Sanderson points out, the reviewing has to be done at half-past three in the morning at the very close of the session. The only things which in fact we do review are those in the nature of concessions to the other fellow who has not a vote for this Chamber. Mr. Holmes took credit for altering certain provisions sent forward by the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No. I took credit on behalf of the House.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I did not mean personally. The hon. member was paying this Council a tribute for liberalising certain legislation that came here from the other place. I say candidly that in view of the present constitution of the Legislative Assembly we are absolutely as democratic as the other House is. I am making no mistake about that. Indeed, I consider there is more chance of obtaining a fair deal for a democratic proposal in this House, if a good case is put up, than there is in the Legislative Assembly as at present constituted. Those who are sent to another place hold exactly the same views as Mr. Lynn, and they regard this Chamber as something that is going to save them in case the revolutionary Labour party happen to get into office. Any sort of Government will do—we know another place is not particular in regard to the personnel of Governments—so long as it is not a Labour Government.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: It does not matter about the Labour party, but about the red-raggers.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: There are some red-raggers on the other side too. It means that while this House is constituted as it is, the old conservative section of the community has control of the affairs of the State, and I can understand their point of view; they do not want to abolish it. But I cannot understand, from the point of view of the general community, why they refuse to adopt the Labour party's belief that one House is suffi-

cient to administer the affairs of the State. I still agree with Mr. Sanderson that we in Australia are over-governed. I also believe that the general community believes that, too. I find that on account of the somewhat farcical manner in which the Parliaments of the States are conducted, the dual Chamber business, there is growing up in the minds of the citizens a suspicion of politicians of all classes. The Press of this country has taught the people to view the labour politician with suspicion, and now an attempt is being made to discredit all politicians. I find that in regard to industrial matters the belief is becoming more general that there is no possibility of getting redress by political action. What does this mean? It means that if the people have no confidence in the politicians, they have no confidence in the Parliament or in the Government. So the discrediting of the Labour politician is now beginning to react upon all parties and I believe that State Parliaments are becoming unpopular and that a move, such as will probably be made by Mr. Sanderson in the near future for a system of unification, will find considerable support. As a matter of fact the Labour party have decided that their policy shall be one House federally and a reconstruction of the State Parliaments. In reference to the Bill, I do not think the Government disclose their idea of what is meant by electoral reform. It will be the same as that held by Mr. Sanderson. It is probably some small amendment of the Act. A considerable difficulty arose some 12 months ago in estimating just what the household qualification amounts to. We tried to get a definition of the term. There was no difficulty in the metropolitan area, but the difficulty in regard to the goldfields was very considerable. We find there that householders, some of them fathers of big families, are living in houses that do not represent the rental value of household qualification, and in consequence they are disfranchised. I should like to know whether this House, representing the taxpayers, intends that such a man is entitled to vote. Also, men living in those houses are men who, if working in the metropolitan area, would certainly be occupying houses which would entitle them to vote. It is only on account of the flimsy structure of goldfields houses that they do not represent the qualifying rental value. In South Australia, the Act provides for a definite household qualification. If we could get over the difficulty we should relieve much heart-burning. Our Act should be amended in such a way as to define the qualification for a householder. I refuse to get people into trouble by putting them on the roll in order that they might assist me into Parliament, when there is a doubt as to their qualification. We have a law which the Chief Electoral Officer does not understand and will not give a ruling upon. Neither will the Crown Law authorities rule upon it. The only way to secure a ruling is to get into trouble and come before a resident magistrate, which is not too satisfactory. People are so nervous

that many of them who really have the qualification refuse to go on the roll. A reign of terror existed up there during the last election. I should not care to go through it again. I am not going to bother my head about getting people on the roll where there is any doubt whatever as to their qualification. It is the duty of Parliament to say definitely who are entitled to go on the roll, and not leave it to the discretion of the individual. Several Bills are down for introduction, but despite the existing great dissatisfaction in regard both to the State Arbitration Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act we are not promised an amendment of either measure. Yet this is supposed to be a time when we should be discussing ways and means of getting over our difficulties and promoting a more amicable feeling between the workers and the employers. During the war we were asked not to deal with contentious matters or party questions. Arbitration, it would seem, is a party question not to be discussed during war time. The war is over now. A good deal of the existing difficulty is due to the fact that certain of these social and industrial questions have been too long deferred. So important a question as arbitration should be faced by the Government during this session. In regard to workers' compensation, under the existing Act certain disabilities lie on the employee who has been injured. He has not the same redress as the employer. An amendment should be introduced, giving the employee the same right as the employer to sue for a settlement. At present the employee has to go cap in hand to the employer and accept what may be offered him, unless he is prepared to take progress payments extending over a number of years. Every employee who is injured has to face this difficulty, whilst all the time the insurance company can put the screw on him and demand its own terms. If hon. members really wish to see the arbitration law observed in this State they will have to make it a law which, in the opinion of workers, is reasonable and practicable. As a matter of fact the suspicion with which the Arbitration Court is viewed is now so great that every endeavour is being made by the unions to become registered as Federal organisations in order that they may approach the Federal Arbitration Court. Also, a difficulty has recently arisen in reference to awards of the State court. In May the moulders were awarded a basic wage of 10s. 6d., and in July the engineers were awarded a basic wage of 11s. Where do the moulders come in? I expect they will have to take direct action to get the same terms as the engineers. There is amongst the workers a general impression that if arbitration is to be successful and equitable there will have to be adopted some method whereby awards can be varied where it can be shown that, for instance, within two months the judge of the same court awards an additional 6d. per day basic wage on account of the increase in cost of living. Either arbitration as a method for settling disputes will

be absolutely discredited or it will have to be revised. I have endeavoured to deal with what I regard to be the most important question of all, a question which has to be settled throughout the world, namely, the adjustment of our great industrial problems. I am confident that if a determined effort is made and consideration shown by both parties, the problem, great as it is, will not be found insuperable.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central): I wish to join with other members in expressing my deep regret at the loss of our late President, and I wish also to congratulate you, Sir, on having received the unanimous support of this House as President. We have listened to some interesting speeches, and at the risk of repeating some of the remarks of hon. members I desire to say a few words. It is the duty of every representative of the people to endeavour to find some way out of the difficult problems facing us to-day. We are living in stressful times. How often has it been said that things can never be the same again after the war! During this war, fortunately for the great Empire of which we form a part, the people of the Empire learnt how interdependent each section of the community was to the other. It would be good for us as a people if we realised that, and endeavoured to solve our problems along the same lines. We are all naturally alarmed at the position of affairs to-day because of the unrest and turmoil and strikes. There must be great changes in the industrial world, and every endeavour should be made to bring about those changes on constitutional lines. As pointed out to-night, it is imperative that some scheme should be availed of whereby capital and labour may work amicably together. If that is not brought about we shall have chaos and no progress whatever, and we will never be able to adjust our affairs. Men's foolishness is causing a great deal of suffering to-day, and will cause very much more if we continue to be as foolish as we have been in the past. There are three things which will have to be done if this State and the Commonwealth are to be lifted out of their difficulties. The first essential is that we should have strong Governments, Governments which will, after the laws are made by the representatives of the people, see that those laws are obeyed. Everyone has to work and produce wealth, but ways and means must also be found for a more equitable distribution of wealth and the proceeds of industry. One way in which we are going to have industrial peace is by letting labour have more say in the control of our industrial affairs. It would be advisable, in the interests of those who control and reap the benefit of those industries concerned, if they appointed representatives of labour to their directorates, so that these might have some voice in the administration and the carrying on of the industries.

Hon. J. Cornell: If there was more mutual trust there would be less suspicion.

Hon. H. CARSON: President Wilson said, in regard to international affairs, that all the

cards must be laid on the table. So must it be with industrial affairs. Men must know how things are being carried on. As Mr. Cornell has interjected, this would tend to remove suspicion. We would then find that we should make progress. In Australia we have a great and glorious country. If we were to solve the problem of bringing capital and labour more together we would make even greater progress. A good deal has been said about the Arbitration Court. I was never favourably impressed by it. The Wages Board would be a much better system both for the worker and employer. We need only refer to Victoria as an instance, for there the Wages Board is in operation. There are fewer strikes in that State than in any other portion of the Commonwealth. That is largely because of the Wages Boards, and the fact that representatives of the employers and employees talk over their difficulties and differences around the table. The people who have wealth in Australia must realise that they have to pay for this war. Their wealth has been saved to them, and also freedom has been saved to them and to us, by our valiant soldiers. As pointed out, our soldiers must be assisted to gain a comfortable livelihood. Our difficulties in regard to the high cost of living are mainly traceable to the war. When we remember that over 11 million of producers of wealth have been killed in this conflict, somewhere about the same number incapacitated, and probably a similar number have been producing wealth for the purpose of destruction, we can only expect great sorrow and difficulties. We have read in the Speech that it is the Government's intention to introduce a Bill for the fixing of prices. It is not necessary to say much on that subject at present, a more fitting time being when the Bill is before us. Mr. Kirwan, Mr. Holmes, and several other members have pointed out that it may be a very dangerous thing, and I am quite sure it is not going to be the panacea for our ills in this respect. Something must be done to stop profiteering. There is nothing too severe for men in this stage of our history, and after such a conflict, who profiteer. We know it was being done even while the late great struggle was going on. I was very pleased that Mr. Kirwan referred to our base metal industry and the attitude of the Commonwealth Government. That attitude is most unfederal, seeing that they compelled the mine owners to send their ores to the Eastern States for treatment. This has paralysed the base metal industry, more particularly the lead industry of the Northampton district. There is a company in that district which owns the richest lead mine in Australia. It could have exported to one of the Allies of Britain its lead, which is a 75 per cent. proposition, at very remunerative rates, had it been allowed to do so. The extra cost of sending this ore to the Eastern States, however, made it unprofitable, and the mine has been closed down and 300 men at least have been thrown out of employment. I hope the Government will do all they can to induce the Federal Govern-

ment to allow free export of base metals. The Premier, for whom I have the greatest respect and admiration—and have always had that against considerable opposition—in my opinion made a mistake in the formation of his Ministry. I do not take exception to the ability of those who form the present Government, for I think we have one of the strongest Cabinets we have ever had in Western Australia. I do, however, take exception to the fact that no representative of the northern portion of the State is a member of the Executive.

Hon. J. Cornell: We have none from the goldfields either.

Hon. H. CARSON: I realise more and more every day that this huge State, especially under present conditions, will not be developed satisfactorily when our Executive is formed of men who come from practically one province.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is nearly all a Northern Government.

Hon. H. CARSON: The feeling is evident in my province that there is too much centralisation, and there are some grounds for it. If we had a representative of one of the northern constituencies in the Cabinet it would allay that feeling to some extent. The Premier is keen on developing the South-West and I think he is right, but this should not be done to the detriment of any other portion of the State. The Government are buying up many estates in the South-West, and I do not know that any offers have been refused. This is not so in the Geraldton district. There we have had estates offered to the Government but they have been refused. This may be because, in the opinion of the board, the estates were not satisfactory for the repatriation of our soldiers, but the Government should endeavour to secure land even if they have to resume it by arbitration. There are many men in our district who are desirous of settling on the land but are unable to secure suitable holdings. When speaking on the high cost of living, I forgot to mention that the citizens of Western Australia are not doing all that they might do. There are many people who are paying 3s. 4d. a bag for imported oatmeal. We have imported to this State £28,000 worth of oatmeal and at the same time have been exporting oats to the Eastern States. I think we should do more regarding our local production. We had huge stacks of wheat here, and if that had been crushed into meal and used in the same way as oatmeal it would have been a good thing for Western Australia.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There are plenty of oats, too.

Hon. H. CARSON: If that had been done oatmeal would have cost 1s. a bag instead of 3s. 4d. I congratulate the Minister for Education upon establishing his correspondence classes for children in the country who are unable to get to the schools. This is a very fine move, and I am pleased that so many are availing themselves of it. We have to try to reduce the cost of government. I believe the people think it is about time that

members of both Houses were reduced in number. It is also high time we had a redistribution of seats.

Hon. J. Cornell: There is room for improvement in the Public Service.

Hon. H. CARSON: Co-operation is going to do much to lift us out of our present difficulties, and the Government should do all they can to encourage the movement. I have, however, a complaint against some of the leaders of the Labour party. Of course I desire to see my fellows improve their position. There are leaders of the Labour party who have tried to put one section against another. This is most unfortunate, though probably in many cases they have had good reason for doing so, because there are some employers about whom you cannot say things that are bad enough. But if we adopt a more conciliatory attitude things must improve. I realise too, that if the co-operative movement were more largely adopted, it would be to the advantage of the workers. Co-operation creates a greater interest in one another's welfare and that is one of the best features of the movement. Then of course there is the immense advantage in the saving which is brought about, and that, together with the feeling of good fellowship which it creates, makes it something that is very desirable. I am pleased to have had the opportunity of saying these few words. I realise we are living in troublous times but I hope that some means will be evolved whereby industrial problems will, in the future, be promptly settled.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, WAROONA TO LAKE CLIFTON.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is the Public Works Department constructing a railway line from Waroona to