

The Minister for Works: The local authorities have never made any request for that.

Mr. COVERLEY: That does not make it wrong that the request should now be made. The road boards are there to collect as much in rates and taxes as they can, but it is not right to impose those taxes on people situated along the coast between Derby and Wyndham. There are many people up there, pastoralists, who seldom use any road, and settlers who are growing peanuts along the coast and never touch a road at all, but go by lugger to Broome. As a matter of fact, there are no roads to their properties. Yet one of them, Mr. Merry, pays road board rates to the Wyndham Road Board, while the only port at which he does business is Broome. Why he should have to pay road rates and health rates to the Wyndham Road Board is beyond my understanding. It is little wonder that no road board has applied to the Minister for permission to grant exemption from taxation, because that would mean a loss of revenue to the board.

Mr. Marshall: They are not likely to ask the Minister, but it is our job to see that it is done.

Mr. COVERLEY: I guarantee they would not.

The Minister for Works: The road boards have just held a conference.

Mr. COVERLEY: But what representation would Wyndham have there?

Mr. Marshall: The Act should be amended to give the ratepayers some say.

Mr. COVERLEY: I have perused the report of the Royal Commission on pleuropneumonia. I understand the position fairly well and I have discussed the matter with the Minister controlling the department. On the evidence taken by the Royal Commission I must support the Minister's restrictions so far as they have gone, but I would like the Minister to give some indication of what the department intend to do to assist the people who are being severely hampered by the restrictions. I do not suppose the department intend to impose such restrictions without offering some alternative. Is anything being done to assist the people to overcome the difficulties by which they are beset? On behalf of the people of the North I wish to thank the Minister for Lands for having visited

that part of the State and for the consideration he has given us since his visit. The people in those outback districts can get no redress for their grievances. They have received such little attention, particularly from the present Government, that they appreciate the visits of the Minister for Lands and the Chief Secretary.

Mr. Raphael: They had a good holiday out of it.

Mr. COVERLEY: I appeal to the Minister for Lands to use his influence with the Premier and his colleagues to secure a re-allocation of the money to be expended and earmark a few thousand pounds for water supplies and other necessary works in the North.

**MR. RAPHAEL** (Victoria Park) [5.18]: I should like all members of this House to range themselves behind the Labour Party in protesting against the attack by the Federal Government on old age pensions. It behoves the people of Western Australia and of Australia to voice the strongest possible protest against this degrading attempt by the Federal Government, led by the Labour rat, Lyons, to rob the old people—people who cannot defend themselves—of the few paltry shillings granted them by way of pensions. Many things have been done by the present so-called Nationalist Government, but this is the worst thing they could have done. I am opposed to any reduction of salaries or emoluments, because I am firmly of opinion that action of that kind will not get the country out of its difficulties. The Federal Government are going to rob the old men and women of 14 per cent. of the amount allotted to them, and while they talk a lot about equality of sacrifice, they are going to reduce their own allowances by only five per cent. This is a filthy act on the part of the Federal Government and I hope it will rebound on the head of the man who suggested it. The Federal Government also propose the abolition of the gold bonus. I am with my leader in objecting to the grabbing propensities of the Commonwealth. If that sort of thing is going to continue and if there is going to be no redress, the sooner we get out of Federation, the better. I am not a secessionist, but I am satisfied that Western Australia is not getting the fair deal to which it is entitled. The gold bonus has been in operation for only a short period and the suggestion that it should be cut out, while the sugar ramp, the greatest disgrace

ever perpetrated, continues, should evoke the strongest possible protest. My electorate, though small in area, has quality to commend it. Its wants are few, but they have been unheeded by the Government. The Minister for Works has evidently realised the mistake he made on taking office in stopping the reclamation works at the Causeway. The great scheme initiated by the member for South Fremantle in conjunction with Mr. Stileman, would have been of immense benefit, not only to Victoria Park, but to the whole State. The widening of the Causeway would have provided efficient means of ingress to and egress from the city. We are frequently reminded that times are bad, but the Minister could have curtailed expenditure and continued operations on a smaller scale, instead of wasting the money already spent by stopping the work. I am of opinion that the Minister did not appreciate the need for a new causeway. I cannot understand why the Perth City Council, who were contributing £1,000 a year to the scheme, should have been told to keep their money. Evidently the Minister took the view that because the Labour Party had started the work, he would finish it and finish it quickly. The delay by the Government in extending the Victoria Park tramline has been the cause of many accidents. Ministers, both Labour and Nationalist, have admitted to deputations for years past that not only considerations of safety, but the needs of the people demanded that the line should be extended. The opportunity for undertaking the extension was never more favourable. The Government have labour to burn. All that they would have to provide are the rails, and I feel sure that they could find the money for that purpose. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) gave the House the other night his remedy for our difficulties. I understood him to say that if we allowed the goods required by the cockies to be imported duty free, and if we capitalised their liabilities, we would be taking a long step towards overcoming our difficulties. I expected the hon. member to suggest also a revaluation of workers' homes and a capitalisation of their liabilities. If concessions of the kind are given to one section of the community, they should be given to other sections. If the hon. member had suggested a writing down of the workers' liabilities, as well as of the farmers' liabilities, his remarks would have contained some sense and would have manifested sincerity. Last year the

Government remitted the payment of land tax by farmers, but at the same time they have played a little trick on workers by revaluing their land. During the last three months the unimproved value of land in Victoria Park has been increased 100 per cent.

The Minister for Lands: Too many sales have been effected.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Practically no sales of land have been effected during the last 12 months. If any sales have taken place, prices have shown a drop of 50 per cent. It is quite wrong for the Government to increase valuations by 100 per cent. in times like the present. We are told that the land had not been revalued for seven years, but the valuations on which people are being taxed represent those of peak years. People should not be burdened with higher taxation of this kind in such a critical time. I appreciate that Country Party members probably dominated the Government and insisted on the abolition of the land tax paid by farmers, but the tax has now been tacked on to the workers, who have to pay the piper. I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister for Works an instance of neglect by one of his departments. Recently I asked him a question regarding the application of the factories legislation to certain furniture and woodwork factories in the metropolitan area. One of those establishments is located practically opposite my place of business, and I can say that the Act is not being administered by the officials as it should be. The workmen are almost choked with dust, but the factories inspectors, in making their visits, simply go into the office, talk to the boss for five minutes, and then are satisfied that the men are getting a fair deal. Seeing that I brought the matter under the notice of the Minister by way of a question in the House, he should have ensured that the inspectors did their duty and administered the Act. I hope that it will not be necessary to reiterate my complaint, but that the Minister will attend to the job he is paid to do. I wish to say a few words in support of the remarks by the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton). It is not often that he brings forward anything with which I agree. I wish to refer to the despicable action of a city councillor in spending money made available through the Lord Mayor's Fund to further his own political aims and gains.

Mr. Patrick: We have had all that.



Mr. RAPHAEL: The hon. member can now have some more. The ex-Lord Mayor of Perth formed these different committees, and stipulated that only councillors should receive the money for distribution amongst the relief committees. The particular councillor referred to by the member for Leederville has been procuring money from the fund, and expending it to further his own ends. I hope the Minister in charge of unemployment will bear in mind the complaint that has been made, and will use such influence as he has to bring about co-ordination between the Government department concerned and these relief committees.

The Minister for Lands: You got your relief money to spend.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am supporting the remarks of the member for Leederville.

The Minister for Lands: What are you going to do about yours?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Ours is all right. I hope the Minister will see whether something can be done to put the Leederville relief committee on a proper basis.

The Minister for Lands: I will ask him to start with the Victoria Park committee.

Mr. RAPHAEL: That is quite in order.

The Minister for Lands: Only Leederville is wrong.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I should like to refer to an oversight on the part of the Minister for Health and to his lack of kindness of heart. The Labour Government, realising that there were many children whose parents were in indigent circumstances and could not afford to have their youngsters' teeth attended to by private dentists, decided to start a dental clinic, and by that means make people understand that teeth constituted one of the main causes of ill-health in children. In pursuance of that idea they created a dental clinic to provide for the care of children's teeth. In 1926 the Government began this work by appointing a dental practitioner, and two years later two more dentists were added to the clinic. During the three years that the present Government have been in office, nothing whatever has been done to further this very necessary undertaking. The three dentists who are now on the staff have the teeth of thousands of State school children to attend to, and also attend orphanages, the Old Men's Home, the Hospital for Insane, and other institutions. How can they possibly be expected to cover so much ground? The

Minister should at once create additional members to the dental staff.

The Minister for Lands: I cannot create them.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister could not create anything. His mind would not allow him to do so. I hope, however, he will employ other dentists so that this work may cover a more comprehensive sphere.

The Minister for Lands: That is better.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Children between the ages of six and eight are at present treated free. Teeth do not usually finish erupting until a child is 11 or 12 years of age, and sometimes the teeth are not through until the child reaches the age of 13 years. I hope the Government will realise the seriousness of the position, and will give special attention to the matter at an early date. The Dental Act has not been amended for ten years. I hope in the near future some effort will be made to remove the anomalies that exist in it. In order to practice, dentists are forced to pay £2 2s. a year as registration fee. If a man has not paid this money to the Dental Board by the 31st January in each year, he is wiped off the list as a registered practitioner. A man can be fined so much for each month his payment is overdue, and the total amount of the fine may run into a considerable sum. The board have a credit balance of over £1,400. If this money were being used for some useful purpose, such as to subsidise the Dental Hospital, I should have no objection to the accumulation of this fund, but it is wrong that all that money should be allowed to lie idle when so much requires to be done. I believe the Dental Hospital is doing good work, but the Government have interfered with it by reducing the amount of the subsidy.

The Minister for Lands: Now then, you had better be careful.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The subsidy was cut down by 20 per cent. when the Financial Emergency Act came into force.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Who put the Act into operation?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The present Government. I have been told that it was the Attorney General's Act. The Government were granting a subsidy of £900 a year, but according to newspaper reports they found it necessary to reduce the emoluments that were being paid, and the institution accordingly suffered the 20 per cent. reduction.



No doubt many institutions exist which should be assisted by the State, but this particular one is the most important and one most deserving of support.

The Minister for Lands: Are you speaking on its behalf this afternoon?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I cannot help it if the Minister's mentality will not allow him to understand on whose behalf I am speaking. Many people cannot afford to pay for dental attention. Owing to the lack of funds, the Dental Hospital now has to charge more than the patients can afford to pay. It is wrong to cut down the subsidy and deprive people of the help they should be getting. I wish also to refer to what I would call the Ottawa farce. We on this side of the House appreciate the good work that was done in some instances by the Scullin Government. We know that the adverse trade balance of £32,000,000 was within a short time converted into a favourable balance of £30,000,000. This was a gigantic effort on the part of the Scullin Administration, and worthy of our commendation. It was the Bruce Administration that put us in our present position, through over-borrowing and unwise expenditure. We are now told that Mr. Bruce, who got us into this terrible mess, will get us out of it again. We hear that Australia is going to receive a preference of 3d. a bushel on wheat. What price shall we have to pay for that? If Russia resumes her dumping tactics, what shall we get out of it? What is this small preference going to cost us in the matter of our trade balance? I wish to say a little with regard to the Frankland River dispute, and the rotten deal the Government have meted out to the men. I first got into touch with these workers at a deputation which came to this House, with a view to seeing whether the conditions could not be altered at Frankland River and Mt. Barker. Unfortunately, there is no Cabinet Minister controlling unemployment only. If our wishes had been granted, and a Minister appointed to deal with unemployment, men would not be begging for food to-day. When the men first went to the job, they were offered £2 a week for clearing. After a certain amount of agitation on their part, the officers in control decided that £2 was not sufficient, and they raised the figure to £6 10s. an acre. Some of the men who went to this job could not have made a living if the rate

had been £60 an acre. I wish to quote the case of a returned Imperial soldier. His shoulder had been shattered, his jaw had been shattered, he suffered from malaria, and had to walk 47 miles in sandshoes. He was no more fit to clear country than he was to chop firewood. To send a man of that type down there and tell him he has to earn the money that the Government decide to pay, or starve, is something damnable. That man was no more fit to do work of the kind that was expected of him than perhaps the Minister himself. As a matter of fact it would have done the Minister a lot of good to change places with that man for a week or two. The Minister would then have appreciated what the men of Frankland River were going through. The price charged the men down there for food is much above city rates.

The Minister for Lands: What does it cost them per week?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I will quote a few prices. Eggs, 1s. 3d. a dozen.

Mr. Sampson: That's cheap.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Cheap all right for the hon. member who receives £10 16s. a week but not cheap for men getting 25s. a week. Bread, 4d. a loaf; we pay 3d. for it here.

The Minister for Lands: You pay 4d.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do nothing of the sort; I pay 3d.

The Minister for Lands: Mt. Barker is recognised as one of the cheapest places in the State in which to live.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Then the Minister thinks that by sending these men away he is actually sending them to where they will be on a good wicket. The men had to buy food under rotten conditions.

The Minister for Lands: Let us have some more of the prices that they had to pay.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister can go through the whole list if he likes; I have the list here. Cheese, 1s. a lb. How much do we pay for it in Perth?

The Minister for Lands: Not less than that.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Minister's mentality is low to-day; he is trying to be witty at the expense of the downtrodden. Those men got into communication with the Minister, and he did not have the courtesy to reply to their telegram. If he had adopted the right attitude and got into



touch with the men, they would not be in the city streets to-day begging for food. The Government have not the people behind them in their attitude towards the unemployed. I have been in touch with many of these unfortunate men, and I have been to two of their meetings, and I can definitely say that they are not being led by Communists. It is the men themselves who are fighting for a livelihood. They are men who fought for their country, and they would be poor old things if they did not fight for better conditions than those offered by the Government. There is not much more that I want to say.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is not much that you have said.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have said more than the Minister has ever said in this House—the most silent Minister we have had or ever will have here. I appreciate what the Attorney General has done for the school at Victoria Park, and I thank him.

The Minister for Lands: You did not say that when speaking on the Supply Bill.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Since that debate the Minister has actually done what he had promised to do.

The Minister for Lands: As a matter of fact tenders were being called when you were speaking on the Supply Bill.

Mr. Marshall: Who is making this speech?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I thank the Attorney General, and I hope the Minister for Health will do his share by acceding to the request for dental attention at the same school.

**MR. MILLINGTON** (Mt. Hawthorn [5.53]): This, the second and final session of the fourteenth Parliament, is stripped for action. There is a restiveness on the part of Ministers who are not prepared to give any information in reply to criticism levelled at them. They have been let off lightly during the past year or two, but during the present session they cannot expect to escape the criticism that they deserve. Personally I was not elected as an apologist for the Government, and I do not intend to congratulate them on their remissness. It is the business of the Opposition, when the Government are remiss, to call attention to the fact. Consequently during the present session we shall only be doing our duty to the country if we direct atten-

tion to their neglect in many directions. There appears to be an idea at the back of the minds of some members of the Government that we are criticising them as individuals and not as Ministers. I might quote a suitable illustration by a tradesman who said, "Tell a man he is a good fellow personally, but that if he were a bad tradesman he would get the sack all the same." We can say to the Government, "We have nothing against the Ministers as individuals; our complaint is that they are bad tradesmen, that they have not done the job they have undertaken." All the criticism that has been offered in respect of the promises the Government made has met with the reply, "What would you have done?" That is rather a negative attitude to be adopted by men who have undertaken a job and who themselves set the terms of the contract. The Government made a promise to the people of the State and immediately we endeavour to hold them to that promise they consider it a complete reply when they say "What did you do in 1929?" It seems to me that the opinions of the Minister for Railways have permeated those of all his colleagues. As far back as 1911, when he was Premier, and the late Frank Wilson offered some criticism of the then Leader of the Government, Mr. Scaddan's complete reply was, "What did you do in 1907?" He did not then attempt to justify his position, and to-day when his attention is called to the laxity of the present Government in respect of a particular question, we get the reply, "Why did you not do it in 1929?" The answer to that is that the conditions to-day are entirely different from what they were before the present Government took office, and what was quite a permissible policy, that would then have been approved by the people of the State, will certainly not apply in this year, 1932. With respect to promises, the Government have given us a good lead. It seems to me that if you make promises that it is possible to carry out, the people will hold you to them, and all that the Government have to do when facing the country is to make promises that are incapable of being carried out and then when challenged merely point out that it was impossible to fulfil them. The record of promises of employment is so ridiculous that the Government do not even remember the definite promises they made. With regard to the Governor's Speech, we find at the tail end of it what appears to be a speculative