

Mr. ALLEN: With reference to the question of the central markets, the Government have resumed a large area of land for this purpose, so that fruit from the country might be sent in, regulated and controlled. At the present time we have a glut of fruit in the City. We have lost an important market in Germany, where our apples were bringing the best price of all Australian apples. The Government are now doing their best to find markets for our fruit supplies. It seems to me that to Colombo we should ship a large quantity of fruit. The Minister for Agriculture will bear me out when I say that we learned from members of a deputation which waited on him, that one enterprising firm in Perth had already opened up negotiations with South Australia and New South Wales for the export of fruit, and he informed us that Western Australian oranges were bringing £1 a case in New South Wales. I was glad to learn that Mr. Hardwick, who has the plans in hand, will shortly be leaving for the Eastern States to make inquiries, so that we may have everything up to date. I think these markets should be built as speedily as possible, but there again it will be a question of expenditure. The matter has been hung up for some time and we are now placed in the position that we cannot borrow money. Probably that is a blessing in disguise, but we want the markets very badly. I remember reading an article on the fruit supply of Perth a few days ago in which it was stated that the inspectors were unable to cope with the present condition of affairs. I think there are seven markets running at the same hour. The inspector cannot be in all those places at once. In one instance a man secured 10s. a case for apricots in one market, while in another market the same fruit was condemned by the inspector as being badly infected with fruit fly. If those central markets are erected, that anomaly will be obviated by the inspectors being on the spot, and so being able to inspect the fruit as it comes in. It is not my intention to take up further time. I hope we shall be able to carry out the sentiments expressed here, and drop for a while at least the

differences which in previous sessions have stood between us. This is a time at which we can afford to do so, and I feel sure I can speak for the rank and file on this side of the House in saying we will do everything we can to render the Government assistance; but the obligation is on the Government to be perfectly frank with Parliament and give us every information, otherwise the Government must take the consequences.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I move—
That the debate be adjourned.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

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

Ayes	13
Noes	30
				—
Majority against	..			17
				—

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Smith
Mr. Connolly	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. George	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Gilchrist	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Male	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Robinson
Mr. Nairn	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Johnston
Mr. Bolton	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munstle
Mr. Collier	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. James Gardiner	Mr. Taylor
Mr. J. P. Gardiner	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Green	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Walker
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Holman	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Heltmann
	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [10.23]: I come here as a new acquaintance, and I am sure members will all appreciate the position in which I find myself, for members know the ordeal they went through in making their maiden speeches in the House. I think we all realise that whatever opin-

ions we may have outside the House we must, to a considerable extent, be influenced by the surroundings in which we find ourselves on the inside. I claim indulgence, Mr. Speaker, for this occasion, and I hope I shall not so far exceed those limits which are extended to new members as to make it necessary for you to correct me and put me in my proper place. I do not propose to detain the House very long, because I realise that in these matters, these formalities of the House, I have a great deal to learn. Nobody appreciates that more than I do, and I shall endeavour to learn the qualities of the House and those principles which will assist me, before endeavouring to take too prominent a part. I want to remark briefly on one or two matters that have come before us since the opening of the debate. First, there is the speech delivered by the leader of the Country party. I want to congratulate that gentleman on his speech, because I think, if it did not strike a new note, it struck a note which will do no harm in this Chamber. Personally I have no associations with the old quarrels, and no desire to be drawn into them, and I hope members will accept me in that spirit. Of course, I do not promise, on the other hand, that it will not be my endeavour, so far as I can, to faithfully criticise that which I think deserves to be criticised on that side. It is the duty of every member to appreciate the position in which the Premier finds himself to-day. In some respects it is an unenviable one, as the Premier himself has said, and, with those who have due regard for the crisis through which we are passing, it should be the endeavour of every member so far as possible in relationship to fair criticism, to let the Ministry down in as honest and impartial a spirit as possible. I want to refer to the statement made by the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green). That gentleman said that from past experience the unemployed had more to expect from the Labour party than from the Liberal party. That is a sort of two-edged weapon. I do not know that the meaning which the hon. member intended

was the one which appealed to me. First it struck me as being unfair to prejudice any man or set of men in respect to their attitude towards the unemployed. I take second place to no hon. member in my consideration for those men who, by no fault of their own, are out of employment, and to that extent I resent a statement of the kind coming from the source it did. The member for Kalgoorlie was perhaps right to this extent, that the unemployed have had greater experience of unemployment while Labour Governments were in office. If this is the thing he had in his mind we agreed on that occasion, if on no other. I want to dwell for a moment on a remark or two made by the Premier in regard to trades unionism. I have always advocated the principles of bona fide trades unionism, and I hope I shall always do so; because any man who reads history can only come to one conclusion, namely, that were it not for trades unionism this world would not be as far advanced as it is to-day. As for any decent, honest sentiment towards the working man, there is no monopoly of it on that side of the House. I want that to be my motto, and my attitude will ever be in the direction I have indicated. If I find it necessary to disagree, as must reasonably follow, with some of the proposals of the Government in regard to their attitude, towards the worker my attitude will at all times be one of considerable friendliness. I must confess I admired the Premier when he got up and so boldly declared his attitude towards the great problem of wages. I do not think this is an occasion for threats. The threat was certainly never meant so far as I or my leader was concerned. My leader distinctly denied any desire whatever to reduce wages or to assist others to reduce wages. There is only one occasion when it is ever necessary or justifiable to reduce wages, and that is when the value of the articles produced has fallen. Up to the present, fortunately for the people of Australia, and for the people of the British empire, values have not fallen so that the most which it would be reasonable to ask of

the workers would be a division of their labour. I see no escape from that. As far as I can see it is not possible to give every worker a full day's work, and a regular day's work during the present crisis, but to suggest that it is necessary, because of the unfortunate position, to reduce the remuneration for the labour rendered is without justification, and I hope justification for it will not arise, either in our time or in any time to follow. Some opportunities might arise through a reduction of wages. We might possibly build houses a little cheaper, but I do not see that this would be an unmixed blessing by any means, because if we produced something under the reduced conditions we would reduce the values of those things already in existence, and not only the worker, but every member of the community would suffer as a result. I will, so far as lies in my power, strenuously oppose any movement coming from any source having that object in view. The worker, after a very long and strenuous fight against many odds, and certainly with many opportunities, has advanced his conditions to such a degree that he might almost be envied his position, but it would not be in the interests of the community for any attempt to be made to diminish those privileges which he has fought for so long and now enjoys.

The Premier: You must not overlook the fact that you are attached to the same party as Mr. Colebatch and Mr. Holmes, and they have pronounced emphatically in favour of it.

Mr. NAIRN: There are certain principles to which I subscribed, not in writing. There are certain principles to which my party are attached which I will honourably obey, but the reduction of wages is not one of them.

The Premier: You are converting some of them.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not care. There are a lot of people who could do with a little conversion, but I do not say on which side of the House they are. When it comes to a matter of conversion there might be some on both sides. With regard to my attitude towards my party

I have never been asked to subscribe to what would be to me such an objectionable thing, and when the time arrives and I am asked, which I feel will never be the case, it will be time for me to take my stand, as I do here now. I want to speak on another phase of labour in Australia, because it might seem strange that I have so greatly stressed this question. I have thought for a considerable time that the real problems of politics here are not those larger issues that affect the people of older countries. Here in this young country the question of wages plays the most important part of all in our political affairs, and the party with which I am associated have no cause to regret their attitude to the worker in giving him the privileges he now enjoys. The problem between the Liberal party and the Labour party to-day is not that of wages or fair remuneration to workers, and I hope it never will be, but I conscientiously believe that in the principles I have just enunciated there are many aspects of the Labour party's attitude which carry us beyond them. There are many problems which the Labour party have been trying in all good faith to solve, and which are the real points of difference between the Liberal and the Labour parties, and among those which are coming home at the present time with most effect and destruction is that of State-owned enterprises. It is necessary on most occasions to appeal to a man as he feels much more than as he reasons, and however desirable may be these State-owned enterprises for competitive purposes designed to uplift the worker and generally improve the conditions of the people, however well they may appear in theory, we know to-day, to our sorrow, and the Labour party know to their sorrow, that these are the particular problems and difficulties which are confronting them all along the way. These are the reasons more than any other—and I am expressing only my own opinion—why those sitting on the Government side have been so considerably diminished in numbers since the general election. These are the principles which I have always held, and my present atti-

tude, I hope, will be the one I will always follow. Many of us agree with the Labour party on many things, but good intention and general desire to help those most deserving of help is not a monopoly of any one party in the House. No one by any stretch of imagination can say that the Scaddan Government have very much to be proud of, so far as their financial results are concerned. I do not say this in any spirit of carping criticism, but it is a positive statement of fact that we must realise. Many opportunities, golden opportunities, were given to the Labour party three years ago. I venture to say there never was a time in the history of the State when such golden opportunities were presented to a political party, and yet what is the position to-day? What has been the underlying motive, the force at the back of this election which has resulted in diminishing the majority of the Labour party? It has not been that the worker or the great bulk of the people did not realise that the Labour party are endeavouring to carry out their professed desires, but it is a realisation that their objects are not in the best interests of the State. There are some members here with whom I find myself very much in antagonism politically. They are men for whose intellectual capacity I have a very high appreciation. I refer particularly to the Attorney General. Without repeating what has gone before, I want to say that certain statements of quite recent date have fallen from the lips of that gentleman which do not add in honour, dignity or in charm to a character we know so well. I wish to refer to his statement that the reason some of the Liberal party were returned to the House was that they bought the votes of the workers. This statement is an insult to the workers. I fail to understand how it is the hon. member does not realise that by making such a remark he was offering an insult to the workers. So far as my constituency is concerned I give the Attorney General's statement an absolute and positive denial right to the hon. member's face, because no man or set of men ever subscribed one single penny to put me in the position I occupy.

The Attorney General: Not you.

Mr. NAIRN: I am pleased to receive that assurance.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Nor in any other constituency either.

Mr. NAIRN: Such things would be better left unsaid, and particularly when we realise that our first duty is to minimise the ill-feeling and class hatred which it seems the desire of many to foster.

The Attorney General: Why do not you give your side the lecture?

Mr. NAIRN: I am giving it to the side which I think deserves it most. I admit there are mistakes on both sides and I have no desire to free myself from the charge of having made mistakes. We all make mistakes, but there are certain essential principles on which all decent-minded men might agree, and one of them is to give the other man credit for having some conscience and to show conscientious regard for his utterances. Here is an opportunity when the old force, because it has been a force, although fortunately it has become a lesser force, can be dragged from the grave and held up to the people as being the reason why the Labour party have been reduced in numbers. The real reason lies in some of the statements I have made. It is in our financial position to-day, this probably more than any other. The average worker records his vote in much the same way as any other man, namely, in the manner in which he thinks will be to the best interests of himself. No reasonable man to-day can expect that the worker feels himself to be in the same position of security as three years ago. We have only to get the views of the man in the street, of the man who is engaged in an ordinary irregular occupation. Whether he is holding a little property or has some vested interests in the State, let me remind my hon. friend opposite that he values these vested interests, and if they are only worth a few hundred pounds they are of as much importance to him as, and probably of more importance than, the vested interests of those who hold thousands of pounds.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: The hon. member does not mean that we are attempting to destroy them.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not say there is any attempt to destroy them. I am not so foolish as to think that the Labour party would endeavour to destroy those who put them in power. The people were led to a certain belief three years ago that certain results would accrue from certain undertakings, which have not been realised to-day. In other words, the Labour party had not delivered the goods.

The Premier: Will the hon. member answer this question, if he knows so well why our party has been reduced, will he inform us why it is that his party has not increased.

Mr. NAIRN: I am not prepared to look upon that side of the question. The party with which I am associated—

The Premier: Now?

Mr. NAIRN: Has now five or six seats in the Metropolitan area right in the very midst of the workers and right in these centres where the workers have so much of the small vested interests that I have been speaking of. That is the best indication that the workers know what is in their interests.

The Premier: How do you account for the victories over Liberals?

Mr. NAIRN: I am not here to account for impossible things. I am here only to make a plain statement of fact. The party which has had so many opportunities is, though not exactly gone out, at all events galloping towards the back door.

The Premier: When we escape it will be by the front door.

Mr. NAIRN: They are doing it not from any lack of good motives. I do not like to impute bad motives to anyone. These principles, the basic principles on which the Labour party rests itself, are the very principles which are going to destroy it. I want to deal with one or two of these, especially with regard to State enterprises and sawmills.

The Minister for Lands: You will not touch the sleeper hewers, will you?

Mr. NAIRN: The sleeper hewers have done their work so far as I am concerned. I realise this, that I had a good friend in the late Minister for Works so far as the hewers were concerned, and I beg to take this opportunity of thanking him for the assistance he rendered to me. I daresay there were many sleeper hewers who did not vote perhaps as their consciences moved them to do, I mean their political consciences. To many of the workers of the State the Labour party stands as an ideal, and when a man has an ideal he does not like to see it shattered. He will cling to that ideal to the last ditch. These are the only voters amongst the workers, so far as my district is concerned, who recorded their votes in the labour interest. It is not that they were badly represented, because my opponent, their late representative, was a vigorous and intelligent one who did me the honour to say that I had fought him fairly and squarely as I hope always to do. There was something in the position which appealed to these men to ask themselves whether their position is better now than it was two years ago. There was not ten per cent. of men who did not feel that they were in a worse position by reason of some of the extraordinary regulations which have been introduced by the department, but these have all been threshed out, and as a result of this I am here to-night. There is another matter which I wish to speak upon, namely, the attitude of the Government towards certain persons following honourable occupations in this State. The matter was discussed at the election and also was replied to by the then Minister for Works. This is in regard to wiping a man out of existence so far as earning an honest living is concerned. I want to refer to a man who is a business man, a man of standing, honourable and respectable and one who has never had any action brought against him in his life. He had placed himself in a position to do business at a place near one of the new State mills. He had honourably come into possession, as tenant, of a piece of land which had just as honourably been obtained by the owner. He established himself in business, and the

first thing that he knew was that he had the Government right up against him. They were not going to give that man an opportunity of carrying on his lawful occupation. The first move on the part of the Government was when he received notice that the land would be resumed. Prior to that he had endeavoured to buy from the Government sufficient material to enable him to build a store, in order to permit of his enlarging his business. Failing the delivery by the Government of the timber necessary for the erection of the building, he asked if he might purchase the timber elsewhere, and have it carried over the Government line which ran close by him. A refusal was the answer to this request. Finally, the result was that the man had his property resumed, and his opportunity of earning an honest living taken away. I defy anyone here to justify that act, and to bring it into harmony with the principles advocated by labour in regard to private mill owners. We have heard from one side and the other that it is wrong for private employers to deny the worker the right to buy his stores at the cheapest rates; in other words, to deny the right to storekeepers to come in and compete for the business. That party has violated the principle which they have stood for so long. Many of these principles that the Labour party stood for have been shattered, and are gone. Why is it that the Country party represents a constituency in which the majority of the workers in it are engaged in the timber business? That, I say, is one of the reasons for it. But it is not the only reason. I say that the attitude of the Government towards the workers engaged in the industry was not in keeping with the principles which they have stood for so long.

The Minister for Lands: Thank God, you do not understand the principles.

Mr. NAIRN: I say we have ourselves to thank. There is not one point that I have exaggerated.

The Minister for Lands: You are making *ex parte* statements.

Mr. NAIRN: I am making statements which I am prepared to pit against any

statement which may be made by the Minister.

The Premier: You have not told the complete story.

Mr. NAIRN: I have told the whole of the story.

The Premier: As far as you know it, perhaps.

Mr. NAIRN: I do know sufficient to say this, that the man was removed from an honourable occupation as a storekeeper, and that he was removed from it forcibly by the Government.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us how he got there in the first place.

Mr. NAIRN: He got there quite honourably, through being the tenant of a piece of land, adjacent to the mill, owned by another man. More than that, I wish to show how far the Labour party were prepared to go in order to crush this man out of existence. When he saw that the Government were determined to have the land resumed, as they said, for a school site, he offered in writing to make an exchange. But nothing was going to stand in the way of the Government. I have the statement of the late Minister for Works on this point. This was one statement made by the late Minister for Works—

Mr. Mattinson was fully aware of the Government's intentions right throughout; and he cannot say, therefore, that he has been hardly dealt by. Now I wish to ask what right has any man, or any Minister, to say that the intention was that there should be no competition at that mill and that no man should enter on that mill site for legitimate and bona-fide trade? That is the answer I want, the answer to that question, which is the most important of all. The intention of the Government plainly was that the business should not exist. The man offered an exchange. However, the land has been resumed, and the school has not been built, nor is it likely to be built.

Mr. Heitmann: He is after a pub, too, is he not?

Mr. NAIRN: You may know more about that than I do. I am talking about the intention of the Minister which was

perfectly clear. It is not my desire to labour the question, but his man was engaged in an honourable occupation and the Government resumed the land over his head and refused to give him an exchange.

The Minister for Lands: You ought to say how he got the land in the first place. Explain that.

Mr. NAIRN: He got it honourably. What right has any member, even a Minister of the Crown, to question any man's right to engage himself in an honourable occupation?

The Minister for Lands: There are two ways of getting land, you know.

Mr. NAIRN: It was got honourably; and if it had not been got honourably, I venture to say, the Minister would have made a statement to that effect in the Press, when replying to me. I wish just to emphasise this case as one of the reasons, amongst many, for which the Government have found themselves hard up against it in carrying on the State enterprises.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): We will carry our troubles; you carry your own. Do not let our troubles worry you.

Mr. NAIRN: I am not worrying; life is too short. But I want to say, as the Premier has said, that though we may not worry, still there are certain principles which every man should stand for, and certain responsibilities which every man must take upon himself and which must be protected at any cost. I shall not detain the House much longer. I wish to point out that, so far as this State is concerned, the position in which we find ourselves financially and in every other way is one which should induce us to learn some lessons even at this late hour. I think we might learn some lessons even from the war, and that is one of them. In making this remark I do not wish to pass any censure on the Government. One of the principles which we should stand for here is that of looking after and developing the industries of Western Australia. We have seen many of those facilities and many of those undertakings of which we know the loss.

We find ourselves placed at a decided disadvantage in many respects to-day because we have not laid ourselves out to develop those industries which we should have developed, having regard to the best interests of Western Australia. I may particularly refer to the importation of pipes into this State—German made pipes, if I may be allowed to emphasise that point. I wish to point out how much better the position would be to-day if we had had an industry established here in this State to construct pipes. How much better in that case would be our position for development and production in many other respects!

The Premier: You would know, of course, that we import German lager beer, too.

Mr. NAIRN: I know that one cannot obtain German lager beer made in Australia, but one can obtain Australian pipes made in Australia.

The Premier: You can get your lager the same as you get your pipes.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not drink much lager. Here was an opportunity for the establishment of a manufacture, and yet the Minister for Works coolly made the statement that he did not think it would be advisable for people to come to Western Australia and commence this industry for the sake of the small order which the Government had to offer.

Mr. George: The pipes are rusting now.

Mr. NAIRN: Yes; they are lying about the yards now. I want to know what explanation there is for the statement that these pipes had to be imported because they were urgently wanted, whilst we find they have been lying about for months.

The Minister for Lands: Those are repaired pipes, which were taken out of the mains.

Mr. NAIRN: Those pipes lying there?

The Minister for Lands: Yes, with a percentage.

Mr. NAIRN: I say those are the German made pipes. I wish to compare the attitude of the Labour Ministry with that of the previous Ministry, who required

steel pipes for the water scheme. When pipes were wanted by the Liberal Government they were manufactured in this State, but the Labour Government got theirs manufactured in Germany. I say that is not a fair attitude to adopt towards any industry, much less a fair attitude for the Government to adopt towards their own workers. I point that out as one of the lessons which we may learn from this war. We ought to learn to make this State more self-supporting. This episode is particularly surprising as originating from a party that has always stood forth as the champion of good Australian principles. I say that pipe transaction is a violation of the principles which have helped to place the Labour Government where they are. So far as may be in my power to assist the Treasurer, and to appreciate the position in which he finds himself to-day, I shall endeavour to make myself fully conversant with the facts and abstain from harassing or hampering in any way the undertakings which have been referred to, because, after all, I suppose each of us in his little insignificant way might inflict some little additional punishment on the Government if he so desired. I have no wish to say anything on the subject, except this: I honestly believe that the State enterprises are doomed to unutterable failure. It is not because the Labour party is controlling those enterprises that they are doomed to failure. They would be just as irrevocably doomed if they were controlled by the other side of the House.

The Premier: More so.

Mr. NAIRN: That is an impossibility. I am expressing my opinion.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you not believe in State enterprises at all?

Mr. NAIRN: Certainly. I do not wish to be caught in any misunderstanding. I think, however, that we should distinguish between State enterprises required for legitimate State purposes and those entered upon for the purpose of competition with private enterprise. When we get the balance sheets we have so long been waiting for, we shall be able to

discriminate between those which are paying and those which are not.

The Premier: On those conditions you ought to ask the Federal Government to close the post office.

Mr. NAIRN: That is a sign of the mental confusion the Premier finds himself in. He compares the post office, which is a monopoly, with a sawmill, which is anything but a monopoly. I am speaking of State competitive enterprises. I do not wish to be misunderstood. No one knows better than the Premier the difference between competitive enterprises and those which are not. I believe as a general principle Western Australia is not going to be an exception to any part of this great Empire to which we belong. So far as those great principles which have built up the Empire to which we belong are concerned, they were not built up on the ethic principles of State enterprises. They were built by a nation of traders giving every man full opportunity to develop them. This paltry attempt of ours is going to make us the laughing-stock of the world. It will make confusion worse confounded, but it will enable the people of the State to distinguish between a bona-fide party which stands for safe principles and humanitarianism, and a party which stands for Utopia.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth) [11.4]: I do not intend to detain the House at this late hour for any length of time. I wish, however, to emphatically enter my protest on this, the first occasion on which I am addressing this House of Parliament, on the attitude of the Premier towards members this evening.

The Premier: My complaint is against a majority of members.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: My complaint is against the leader of the House. I know from experience what are the duties of the leader of the House. I know that he should at least be courteous to members, and I think the Premier on this occasion, remembering that there were so many new members on this side, and this the first session of Parliament, might have had the common courtesy, if he intended to put the debate through to-night,