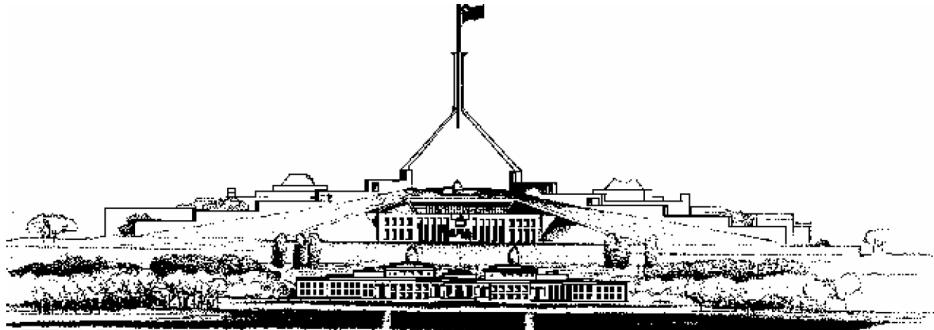




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



# House of Representatives

## Official Hansard

No. 45, 1946  
Thursday, 7 November 1946

EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

# PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: FIRST PERIOD.

## GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

His Royal Highness Henry William Frederick Albert, Duke of Gloucester, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, Knight of the Most Illustrious Order of Saint Patrick, Great Master and First or Principal Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order, General in the Army, Air Chief Marshal in the Royal Air Force, one of His Majesty's Personal Aides-de-Camp, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia from the 30th January, 1945.

## SECOND CHIFLEY GOVERNMENT.

(SWORN IN THE 1ST NOVEMBER, 1946.)

Prime Minister and Treasurer .. .	The Right Honorable Joseph Benedict Chifley.
Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs (and Deputy Prime Minister) .. .	The Right Honorable Herbert Vere Evatt, LL.D., D.Litt., K.C.
Minister for Labour and National Service .. .	The Honorable Edward James Holloway.
Minister for Air and Minister for Civil Aviation .. .	The Honorable Arthur Samuel Drakeford.
Vice-President of the Executive Council .. .	The Honorable William James Scully.
Minister for Supply and Shipping (and Leader of the Government in the Senate)	Senator the Honorable William Patrick Ashley.
Minister for Defence, Minister for Post-War Reconstruction and Minister in charge of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research	The Honorable John Johnstone Dedman.
Minister for Transport and Minister for External Territories	The Honorable Edward John Ward.
Postmaster-General .. .	Senator the Honorable Donald Cameron.
Minister for Information and Minister for Immigration .. .	The Honorable Arthur Augustus Calwell.
Minister for the Interior .. .	The Honorable Herbert Victor Johnson.
Minister for Health and Minister for Social Services (and Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate)	Senator the Honorable Nicholas Edward McKenna.
Minister for Commerce and Agriculture .. .	The Honorable Reginald Thomas Pollard.
Minister for Works and Housing .. .	The Honorable Nelson Lemmon.
Minister for Munitions .. .	Senator the Honorable John Ignatius Armstrong.
Minister for the Army .. .	The Honorable Cyril Chambers.
Minister for Trade and Customs .. .	Senator the Honorable Benjamin Courtice.
Minister for the Navy .. .	The Honorable William James Frederick Riordan.
Minister for Repatriation .. .	The Honorable Herbert Claude Barnard.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD.)**

**SESSION 1946.**

FIRST SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

(FIRST PERIOD.)

(*From the 6th November, 1946, to the 6th December, 1946.*)

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**10 GEO. VI.**

**VOLUME 189.**

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SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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*Printed and Published for the GOVERNMENT of the COMMONWEALTH of AUSTRALIA by  
L. F. JOHNSTON, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, A.C.T.*

# THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE.

(FROM THE 1ST JULY, 1944.)

## EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION : FIRST PERIOD.

*President*—Senator the Honorable Gordon Brown.

*Chairman of Committees*—Senator Theophilus Martin Nicholls.

*Temporary Chairmen of Committees*—Senators Stanley Kerin Amour, James Jarvist Arnold, William Edward Aylett, Walter Jackson Cooper, M.B.E., and Senator the Honorable Herbert Hays.

*Leader of the Opposition*.—Senator the Honorable George McLeay.

*Deputy Leader of the Opposition*—Senator the Honorable John William Leckie.

Amour, Stanley Kerin†	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Armstrong, Hon. John Ignatius‡	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Arnold, James Jarvist†	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Ashley, Hon. William Patrick†	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Aylett, William Edward†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
( <sup>5</sup> )Beirworth, Frederick Hubert	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
Brand, Charles Henry, C.B., C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O.†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Brown, Hon. Gordon†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
Cameron, Hon. Donald†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Clothier, Robert Ernest†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
Collett, Hon. Herbert Brayley, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D.†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
Collings, Hon. Joseph Silver†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
Cooper, Walter Jackson, M.B.E.†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
Courtice, Hon. Benjamin†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
Crawford, Hon. Thomas William†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
( <sup>6</sup> )Devlin, John Joseph	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Finlay, Alexander†	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
Foll, Hon. Hattil Spencer†	..	..	..	..	..	Queensland
( <sup>7</sup> )Fraser, Alexander John, M.C.	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Fraser, Hon. James Mackintosh†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
Gibson, Hon. William Gerrard†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Grant, Donald MacLennan†	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Hayes, Hon. John Blyth, C.M.G.†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
Hays, Hon. Herbert†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
( <sup>8</sup> )Kean, Hon. Richard Valentine†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Lamp, Charles Adcock†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
Large, William James†	..	..	..	..	..	New South Wales
Leckie, Hon. John William†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
MacDonald, Hon. Allan Nicoll†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
McKenna, Hon. Nicholas Edward†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
McLachlan, James†	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
McLeay, Hon. George†	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
( <sup>9</sup> )Mattner, Edward William, M.C., D.C.M., M.M.	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
Nash, Richard Harry†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
Nicholls, Theophilus Martin‡	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
O'Flaherty, Sidney Wainman†	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia
Sampson, Burford, D.S.O., V.D.†	..	..	..	..	..	Tasmania
Sheehan, James Michael†	..	..	..	..	..	Victoria
Tangney, Dorothy Margaret†	..	..	..	..	..	Western Australia
( <sup>10</sup> )Uppill, Oliver†	..	..	..	..	..	South Australia

(<sup>1</sup>) Resigned, the 16th September, 1944.

(<sup>2</sup>) Elected to casual vacancy, the 10th October, 1944; defeated at general elections, the 28th September, 1946.

(<sup>3</sup>) Died, the 27th April, 1946.

(<sup>4</sup>) Elected to casual vacancy, the 15th May, 1946; defeated at general elections, the 28th September, 1946.

(<sup>5</sup>) Elected to casual vacancy, the 28th September, 1946.

(<sup>6</sup>) Elected to casual vacancy, the 28th September, 1946.

Dates of Retirement of Senators—† The 30th June, 1947.      ‡ The 30th June, 1950.

# THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

## EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION : FIRST PERIOD.

*Speaker*—The Honorable John Solomon Rosevear.

*Chairmen of Committees*—Joseph James Clark.

*Temporary Chairmen of Committees*—The Honorable Joseph Palmer Abbott, M.C., George James Bowden, M.C., Thomas Patrick Burke, Henry Baynton Somer Gullett, M.C., James William Hadley, William Joseph Hutchinson, Daniel Mulcahy, George James Rankin, D.S.O., V.D., Rupert Sumner Ryan, C.M.G., D.S.O., Thomas Sheehan, Thomas Neil Sheehy and David Oliver Watkins.

*Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia*—The Right Honorable Robert Gordon Menzies, K.C.

*Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia*—The Honorable Eric John Harrison.

*Leader of the Australian Country Party*—The Right Honorable Arthur William Fadden.

*Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party*—The Honorable John McEwen.

Abbott, Hon. Joseph Palmer, M.C.	.	.	.	.	.	New England (N.S.W.)
Adermann, Charles Frederick	.	.	.	.	.	Maranoa (Q.)
Anthony, Hon. Hubert Lawrence	.	.	.	.	.	Richmond (N.S.W.)
Barnard, Hon. Herbert Claude	.	.	.	.	.	Bass (T.)
Beale, Howard	.	.	.	.	.	Parramatta (N.S.W.)
Beazley, Kim Edward	.	.	.	.	.	Fremantle (W.A.)
Blackburn, Mrs. Doris Amelia	.	.	.	.	.	Bourke (V.)
Blain, Adair Macalister	.	.	.	.	.	(N.T.)
Bowden, George James, M.C.	.	.	.	.	.	Gippsland (V.)
Brennan, Hon. Frank	.	.	.	.	.	Batman (V.)
Burke, Thomas Patrick	.	.	.	.	.	Perth (W.A.)
Calwell, Hon. Arthur Augustus	.	.	.	.	.	Melbourne (V.)
Cameron, Hon. Archie Galbraith	.	.	.	.	.	Barker (S.A.)
Chambers, Hon. Cyril	.	.	.	.	.	Adelaide (S.A.)
Chifley, Rt. Hon. Joseph Benedict	.	.	.	.	.	Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Clark, Joseph James	.	.	.	.	.	Darling (N.S.W.)
Conelan, William Patrick	.	.	.	.	.	Griffith (Q.)
Corser, Bernard Henry	.	.	.	.	.	Wide Bay (Q.)
Daly, Frederick Michael	.	.	.	.	.	Martin (N.S.W.)
Davidson, Charles William, O.B.E.	.	.	.	.	.	Capricornia (Q.)
Dedman, Hon. John Johnstone	.	.	.	.	.	Corio (V.)
Drakeford, Hon. Arthur Samuel	.	.	.	.	.	Maribyrnong (V.)
Duthie, Gilbert William Arthur	.	.	.	.	.	Wilmot (T.)
Edmonds, William Frederick	.	.	.	.	.	Herbert (Q.)
Evatt, Rt. Hon. Herbert Vere, LL.D., D.Litt., K.C.	.	.	.	.	.	Barton (N.S.W.)
Fadden, Rt. Hon. Arthur William	.	.	.	.	.	Darling Downs (Q.)
Falkinder, Charles William Jackson, D.S.O., D.F.C.	.	.	.	.	.	Franklin (T.)
Falstein, Sydney Max	.	.	.	.	.	Watson (N.S.W.)
Francis, Hon. Josiah	.	.	.	.	.	Moreton (Q.)
Fraser, Allan Duncan	.	.	.	.	.	Eden-Monaro (N.S.W.)
Fuller, Arthur Neiberding	.	.	.	.	.	Hume (N.S.W.)
Gaha, Dr. the Hon. John Francis, M.B.	.	.	.	.	.	Denison (T.)
Gullett, Henry Baynton Somer, M.C.	.	.	.	.	.	Henty (V.)
Hadley, James William	.	.	.	.	.	Lilley (Q.)
Hamilton, Leonard William	.	.	.	.	.	Swan (W.A.)
Harrison, Hon. Eric John	.	.	.	.	.	Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Haylen, Leslie Clement	.	.	.	.	.	Parkes (N.S.W.)
Holloway, Hon. Edward James	.	.	.	.	.	Melbourne Ports (V.)
Holt, Hon. Harold Edward	.	.	.	.	.	Fawkner (V.)
Howse, John Brooke	.	.	.	.	.	Calare (N.S.W.)
Hughes, Rt. Hon. William Morris, C.H., K.C.	.	.	.	.	.	North Sydney (N.S.W.)
Hutchinson, William Joseph	.	.	.	.	.	Deakin (V.)
James, Rowland	.	.	.	.	.	Hunter (N.S.W.)
Johnson, Hon. Herbert Victor	.	.	.	.	.	Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
Lang, John Thomas	.	.	.	.	.	Reid (N.S.W.)
Langtry, Joseph Ignatius	.	.	.	.	.	Riverina (N.S.W.)

**THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*continued.***

v

Lawson, Hon. George .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Brisbane (Q.)
Lazzarini, Hon. Hubert Peter .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Werriwa (N.S.W.)
Lennon, Hon. Nelson .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Forrest (W.A.)
Lyons, Dame Enid Muriel, G.B.E. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Darwin (T.)
McBride, Hon. Philip Albert .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Wakefield (S.A.)
McDonald, Hon. Allan McKenzie .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Corangamite (V.)
McEwen, Hon. John .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Indi (V.)
McLeod, Donald .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Wannon (V.)
Menzies, Rt. Hon. Robert Gordon, K.C. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Kooyong (V.)
Mulcahy, Daniel .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Lang (N.S.W.)
O'Connor, William Paul .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	West Sydney (N.S.W.)
Page, Rt. Hon. Sir Earle Christmas Grafton, G.C.M.G., C.H. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Cowper (N.S.W.)
Pollard, Hon. Reginald Thomas .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Ballaarat (V.)
Rankin, George James, D.S.O., V.D. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Bendigo (V.)
Riordan, Hon. William James Frederick .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Kennedy (Q.)
Rosevear, Hon. John Solomon .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Dalley (N.S.W.)
Russell, Edgar Hughes Deg .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Grey (S.A.)
Ryan, Rupert Sumner, C.M.G., D.S.O. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Flinders (V.)
Scullin, Rt. Hon. James Henry .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Yarra (V.)
Scully, Hon. William James .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Gwydir (N.S.W.)
Sheehan, Thomas .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Cook (N.S.W.)
Sheehy, Thomas Neil .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Boothby (S.A.)
Spender, Hon. Percy Claude, K.C. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Warringah (N.S.W.)
Thompson, Albert Victor .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Hindmarsh (S.A.)
Turnbull, Winton George .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Wimmera (V.)
Ward, Hon. Edward John .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	East Sydney (N.S.W.)
Watkins, David Oliver .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Newcastle (N.S.W.)
White, Hon. Thomas Walter, D.F.C., V.D. .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Balaclava (V.)
Williams, Thomas Francis .. .	.. .	.. .	.. .	Robertson (N.S.W.)

# THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION.

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## JOINT.

BROADCASTING.—Senator Amour, Senator Finlay, Senator Herbert Hays, Mr. Burke, Mr. Falkinder, Mr. Hadley, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Spender, and Mr. Watkins.

HOUSE.—The President, Senator Amour, Senator Arnold, Senator Brand, Senator Cooper, Senator Fraser, Senator James McLachlan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Burke, Mr. Corser, Mr. Francis, Mr. Holt, Mr. Mulcahy, and Mr. Watkins.

LIBRARY.—Mr. Speaker, The President, Senator Arnold, Senator Collett, Senator J. B. Hayes, Senator Lamp, Senator Sampson, Senator Tangney, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Beazley, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. White.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS BROADCASTING.—Mr. Speaker (Chairman), the President, Senator Arnold, Senator James McLachlan, Mr. Corser, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Haylen, Mr. Holt, and Mr. Sheehan.

PRINTING.—Senator Arnold, Senator Beerworth, Senator Cooper, Senator Gibson, Senator J. B. Hayes, Senator MacDonald, Senator Tangney, Mr. Adermann, Mr. Conelan, Mr. Daly, Mr. Haylen, Mr. McDonald, Mr. O'Connor, and Mr. Ryan.

PUBLIC WORKS.—Senator Brand, Senator Lamp, Senator Nash, Mr. Conelan, Mr. Gullett, Mr. Howse, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Russell.

## SENATE.

DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS.—Senator Clothier, Senator Collings, Senator Gibson, Senator James McLachlan, Senator Nash, Senator O'Flaherty, and Senator Sampson.

REGULATIONS AND ORDINANCES.—Senator Arnold, Senator Cooper, Senator Herbert Hays, Senator Large, Senator MacDonald, Senator Nash, and Senator Tangney.

STANDING ORDERS.—The President, the Chairman of Committees, Senator Cameron, Senator Crawford, Senator Devlin, Senator Herbert Hays, Senator Lamp, Senator James McLachlan, and Senator Sheehan.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

PRIVILEGES.—Mr. Clark, Dr. Evatt, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. McEwen, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Williams.

STANDING ORDERS.—Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Fadden, Sir Earle Page, Mr. Riordan, and Mr. Williams.

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# PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS.

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## SENATE.

Clerk.—J. E. Edwards.

Clerk-Assistant.—R. H. C. Loof.

Usher of the Black Rod—W. I. Emerton.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Clerk.—F. C. Green, M.C.

Clerk-Assistant—A. A. Tregear.

Second Clerk-Assistant—S. F. Chubb.

Sergeant-at-Arms—A. G. Turner.

## PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING STAFF.

Principal Reporter—(Until the 30th November, 1946) G. H. Romans; (from the 1st December, 1946) A. P. Adams.

Second Reporter—(Until the 30th November, 1946) A. P. Adams; (from the 1st December, 1946) H. M. Johnson.

## LIBRARY.

Librarian—K. Binns.

Assistant Librarian—H. L. White.

## JOINT HOUSE.

Secretary—R. H. C. Loof.

# THE ACTS OF THE SESSION.

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## APPROPRIATION ACT 1946-47 (No. 56 of 1946)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the 30th day of June, One thousand nine hundred and forty-seven, and to appropriate the Supplies granted by the Parliament for that year.

## APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1946-47 (No. 57 of 1946)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the 30th day of June, One thousand nine hundred and forty-seven, for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c., and to appropriate that sum.

## CENSUS AND STATISTICS ACT 1946 (No. 74 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Census and Statistics Act* 1905-1938.

## CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (SOCIAL SERVICES) ACT 1946 (No. 81 of 1946)—

An Act to alter the Constitution by empowering the Parliament to make Laws for the Provision of Maternity Allowances, Widows' Pensions, Child Endowment, Unemployment, Pharmaceutical, Sickness and Hospital Benefits, Medical and Dental Services, Benefits to Students and Family Allowances.

## CUSTOMS TARIFF (SPECIAL WAR DUTY) VALIDATION ACT 1946 (No. 68 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Customs Tariff (Special War Duty) Validation Act* (No. 2) 1943—

## DEFENCE (TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS) ACT 1946 (No. 77 of 1946)—

An Act to make provision for the Security and Defence of the Commonwealth during a Time of Transition from War Conditions to Conditions of Peace, and for other purposes.

## EXCISE TARIFF VALIDATION ACT (No. 2) 1946 (No. 69 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Excise Tariff Validation Act* (No. 2) 1943.

## LOAN (HOUSING) ACT 1946 (No. 76 of 1946)—

An Act to authorize the Raising of Moneys to be advanced to the States for the purposes of Housing.

## MINISTERS OF STATE ACT 1946 (No. 73 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Ministers of State Act* 1935-1941.

## QANTAS EMPIRE AIRWAYS AGREEMENT ACT 1946 (No. 75 of 1946)—

An Act to authorize the execution of an Agreement for the Purchase by the Commonwealth of certain shares in Qantas Empire Airways Limited, and to appropriate the Moneys necessary for the purchase of those shares.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 1) 1946 (No. 58 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 1) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 2) 1946 (No. 59 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 2) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 3) 1946 (No. 60 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 3) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 4) 1946 (No. 61 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 4) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 5) 1946 (No. 62 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 5) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 6) 1946 (No. 63 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 6) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 7) 1946 (No. 64 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 7) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 8) 1946 (No. 65 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 8) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX ACT (No. 9) 1946 (No. 66 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Act* (No. 9) 1930-1943.

## SALES TAX (EXEMPTIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS) ACT (No. 2) 1946 (No. 67 of 1946)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Act* 1935-1946.

## STATES GRANTS ACT 1946 (No. 72 of 1946)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund sums for the purposes of Financial Assistance to the States of South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania.

## STATES GRANT (DROUGHT RELIEF) ACT 1946 (No. 70 of 1946)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a Sum for the purpose of making Grants to certain States for the purpose of Drought Relief.

THE ACTS OF THE SESSION—*continued.*

WHEAT EXPORT CHARGE ACT (No. 2) 1946 (No. 79 of 1946)—  
An Act to amend the *Wheat Export Charge Act* 1946.

WHEAT INDUSTRY ASSISTANCE ACT 1946 (No. 71 of 1946)—  
An Act to amend the *Wheat Industry Assistance Act* 1938.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION ACT (No. 2) 1946 (No. 80 of 1946)—  
An Act to amend the *Wheat Industry Stabilization Act* 1946.

WHEAT TAX ACT 1946 (No. 78 of 1946)—  
An Act to impose a Tax in respect of certain Wheat.

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[The only Bill remaining on the Notice-paper was the Acts Interpretation Bill 1946, which was initiated in the House of Representatives and reached the second reading stage.]

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# PARLIAMENT PROROGUED AND CONVENED.

EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION.

(*Gazette No. 200, 1946.*)

## PROCLAMATION.

COMMONWEALTH OF By His Royal Highness the Governor-General in and over the  
AUSTRALIA TO WIT. HENRY Commonwealth of Australia.  
Governor-General.

WHEREAS by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia it is amongst other things provided that the Governor-General may appoint such times for holding the Sessions of the Parliament as he thinks fit:

Now therefore, I, Henry William Frederick Albert, Duke of Gloucester, the Governor-General aforesaid, in exercise of the power conferred by the said Constitution do by this my Proclamation appoint Wednesday the sixth day of November One thousand nine hundred and forty-six as the day for the said Parliament to assemble and be holden for the despatch of divers urgent and important affairs: and all Senators and Members of the House of Representatives are hereby required to give their attendance accordingly in the building known as the Houses of Parliament, Canberra, at the hour of Two o'clock p.m. on the said sixth day of November, One thousand nine hundred and forty-six.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia aforesaid this 23rd day of October, in the year of our Lord, One thousand nine hundred and forty-six and in the tenth year of His (L.S.) Majesty's reign.

By His Royal Highness's Command,

J. B. CHIFLEY

Prime Minister.

God SAVE THE KING!

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member desires enlightenment in regard to any particular phase of the agreement, the Commissioner of Taxation will make his officers available to supply whatever information may be required.

### TUBERCULOSIS.

**Mr. HARRISON.**—Has the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Minister for Social Services read a letter published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 6th November, in which Dr. Keith Barry cited a medical specialist as having said that more Australian lives had been lost because of tuberculosis between 1914 and 1918 than had been lost in the two world wars, and that three people a day were dying in New South Wales from a preventable disease? Has the Minister read, in particular, this statement by Dr. Barry: "It is a pretty grim business telling a youngster that you realize that he is desperately ill but no facilities are available for helping him get better"? If so, will the Minister immediately convene a conference with the States to initiate action to provide the necessary treatment facilities to cope with this scourge, so that the alarming death rate as the result of it may be arrested?

**Mr. HOLLOWAY.**—I have not read the letter referred to. I agree with Dr. Barry that if the facts are as he has stated them, it is a "pretty grim business". I do not know whether or not the statements quoted are true. I shall draw the attention of the Minister for Health and Minister for Social Services to the questions which the honorable gentleman has raised and shall ascertain what views he holds in regard to the convening of a conference. The Minister is continually having conferences with the Health Departments of all the States. I add that more has been done in connexion with this matter by the Commonwealth Labour Government during the last few years than had previously been done in Australia.

The agreement was signed in London on the 29th October, 1946, by Dr. Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, and by Mr. J. A. Beasley, High Commissioner for Australia, on behalf of the Australian Government.

The agreement is designed to apply to assessments for the current financial year, but it will not come into actual operation until such time as it has received the endorsement of the Parliament of each country. The appropriate legislation to give it this endorsement in Australia will be introduced by the Government early in 1947.

In the statement which I made to the House on the 2nd August last, I gave to honorable members a broad outline of the provisions of the agreement. These provisions will be examined in greater detail when the legislation mentioned is brought down. Meanwhile, if any honorable

**Mr. BEAZLEY.**—During the last Parliament an annual grant of £350,000 was made available by the Commonwealth to the States for the purpose of treating tuberculosis. I understand that of that amount £100,000 was to be provided for expenditure on capital equipment such as

hospitals and fittings. I have been informed that no State has applied for any part of the latter sum. Will the Treasurer inform the House whether that is so?

**Mr. CHIFLEY.**—The amount which the Commonwealth had agreed to provide for this purpose was as has been stated by the honorable member. It was agreed that an amount of up to £50,000 annually should be paid to the States on a £1 for £1 basis for diagnostic treatment and other measures associated with the detection of tuberculosis. The Commonwealth also agreed to provide £50,000 annually to subsidize the States on a pound for pound basis for expenditure incurred on after-care treatment. However, a flaw was discovered in the original legislation and the act was amended towards the end of the last Parliament. An amount of £250,000 has now been provided for distribution between the States in order to enable them to meet the requirements of necessitous cases where the bread-winner of the family is in hospital suffering from tuberculosis. One of the causes of delay in the distribution of the money was the flaw in the original legislation. I am not able to say at the moment whether any of the States have applied for a grant from those funds, but I shall obtain the information and supply it to the honorable member. I may add that the Minister for Health and Social Services is arranging for the holding of a further conference on the matter.

#### HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

**Mr. SHEEHY.**—Owing to the shortage of accommodation in maternity hospitals in South Australia, some expectant mothers are obliged to enter non-approved hospitals, thereby losing the benefit of the hospital subsidy of £2 2s. a week. Can the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Minister for Social Services say whether it is possible to pay this subsidy to those who are obliged to enter non-approved hospitals through no fault of their own?

**Mr. HOLLOWAY.**—The honorable member's question raises a technical point which has not so far been dealt with. It is true that expectant mothers who enter a hospital, whether private or public, are entitled to a rebate of £2 2s. a week, plus

the maternity allowance. The Commonwealth Government has not refused to approve any hospital that has applied for registration unless the State Health Department concerned asserted that conditions or accommodation were not suitable. I do not know whether women are being compelled to enter non-approved hospitals because of a general shortage of accommodation, nor do I know whether hospitals have not been approved because the management has not sought registration, or because the application has been refused. If women are compelled to enter non-approved hospitals, I do not know whether they are entitled to the rebate provided under the act, but I shall make inquiries.

#### MEAT.

##### EXPORT TO GREAT BRITAIN: NEW AGREEMENT.

**Mr. McEWEN.**—Will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture state whether the Government has entered into a new agreement with the Government of the United Kingdom for the sale of Australian meat for another year, or for any other period? If such an agreement has been made, will the Minister undertake to make its provisions known without delay? If he cannot do this, will he state what reasons exist which, in the opinion of the Government, would justify keeping the Australian meat producers in ignorance of the price at which their product is to be sold?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—A new agreement has been entered into with the Government of the United Kingdom. I ask the honorable member to put the remaining part of his question on the Notice Paper, and in due course a full statement on the subject will be made.

#### SHIPPING.

##### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SERVICES.

**Mr. BURKE.**—The home-building programme for Western Australia has been impeded and frequently goods required for building purposes are in short supply owing to a shortage of materials, and this, in turn, is due to the lack of shipping for the carriage of these materials from the eastern States. Will the Minister representing the Minister

for Supply and Shipping confer with his colleague with a view to ensuring that sufficient shipping shall be made available to meet the needs of Western Australia?

Mr. DEDMAN.—I shall bring the honorable member's question to the notice of the Minister for Supply and Shipping, who, I am sure, will do everything within his power to ensure that existing difficulties shall be overcome.

#### FOOD FOR BRITAIN.

Mr. HOLT.—Australians returning from Great Britain, as well as English people visiting these shores, all express concern at the food situation in Great Britain. Can the Prime Minister say whether the Government proposes to take any special measures to increase the supply of those foodstuffs which are most urgently needed?

Mr. CHIFLEY.—I dealt with this matter at some length in the last Parliament, and pointed out that the Government had, as far as possible, met the requests of the Government of the United Kingdom in regard to meat, wheat, sugar and butter. I explained that rationing was being continued in Australia so that we might meet our commitments in respect of these commodities. Very shortly, the new Cabinet will review the subject of rationing, and until then I cannot say whether more food can be sent to Britain. I shall give a more extensive reply to the honorable member's question as soon as possible.

Mr. WHITE.—In view of the differing food positions in Britain and Australia, will the Prime Minister, when he conducts his inquiry, in conjunction with the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, with a view to determining whether a greater national effort may be made to export food to Britain, also consider whether the food parcels that are being sent generously to Britain by Australian citizens may be supplemented by a substantial gift of food from the Commonwealth as a Christmas gesture?

Mr. CHIFLEY.—I shall examine the honorable gentleman's suggestion when the other matter that he has mentioned is being investigated.

#### MANUS ISLAND.

Mr. ABBOTT.—Will the Minister for External Affairs inform the House on what terms and conditions the United States of America occupied, fortified and built military installations upon the island of Manus during the recent war against Japan? Will the Minister also state whether any request has been received from the Government of the United States of America for the transference of sovereign ownership of Manus to that Government with a view to establishing a permanent military base there for the defence of the South-West Pacific area? Have other approaches been made by the United States Government regarding the island, and if so what is the present position of the negotiations? Is it a fact that if the United States of America created a large military establishment on the island it would in effect be extending the Monroe doctrine to the Pacific and South-West Pacific area? Will the Minister make a statement to the House concerning the whole of the negotiations which have taken place between the Government of the United States of America and the Australian Government regarding Manus Island?

Dr. EVATT.—I have from time to time reported to the House the situation in relation to Manus Island. In view of the length and importance of the honorable gentleman's questions I believe the best way to deal with the matter would be for me to make a further statement to the House at the earliest opportunity. Negotiations in relation to Manus Island and other matters have taken place as a consequence of the conference of Prime Ministers of the British Commonwealth in London. There is a good deal of ground to be covered in dealing with these negotiations, and I shall take the earliest opportunity to make a statement to the House concerning them.

#### CIVIL AVIATION.

#### ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE WORKSHOPS AND INSTALLATIONS.

Mr. THOMPSON.—In connexion with civil aircraft operations in South Australia, extensive repair and other work is being undertaken in workshops and

installations established by the Royal Australian Air Force at Parafield and other places. Will the Minister for Air and Minister for Civil Aviation state what is the policy of the Government and of his department regarding civil aviation throughout Australia, and whether it is intended to retain in each State the main service workshops and efficient staffs and to make them available for the carrying out of repair work necessary for the maintenance and development of civil aviation?

**Mr. DRAKEFORD.**—The position with regard to repair and maintenance at airfields throughout Australia is that sufficient staff is retained to look after the safety and servicing of aircraft which start from or pass those places in the course of their operations. The Department of Air has in Australia several maintenance, servicing and repair establishments which are located at the most suitable sites. As it is not practicable to have at every air station a maintenance, servicing and inspection organization, it is necessary to put these facilities in the places where most aircraft are engaged. That policy will be continued, because, according to the advice which the Royal Australian Air Force has tendered to me, it is the best way in which to ensure the safe operation of aeroplanes.

#### **Mr. A. S. DRAKEFORD, M.P.**

**Mr. GULLETT.**—Will the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs inform the House whether a newspaper is correct in reporting that, when the Minister for Air returned to Australia from America recently, he demanded of the local customs officer in Sydney that a locked bag be passed through the customs without examination by customs officials? Did the customs officer insist that the law be obeyed and that the bag be opened? Did the Minister for Air then communicate with some higher authority, and was the bag eventually passed without examination on the instruction of that higher authority? Will the Minister inform me who was that higher authority and what was in the bag? Were the contents, in fact, those of the Minister for Air or a member of his family who accompanied

him? In conclusion, were the contents dutiable, and has duty been paid on them?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—I have not seen the reference in the press; but I shall refer the honorable member's question to the Minister for Trade and Customs.

**Mr. DRAKEFORD.**—I rise to a personal explanation. As my name has been imported into a question asked by the honorable member for Henty, I desire to inform the House immediately that there is no truth in the statement that I was held or any member of my family was held by the Customs Department. It is true that on my arrival in Sydney, I communicated with the Prime Minister, because I desired to ask the right honorable gentleman whether he desired me to return direct to Canberra with the object of reporting to him on my mission. A considerable time elapsed before I was able to speak to the Prime Minister. Rumours such as that repeated by the honorable member for Henty have been circulated, and I ask him and other honorable members not to give credence to sensational statements which are published in the press, and have not the slightest foundation.

#### BROADCASTING.

##### DISMISSAL BY THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION.

**Mr. HAYLEN.**—Is the Minister representing the Postmaster-General aware that a ranking journalist employed by the Australian Broadcasting Commission has been dismissed for having used offensive words? I should like to point out that these offensive words were not written but were spoken to the general manager of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. In view of the fact that the penalty imposed in the police court for offensive words ranges between £5 and £20 and this man is in receipt of a salary of approximately £900 per annum, will the Minister ask the Postmaster-General to institute an inquiry as to the justice of the sentence?

**Mr. CALWELL.**—I shall ask the Postmaster-General to make the inquiry requested by the honorable member for Parkes and I shall, I hope, at a not distant date be in a position to advise him and the House regarding the result.

**CONTRABAND TOBACCO.**

Mr. ANTHONY.—I direct the attention of the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs to a paragraph which appeared in to-day's press containing allegations made in the Parliament of Queensland that excise officers in Brisbane had raided the home of a Minister of the Crown in Queensland and had found there a quantity of contraband tobacco. Will the Minister have inquiries made immediately and make a statement to the House to-morrow regarding the allegation? Will he also state the names of the officers concerned, and the quantity of contraband goods, if any, that were found?

Mr. POLLARD.—I have not read the press statement, but I shall refer the question to the Minister for Trade and Customs. I shall not guarantee to furnish an answer to-morrow.

**PETROL RATIONING.**

Mr. HUTCHINSON.—Will the Minister representing the Minister for Supply and Shipping state how long the Government proposes to continue petrol rationing? Is rationing being continued because stocks in Australia are inadequate, or because it is desired to conserve dollars, or because rationing of petrol is regarded as a desirable economic control? Will the Minister have a statement prepared and submitted to the House, showing the total staff engaged in administering and policing petrol rationing, and also the annual amount of salaries or wages involved?

Mr. DEDMAN.—The whole subject of petrol rationing is under constant review by the Government, which has not come to a decision that rationing shall cease at an early date. The subject has been one of constant consultation for a considerable time between the Commonwealth and United Kingdom Governments. The honorable member will realize that petrol rationing does affect dollar exchange. It also affects the availability of shipping and other things. I shall refer to my colleague, the Minister for Supply and Shipping, the aspects of the question with which I have not dealt, and ask him to furnish an answer.

**WHEAT.****DROUGHT RELIEF—SALES TO NEW ZEALAND.**

Mr. LANGTRY.—In view of the very serious position that exists in the wheat areas of New South Wales, and the urgent need of financial assistance to wheat-growers because of drought conditions, will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture immediately discuss with the Government or the Treasurer the provision of money for the payment of a drought relief subsidy for the whole of the State? I desire the matter dealt with at once, because farmers will be unable to carry on their operations unless they are assured of help from the Government immediately.

Mr. POLLARD.—I realize the position that confronts wheat-growers in New South Wales. The initiative in regard to the payment of drought relief is a matter for the State governments concerned.

Mr. RANKIN.—Will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture make an authoritative statement to the House on the terms of the wheat agreement made with New Zealand? I ask this because of the anxiety of the wheat-growers and other persons interested in the wheat industry, and of the contradictory statements that have been made on the subject by Ministers of both the Commonwealth Government and the Government of New Zealand.

Mr. POLLARD.—No wheat has been shipped to New Zealand up to date other than that sold at a price agreed upon between the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture and the Australian Wheat Board. Any future commitments made either by the Government or the Australian Wheat Board will be the subject of a statement in this Parliament.

Mr. RANKIN.—In view of the conflicting statements made by Ministers of the Australian Government and of the Government of New Zealand, will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture lay on the table of the House a copy of the wheat agreement between the two countries?

Mr. POLLARD.—I have already dealt with this question.

**Mr. SPEAKER.**—The question differs from the earlier one in that the honorable member for Bendigo now asks that a copy of the agreement be laid on the table of the House.

**Mr. POLLARD.**—I have already said that all wheat shipped to New Zealand up to the present has been sold at world-parity price—

**Mr. SPEAKER.**—The question relates to the tabling of a copy of the agreement.

**Mr. POLLARD.**—I shall be glad to make a statement on the subject in due course.

### DAIRYING.

#### SUBSIDY ON SWEET CREAM—BUTTER.

**Mr. FRASER.**—When the decision was made to defer the payment of a subsidy on sweet cream, the official reason given was that such action was unnecessary because there was a prohibition on the sale of cream. Now that the prohibition has been removed, I ask the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, in his own capacity and also as the representative in this chamber of the Minister for Trade and Customs, for both departments are concerned, when the payment of the subsidy will begin?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—I shall be glad to refer the honorable member's inquiry to the Minister for Trade and Customs.

**Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.**—Will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture take an early opportunity to inform the House of the exact facts relating to all transactions between Australia and the United Kingdom Government in respect of butter sales throughout the war, and, particularly, will he indicate whether any price additions to prices paid for butter, or special subsidies, or donations or moneys were paid to the Australian Government in respect thereof, and whether all such moneys were in turn distributed to the dairy-farmers of Australia?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—I shall be glad to explore the feasibility of making such a statement at an early date.

**Mr. ANTHONY.**—I ask the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture whether it is correct that for the last eighteen months or thereabouts, the butter producers' organizations have been making representations for an increase of the

price of butter from 1s. 7½d. to 1s. 11½d. per lb. and have prepared statistics and documentary evidence to show that that is the cost of production? Has the Minister appointed a committee to inquire into the position of the dairying industry? If so, who are the persons who have been appointed to the committee, what are its terms of reference and when will it make its report? I emphasize the urgent necessity for action to relieve the plight of the industry.

**Mr. POLLARD.**—Generally, I have never known a period when dairy-farmers—and I have been one—were not seeking increased prices for their produce. I have no doubt that this is a continuing policy. On the representations of the dairymen's federal organization my predecessor, Mr. Scully, agreed to appoint a committee to inquire into production costs. The terms of reference and the names of the appointees will in due course be furnished to the honorable gentleman.

### IMMIGRATION.

#### ALIENS—WORKMEN FROM GREAT BRITAIN —BRITISH APPLICANTS—WIVES AND FIANCÉES OF SERVICEMEN.

**Mr. LANG.**—Will the Minister for Immigration lay on the table of the House all the papers relating to the entry of 200 alien immigrants who arrived in Australia from the Middle East on the liner *Strathmore*? Will he include in such papers the original applications for permission to enter, together with the recommendations that were made thereon? Will he also lay on the table of the House the text of the representations that were made to the British Ministry of Transport, through Australia House, leading to the withholding of these 200 berths from persons who were stranded in England, in order to accommodate migrants from the Middle East?

**Mr. CALWELL.**—*by leave*—Newspapers have recently given some prominence to complaints that approximately 200 alien passengers were taken on board the British liner *Strathmore* at Port Said, and it was stated that this action was taken at the request of the Australian Government and that consequently a number of British and Australians

were deprived of the opportunity to join the ship in the United Kingdom. It is neither correct to say that the Australian Government requested the allotment of these passages or to suggest that a corresponding number of British or Australian people in the United Kingdom were deprived of passages on account of those who embarked at Port Said. Representations were certainly made on behalf of a few close relatives of Australian residents in cases where it was brought under notice that these relatives had been stranded at Port Said for months while awaiting passages at a cost of £50 a month to the guarantors in Australia. Some scores of other people, both British and foreigners, the latter being relatives of residents in Australia, were stranded in Egypt through not being able to secure accommodation on ships bound for Australia. During the present year thousands of Australians and practically all the wives and children of Australian servicemen have secured passages from the United Kingdom, and it was mainly through the efforts of the Australian High Commissioner in London that extra ships were made available for this purpose in spite of the acute shortage of shipping. The people waiting at Port Said for passages saw ship after ship pass through the Suez filled with passengers from the United Kingdom and without any vacant berths for them. It was not unreasonable, therefore, that on one ship out of many, some provision should be made by the British Ministry of Transport acting in conjunction with the Middle East Sea Passages Priorities Board, to lift the most needy of the passengers who were stranded at Port Said. As a matter of fact, practically no British residents of the United Kingdom were displaced, because of alien passengers who joined the ship at Port Said. The aliens who joined the ship at that port numbered less than 200 if we exclude Maltese and Cypriots, who are British subjects. Of the passengers who embarked in England, 151 disembarked at Port Said, and this provided a special opportunity for those waiting there to be provided with accommodation on the ship. It may be added that all the foreigners on this ship holding permits to enter Australia were close relatives of

persons already resident here, who guaranteed their maintenance and accommodation on arrival in this country. Of the total number who came to Australia, about 180 were Greeks. They have relatives in Australia who had guaranteed the cost of their passages, accommodation in this country, and the avoidance of their being a charge on the public revenues for a period of five years.

Mr. McEWEN.—They should not have received priority over fiancées of Australian airmen.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! The honorable member for Reid has asked the question.

Mr. CALWELL.—I have made it clear that 151 berths were rendered vacant at Port Said. These were filled by a similar number of persons who desired to come to Australia. Some other berths had been reserved. There has been a good deal of inspired criticism in the press about aliens coming to this country. We shall have to get aliens as well as British subjects to come here if we are to populate the country. The prevailing anti-alienism is a form of racial prejudice which is almost indistinguishable from Nazi-ism. I desire to read, in conclusion, a letter on this subject, which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 1st November, over the signature of the Reverend "David Hand". In it, he said—

I was a passenger in the Strathmore on her recent voyage. I am an Australian-born priest of the Anglican Church. I write purely in the interests of truth and justice.

The passengers who embarked at Port Said—and other "aliens" on board—were accepted by the Australian Government as immigrants: otherwise they would never have been allowed to embark. Many were apparently accepted because of their services—underground or otherwise—to the Allies in the war, during which they lost all.

To a great extent these persons replaced those who disembarked at Port Said. It is unfair to say unreservedly that British immigrants were left behind in England to make room for them. Many of them were packed into a portion of the ship variously known as "The Dormitory" or "Belsen," in which many English people would probably have refused to sleep.

As a priest on board, I had occasion to learn a good deal about the moral or immoral behaviour of passengers; and I know that the highest officers of the ship would support my

contention that the morals of the British passengers were no better—perhaps worse—than those of “aliens.”

The captain of the ship was entirely satisfied with the behaviour of the “aliens” aboard. Those who were privileged to get to know any of them usually found them friendly, keen to learn Australian ways and language, and full of admiration and gratitude of the British people.

I accept no responsibility for the contents of that letter; but I quote it in opposition to those who want to stir up racial prejudice in this country.

**Mr. SHEEHAN.**—Can the Minister for Immigration say whether arrangements have been made to bring British workmen to Australia? Have any of these men yet left England, and has it been arranged that their families also shall be brought to Australia?

**Mr. CALWELL.**—Some months ago, the Prime Minister approved of the despatch of a cablegram to the Australian High Commissioner in London asking him to recruit 600 building tradesmen for work in Canberra, but he has experienced difficulty in obtaining the required number in the various categories. It was intended that the workmen should arrive here in groups, starting with a number of brickmakers, with other groups following, until we had a full complement of building trades workers. Difficulty occurred in obtaining brickmakers, but the first batch of 178 building tradesmen will leave England within the next fortnight. Provision has already been made for their accommodation in Canberra, and I hope that, from now on, there will be a regular flow of British workers of all categories.

**Mr. WHITE.**—Will the Minister for Immigration indicate the approximate number of applications listed at Australia House, London, of British migrants desirous of coming to Australia, and also the numbers of wives and fiancees of Australian servicemen still awaiting transport to Australia?

**Mr. CALWELL.**—If the honorable member will possess his soul in patience a little longer I shall prepare a complete statement of the position, covering not only the matters raised in his question but also others as well. With the indulgence of the House I hope to be able to make that statement some time next week.

#### BRETTON WOODS AGREEMENT.

**Mr. MENZIES.**—I ask the Prime Minister whether I am right in supposing that the 31st December is the extended date for the ratification or adoption of the Bretton Woods Agreement. If so, can the right honorable gentleman state whether the Government proposes to bring the agreement before the House before the end of the year, and whether he proposes to make available to the House the reports which, we understand, were made on it by Mr. Melville?

**Mr. CHIFLEY.**—As the right honorable gentleman has said, the time for becoming a signatory to the Bretton Woods Agreement expires on the 31st December. Some consideration was given to the agreement by the previous government. Later, Mr. Melville attended a meeting of the organization in the United States of America, and upon his return to Australia presented a report to me. I might mention that when a report in respect of Bretton Woods was tabled in this House, attached to it was a document that had been prepared by Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Melville, under the direction of the Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) and myself, giving what I believe to be an impartial review of the proposed agreement. The new Cabinet proposes to consider the report at a very early date, and to decide whether the agreement will be submitted to Parliament for ratification. If the agreement is to be ratified, it must be done during the present session of Parliament, because the allotted time is running short.

#### FILM INDONESIA CALLING.

**Dame ENID LYONS.**—Has the Attorney-General seen the following newspaper item:—

The film *Indonesia Calling* was shown privately to Federal Ministers during the last meeting of Federal Cabinet to-day. The film, which had only a limited public audience, is a dramatization of the waterside workers' case in the dispute over the Dutch ships during the Indonesian campaign.

Will the Minister make a statement to the House concerning the nature of the film? Was it a film designed as propaganda in support of the commission of an offence against Commonwealth law, one which

affected relations between Australia and another power? For whom and by whom was the film made? Is it to be distributed, and, if so, under what conditions, and in what countries?

Dr. EVATT.—It is true that members of the Cabinet saw the film *Indonesia Calling*, because it was necessary to decide whether the exportation of the film should be prohibited. This film was not produced by any government authority, but by a private organization, namely, the waterfront unions.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—It had the hammer and sickle on it.

Dr. EVATT.—No, I do not think that it actually had the hammer and sickle on it. The question was not whether the Government approved of the film, or whether it contained anything objectionable, or to which objection could reasonably be taken. The question was whether censorship should be imposed at the point of production, when censorship could be exercised by governments or authorities in the countries to which the film might be sent. The Government decided that it would be an abuse of power to invoke the censorship in order to prevent the export of the film, and that was my view, also. There is a good deal of propaganda on the one side and on the other regarding such matters, and I desire to make it clear that the question was not whether the film should be shown in any particular country, such as New Zealand or the United States of America, but whether its export should be prohibited by the exercise of the power of censorship in Australia. The Government decided against the use of its powers of censorship, and I submit that the decision was right.

#### TELEPHONE SERVICES.

Mr. DALY.—At the present time, many ex-servicemen, business men and private citizens are inconvenienced because they are unable to obtain telephones. Can the Minister representing the Postmaster-General say how many applications for telephones are outstanding in the Sydney metropolitan area? What has been done to remedy the present position, and when may the public expect an improvement?

Mr. CALWELL.—I shall endeavour to obtain as quickly as possible the figures for which the honorable member has asked. The delay in granting applications for the installation of telephones is due largely to the lack of telephone exchange accommodation. In all capital cities exchange facilities are insufficient to carry the extraordinarily heavy traffic with which the department has had to cope since the outbreak of war. When more exchanges are built, more people can be provided with telephones. However, even in spite of the present shortage of exchange accommodation, improvements will be effected and, as forecast in the speech of the Governor-General, additional facilities will be provided during the next financial year, particularly in outback areas.

#### ANGLO-EGYPTIAN TREATY.

##### CONSULTATION WITH AUSTRALIA.

Sir EARLE PAGE.—Will the Prime Minister make a statement regarding the revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, defining the attitude of the Commonwealth Government to the proposal for the evacuation of Empire troops who have been garrisoning the Suez Canal? Will an opportunity be provided for a discussion of this matter in Parliament before a decision is reached?

Mr. CHIFLEY.—I am unable to give a detailed explanation of the negotiations between the governments of the United Kingdom and Egypt regarding the revision of the treaty. The subject was discussed at length during the conference of Empire Prime Ministers in London, though this was more for the purpose of providing information for the Prime Ministers than for arriving at any decision on the subject. It is believed that the decision is primarily a matter for the Government of the United Kingdom, although it is recognized that the protection of lines of communication through the Suez Canal is important to Australia, even if, owing to changes in military technique it is not so important as it was some years ago. The subject has not been considered by the Commonwealth Government, and no up-to-date information is available regarding the negotiations. I do not speak now for

the Government, but my own opinion is that the action proposed by the Government of the United Kingdom is justified.

**Mr. ABBOTT.**—Is it the custom of the Government of the United Kingdom to make vital decisions affecting large parts of the Empire without prior consultation with those parts of the Empire concerned? If so, does not the Prime Minister, as Leader of the Australian Government, think that there should be an emphatic protest from this Parliament against the continuance of such a practice?

**Mr. CHIFLEY.**—Without being familiar with all the circumstances, I should imagine that the Government of the United Kingdom has made very many important decisions without prior consultations with the dominions. In some cases decisions have had to be made quickly, particularly during the war. My experience of the present United Kingdom Government—I cannot speak regarding previous United Kingdom Governments—is that it is most anxious to discuss with the dominion representatives all problems associated with the British Commonwealth of Nations. The recent conference of Prime Ministers covered a wide field of discussion; many matters were brought before the gathering not for decision, but in order to ascertain the views of the dominions. Those views, no doubt, to some extent, influenced the final decision reached by the United Kingdom Government. The present United Kingdom Government has been most anxious to obtain the views of all of the dominions on all matters of importance to them and to the British Commonwealth of Nations generally.

### COAL.

#### COMMONWEALTH COAL BOARD: APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN.

**Mr. HARRISON.**—Is it a fact that the Commonwealth Government and the Government of New South Wales have approached a number of leading mining authorities to accept the position of chairman of the proposed Commonwealth Coal Board, but that these overtures have been rejected because, among other things, certain assurances relating to the powers of

the proposed body were lacking? If so, does this mean that the Government is now hawking this responsible post, hoping eventually to fill the position by the appointment of some person, irrespective of his qualifications? In view of the importance of this matter, will the Government give an undertaking that, in the event of a competent and impartial chairman being appointed, it will support to the utmost any action that may be taken by the appointee against extreme industrial pressure?

**Mr. CHIFLEY.**—It is true that the question of selecting a man of the highest capacity to fill the post of chairman of the Commonwealth Coal Board has been the subject of discussion between the Premier of New South Wales, on behalf of the Government of that State, and myself on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. It is also true that we have discussed the appointment with several very prominent men, not necessarily associated with the coal-mining industry. It is also true that, up to date, the men we have had in mind for this post have, for various reasons—not the one suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—not felt disposed to accept the position. The qualifications of other persons are now being examined. I regret that it has not yet been possible to induce a person of the highest capacity to accept the position. However, there is no lack of aspirants for the post. The Government is anxious to obtain the services of a most highly qualified man for this important position. In the case of the three men already approached we did not endeavour to induce them to accept; we merely asked them whether they were prepared to accept the position. They offered no objection to acceptance of the post on the ground suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The matter is still being pursued and all efforts are being made to obtain the service of the best man available.

### POTATOES.

#### TASMANIAN CONTRACTS.

**Dame ENID LYONS.**—Will the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture state the approximate proportion of

potato contracts in Tasmania still outstanding as the result of some disagreement concerning the terms of the contract?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—The honorable member's question, I assume, refers to contracts for the supply of potatoes to the Australian Potato Board. Offhand I am unable to furnish the particulars sought by the honorable member. I shall endeavour to furnish them as soon as possible.

#### CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

**Mr. WATKINS** (Newcastle) [3.27].—I move—

That the honorable member for Darling (Mr. Clark) be appointed Chairman of Committees of this House.

**Mr. SHEEHAN** (Cook) [3.28].—I have pleasure in seconding the motion.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

**Mr. CLARK** (Darling) [3.29].—I thank honorable members for having appointed me to the position of Chairman of Committees of the House. I shall perform my duties to the best of my ability, and with great impartiality.

#### TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

**Mr. SPEAKER.**—Pursuant to Standing Order 25 I lay on the table my warrant nominating Mr. Abbott, Mr. Bowden, Mr. Burke, Mr. Gullett, Mr. Hadley, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Sheehy, and Mr. Watkins to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees when requested to do so by the Chairman of Committees.

#### ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER.

**Motion (by Mr. CHIFLEY)**—*by leave—agreed to—*

That during the unavoidable absence of Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Speaker be authorized to call upon any of the Temporary Chairmen of Committees to relieve him temporarily in the chair.

#### PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS BROADCASTING COMMITTEE.

Message received from the Senate intimating that the following senators had been appointed members of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Com-

mittee:—The President (Senator Brown), Senator Arnold and Senator James McLachlan.

**Motion (by Mr. CHIFLEY)**—*by leave—agreed to—*

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Proceedings Broadcasting Act 1940, the following members be appointed members on the Joint Committee on the Broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bernard Corser, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Haylen, Mr. Holt and Mr. Sheehan.

#### GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.

##### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

**Mr. DUTHIE**, for the committee appointed to prepare an Address-in-Reply to His Royal Highness the Governor-General's Speech (*vide* page 6), presented the proposed address which was read by the CLERK.

**Mr. DUTHIE** (Wilmot) [3.30].—I move—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Royal Highness the Governor-General's Speech be agreed to:—

**MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS:**

We, the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Royal Highness for the Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I express my sincere thanks to the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) for having conferred on me the high honour of moving the Address-in-Reply to His Royal Highness's Speech. To the Labour movement of Tasmania that endorsed me and to the people of Wilmot who elected me, I also express my gratitude, assuring them that I fully understand and realize the grave responsibilities of being a member of the National Parliament. Three important features are associated with the opening of the 18th Parliament. The first is that it is the fourth occasion since federation that a new Parliament has been opened by a member of the Royal Family; secondly, it is the first new Parliament since the end of World War II.; and, thirdly, it is the first occasion in the history of the Commonwealth Parliament that the opening ceremony and the Address-in-Reply have been broadcast to the people of Australia.

I desire now to pay a tribute to our fighting men. Surely this is an appropriate time to honour the men and women of the fighting services of our land, the Homeland, and all the Allies, whose gallantry, courage and sacrifices during six years of the world's Gethsemane won for us the opportunity both to meet here to-day, and to build a world community of free people. We extend our sincere sympathy to the relatives of Australia's sons and daughters who gave their lives on far-flung battle-fields and in hideous prisoner-of-war camps. Those men who returned to Australia physically and mentally maimed, and those who returned blind, are a constant challenge to us to make this great land of Australia a fit country, economically, culturally and spiritually, for heroes to live in. The world that died in 1939 must never be resurrected. With its economic insecurity, soul-destroying unemployment, foul slums, survival-of-the-fittest, periodical depressions, policy of boom or bust, every man for himself with the devil picking up the stragglers, inadequate social and health services—with all those ills, that pre-war era was a disgrace to our civilization and a rebuke to man's vaunted genius. It is obvious that careful economic planning can water down the effects of any economic depression in this country, so that the tragedies that I have mentioned shall not recur.

The result of the recent election indicates continued confidence in the Prime Minister and the Labour Government. Never before has federal Labour won two successive elections. The amazing growth of the Labour movement since 1891, when Labour first became a political as well as an industrial movement, is a remarkable tribute to our pioneers who suffered in order to bring the movement into being, to the soundness of Labour principles, and to the progress of political and economic thought among the people. Everywhere throughout the world the forces of conservatism and reaction are fighting a losing battle. The electors approved the Labour party's war effort, which was so vigorously and courageously pursued by our late friend, leader and colleague, John Curtin, and so faithfully concluded by the Prime Minister and his team of hard-working Ministers. What is

of even more significance is the fact that the people of Australia approved the general post-war programme covering the last twelve months, when certain war-time restrictions had to be continued. In effect they have approved this programme as it operates in the field of finance. Productive capacity should not be made to fit into a monetary strait-jacket, with surplus foodstuffs and the like being destroyed. Money should serve man, not enslave him. The electors have approved this programme also in the field of economics, social security, hospitalization, education, stabilization of primary products with certain limitations, rehabilitation, foreign affairs, native affairs and industrial expansion. Though the vote cast for the proposals to alter the Constitution to provide for the organized marketing of primary products, and to cover industrial employment was gratifying. I regret that the necessary majority of four States to two was not obtained. However, it was pleasing to note, in paragraphs 30 to 35 of the Governor-General's Speech, that the Government intends to set up a committee of employers and employees to inquire into aspects of the basic wage, to eliminate the causes of production delays and to introduce legislation to simplify and expedite the working of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Inflation, which is rife in many countries, has been controlled in Australia in a way which has won the praise of world leaders. One highly significant result of the elections is that the people refused to be panicked over taxation reductions, on which the Opposition parties practically fought the campaign. That we won although we made no particular promises is a tribute to the sanity of the people of Australia. I remember walking into a grocer shop just after the elections. The gentleman behind the counter lit a cigarette and said, "Well you are in. I suppose you will be able to give us more cigarettes and tobacco now." I said, "No; we did not promise you anything." Having said that, it is only fair to emphasize again that the Government believes in a scaling down of both direct and indirect taxation, and in the removal of controls as circumstances permit. It is, in fact, already moving in those directions.

Our memories of long queues outside mines, factories and employment bureaux, the vicious use of the "hire and fire" principle, and the war between workers fighting each other for jobs, were so vivid that it was not surprising that the Government's full employment objective aroused the enthusiasm and hopes of the Australian people. The British Government has just issued a memorandum on full employment, in which it urges upon all countries of the world the introduction of this principle, so that it may work more effectively in the countries, including Australia, where it is to be applied. Coupled with this is the new order brought to women workers through the Women's Employment Board's fight for women's rights in industry.

I pay tribute to the people on the home front for their wonderful efforts in peace and war. The creators of Australia's true national wealth are the primary producers and the workers in our factories and mines, who are turning into national assets the resources that the Creator has given to us for the use of all. These two producing groups are paramount in our economy and, in order that production may overtake its lost ground, they must have the full backing of the Government at all times. The Government's efforts to stabilize primary production have had excellent results even during the critical period through which we have just passed. The happiness, security, health and well-being of the people are our main concern. We are the mouthpiece of the people. We must try to express their will in legislation, and each one of us must always try to keep tuned in to public opinion, which, in these days, is better informed than ever before. In this Parliament we are the voice of the people, speaking not only for those who make their wishes known, but also for the inarticulate. Service to humanity is the greatest service there is. Sincerity, hard work, courtesy to all, and a general interest in the people of the electorates, together with an understanding of human needs and problems, will remove much of to-day's cynicism in relation to Parliaments and members of Parliament. There must always be a feeling of trust between the electors and the elected. I keep reminding myself that

government is from the bottom up—that is, from the people enlightened and alert to their responsibilities—and not from the top down. That is democracy as distinct from autocracy and fascism.

Let us now turn our minds to another factor in this post-war world—the battle of ideologies. The military power of Fascism, Nazi-ism and Japanese imperialism is broken. The physical battle is over. But another more subtle battle continues. It is the battle of ideologies. This is a war not of the battlefield, but of the mind, a war between ways of life, ideas, concepts and political, economic and social beliefs. A nation's military power may be broken, but not its ideologies. Centuries ago the enemies of Christianity threw Christians to the lions, but centuries later the descendants of those enemies realized that the Christians had been destroyed but not their ideas and beliefs. Do not let us lull ourselves into believing that with the death of Mussolini and Hitler and their gangsters, and of millions of Germans and Japanese, by the destruction of the armed might of our enemies, or by the signing of peace treaties or the proclamation of new legislation in Japan, the creeds and ideologies of these tyrannous régimes are dead. The poison is still in the world's blood stream.

The fact that the unconditional surrender in the West was signed in a school-room at Rheims, France, is symbolic. Our enemies have to go to school again to unlearn their beliefs, and we have to go to school again to relearn what democracy stands for, so that we may become evangelists for the conversion of our enemies to the democratic way of life. We do not change a nation until we change the beliefs and ideologies of its people. A bad idea is destroyed not by armed might, but by replacing it with a good one. An evil way of life is destroyed by overcoming it with a good way of life. Our schools, colleges, universities, youth clubs, churches, discussion groups, forums, libraries, documentary films, theatres and homes must become recruiting agencies in the war of the mind and the battle of ideas for the building of a race which knows what democracy really means. The best teacher is example. By our example in human and national affairs we can convince the enemies of democracy that

democracy works. I urge the Government to speed up the development of the Australian film industry and the establishment of a truly national theatre and to press forward confidently with the plan for a national university at Canberra. It should also provide still more money as grants to States for education on our plan to win the ideological war for true democracy.

The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima marked the birth of a new era. The atomic age has dawned menacingly and frighteningly. But it is good to know that the Government is wide awake to its implications. Whether atomic energy is here for good or evil will depend on whether enough men and nations can get together in such a spirit of goodwill, neighbourliness and co-operation as to demonstrate in no uncertain terms that the world does not want atomic energy as a destructive force. A rigid control of the materials that are used or are likely to be used in producing atomic energy will go a long way towards outlawing it as a destructive force. Such things must never become the private monopoly of armament firms, but must always be under the control of governments—internationally, if possible.

There are moral aspects with which I shall conclude. Isolationism and individualism are more than ever tragic irrevelancies in the atomic age, for from now on it will be "one world or no world". Unless the nations can come together in a partnership for the good of humanity, with an interchange of principles and a levelling up of economic standards, there will be grave days ahead. Science has furnished for our use thousands of rooms in the vast world-home which God gave to us. But science, miscontrolled, will destroy civilization; for if man cannot control himself; if greed and selfishness, hate and racialism, mammon worship and arrogance get the upper hand, whence will come the goodwill, the common sense, the sense of community, to keep inventive genius within constructive channels? I believe that danger lies in the fact that our scientific advancement has outpaced our moral and cultural advancement. In 1932, Mr. Winston Churchill,

*Mr. Duthie.*

in a role entirely different from that which he played in the last few years, published an essay entitled *50 Years Hence*. In it, he made this statement—

Without an equal growth of mercy, goodwill, pity, peace and love, science herself may destroy all that makes human life majestic and tolerable.

So we must catch up morally and culturally, or lose all that we have won. This country can have a wonderful future. But I believe that more and more co-operative effort will be needed to clinch the victory of the peace for the people. May these few lines, which appeared in a poem, *This Land of Ours*, published recently in the *Melbourne Argus* by an Australian poet of whom I have not heard previously, inspire us to this end—

I have loved this country and have felt  
The unchanging tide of time before man  
came;

The still, vast sameness, unending green-grey  
trees

With pale barks upright against a dry blue  
sky;

And I have sensed a loneliness more deep  
And an awareness of a great eternity.

Man seems so infinitely small,  
Bound by the girdle of his worldly chain  
Of small deceits and monetary fears;  
And he has failed to use his bounteous gifts,  
For in the very nature of his life  
There is no time for but the smallest loves.

But here we have the chance to build  
The first example of a God-like State.  
The world is staggering from its greatest  
blow.

Out of the ruins there is much to learn.  
Can we not make a new beginning now  
Before the tide of lethargy engulf the shore?

Australia offers priceless gifts,  
Abundant in her riches, hands out-stretched  
She whispers of great possibilities.  
If we can join her in her quest, there lies  
A future which is peace as yet unknown,  
A life of pure unprecedented calm.

We cannot reap the harvest of her wealth  
Unless we are prepared to build again;  
To fight as in those long dark years we toiled  
And tracked the enemy and beat him down.  
This time we must perceive our weakest  
points,

And conquer where we now are dull and still.  
The poet is E. Lewis. Once again I  
thank the House for the attentive hearing  
it has given to me, and the Prime  
Minister for the opportunity which he  
afforded to me to say these few words

in moving the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

**Mr. EDMONDS** (Herbert) [3.50].—First, I express my sincere thanks to the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) for his having afforded to me the opportunity of seconding the motion that has been so capably made by the honorable member for Wilmot (Mr. Duthie). I regard it as an honour, not only to me personally, but also to the Queensland branch of the Australian Labour party, as well as to the Australian Workers Union, that traditionally Australian union with which I have been associated as a member and an official for very many years.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government on the work that it has done since it first assumed office. We all know that five years or so ago this country was faced with the gravest crisis in its young history. We also know that at that time the parties, the remnants of which now adorn the Opposition benches, were in power. Before very long, the extreme urgency of the situation revealed the hopeless incapacity of those parties to grapple with the problems with which this country was confronted. It is also well known that it was a Labour Government which took control and filled the breach, under the leadership of one whom I consider to be probably the grandest and most courageous man ever born in this or any other country; I refer to the late John Curtin. We all know that the capable leadership of that grand man continued until, unfortunately, he became a war casualty and was lost to Australia and the British Empire. But it is an outstanding characteristic of the Labour movement that it continues to progress even after the loss of one who may be regarded as indispensable and as having achieved the height of greatness. When it sustained the loss of the late John Curtin, it produced another great man in the person of the present Prime Minister, who is commonly known in every household in Australia as "honest Ben Chifley". Under his capable and honest direction, this country was piloted out of the doldrums of the extraordinary situation in which it found itself at the time. We are now in the fortunate position of

being able to say that we have survived the gravest threat which this country has ever experienced, or we hope, will ever experience.

I understand that when a new member makes his first speech in this Parliament he enjoys some degree of immunity from interjections. I take it to be expected that the speaker will ensure that he is not unduly provocative. I am prepared to take the risk of having that charge laid against me. We were faced with such a critical position that the present Opposition cannot hope to escape some criticism; and in offering it, I am prepared to receive some interjections in return. With my experience, I should be lonely if I did not receive interjections while addressing a meeting.

I have said that I regard as an honour to the Australian Workers Union the invitation to me to second this motion. I propose to refer briefly to the policy of that union, because that will afford me an opportunity not only to deal with its affairs but also to discuss industrial matters as they affect this nation to-day. The Australian Workers Union is a body which always has, and I trust always will, stand firmly in support of the policy of arbitration as the best method of dealing with our industrial problems. In the process of doing that, this organization has been subjected to most vicious attacks by certain sections of the industrial movement. The Australian Workers Union claims to be the backbone of the Labour movement in this country. There is a force operating in Australia to-day which aims to destroy the Australian Labour movement, and it realizes that in order to do so it must first break the backbone of that movement. Consequently, it is concentrating its activities on the Australian Workers Union. Despite the vicious attacks that have been made on that union throughout the years, it has never deviated in the slightest degree from its policy of conciliation and arbitration. In this country to-day there are people who are enunciating all sorts of foreign ideologies and methods in an endeavour to advance their own interests. They do not care how far their actions may carry them. They are prepared to sink to any depths in order to place their

ideologies before the workers of this country.

I heard yesterday in the Speech delivered by His Royal Highness the Governor-General that his Government proposes to do its utmost to maintain economic stability in this country. It is merely logical for me to say that in order to maintain economic stability we must maintain production. A nation's economy depends entirely on its ability to produce. It is impossible for this or any other country to maintain economic stability, and to achieve maximum production, while subjected to the extraordinary and tragic industrial upheavals which we have recently experienced. Therefore, I make an earnest plea to all sections engaged in industry, whether employers or employees, to do their very utmost to maintain production. We must ensure that those engaged in industry are contented. To those persons who are parading as the emancipators of the workers—and I have no hesitation in naming them, as the Communists and their satellites—I say that there is no place for them in this country.

**MR. FADDEN.**—We told the people that during the last election campaign, but they did not believe us.

**MR. EDMONDS.**—Our attitude towards the Communists is one thing which the Leader of the Australian Country party (Mr. Fadden) and I have in common—perhaps the only thing. There is no need for a Communist party in this country. The Australian working-class movement is quite capable of formulating its own rules and constitution without any assistance from overseas. There are people running around the country condemning dictatorships and fascism when they themselves subscribe to what is probably the worst kind of fascism in the world—that is, red fascism. Without apology to any one, I say that we do not want them in Australia, because they are a menace to the community.

Let me relate a story which, in my opinion, illustrates very aptly the outlook of our friends in the Communist camp, and allows us to view them in proper perspective. Not long ago, one of the Communists was on the soap-box in Bris-

bane and, in characteristic style, was promising a multitude of things to his audience. "Comrades," he said, "the workers of this country will never be released from the bonds of slavery until the revolution has been fought and won. The revolution will be fought and won, and only then will the day of freedom arrive. When that day comes all those beautiful limousines that you see parked along the kerb will no longer belong to the idle rich; they will belong to you. Those palatial hotels will cease to be the property of the racketeering publicans; they will be yours. All those beautiful homes at Hamilton and Clayfield will cease to be occupied by blood-sucking capitalists. When the day of liberation arrives you will be living in those houses." Standing immediately in front of the Communist was a little, insignificant chap who looked up at the speaker, and said, "When that day arrives I don't want to live at Clayfield. I want to live with my mates in South Brisbane". The Communist glared down at him and shouted, "Listen, mug: When the day of freedom arrives you'll live where you are damned well told to live!"

I am convinced that the workers of Australia agree with me in my condemnation of the Communists. The vast majority of the members of the working class are honest, decent people who are anxious to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. There remains a minority, the members of which are forever forcing their ideas upon other workers. They intimidate them into doing things which otherwise they would not do. The average working man is very reluctant to be placed in a position in which any one may accuse him of "scabbing", and that is why men are sometimes drawn into industrial disturbances against their will. However, my experience—and it has been fairly wide—has been that most industrial upheavals are caused by pin-pricking tactics on the part of the employers. Every employer should treat his employees as if they were integral parts of his business—not something to be trampled on at will. Unless we can obtain industrial harmony, and maintain maximum production, Australia cannot survive. Already there are overseas buyers clamouring for Australian goods. Men in

control of overseas capital are eagerly awaiting an opportunity to invest it in Australia, and to set up new industries here. However, until industrial sanity is restored, we can neither supply goods sought by overseas buyers, nor induce manufacturers from abroad to begin operations in Australia.

I was pleased to hear His Royal Highness, in the course of his Speech, announce that the Government intended to amend the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. I do not wish to be parochial, but I may fairly claim that, in Queensland, we have a Conciliation and Arbitration Act which is second to none in the world. Whatever justification there may be for strikes in other States, there is none in Queensland. There, the Arbitration Court consists of three members. The president is now Mr. Justice Matthews, and when he is hearing cases before the court, he does not wear wig and gown. In that jurisdiction, he is the president of the court only, and not Mr. Justice Matthews. I make no reflection upon the judiciary or the legal fraternity, but it is my belief that the Commonwealth Arbitration Court will not give satisfaction until it is made to function without the intervention of lawyers. In Queensland when an application is made to the court by either the employers or the employees, it is often only a matter of hours until the hearing is concluded and a decision given. Recently, there was before the court an application for a 40-hour week in the pastoral industry, and those who know Queensland will understand that such an application, having to do with one of the State's principal sources of wealth, was no unimportant thing. However, the evidence was heard and the addresses given in less than two days, and ten days later the court delivered its judgment. One of the reasons for the expedition with which the matter was concluded was that we did not have a stream of barristers taking part in the case. I know something of the operations of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, and it is only necessary to refer to the present 40-hour case which has been before it for months, and which may not be disposed of for many months yet, in order to illustrate its short-comings. Such delays must

create in the minds of the workers, who are eagerly waiting for a decision, the impression that there is something wrong with arbitration. Therefore, I was pleased, as I have said, to learn that the Government proposes to introduce legislation to amend the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

In the past, governments have neglected the northern part of Australia, with the result that development has been retarded. I recognize that the Labour Government has been fully occupied during the last five years, first in the successful prosecution of the war, and later with urgent post-war problems. However, whether or not members of the Opposition will agree with me, the fact remains, that in the past, the north has been neglected. Until the resources of that area are developed, and the country settled, Australia will not be in a position to defend itself from attack. Visitors from overseas have referred in my presence to the Great Barrier Reef as one of the wonders of the world. We know that in Whitsunday Passage and in Hinchenbrook Passage we have scenic attractions that can compare favorably with those of any other country. I hope that the Government will ensure that this part of our heritage shall be developed as it should be. The people of the north have been very tolerant, but they now want the authorities to act. It will be my endeavour, as it will be that of my colleague the honorable member for Kennedy (Mr. Riordan), to do everything possible to promote the development and full utilization of the northern parts of this continent. I seek this assistance in the interests not only of northern Queensland but also of the nation as a whole. I give my colleagues in the Ministry an early warning that I shall wait on their official doorsteps from day to day until something is done regarding the development of this important area.

Yesterday His Royal Highness intimated in his Speech that this would be the last occasion upon which he would open the Commonwealth Parliament, and that, owing to pressure of business overseas, he would be leaving for his homeland early in the new year. I am sure I express the sentiment, not only of members of this House, but also of the

whole of the Australian people, when I say that we wish him God-speed and a safe return to his homeland.

In conclusion, I again express my most sincere thanks to the Prime Minister for having afforded to me the high honour of seconding this motion.

**Mr. MENZIES** (Kooyong—Leader of the Opposition) [4.16].—I would like to begin by saying that whilst it was not to be expected that those of us who sit on this side of the House would agree with all that fell from the lips of the mover and the seconder of this motion, we congratulate them on the way in which they have acquitted themselves in their opening speeches. All honorable members who come newly into this House without parliamentary experience, on whatever side they sit, will find all of us more than willing to give them such help as we can out of such experience as we have.

In the necessarily limited time at my disposal I do not propose to endeavour to traverse the whole of the field covered by the Speech of His Royal Highness, but there are two or three aspects of it about which I propose to say a little. In the first place, I should like to follow up the remarks of the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Edmonds) with reference to the impending departure of his Royal Highness, the Governor-General. His Royal Highness and the Duchess have been in this country now for the better part of two years. It certainly does not seem so long as that since they came here. Upon their arrival they received a great welcome because it was felt on all sides that His Majesty had conferred a singular honour on Australia by appointing his brother to be the Governor-General of this great dominion, and that feeling has persisted throughout the period of office of His Royal Highness. The Duke of Gloucester and the Duchess have travelled around Australia and have shown a keen interest in the life of the people; they have become extraordinarily well-informed about Australia and Australian affairs. I should think that never before has any member of the Royal Family acquired for so long a time so intimate a knowledge of one of His Majesty's dominions. All of that, of course, is not only a great honour but also

a great advantage to us. His Royal Highness carries with him from Australia the goodwill as well as the good wishes of all the Australian people, and that applies also, I need not say, to Her Royal Highness, the Duchess, whose gracious and charming personality has commended her to all sections of our people.

In the course of the Speech which His Royal Highness read yesterday, some reference—not too much, but a good deal—was made to the problem of defence. I do not propose to discuss this matter in a controversial way. Much of what was said on the subject in the Speech will, I think, command the support of all sections of the House. What I want to do rather is to establish, if I can, the outstanding importance of this subject, an importance which no doubt the Prime Minister fully realizes and which led the Government to attach a fair number of paragraphs of the Speech to it. Honorable members will observe that particular reference is made in paragraph 4 to the factors which govern defence policy. One of the factors stated is the force to be placed at the disposal of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. I merely use that as a text, because I want to address myself for a short period to the question of how far the defence problem of this country is affected by the existence of the United Nations and, in particular, by the powers and machinery of the Security Council. The Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt) has been very prominently associated throughout the world in many discussions of this matter. I want to take up one of the aspects of it to which he has very properly devoted a great deal of time, and to establish, as I believe I can, that one result of the power of the veto is that we in Australia cannot regard the United Nations as in any way removing from us our normal obligations of defence. It certainly does not take away from us our obligation to co-operate fully with other British Empire countries along the lines that are mentioned in the Speech. I found, on going about Australia during the recent election campaign, that although there is somewhat more interest

in external affairs than there was previously, there is still only a limited interest. I should imagine that of every 1,000 persons who hear or read some reference to the veto there may be well over 900 who have only the vaguest idea of what is involved in that expression. Therefore, not for the illumination of Ministers, who are familiar with this problem, but in a general way, I should like to say something about it. If honorable members and the people of Australia will look at the Charter of the United Nations they will see exactly how this problem of the veto arises. As we know, the heart of the organization is to be found in the Security Council, which was established under chapter 5 of the Charter.

The Security Council consists of eleven members, representing the member nations. Five of those nations have permanent membership. Taking them so to speak from left to right on the map—I am now thinking of the map in the terms of Mercator's projection—they are the United States of America, France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China. The five permanent members are, of course, among the great powers of the world. For this purpose, one eliminates Germany, though Germany at some future stage, and in some circumstances, must inevitably again become a great and important community in the world because of its population and resources. The same is true of Japan. At this time in the history of the world, however, the countries I have mentioned constitute the great powers. There are six others who are non-permanent members of the Council. I need not go into details of how they came to be appointed. The power of veto in the Security Council is established under article 27. Each member has one vote, and decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of seven members, who may be any seven members. All other matters except two require the concurring votes of the permanent members. The only two matters excepted are, first, those set out in chapter 6, which deals with the pacific settlement of disputes—settlement not by coercive action—and, secondly, those set out in article 52, which deals with regional arrangements and the approval which has to be given by the Council in

respect of such arrangements. I have only to refer to these provisions to make it clear that when it comes to matters which possess a coercive quality—action which really requires force or the threat of force—the Security Council can make no decision except with the concurring votes of all permanent members, which means at this time of all the great powers. At a later stage in the Charter we find provisions which deal with the obligation which has to be met by agreement, to place armed forces at the disposal of the Security Council under certain conditions. All those provisions were inserted in the Charter because it was contemplated that the United Nations was to have genuine military and material power to enforce decisions for the maintenance of order in the world. But the veto, as it has been summarized, means that no decision of that kind involving coercive action can be made against the will of the great powers, and as disputes which are likely to produce great wars in the world will almost inevitably be disputes to which at least one great power is a party, then it becomes clear that the Security Council, as the Charter now stands, cannot prevent great wars except by the process of friendly argument which happens to lead to ultimate agreement between all the parties concerned. When I say that, I say nothing that falls with novelty on the ears of the Minister for External Affairs, who has been discussing this matter in this place and in other places for a long time. But what has to be made clear to the people is that the existence of that state of affairs in the Charter means that at present, except by force of argument, the United Nations, acting through the Security Council, cannot take any steps against an aggressor nation. We have only to bear that in mind to realize that, so far from lifting the burden of arms from us, this Charter leaves the burden of arms upon us. Insofar as we need defence—defence forces and defence provisions of one kind or another—then we must be prepared to continue to find it for ourselves, find it in collaboration with other British countries, and find it, as I hope we shall in Pacific matters, in collaboration with the United States of America. But if

we fall into the error in 1946 that we fell into in 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938 of thinking that the existence of a world charter removes from us the obligation to be ready for war, then this second great illusion can produce another war in the world just as certainly as the first one did. I have called it the "great illusion" because I have vivid memories of the enthusiasm with which people in Great Britain in 1935, 1936 and 1938 would refer to the League of Nations, the enthusiasm with which they would refer to the famous peace ballot that took place in Great Britain, and the enthusiasm with which they would say, "As well, we are behind the League of Nations, and the Covenant of the League of Nations has only to be put into operation and all will be well". But a covenant, without the power to enforce it, is of all things most deceptive and unreliable. It is one of the historic ironies of our time that in the ten years before the recent war the people in the world who loved peace, and who wanted peace, rested upon this frail foundation of an unenforceable covenant, while those who did not want peace, those who sought aggression, those who were out to make war and mischief in the world, went on with the hard practical business of providing themselves with guns, ships and aircraft so that they might put the world at risk and put the whole of our democratic freedoms into the balance. We shall do well to avoid a repetition of that disaster; and that is why I, for one, and I am sure that I speak for every member of this House on this matter, feel glad that there is in His Royal Highness's Speech an emphasis upon our problem of defence locally, and upon our problem of making a fuller contribution than in the past to the general structure of Empire defence. Of course, I realize that at the moment it is not possible for the Government to be very particular in its statements on these matters. As we know, the world has not yet recovered from the first shock of the atomic bomb. We do not know what developments may ensue from the examination of those problems that is now being conducted. I hope that at the earliest possible moment the Government will find itself in a position to tell us what the result

of those investigations is, and what particular measure it proposes to take to carry out our local domestic defence obligations and our obligations in association with other British countries.

What I have sought to establish by that very brief examination of the problem is this: First of all, this problem of defence, even though the greatest of all wars has just been won, is still a problem of the first magnitude. That problem is one the basic character of which, for us, is not really altered by the existence of the United Nations. There are still great burdens upon us; we still need concrete and realistic defence policies; and the Government should, at the earliest practical moment, inform the House regarding its proposals, so that on a suitable occasion, with definite plans before us, there may be a real debate in this House about what the nature of those defence burdens should be and how they should be borne.

I turn from that problem, the importance of which is really not to be estimated by the amount of time that it is possible to devote to it in the course of one speech, to the next one in His Royal Highness's Speech. I desire to make particular reference to it. Paragraph 13 of the Speech states—

It is also a basic part of the Government's policy to take an active part in all measures aimed at international and economic welfare, full employment and a higher standard of living throughout the world and also at encouraging the political and economic development of dependent peoples.

Those are good words. With them, as words, I have no quarrel; but I believe that there should be associated with them some observations of a warning kind. No doubt it is a good thing that we should be interested in world problems, and that we should play our part in the settlement of international economic problems and in the raising of the standards of backward peoples. But whilst all that is abundantly true, our best contribution must be the raising of the standard and availability of production in our own land. We should find ourselves in rather a sorry position if, while we were busy about ambitious world schemes, our own production lagged and our own contribution to what the world needed was smaller than it would be when we all were really doing

our job. That is why the problem of production in Australia in 1946 and in the years to come is one of such outstanding magnitude. The honorable member for Herbert had some wise words to say about it. Here is something which touches the standard of living of everybody in Australia; and the honorable member might have added "and which determines our real capacity to make a contribution to the material needs of the rest of the world". Consequently, all domestic policies in Australia to-day must be judged by how far they stimulate real production in Australia, and make that production available, not only to Australians but also to the people of the world. Of course, on that, two problems have an immediate bearing. The first of them is one about which we still fondly hope to hear something when the Budget is opened by the Treasurer. That is the problem of tax reduction. I do not want to go into this unduly, because I know that this is slightly controversial, although what the controversy was became more difficult to discover as the election campaign proceeded. This is one of my really humorous recollections of the election, because when I began, on behalf of my colleagues, by speaking of a reduction of taxation, I understood that the Prime Minister, forsaking his usual aplomb and reserve, accused me of bribery, and not only bribery but "unbridled bribery", which I think was a very admirable phrase. But as the campaign proceeded, I began to wonder more and more whether the Labour party was not really promising tax reductions. I am still a little hazy about it. I read with great joy a speech made by my old friend the Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr. Holloway). He delivered at Port Melbourne a very sensible speech, in which he said he thought that a "40 per cent. reduction of tax over a period of three years was not too bad". That was, of course, my own idea.

**Mr. HOLLOWAY.**—The trouble is that the right honorable gentleman let his cracker off too soon.

**Mr. MENZIES.**—Here is another version. According to the honorable gentleman, the trouble with my policy of tax reduction was that I announced it too soon; but that is a very far cry from

saying that my policy was election bribery, or even unbridled bribery. However, I leave that to the Government to work out, because until the budget is opened, we shall not know what bird is going to sing. I desire to take the opportunity to point out to the Prime Minister, if it is not too late, that a reduction of taxation has a great deal to do with the volume of production in Australia and the incentive to produce. Indeed, I was looking recently at the speech which the right honorable gentleman delivered on the 12th July last in lieu of a budget at that time. In the course of that Financial Statement, he said—

Most of our resources are free once again for civil production and full employment of these steadily maintained, can work wonders in output. Then as output and real incomes rise, taxation can be reduced still further.

Insofar as that statement does associate production with taxation, I agree with it; but my real quarrel with it is that it puts the cart before the horse. The Prime Minister discloses his mind. He wants output to rise first, and taxation to be reduced second. That is all wrong, because if you want output to rise, then you must first reduce the tax burden. If you want output to rise in Australia, then problem No. 1 in point of time is the problem of removing some of the burden from the people, so that they shall be encouraged to strive for the ideal, namely, a good day's work for a good day's pay; and whether a good day's pay is a good day's pay or not depends, not upon its nominal terms but upon, first, how much of it is left after the tax gatherer has taken his share, and, secondly, what it will buy when it reaches the housewife's purse. Each of those matters, in turn, is affected by taxation, because it is the tax cut which determines the net sum of money left to the income earner, and a large volume of production in Australia will be the greatest possible guarantor that we shall not have inflation. When the Treasurer talks of inflation, I agree with him. I have yet to hear him pronounce a general view on this problem that is not entirely in line with my own beliefs. But in the long run, let us remember that inflation comes about because there is more money looking for goods than there are goods to be bought, and, consequently, if we

want to preserve the value of money and stabilize the economy, we must concentrate every effort upon increasing the volume of production. If we are to raise the volume of production, I sincerely hope that the forthcoming budget will grant sufficient tax relief of a kind which will be calculated to encourage people to build more houses, produce more materials and get on with those essential things that must be done if our standards of living are to rise and if our capacity to contribute in real terms to a solution of the world's problems is to be established.

The third matter that I desire to mention is this. Paragraph 32 of His Royal Highness's Speech states—

It is my Government's intention to set up as early as possible a committee including representatives of both parties in industry, to inquire into and report upon aspects of the basic wage. The setting up of this committee will not preclude earlier consideration by the court of any application that may be made relating to the amount of the basic wage or the principles upon which it is determined or varied.

I should be reluctant to criticize with any force proposals for conferences between employers and employees in industry, because basically what we need in industry is a better mutual understanding, and an increasing realization by both sides that their interests are interests in common. The honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Edmonds) touched on that point in the course of his speech, but there are one or two aspects of this matter which I think are worth considering. In the first place, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is the body which has fixed the basic wage for many years past; it has done so in the ordinary course of its arbitral functions. In 1942, just after the first impact of the Japanese move in this direction, the Government took various economic measures, one of which was the pegging of wages. As long as wages were pegged, a hand was put down on the wage structure of Australia. It was associated inevitably with the price ceiling plan; obviously the two things were in a large measure interdependent. Earlier this year the Government took a step, which I approved, when it qualified its national security regulations by providing that the Arbitration Court could

*Mr. Menzies.*

review the basic wage and also the standard hours of work. If it reviewed either or both of them, and substituted a new pronouncement, that new pronouncement was to have valid operation, notwithstanding the wage-pegging regulations. That was a sensible thing to do. That left the matter with the associated trade unions of Australia, in particular, the Australasian Council of Trade Unions. That body had its choice; it could go to the Arbitration Court first for a reduction of the hours of work, or it could first approach that body for a review of the basic wage. I should have thought that, as between those two things, a review of the basic wage was of the first importance. There is a widely held belief in Australia—a belief which I share, and which others on this side share—that the basic wage has become out of touch with the realities of the true cost of living of the ordinary home. I should have thought that, being presented with that choice, the unions would first go to the court and ask that the basic wage be revised, and that later they would ask that the hours of work be dealt with. I have made that suggestion, or criticism, more than once in public. They decided to approach the court first on standard hours. Now there are complaints that this is a long business. I point out that until the last few days the whole of the time has been occupied by the witnesses for the applicants, namely, the trade unions. These matters are not to be got through in a great hurry. My friend, the honorable member for Herbert, has a belief which does great credit to him; he believes that the Queensland system is perfect, and that if these matters can be approached in the right way, such a problem as fixing standard hours in industry can be settled in a week or two. That is not so; these things cannot be done in that way.

*Mr. Holloway.*—It did not take long to take 10 per cent. off.

*Mr. MENZIES.*—It took a long time to conduct the inquiry. The Minister for Labour and National Service should keep out of this argument. I very well remember that in, I think, 1926, when the 44-hours case was on, he and I were mixed up in the wretched thing a good deal. We were there for months. The Minister did most of the talking. I

thought that he spoke very well, and said a lot of interesting things. He must not tell me now that lawyers protract such proceedings. For every word that I uttered I think the Minister uttered 25 words. My point is that if there is delay, as there has been, in the revision of the basic wage, it is a delay which arises from the deliberate choice of the organized trade unions of Australia. Having made their decision in favour of an inquiry into the hours of labour, they are now coming round on the other tack and saying, "What about the court dealing with the basic wage at the same time as it deals with the hours question?" In other words, the unions have begun to realize that they started off on the wrong foot, and that the sooner the basic wage is examined the better. I agree with their second view, because the sooner this authoritative body can determine the basic wage the better it will be for everybody. No committee, however interesting its deliberations, is any substitute for a decision by the one body that has power to give a decision.

Mr. HOLLOWAY.—That is not proposed.

Mr. MENZIES.—I do not know what is involved. I can only rely on the words. As the honorable member for Werrawa (Mr. Lazzarini) said in the last Parliament when he was a Minister, "These words mean what they say". That was his favourite retort. These words read: "A committee . . . to inquire into and report upon aspects of the basic wage". Perhaps some Minister will be able to give us a better description of what the word "aspects" means than can be given by any wretched lawyer. I point out that the thing that counts to the basic wage earner is the net result—how much money he gets for his week's work. That question will be answered by the Arbitration Court, and the sooner that body gets on with the job and concentrates its attention upon it the better. As between these two problems—the basic wage and the hours of work—there is no question as to which calls the more urgently for determination in Australia.

That is all that I desire to say on the matters which are raised in the Speech.

During the last month or two we have had a good opportunity to express ourselves on public questions—an opportunity which I must say in my own favour that I exhausted to the full, as well as exhausting myself. This debate is not an occasion for long speeches. That is why I have confined my remarks to the three matters to which I have referred, and that is why I have taken the opportunity, not so much to create an issue between the Government and myself, as to underline what I believe to be the true importance of some of these vastly significant problems.

Mr. BURKE (Perth) [4.51].—The Eighteenth Parliament meets at a time when we can look forward to a large measure of progress, but it is also a time of heavy responsibility. In the course of an excellent speech, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Menzies) dealt with a number of matters which are prominent in the minds of people throughout the world to-day. I propose to deal in brief, not with such major matters as the views of the right honorable gentleman on defence, but rather with the later portions of his criticism of His Royal Highness's Speech. He dealt at some length with the application now before the Arbitration Court and expressed the view that it would have been preferable had the unions applied for an increased basic wage rather than fewer hours of work each week. Probably that is the correct approach to the dual problem that confronts industry and workers in industry, not only in Australia, but also in other countries. Men and women in industry, however, have other concerns than those associated with wages and conditions in employment. Prominent in their minds—and desirably prominent, in my opinion—is the need to reduce working hours, so that they may be able to enjoy more fully the cultural opportunities which modern conditions provide. If a mistake has been made in the way which the matter has been approached, it has been caused by a desire to improve the conditions of the people in the matter of leisure, and to confer additional benefits on workers and their wives and families. As I have said, this is a dual problem which must be solved, because its solution would, in large measure,

mean the settling of most of the industrial problems that arise from time to time. Even those who are described as wreckers, must have a fertile field in which to work before they can give effect to their policies. That fertile field is provided by unsatisfactory conditions of employment, prices which make a mockery of the basic wage, uncertainty as to future conditions of work, and the fear of large-scale unemployment. Although the matter of working hours may have less significance in the minds of many of us than has the matter of remuneration for services rendered, it is a vital part of the terms and conditions of employment in industry. Mutual understanding between employers and employees is a principle to which we all subscribe. As the Leader of the Opposition said, the fault does not lie completely with either one side or the other in industry. We all know that there are good and bad employees and good and bad employers.

Taxation policy, and what part it can play in promoting greater productivity in Australia, is a highly contentious subject. It is one of the matters raised in the election campaign which Government supporters will be keen to debate in this House. They will set out to prove that had the Opposition parties regained the treasury bench conditions similar to those which existed after World War I., and which have existed after every major conflict in the past, would have been experienced again in this country. From our study of history, particularly the history of wars and their aftermath, we know that there has always been a period of rising prices followed by a period of reaction, culminating in a slump, either great or small. As modern wars have grown in intensity they have made greater demands on materials and man-power, and so the boom and slump conditions have been of greater magnitude. I firmly believe that the ruin and misery which followed previous wars would have resulted from the policy which Opposition parties would have put into operation had they won the election. Those things can be demonstrated. During the election campaign, the right honorable gentleman also enunciated other proposals, at the full effect of which we can only guess. For instance, we do not know just how far his

proposal to reduce taxes would have involved a contributory scheme of social services. We cannot do more than speculate on that matter. However, a calm examination of the proposals made by the opposition parties to the people reveals that the tendencies to which I have referred must have been accentuated by the policy enunciated by the right honorable gentleman and his followers. In the early portion of his speech to-day he examined the international situation. At first, I thought that he intended to demonstrate that Australia was not playing its part in Empire co-operation, but, later, he graciously admitted that Australia was performing its duty in that sphere. We should devote more time to discussions on international affairs, because they are of tremendous significance to our people. The United Nations has been born in an atmosphere of hope. It has fought against natural obstacles. It has warred with problems arising from varying national outlooks, some of which have arisen from fear and others from self-interest. The discussions which have already taken place undoubtedly give rise to pessimism as to whether this structure, conceived in hope and devoted to high purpose, can succeed where former organizations have failed. One can infer from the remarks of the right honorable gentleman that Australia should build up its own defences, regardless of other organizations in the world. We should not rely solely upon either the United Nations or our position in the British Empire; but neither should we believe that in unilateral defensive action, giving way to an armaments race, we can find a solution to the grievous problems that confront the world and demand solution by the statesmen of all countries. Although the difficulties which have confronted this newly formed organization already give rise to some degree of pessimism, there is no need for panic. We must not despair, and abandon the organization which has just begun. It is only through collective organization that we can hope to avoid another conflagration of the magnitude of that through which we have come. The system of individual nations arming to the teeth has been tried time and time again, but always with the same result.

Australia must play its part both as an individual nation and as a member of the British Empire and the United Nations. The Speech delivered by His Royal Highness, the last which he will make to the Parliament before returning to his homeland, dealt in a special way with the planning of Australia's defence policy. We were informed that Australia is completely conscious of the need, first, to keep in order its own defences against any sudden unprovoked attack, and, secondly, to develop closer association with the British Empire in its endeavours to promote a free way of life and preserve world peace. Finally, we regard the United Nations as the bastion of those people who seek to preserve peace. Summed up, Australia's defence plans are based upon a practical approach to world problems. Our defence policy is based on collective, rather than unilateral, armament; but this does not ignore the necessity of maintaining Australia in a position to withstand possible attack. On many occasions in this House honorable members opposite have attempted to create the impression that Australia is endeavouring to draw apart from the British family of nations. I repeat that that assertion is not helpful to the British Empire. It is not fair to Australia, and it is ungenerous to the Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt). The very reverse is the case. We have pursued our policies in close co-operation and consultation with British Empire leaders, and the purpose of suggestions made by the late Prime Minister, the present Prime Minister and the Minister for External Affairs is to solidify the varying resources which the British Commonwealth of Nations could put into the field in the face of a common enemy should war once more come to this world. I trust that we shall not hear any repetition of that idle and baseless charge which has so frequently been hurled across this chamber. It is not only unfair to the Government, but also harmful to the British Empire.

Dealing with circumstances in the Pacific, His Royal Highness drew attention to the fact that in this area, as in the European sphere, while we demand that peace shall be enforced and that all vestige

of Fascist and Nazi tyranny shall be obliterated, we seek for defeated peoples as well as for ourselves a just and democratic peace. In the past the seeds of war have too frequently been sown in unjust treaties. We must not commit that mistake on this occasion. Whilst unfair and vindictive treaties stave off war for a period, the children of this generation will suffer the consequences of any peace written in hostility and dictated by the spirit of vengeance. Therefore, I welcome the portion of the Governor-General's Speech which emphasizes the necessity to evolve a just and democratic peace. His Royal Highness also stated that frequent consultation will be carried on with our sister dominion of New Zealand. Through the Anzac Pact the common aims and ideals of Australia and our sister nation have been proclaimed to the world. In this chamber that Pact has been criticized, and the Government and the Minister responsible for it have been vilified in that respect. However, the Anzac Pact offers a basis upon which we can deal wisely and effectively, first with problems arising in the Pacific theatre, and, secondly, in our negotiations with other nations. In that spirit of free consultation and open diplomacy, and by insistence upon democratic ways and procedure, we can build a world in which existing hateful, racial prejudices among nations can be removed, and men and women in years to come can live happily together, rid of the constant fear of war, ruin and destruction. An important phase of the Government's foreign policy is the extension of its foreign affairs services. This also reflects sound planning, because we must get to know the peoples of other lands and demonstrate our willingness to work side by side with them in the maintenance of peace, and the promotion of cultural and economic standards. Only in that way can we strengthen the feeling of friendship and goodwill throughout the world. The other organizations of an international character with which this Government has been associated, and to which reference is made in the Governor-General's Speech, are parts of a general pattern upon which we can build future peace and prosperity, and, to quote the Charter of the United Nations "achieve high and rising standards

of living". Fierce competition in the past has sown the seeds of disagreement which has led to international conflict with consequences which we know only too well. The Government's insistence upon the part Australia must play in world affairs will help not only to solve existing problems and meet future dangers, but also to ensure the maintenance of high standards of living, and the welfare of dependent peoples, which is regarded as one of the responsibilities of trusteeship that devolves upon what are termed the more civilized peoples. International conflicts in the past have been between nations which have developed to somewhat similar standards, culturally and in the industrial sphere. The war of the future might well occur between more advanced peoples and backward nations, the dependent peoples, who may come to feel that they have been exploited in order to raise the standards of human beings of another colour. Bearing in mind the growing national sentiment among native peoples in the Pacific, we have a real interest in their welfare and in helping to raise their standards of life.

Dealing with the demobilization of service personnel His Royal Highness related the record of this Government, of which we have every reason to be proud. Some difficulties existed. Many who have been discharged from the armed forces have not fitted into the occupations which they have undertaken; but that is inevitable in the existing circumstances. It can be said with confidence that, overall, Australia's demobilization, planned well in advance and carried out efficiently according to the Government's policy, has been at least comparable with that achieved by any other nation.

His Royal Highness referred also to the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States. That relationship has been unsatisfactory for many years. State governments that are operating in areas which were the latest to be developed have laboured under a tremendous handicap. The present Commonwealth Government, and I believe previous governments also, have usually come to the assistance of State governments when they have found themselves in a precarious financial position. As a

matter of fact, however, State governments in Western Australia and the other claimant States have not had an opportunity to develop the policy that was demanded of them by the huge territories committed to their care. They have had to act warily and proceed slowly in the promulgation of the programmes which they desired to implement, because they have always been uncertain as to whether the financial commitments they would be forced to make in order to proceed with big developmental schemes, or even railways, road and like services, would be met in part by the Commonwealth Government when claims were submitted to it. That is a situation that might well be investigated. The problem of the financial relations of the Commonwealth and the States is complex, and very little that is beneficial might be produced by even lengthy discussion of it, because of the conflicting loyalties of Federal and State instrumentalities. The simple fact is that the strength and welfare of Australia are dependent on the strength and welfare of its outposts; for example, the State of Western Australia and even the small State of Tasmania. The greatness of Australia is not to be found in the heavily industrialized areas of the crowded cities. Sydney and Melbourne are only as strong and prosperous as they are enabled to be by the strength and prosperity of the whole of the continent. My colleague from Herbert (Mr. Edmonds) has referred to a problem that exists in the northern portion of his State of Queensland. That is bound up with the whole of the problems of the other States. Western Australia has a similar one, vast in its ramifications and tremendous in the financial drain that it makes on the State Treasury or that it will make on the Commonwealth if and when federal assistance is provided. These problems are a challenge to the Government, and demand a solution. Therefore, in the interests of Australia, I welcome the reference in the Governor-General's Speech to an improvement of the financial relations of the Commonwealth and the States.

At page 5 of the Speech, the Government, through His Royal Highness, has referred to improved amenities and working conditions in workshops and factories.

That sentence has very great significance; because, in an improvement of the conditions in factories, plus the improved relations to which the Leader of the Opposition referred, is to be found in large measure a solution of the industrial unrest that exists to-day. I do not want to be misunderstood when I speak of industrial unrest; because not only in Australia but also throughout the world there is growing evidence of such a condition, and it is due to a variety of causes. By proposing to improve amenities and working conditions, the Government is adopting a course which will help to increase production and achieve a better understanding between the various elements in industry to-day.

I welcome the reference in the Speech to the institution of an inquiry in regard to the basic wage. No person in Australia who considers this matter dispassionately can claim that, at existing price levels, not only of those commodities which appear in the "C" series index but also of all other items which are regarded as essential to the maintenance of ordinary living standards, a man can bear family responsibilities on the present basic wage. It will be generally conceded that the basic wage is inadequate to meet the needs of the ordinary man and woman in industry or elsewhere in the community.

I shall refer briefly to the reference in the Speech to the wheat stabilization plan. I do not speak as a representative of wheat farmers; but I have had a long experience of the trials and tribulations of the farming community of this country. No man who is engaged in primary or other production can exist if he is uncertain of the price which his produce will realize. We have had the experience of daily fluctuations of wheat prices, of rises to comparatively high levels and of falls to levels that have been ruinous to the farming community and have made a severe impact on the rest of the people. So, I consider that the Government's stabilization plan ought to be accepted by the people of this country. I know that the subject is a contentious one. Some persons have the idea that the farmers could achieve a better result and obtain a more immediate cash return. I believe that the farmers would be ill-

advised to sacrifice a stabilization scheme which guarantees to them a price of 5s. 2d. a bushel f.o.r. at ports for five years, in the hope that during that period they may receive higher prices or a more generous scheme may be evolved. Higher prices than the price guaranteed are ruling to-day, and they may continue to be paid. But every one knows, and the farmers have reason to appreciate, the rapidity with which a shortage of production can be replaced by considerable over-production of essential commodities. The present price of wheat could topple in a brief space of time to the ruinous level that was experienced in the years prior to and during the depression. So I warn the farming community not to forgo the substance of this stabilization scheme for the shadow of a better one or the hope of an immediate cash return.

In common with other speakers who have preceded me, I express to Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester the warm regard in which they are held by the Australian people because of the interest they have shown in this country. I believe that when they return to the seat of Empire they will be ambassadors for Australia and advocates of the development of the great possibilities that exist in this country.

I consider that this Eighteenth Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia has a great opportunity but a heavy responsibility. As we plan and develop our approach to domestic and international problems, so shall we determine whether a period of boom and slump will again be experienced in Australia, and on the international plane whether the wars shall recur, with short or long but always uneasy intervals of peace. That places upon us a tremendous responsibility. I hope that every member of the Parliament will discharge that responsibility in the manner demanded of him.

*Sitting suspended from 5.25 to 8 p.m.*

**Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON** (Barker) [8.0].—In delivering his Speech to members of both houses of this legislature yesterday, His Royal Highness the Governor-General formally and officially set the Eighteenth Commonwealth Parliament on its course. I have now had an opportunity to hear five such opening

speeches in this Parliament. There are certain matters in the Speech of His Royal Highness to which I wish to refer. My first observation is in relation to the most recent election campaign. I had always believed, apparently quite erroneously, that the object of having an election campaign was to enable the respective claimants of high office to deliver to the electorate their views as to how the government of the country should be carried on. In the last campaign, it is true, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Menzies) delivered a policy speech—the first of the campaign—and may I say, with great respect, there was nothing wrong with that policy speech. It contained references to many things that must be done if the Commonwealth of Australia is to be placed upon a secure and firm peace-time footing. The Leader of the Australian Country party (Mr. Fadden) also made some important statements in almost the same manner, form and volume. On the other hand, we had the policy speech of the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley), which I consider to be one of the most vacant allotments that this country has ever inspected. The right honorable gentleman did not promise anything. I have always understood that the object of holding elections is to enable a government to declare where it stands on important questions. Virtually, what the Prime Minister said to the electorate was, "You know who I am and you know the people I have with me. I do not promise anything. If you return me and give my party a majority in the Parliament, I shall open Pandora's box any time I happen to think fit, and what emerges from that box will be what you have authorized me to produce".

Mr. SHEEHAN.—The Prime Minister has a good reputation.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—I have known good reputations to be blasted in a short time, and I advise the honorable member for Cook (Mr. Sheehan) not to bank very strongly on them. I have seen good reputations in politics sink suddenly and irretrievably. Other Labour candidates at the elections, so far as I could see, placed their implicit faith in the leader of their party, although for a long time there were some misgivings and rumblings in the State capitals. Some

honorable members opposite were questioning whether or not "Ben" was on the right track. They thought he might have mistaken the turn; but he eventually arrived at the station, and the train was in perfect order from his point of view. And on that I congratulate him. I congratulate the right honorable gentleman on being the first leader of a government in the history of British politics, so far as my reading goes, who ever went to the country, promised nothing, asked for a blank cheque, and, incidentally, got away with it. Last week, it was my pleasure—looking back upon it I would not have missed it for many pounds—to be in this capital city, and in this building when members of the Labour party, fresh from their victories, went painfully through the process of selecting a cabinet. That was an education in itself. The selection of a cabinet having been accomplished, we are entitled to have a look at some of the results. It was not surprising that the Prime Minister should have been re-elected, unopposed, to the leadership of the party. Any other vote on that issue would have been most disastrous—I need not say any more about that. My friend, the Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs (Dr. Evatt), cast his bread upon the waters, and for him, too, the results were satisfactory. We see him now in second position, as deputy leader of the party. I remind him, however, that the history of deputy leaders of all parties is that they seldom succeed to leadership. They are, by no means, in the same relationship to the leader as is a Crown prince or heir-apparent to a throne. So I have great misgivings about the Attorney-General, because I believe that if I were to charge him with being politically ambitious, most of his colleagues would agree that the charge was well founded, and, of course, he has some ability—sometimes quite out of the ordinary—to justify that ambition. The next important matter was to observe the degree to which left-wing politicos had penetrated into the Labour party, and the support which was accorded to that very stormy petrel, the Minister for Transport and Minister for External Territories (Mr. Ward), in his attempt to secure the deputy leadership of the party.

Mr. HAYLEN.—Is the honorable member making a speech or quoting from the *Sydney Morning Herald*?

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—I am not quoting from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, nor from some of the honorable member's printed apologies. No one would accuse the Minister for Transport of having contested the deputy leadership with a view to that being the end of his political aspirations, because he, too, I believe, is ambitious.

Mr. HOLLOWAY.—And why should he not be?

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—I am saying that there is nothing wrong with that. Everybody has a right to be ambitious; but in some circles in which I have moved, and in others in which I have observed the goings on, it seems that that is something which should be reserved for an exclusive view.

I notice, too, that the Prime Minister decided to maintain the strength of the Cabinet at nineteen Ministers. I should be interested to hear the right honorable gentleman endeavour to justify that strength under peace-time conditions. From what knowledge I have of the work of a Commonwealth Government, I say that that strength cannot be justified.

Mr. JAMES.—The honorable member would not hold that view if he were on this side of the chamber.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—If the honorable member for Hunter (Mr. James) will cast his mind back to 1941, when the size of the Cabinet was increased, he will recall certain remarks made by some of us on the Government side.

Mr. HADLEY.—We may remember a lot of other things, too.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—The honorable member may remember them and he may quote them any time he desires. They are good things, and will stand quoting.

According to the Governor-General's Speech, the most important matter with which the Commonwealth Government will be concerned in the near future will be defence, because that subject takes up the greatest proportion of the 51

paragraphs of the Speech; yet, notwithstanding the fact that the Prime Minister himself, deliberately I assume, selected defence as the most important aspect of Commonwealth affairs, he has allotted defence portfolios to some of the junior Ministers in the new Government. I assume, also, that the degree of juniority depends upon the order in which honorable members opposite were selected by ballots. That, I think, demands an explanation from the right honorable gentleman, or from some of his colleagues.

There was recently an election for both Houses of the Parliament. I am a member of the Opposition. I think it will be generally conceded, that in the election of three years ago, the Opposition suffered a defeat. At that time, we might have been entitled to say that the electorate had made a mistake, and that it would reverse its decision in three years' time. After the recent election we have no right to say anything of the kind. In too many instances the electorate confirmed the decision given in August, 1943. In fact, it has almost wiped out the Opposition in the Senate. When I entered Parliament twelve years ago, the Senate Opposition consisted of three Labour members, and I maintain that a Senate consisting of 33 members of one party and only three of another is not a workable chamber. The disparity is too great. If the Senate is not to degenerate into a subordinate and practically useless body there will have to be a revision of the method of electing members of that chamber.

Mr. EDMONDS.—What were the honorable member's views when his party had an overwhelming majority in the Senate?

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—They were the same as now. As one who has for long been a member of the Proportional Representation Society, I may be believed when I make that statement. We should try to make of the Senate what the founders of the Constitution intended it to be, namely, a house of review in which the rights of the six States might be considered in a proper atmosphere. As at present constituted, and as it has been for a long time past, the Senate is much more a party chamber than one concerned with the rights of the

States, and that applied when my party was in a majority just as much as it does now. However, there was this difference; many representatives of my party in the Senate were prepared, when they thought the situation justified it, to take a stand against the government which, in general, they supported. Under the constitution of the Australian Labour party, no Labour senator may take such a stand. Whatever may be their private views, they must conform to the party policy which they signed and on which they were elected. If they failed to do so they must seek a career elsewhere. I believe that an all-party committee of this Parliament should be appointed to consider proposals for reforming the method of electing the Senate. This is not a question of administration or of party politics, but of trying to make of the Senate a useful and workable part of the legislature.

Turning now to the House of Representatives, we note that there are not many changes as a result of the recent elections. I see before me among Government supporters some faces which, frankly, I expected to be absent. On the other hand, I note the absence of some whom I had expected to be here. Among the newcomers I see the masculine form of my acquaintance of only yesterday, the honorable member for Reid (Mr. Lang). I have been expecting his arrival here for many years. When I first entered this Parliament I occupied a seat almost immediately in front of where he is now sitting, and I frequently heard from the lips of his admirers the slogan, "Lang is right", and sometimes, "Lang is greater than Lenin". It is not for me to question the decision of the electorate which sent the honorable member here. It is sufficient for me to recall that he has been one of the most outstanding, the most criticized and the most sinister figures in Australia's political history. I was relieved when I observed yesterday that he was alone, not being attended even by Captain de Groot. As one who will be an uncompromising opponent of practically everything the honorable member advocates, I can inform him that I will do for him, if necessary, what I have done for others, including the honorable member for the Northern Territory (Mr.

Blain) and the former honorable member for Bourke, Mr. Bryson: if he wants a seconder for a motion, no matter what it may be, I will second it, because I believe that every member of this Parliament should be allowed to speak his mind, and to express the opinions which he honestly and sincerely holds. One cannot help observing how the party which once professed to support the honorable member for Reid seems to have faded away. We have heard of the Master being denied, but I have heard no actual denial from his former friends. I have not heard any one of them get up and say, "Lang is wrong", or that he had been wrong. I know that you will bear with me, Mr. Speaker, when I refer to these matters, which must strike a responsive note in your own breast. Your own political career has been, like Joseph's coat, a thing of many colours, for one of which the honorable member for Reid was responsible. When I first entered the Commonwealth Parliament, what was called the Lang Labour party consisted of ten members. Watching them, I recalled what was written in one of the Book of Kings about those who supported the rebellion of Absalom, the Son of King David: "They went forth in their innocence, and they knew not anything".

I was interested to note that after the selection of the Cabinet, there took place the distribution of consolation prizes, as a result of which my friend, the honorable member for Griffith (Mr. Conelan), whom I have sometimes looked upon as a character out of *Alice in Wonderland*, is to proceed overseas. Perhaps his colleagues also saw the resemblance, and decided that it was better that he should fill the role of the March Hare. Hence, he is not with us to-day.

Many important matters await the attention of the Parliament. An event which may have far-reaching consequences, particularly should we become involved in another war, was the decision reached by the court in the Nuremberg trials. I confess that I do not know just where the world is heading in regard to these matters, and it behoves us to study very carefully the effect of the verdicts of this court upon international law and practice. Precedents set up there may be extended into domains which were not

touched upon at the trials. The composition of the Bench at Nuremberg to my mind was a rather strange mixture. One of the greatest dictatorships in the world was represented, and I compliment the honorable member for Herbert (Mr. Edmonds) on what he said about certain things in that connexion this afternoon. All I have to say is that, for the future of world history, it might have been better if the Soviet representatives had been in the dock instead of on the Bench. That is my view on that subject.

I refer again the Governor-General's Speech and to the important part occupied in it by the subject of defence. Sooner or later this Government must make up its mind about defence. One can examine the Speech without finding anything which will give a direct indication of the Government's attitude to post-war defence. Obviously, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Menzies) pointed out this afternoon, Australia's attitude to defence depends largely on its attitude to the United Nations. This Parliament ought to have a good look at the constitution of the United Nations before long. The Minister for External Affairs is back home, and I hope, for the good of Australia, that he will stay here for some time because there are many things that require his personal attendance in this Parliament and in certain departments over which he has control. In regard to the United Nations, I stand exactly where I stood in regard to the League of Nations. I say that the United Nations is a bigger, more expensive and more deceptive institution than the League of Nations ever could have been, with this bit of spice added, that any one of the "Big Five" can wreck its decisions whenever it chooses to do so. It cannot carry on under that arrangement. As I have said before, the idea of raising armed forces and placing them at the disposal of some authority other than our own kith and kin has not been carefully considered by the Parliament or the people of this country. There is no indication in the Governor-General's Speech that the Government proposes to consider the idea at any stage. To my mind, our first consideration should be self-defence—the defence of our own country. After that, the thing that

we must rely on through most of our future history, will be the closest possible defensive arrangement between ourselves and, first, our kith and kin inside the British Empire, and, secondly, the United States of America. Anything that the Minister for External Affairs may have to say on this subject will be heard with great interest by myself, and, I believe, by every honorable member in Opposition.

I notice that the Governor-General's Speech has very little to say about world trade. It is referred to only in one paragraph and then in a cursory sort of way. There is nothing about world finance. A question on this subject was answered in some measure to-day by a Minister, but in view of the length of time that has elapsed since the Bretton Woods conference and other conferences in the United States of America, and in view of the investigations that must have been made by different ministers and senior officers, it is surprising that the Governor-General's Speech should be absolutely devoid of any reference to Australia's proposed commitments under international financial and monetary agreements. The reason is not far to seek. The Labour party has not made up its mind. I always hope to see peace and quietness, but it seems that there are two factions within the Labour party and that its ranks are divided on this important subject. I refer again to world trade. Paragraph 18 of the Governor-General's speech contains a statement for which I am sure the Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs must have been responsible. It is as follows:—

Following the conclusion of the final peace agreement with Siam, which was negotiated by Australia as a party principal the Government has been concerned to secure the full protection of Australian interests in Siam. I do not know whether or not the honorable gentleman carries a microscope. The paragraph continues—

An Australian Consulate-General has been established at Bangkok.

No doubt that caused a flutter on the political seismograph, if it was in operation. That paragraph, taken in conjunction with the Government's failure to refer to world trade, is very significant. Trade must be infinitely more valuable

and of greater importance to Australia than 50 consulate-generals.

The Speech contains no reference worth mentioning to the future of agriculture in Australia. Is this because the honorable member for Ballarat (Mr. Pollard), who was so recently promoted to the office of Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, has not had a chance to exercise his influence in Cabinet yet? I can hardly believe that he had a finger in a political pie in which primary industry was a relatively unimportant ingredient. The subject is mentioned only cursorily in paragraphs 40 and 41 of the Governor-General's Speech, whereas the establishment of a consulate-general at Bangkok had a whole paragraph to itself. The two things are entirely out of proportion.

**Mr. POLLARD.**—When the honorable member was Minister for Commerce there were plenty of references but no action.

**Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.**—The honorable gentleman may have a debate with me on that subject at any time he likes. I recall him moving the adjournment of the House because he objected to action which I had taken. His references to that action are still on record. The items which I have mentioned show a complete lack of proportion politically on the part of the Government. The Speech also contains a few pious hopes regarding the settlement of industrial disputes. It states that the Government is "desirous of securing greater and more continuous production and it intends to do everything possible to eliminate causes of industrial discontent". I shall take a great deal of convincing on that point. I freely admit that, after the conclusion of any great war, there is always a period of discontent in any country which has been a party to that war, but the present discontent in Australia is out of all proportion to the grievances which the working men have, and many of the strikes have been deliberately engineered by the emissaries referred to this afternoon by the honorable member for Herbert. These men owe their allegiance to some authority and power outside Australia. These men and their activities have been condemned by the Labour party in South Australia, for which the honorable mem-

ber for Hindmarsh (Mr. Thompson), who is no stranger to me, can speak. They were condemned, I believe, as being anti-Australian, anti-British and anti-working class. Nevertheless, the only action of the Labour Government in regard to them has been to remove the ban of illegality placed upon them by a Government in 1940. I would be interested to hear whether or not this Government has a policy in regard to them and, if so, what that policy is. At the town of Murray Bridge, in my electorate, I was asked by one of these emissaries why I supported the viewpoint of the right honorable member for Darling Downs (Mr. Fadden) on this matter rather than that of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Menzies). My answer was fairly effective, and there is no copyright over it. It was to the effect that, if my questioner went back to his home that night, walked into his bedroom and found a tiger snake, he would kill it. He would not argue with it. That is the situation which faces the Commonwealth Government on this important subject. Even at this early stage after its defeat on the 28th September, the Opposition must look ahead. From my point of view, and from the point of view of the electorate which I represent, the only hope for Australia lies in the replacement of the present Government by one composed of honorable members from the Opposition benches. As a prerequisite to such a desirable change there must be a firm and close understanding between the two Opposition parties. Any attempt on the part of one of those parties to swallow the other will result in the swallower dying from political indigestion at a fairly early date. Each must recognize the right of the other to live and to represent those interests which it can best represent in this Parliament. There were certain contests at the recent elections which were obviously not in the best interests of the people of Australia. I hope that before the next election many of the differences between the two Opposition parties will have been resolved. I have no desire to go deeply into that, however, because I have been a member of both parties on this side of the House. As a matter of fact, just over half of my political career was spent in the service

of the one of which I am not now a member. What this country needs above all things is a recognition of the rights, not of the unions, but of the men who comprise them, and of the tens of thousands of individuals who are not members of any union. First and foremost, we need in office in this Commonwealth a government which recognizes the right of every man to earn, to save, and to own property. Once that is conceded the Opposition and the Australian Labour party must come into sharp conflict, and either one or the other must go down. There can be no half-way house, no middle of the road in this matter, and the electors must make up their minds about it in the not distant future. Honorable members opposite are in the habit of referring to the terrible monopolies that exist in this country. I was interested recently to see that the Commonwealth Oil Refineries Limited, more than half of the shares of which are owned by the Commonwealth Government, had paid a dividend of no less than 12 per cent. As time goes by I have no doubt that our friends opposite will continue to rant against combines and monopolies while important questions are still left unanswered. I have a strong suspicion that when the next elections are held, three years hence, many of these important questions will still remain unresolved, while too many of the things that do not matter will have received a great deal of attention, much discussion and perhaps great or little remedy; time alone will tell.

**Mr. WILLIAMS** (Robertson) [8.34].—The House has just listened to one of the usual entertaining speeches of the honorable member for Barker (Mr. Archie Cameron). We are left amused but no better informed. The honorable member is politically erratic and is seldom of the same opinion two days running. Perhaps if he would make another speech in an hour's time he would express views entirely different from those which he has just advanced. Fortunately, however, in these days the honorable member is not taken very seriously in this House. The honorable member sought to direct trouble-making jibes at the honorable member for Reid (Mr. Lang). I feel sure that if the latter cares to inquire

into the political history of the honorable member for Barker he will very easily be able to turn the tables on him.

With respect I should like to offer my congratulations to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester on the Speech he made yesterday, both in regard to the manner in which it was delivered and its contents. Naturally the Opposition is not very pleased that the Chifley Government should again be returned to office by the people. The honorable member for Barker contended that as the policy speeches delivered by the leaders of the Opposition parties contained more promises than that delivered by the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) the people should have been more impressed by them. The people, however, do not elect a government merely upon promises contained in the policy speeches of party leaders; if they did so the Opposition would have been returned to office with a great majority. The Labour Government was re-elected solely because of its splendid record in the past, the electors judging it on its great achievements throughout one of the most difficult periods in our history. The Labour Government is now firmly back in the saddle for at least another three years and during the life of this Parliament it will have to deal with matters of increasing importance. A great deal of work lies ahead of it. The honorable member for Barker has complained that nineteen Ministers are too many to handle the administrative affairs of the Government. With that contention I entirely disagree. Everybody knows that Ministers of State are very much overworked, and a great many people are of opinion that the number of members of this chamber should be doubled. They are fully aware of how overworked are many of us and they are familiar with the great demands made upon us by the electors. Ministers will have plenty of work to do, perhaps too much, and accordingly I should like to see their numbers increased. The second Chifley Government, which has a great reputation to uphold will, I am sure, surpass the fine achievements of the Curtin and first Chifley Governments. What concerns most people to-day is the fear of industrial strife and turmoil. The Government, being newly elected by the people, should

make a bold stand and give the workers of this country a new deal. Having achieved success in the recent elections the workers are entitled to the fruits of victory. No less than 90 per cent. of former members of the armed forces were workers. They are now back in industry and their just demands should be met. I do not think that any sensible person would argue that the time is not ripe to-day for the introduction of a 40-hour week in Australia.

**MR. SPENDER.**—Straight away?

**MR. WILLIAMS.**—Straight away. I believe there should also be a substantial increase of the basic wage. It is a great pity that the proposals relating to organized marketing and industrial employment put to the people by means of a referendum were not carried by a majority of the people in a majority of the States. Had the Government been given power to deal with industrial questions I trust that it would have brought before this Parliament a measure establishing a 40-hour week and increasing the basic wage of the workers of this country. Unfortunately, this Parliament has not power at present to grant a 40-hour week or to increase the basic wage. It has never had such power. Matters of that kind have been left to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. That is a great pity, indeed. The Government must do all in its power to ensure that a 40-hour week is granted to the workers, but how can it do that? It has been said that pressure of some kind has been applied in order to achieve that end. The Government has called representatives of the employers and the employees together and suggested that they should agree to shorten the proceedings now before the court for a 40-hour week and for an increase of the basic wage. I trust that the parties will agree, and that at an early date the court will be able to accede to the requests of the workers in these matters. However, I am not very hopeful of an early determination, because the parties in these applications have rights similar to those of parties in any other court. Should the court fail to grant a 40-hour week and increase the basic wage, the Government should call the Premiers of the various States to-

gether and place before them as forcefully as possible the urgent need for all the States to legislate on those matters. The Government has indicated in the Governor-General's Speech some of the things which it intends to do, and I am pleased to read that it has pledged itself to provide full employment for the workers and favours a shorter working week. In the latter matter the Government is using its best efforts to have the hearing before the court expedited.

Australia is a great country which is crying out for population and development, and I hope that nothing will be done to impede immigration to this land. On the contrary, I trust that the Government will do everything possible to attract immigrants. Australia needs to attract to its shores healthy white people, thousands of whom could be obtained from northern Europe and also from southern Europe. Australia has now an excellent opportunity to open wide its doors and attract as many white settlers as possible. I know that the Government is doing this, and I applaud it for its action. I appreciate the great difficulty that has been experienced in providing shipping arrangements for the transport of immigrants to this country. I suppose that some years will elapse before a million migrants will have been brought here, but I hope that the Government will leave no stone unturned to increase the population.

I also compliment the Government on the statement in the Speech concerning the proposed expenditure of £200,000,000 on developmental projects, which are to be carried out through the National Works Council. This is the greatest plan for national development in the history of the Commonwealth. What is more vital to the welfare of the man on the land than water conservation? I recently attended the ceremony of firing the first shot in the construction of the Glenbawn Dam. If anybody has doubt as to the sincerity of the McKell Labour Government of New South Wales in its efforts to assist in the development of Australia, he should consider the projects for water conservation commenced at Glenbawn on the 19th October last. No fewer than five dams are to be constructed on the Hunter River and its tributaries, which

will result in greatly increased development along the Hunter River Valley. Water conservation promotes production, provides employment for the workers, and develops markets for the primary producers. The McKell Government proposes to expend millions of pounds, which will be advanced by the Commonwealth Government for water conservation. New dams will be constructed on the Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers, and 35 low-level weirs are to be placed on the Darling, whilst a big scheme is contemplated for the diversion of the waters of the Snowy River. These works will result in rapid progress in Australia, and it will be necessary for us to attract a large number of immigrants to enable the primary industries to be further developed.

The Government is to be congratulated upon its statement that arrangements are being made with the States for the speeding up of building operations. Many thousands of houses are to be constructed, and employment is guaranteed for many years in the building industry. If we can avoid industrial strife and keep the wheels of industry moving, I have no doubt that great prosperity will be experienced in this country. Many people speak of strikes as though Australia were the only country in which they occur, but if honorable members would refer to overseas newspapers they would observe that strikes are now common throughout the world. I read recently in the *Toronto Globe and Mail* about the great steel strike in Canada which had been in progress for over nine weeks. The Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. McKenzie King, referring to that industrial upheaval, said—

I have yet to see an industrial dispute in which there are not two sides. The angels of light and darkness wrestle incessantly for supremacy in the best of every one of us. The only solution to any such dispute is to get the other man's point of view and have him share yours also.

I emphasize the necessity for employers to co-operate with the workers, to understand their point of view, arrange agreements with them, and submit disputes to the Arbitration Court before they reach such serious proportions that thousands of men become unemployed. Conciliation in industry is the factor upon which we rely

to save Australia from unemployment, chaos and economic disaster. The workers and the employers must get together. The employers and the workers are equally responsible for maintaining peace in industry. As a Labour government, we should take the view that the demands of employees, when they are justified, should be met. We should endeavour to arrange for the 40-hour working week to become law, for a sharp increase of the basic wage, for an extension of social services, and for a reduction of taxes upon the lower-paid section of the community. If we give effect to such a policy, we shall have peace in industry. Industrial unrest is due to the fact that the workers are not getting an adequate return from production. If we satisfy that complaint, we shall expand production.

The Government should, without delay, abandon as many of the war-time restrictions as possible. The war having ended more than a year ago, the Government should reduce taxes and terminate rationing. In my opinion, the necessity for the rationing of clothing no longer exists. With the return to peace-time conditions, the Government should ration only those articles which are in such short supply that the wage-earner would not be able to obtain them unless coupons were required for them. I believe that clothes rationing should be eliminated completely.

The Labour Government was returned at the recent elections on the vote of all sections of the community. I take the view, and I have made this statement on many occasions, that the Labour party has become the party to protect those engaged in rural pursuits because it represents the interests of the man on the land. We on this side of the House hold so many country electorates to-day that we safeguard the primary producers. The farmers look to Labour governments, Commonwealth and State, to assist them. For everything worthwhile that has been done for the farmer, the Labour party has been responsible. Indeed, we have such a proud record of achievement that we are continuing to gain the support of the man on the land. We shall continue to enjoy that support because we render to primary producers the services that they require. The Government should continue to assist

them by subsidy and other means. Farmers should receive our special protection. As all wealth emanates from the country, we must make it our object to maintain primary producers in a prosperous condition. While we do so, we shall banish the fear of economic depressions. Our solicitude for the farmer and our insistence on protecting his standards, in conjunction with our policy and achievement of full employment, will safeguard this country against any risk of an economic blizzard such as that which Australia encountered fifteen years ago.

I desire now to emphasize the necessity for Commonwealth assistance for education. Before the recent election, I promised that, at the first opportunity, I would support the claim that the Commonwealth Government should make available to the State of New South Wales a considerable sum of money to assist its education requirements. The New South Wales Public School Teachers Federation has stated, and I agree with the view, that school buildings in the State have been likened to barracks and the playgrounds to prison yards. The lack of libraries and dining facilities in schools, and the large classes, have been the subject of unfavorable comment, not only from local educationists, but also from overseas visitors.

**Mr. SPENDER.**—What amount does the honorable member consider that the Commonwealth should make available to the States for the purpose of assisting education?

**Mr. WILLIAMS.**—The Commonwealth already allocates money to the States, but the manner in which they expend it is their own responsibility. I consider that at least £25,000,000 should be allocated for the purpose of advancing and rehabilitating education in New South Wales. Honorable members will agree that education is a subject of supreme importance, and I urge the Government to give sympathetic consideration to this request. Evidently, my proposal is causing members of the Opposition considerable merriment. They seem to regard as a joke a request for financial assistance for education. I assure them that honorable members on this side of the

chamber believe that education is a most important and serious subject, for which increased financial provision should be made. Unfortunately, Australia's education system is lagging behind that of other countries, but I hope that it will not be long before the Commonwealth Government, by agreement with the States, will be able to make available to them at least £25,000,000 for the advancement of education in this great land.

**Mr. BERNARD CORSER** (Wide Bay) [9.0].—Before dealing with the various subjects referred to by His Royal Highness in the Speech which he delivered to the Parliament yesterday, I wish to add my congratulations to those already expressed to the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. I was particularly pleased with the confidence displayed by those honorable members in their maiden speeches, and I believe that their contributions to future debates will add to the prestige of the party which occupies the treasury bench.

A most pleasing feature of the Speech was that portion in which His Royal Highness, in referring to his impending departure from Australia, expressed his gratitude for the kindness and courtesy which has been extended to the Duchess of Gloucester and himself and their two sons. All Australians wish them God-speed as they return to the Homeland, and express the hope that at the heart of the Empire they will continue to serve its best interests.

It is pleasing to note that the Government proposes to make provision for the defence of Australia. The paragraph in which reference to this matter is made brings to my memory the time when the Lyons Government desired to make provision for Australia's defence. At that time, however, its plans were opposed by the Labour party. Had the will of that party prevailed, Australia would have been in a much worse state when war broke out in 1939. It is pleasing, therefore, to know that the present Labour Government, influenced by the British Government, recognizes its obligations for the defence of Australia, and also proposes to co-operate with other Empire countries in the defence of the Empire as a whole.

I notice, too, in the Speech that "The Australian Government has consistently endeavoured to assist in establishing a just and lasting peace". That is a worthy aim, but I regret that no similar statement relating to industrial peace within Australia is to be found in the Speech. Australians, unfortunately, are only too accustomed to reading in their newspapers of strikes and industrial unrest. It is not uncommon to read that large numbers of men are likely to be thrown out of employment because of the influence of a rebellious element within the Labour organization. It is a pity that the Speech does not contain some reference to the intention of the Government in this connexion, or to its desire and determination to increase production to the maximum capacity of the country. Only too frequently do we find the wheels of industry being clogged, with the result that there is considerable unemployment, resulting in losses to all concerned. While such conditions continue, Australia will be unable to take its proper place in world affairs or to expand its trade. Disputes cause much inconvenience and loss to, not only the particular industries directly concerned, but also the citizens generally. The community lives in constant dread of restrictions in respect of the use of electricity, gas, transport facilities, home building, domestic requirements, and so on. Unfortunately, trouble in one State has its repercussions throughout the whole of the Commonwealth. A lack of materials due to trouble in certain industries means that homes are not provided for ex-servicemen and others thousands of miles away. Carpenters, bricklayers, and other home builders are thrown out of employment because of trouble in such industries as coal-mining and shipping. Even in those industries in which production has increased, the position is not entirely satisfactory, because trouble in other industries does not allow the goods which have been produced to reach those who need them. To-day, in Sydney potatoes are practically un procurable; as much as £11 10s. a ton being paid by the Commonwealth Government for supplies. That is not because of any failure of the potato crop, but because thousands of tons of potatoes have been left to

rot on the wharfs as the result of industrial strife. We are told in the Speech that the Government desires to do what it can to promote and preserve international peace, but there is no intimation of what it proposes to do to maintain industrial peaceful relations within Australia. There is no pronouncement that the Government intends to govern in this respect.

Another paragraph in the Speech reads—

Australia has taken an active part in trying to prevent the exercise of the veto power in all cases where the Security Council is dealing with international disputes and situations by the process of peaceful adjustment. That paragraph reminds me that one of the last measures brought before the Seventeenth Parliament showed clearly that the Government was not adverse to exercising the power of veto in connexion with the meat industry. Under that legislation, the Minister may defeat the decision of a majority of producer members of the board set up to control the meat industry. It is strange to find the Government using within Australia a weapon which it regards as undesirable in the international sphere.

I support the remarks of the honorable member for Barker (Mr. Archie Cameron) regarding the omission from the Speech of any reference to the Bretton Woods Agreement. Australia, so far, has until the 31st December next to decide whether or not it will fall into line with other nations in supporting that agreement. Although experts and observers were sent abroad, the information which they obtained at the country's expense has not been passed on to the people through this Parliament. The Government has been most reluctant to state its intentions in regard to the Bretton Woods Agreement. I sincerely trust that a decision in this matter will not be made until the Parliament has been given an opportunity to discuss it.

Mr. LEMMON.—Has the honorable member read the report?

Mr. BERNARD CORSER.—It is not a full report. From what I can gather from references made to the Bretton Woods Agreement in the United Kingdom Parliament and the Senate of the United States of America, there are many

angles of this matter which should be of great interest to Australia. Among them is the subject of Empire preference.

Mr. LEMMON.—That matter has not been considered.

Mr. BERNARD CORSER.—The United Kingdom Government has stated that it does not intend to give away anything in the matter of Empire preference unless it receives an equivalent return. The people of Australia are entitled to know how this agreement affects them.

I agree with the remarks of the honorable member for Barker concerning the paragraph relating to the protection of Australian interests in Siam which states that an Australian consulate-general to that country has been appointed. That reads very well. It is pleasing to learn of the Government's desire to protect Australia's interests in that country; but we recall that only a few weeks ago it exhibited no desire to protect Australia's trade interests in the Netherlands East Indies. As the result of its failure in that respect an immediate market was lost for £5,000,000 of Australian products which had been loaded on ships which were not permitted to leave these shores because Communist extremists on the wharfs dictated the foreign policy of this country. On that occasion, the Government took no action to protect the nation's interests or that of a friendly nation. All that the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) could say was that he would not provoke a general hold-up of shipping by insisting that the Government should govern this country and determine its foreign policy. Had the Government realized its responsibility it would not have lost to Australia the opportunity presented to us on that occasion to establish a valuable market for our exports in the Netherlands East Indies where our prospects appeared to be almost unlimited. The extremists on the waterfront tied up shipping to such a degree that to-day vessels which should be bringing to Australia more tea, petrol, rubber and other commodities now in short supply in this country, are now diverted elsewhere whilst, at the same time, Australia has lost thousands of pounds worth of trade. We have sustained this injury because the Government, despite its weight of numbers in

the Parliament, has been afraid to govern. Yet it has an agreement with Siam and has established a Consulate-General.

The Governor-General's Speech also indicates the Government's proposal to appoint a defence commission to carry out responsible duties. The proposed commission will embrace the Departments of Supply and Shipping, Munitions, and Aircraft Production and the secondary industries division of the Department of Post-war Reconstruction. In view of the present large number of Ministers one would imagine that all of them would be only too pleased to retain their present duties, and that the last thing the Government would want to do would be to set up a commission of this kind. For what reason should the limited duties of the Minister for Munitions (Senator Armstrong) for instance, be reduced? I regret the Government's intention to set up this commission. However, the proposal is made a feature of the Governor-General's Speech.

It is very pleasing to note that the Government has at last, after wrangling for many years with Great Britain on the subject, concluded an agreement for the abolition of double income tax. The result will be to encourage the investment of British capital in industries in this country, because the income from such investments will no longer be subject to double tax. That reform is of first concern to British investors; but no proposal is made in the Governor-General's Speech to abolish double direct and indirect taxation now paid by our own people. No further indication has been given that the meagre reduction of income tax which was promised to the people during the election campaign will be increased, even though since that promise was made the right honorable member for Darling Downs (Mr. Fadden) has shown clearly how further relief can be given to our taxpayers. I hope that the Treasurer in his budget will deal with that subject as a matter of first concern to the people.

The Government has also announced certain plans with respect to the development of aviation. We are told in the Speech made by His Royal Highness that it is continuing to take all possible steps

to ensure that adequate services are conducted with the highest degree of efficiency and safety. Such provision is essential. However, I urge the Government to co-opt the services of local authorities in the provision of aerodromes in country districts. To-day, Commonwealth authorities merely inspect sites proposed as aerodromes and, after reporting thereon, simply gives free advice with respect to the establishment of aerodromes. In questions which I have asked in this chamber and by letter, I have urged the Prime Minister to give consideration to this matter when reviewing the Federal Aid Roads Agreement. I have suggested that portion of the revenue from the petrol tax which, incidentally, must be reduced, should be allocated for this purpose; and that it should be made obligatory upon the States to provide a proportion of the money required for the construction and maintenance of local aerodromes which are essential to provide transport, not only for citizens, but also for perishable primary products, not only within Australia, but also to islands to the north and also to South-East Asia and other countries. Adequate facilities for the transport of such commodities by air must be provided. This will involve the provision of services by small aircraft to feed larger aircraft at suitable points for the rapid distribution of foodstuffs throughout the Commonwealth and to adjacent countries. I again urge the Government to realize the importance of this matter and make liberal financial provision for its adoption when it is reviewing the Federal Aid Roads Agreement. Under the original agreement the Commonwealth must approve road works proposed by the States. I do not ask the Government to revert to that provision, but that in the new agreement the States shall provide a specified amount for aerodromes and for roads, also wharfs and boat harbours for fishermen engaged in fishing and for the tourist traffic.

The Governor-General's Speech also announces the Government's intention to explore the possibility of further collaboration with the States in the prevention and treatment of tuberculosis. The spread of this disease is a major problem at present. The Army authorities have shown how it can be successfully treated. This

can be done only by joint effort on the part of the Commonwealth and the States. In this matter we would be well advised to follow the example set by Sweden, where this disease once had a greater hold than in any other country. To-day, tuberculosis is gradually disappearing in Sweden. Should the present rate of progress be maintained, it is estimated that, by 1960, tuberculosis will be arrested in Sweden as a fatal disease. I urge the Government to give immediate attention to this problem.

His Royal Highness also stated that an agreement is being made with the States which will accelerate the construction of houses to offset the shortage which was intensified under war conditions. The Government's recognition of this problem is rather late. If it is really anxious to insist that the States provide homes for all sections of the community, it must prevent industrial unrest in order to maintain the distribution of building materials. The necessary materials are available in the southern States, but transport is impossible owing to strikes. The press stated to-day that relief from the petrol tax and from petrol rationing is not possible at the present time because so much use is being made of petrol-driven vehicles for the transport of commodities. The more extensive use of that form of transport is due to railway strikes and shipping hold-ups. Because of these industrial upheavals the people have to suffer petrol rationing for a longer period than would otherwise be necessary. It is gratifying to learn that £200,000,000 is to be expended on national works; but I am somewhat perturbed when I learn the nature of the works on which the money is to be expended. We have been informed by the Speech of His Royal Highness that certain of the States have joined with the Commonwealth Government in an agreement to effect the standardization of our railway gauges. Authority to proceed with this work was given by a bill which was forced through late at night in the dying days of the last Parliament. If anything is likely to impair the future of Australia it is the lack of water and power. If the Government intends to embark on the large expenditure mentioned,

and to provide £50,000,000 or £60,000,000, immediately for the standardization of railway gauges, it should devote the money to the provision of water supplies, where they are urgently needed. On one occasion when I moved the adjournment of the House, I urged the appointment of an authority to visit all the States and to present to the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and the States a report outlining the possibilities of providing water and hydro-electric power along Australia's coastline as well as inland, for the benefit of men on the land to-day, and for future primary producers so as to ensure the development of secondary industries away from the capital cities. Where minerals and metals may be produced, secondary industries should be established and be provided with the necessary power. The expenditure of a few million pounds would make this possible. Water and more water is our immediate need. This "liquid gold" is our first essential. That is probably the most important issue that is facing Australia to-day. Because of droughts a great deal of suffering is caused and much loss is sustained. One would imagine that the Government would follow the lead given by the honorable member for Robertson (Mr. Williams), who has just resumed his seat. He has stressed the necessity for embarking on schemes for the provision of water and has told us of a water scheme to which the Premier of New South Wales intends to give effect, at a cost of £30,000,000 spread over a period of twenty years. If the Commonwealth were to devote a portion of the proposed expenditure of £200,000,000 on national works to the provision of financial assistance, for instance to New South Wales, the scheme which that State has in view and which affects every water-course of any value from the coast to the west could be completed in much less than twenty years. Experts should be brought from the United States of America to this country to investigate and report upon water and hydro-electric possibilities to which the proposed expenditure of £200,000,000 could most usefully be devoted, thus ensuring a certainty of success to men who are on the land and obviating the losses and priva-

tions from which they suffer periodically because of droughts. On account of the present absence of security or financial reward the children of many of those who are on the land to-day are driven to the cities as soon as they reach the age of reason and are forever lost to the land. If security be assured our latent wealth will be developed and employment will be guaranteed. It is well known that droughts have caused this country to lose £100,000,000 in one year and have placed in a desperate plight those who have been affected by them. Consequently, I hope that the Government will review its determination to proceed speedily with the standardization of our railway gauges in order that there may not be a break of gauge during the next war. The first bomb that was dropped on a railway line would have the effect of disorganizing traffic even under a standardized system. The Queensland railways are not a paying proposition to-day. Is it intended that indebtedness amounting to £45,000,000 is to be wiped off by rendering useless every engine, sleeper, tunnel and bridge so that these may be replaced by others at a cost of £70,000,000? Can it be expected that the system will be able to operate economically and that the produce of the land will be transported on a payable basis? It is to be hoped that wiser counsels will prevail and that the Government will discard its present proposal, which had its genesis in the desire to provide work for pick and shovel men and for the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, which will supply most of the iron that will be needed for twenty or thirty years. It should give security to the people by providing them with more water and electric power, and thus enable the country to be developed along proper lines to provide security for those on the land to-day, and those to come, and to assure development by increased population and, as a result, general wealth. That is our greatest need. I have mentioned New South Wales. I can cite also Victoria, the smallest and wealthiest State, with the greatest return per acre from its land as well as the most generous provision of water. In Queensland, the Government of the State has in view a programme involving an expenditure of

£640,000 or possibly £660,000, for the provision of water to those areas which are suffering by reason of the lack of it. It does not touch the problem. Most of the towns with a population of a few thousand should be provided with water. The Minister for Post-war Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman) has said that this is a function not of the Commonwealth but of the States. My reply to him is that railway construction is a matter for the States, yet the Commonwealth Government has appointed an authority to deal with it. An estimate has been made of the total cost of standardization in each State and of the need for constructing additional as well as stronger bridges and heavier rails. A report has been made to the States and the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth has agreed to bear the larger portion of the expenditure. What has been done in connexion with the standardization of railway gauges could be done in regard to water schemes. The Minister to whom I have referred knows that, whilst the proposal of the Government is that the railway gauge in Victoria shall be reduced, Russia is adopting a 6-ft. gauge in order to provide faster trains and a greater opportunity for the expansion of production.

I regret that, as a result of the last elections, the number of Opposition members in the Senate will be depleted after the 30th June next. I hope that a constitution convention will be held in the not distant future and that it will decide either on the abolition of the Senate or on means whereby it may be made a useful chamber. If the number of members of the House of Representatives is, under the existing Constitution, to be increased by 100, provision will have to be made for the election of 24 more senators. The position in the Senate to-day is a repetition in reverse of the state of affairs that existed in that chamber ten years ago. It is in this chamber that most of the Government's legislation is introduced, and it is through members of this chamber that the Government is most directly responsible to the electors of this country. The Senate has lost its value. It might be possible, by constitutional reform, to increase the number of members of the House of Representatives with-

out increasing the membership of the Senate. I am only repeating now the protest that I made years ago when the position in the Senate was the reverse of what it is to-day, and there were only three Labour members. Incidentally, they, too, were from Queensland. Even if the Senate were to function as a house of review as originally intended I should still doubt its value. A government formed as the result of the expression of the will of the people should be assured of the right to govern in this House. I conclude by stressing again the need for a constitution convention to draft proposals which would ensure that members of the Senate would be enabled to perform their duties in the interests of the States which they represent and the Commonwealth as a whole, free from party political bias. If this cannot be provided, the Senate should be abolished.

**Mr. LANG (Reid)** [9.32].—There must be an evil influence that affects all Labour governments in Canberra. All the later Labour Prime Ministers seem to have been determined to prove that the Labour party's platform will not function in a practical manner for the government of our country. During the depression, fifteen years ago, the Labour party's policy was cast aside. It was claimed that the then unprecedented economic situation made it necessary for the Labour Government to ignore the planks of the party's platform, and to implement legislation which no ordinary Labour administration would have dreamt of introducing. The next time we had a Labour government was during the war, and the war was made a pretext for not only ignoring the Labour party's platform and policy, but also dispensing with democratic government altogether. Now, we are in a period of neither war nor depression, and surely it is a time when we should expect Labour men at least to make an attempt to implement the Labour party's platform; but there is still another alibi. It seems that to-day we are in as great or even greater danger than we were during the war or during the depression. According to Government leaders, we are standing with our backs to the wall, fighting the greatest demon of all—inflation. It is with great reluctance

that the Government permits even a partial restoration of parliamentary government. So, the Labour platform must be put aside until the return of what the Government considers to be normal times. But it is not the time nor the conditions that make the Labour platform effective. These things do not affect it at all. The only things that count are the sincerity and determination of the Government and its leaders. Times, conditions—nonsense! The sincerity, earnestness and determination of the Government and its leaders are the only things that matter.

The policy of the Labour movement is that industrial matters should be determined by arbitration. The party believes in arbitration, the people of Australia believe in arbitration, and the workers believe in arbitration; but to-day we have an arbitration system which will not work. It is cumbersome, inefficient, and out of date. In addition to the handicaps inherent in its structure, it is hobbled by the wage-pegging regulations. When the Government tells the workers of Australia to take their troubles and grievances to the Arbitration Court and obtain justice, it is working a confidence trick upon them. The court is forbidden by the Government to dispense justice to the toilers of this land. A Labour government that really believed in Labour's policy would have unshackled the Arbitration Court. It would have reconstructed the arbitration system on modern lines and removed the limitations now placed upon it. It would have made the arbitration system an effective, practical machine of justice which would inspire the confidence of the workers; but the Government has not any interest in the Labour party's policy. It has a new idol called "financial policy". This financial policy requires that, in every instance, the minimum wage shall remain the maximum wage, and as wages get further and further behind the cost of living, so the standard of living of the community falls. The present arbitration system is admirably suited to this financial policy. With its interminable delays it frustrates and defeats justice, because speed is an integral part of justice. Thus it serves the financial policy of the Government, and at the same time

enables the Government to side-step its responsibilities. The Government just does nothing about the matter, and cares less. If the Government is sincere there are two testing points that can be applied to it. The first is that with all speed it introduces a modern system of arbitration that will deal with industrial matters in the light of current conditions. The second test of sincerity is in regard to the 40-hour working week. The alibi behind which the Government shelters, namely, that the Commonwealth lacks constitutional power to legislate in regard to hours of work, and that even if it had the power it would leave the matter to be determined by the Arbitration Court, has enabled it to side-step the issue up to date. I point out, however, that there exists one field to which neither of those considerations applies, namely, the Government's own Public Service. There is no constitutional limit there. Commonwealth public servants do not go before the Arbitration Court. They have their own arbitrator, who has been appointed by the Government to do that job. The postal service, for instance, with its thousands of employees, provides the Government with a splendid opportunity to prove its faith, if it has any, in the principle of the 40-hour working week. Postal employees performed a most difficult task during the war. They did it on the pegged wages of 1942, and they did it without any war loading. Theirs is an occupation in which the 40-hour working week could be introduced very smoothly, and its introduction would be an indication that the Government was sincere in its advocacy of the 40-hour week, that it believed in its own policy. Why is there so much discontent in Australia to-day among government employees? Never before have government workers been so discontented with their conditions. In practically every State-owned transport system throughout Australia strikes have occurred or are threatening. Week after week, Commonwealth public servants are holding meetings in all the principal towns throughout New South Wales to express dissatisfaction with their conditions. This discontent cannot be written off as due to Communist activity. It is too general, too widespread, and too

unanimous. In the past, there have been big industrial upheavals, but they were confined to one industry, or to one section of industry or to one State, and nearly always they were directed against private employers. But the feature of this new order is the universal discontent of government employees with the conditions of their employment, and it is directed against every State government, and the Commonwealth Government, also. The fact that six of the seven governments in Australia bear the name of Labour makes the matter of very great concern to the people who believe in the principles of the Labour party. They ask whether it is the fault of Labour principles. Is it the fault of Labour principles, or is it the fault of the governments that are using the name of Labour? As the principles of the Labour party and its platform are not being implemented, it cannot be said that the fault lies in the Labour platform. The fault, therefore, must lie entirely with the governments that are ignoring the principles which they claim to espouse. After 33 years as a member of the Labour party in the Parliament of New South Wales I find myself, on entering this chamber, looking for the Labour party in this Parliament. The Labour party has always been a party of high ideals. It stands for improved conditions of living. It stands for better conditions for the aged. But what do we find in this Parliament? We have a government that calls itself a Labour government. I look around and see an Opposition which, naturally, I would look upon as the conservative party. Yet what is the position? In order to reduce the purchasing power of the people—striking the poor the hardest blow—this Government has imposed the highest rates of taxation of any country in the world. With both direct and indirect taxes it reduces the standard of living. The Opposition says it stands for reduced taxes. The Government refuses to reduce taxes. Where is the Labour party then? In order to meet the rising costs of living a substantial rise of wage levels has become imperative. Why, even the president of the Employers Federation admits that a rise has become necessary! Yet the Government, having pegged wages in 1942, when

the war was at its worst, refuses to unpeg them. The Labour party has always been the party that stands for the raising of standards of real wages. What does it stand for to-day? The Labour party in New South Wales pioneered family endowment in Australia. It granted family endowment for the first child of a family as well as for succeeding children. The Opposition in this Parliament says that it believes in paying endowment for the first child, but this Government refuses to do so. Are we to believe that a Labour government would be opposed to implementing this vital plank of its party's platform? Next we come to pensions. A cardinal principle of Labour policy has been that there should be a retiring pension, not based on the poverty of the recipient, but granted as a statutory right. That is in accordance with Labour thought throughout the world. Yet what do we find? The Opposition advocates the abolition of the means test, but this Government refuses to abolish it. Again I ask: Where is the Labour party in this Parliament? On its present record it has usurped the role of the conservative party. It is the right wing of the present opposition. If the Government moved for increased wages, for reduced income tax, for endowment for the first child of each family and for the abolition of the means test in order to help the aged, the poor and the afflicted, it would find that the Opposition, from what its members have said, is committed to those things. According to statements, there would be no opposition to these desirable acts. Such legislation, if introduced, should be passed unanimously. However, the Government is not prepared to apply the acid test, and make the Opposition stand by its brave words. Instead of doing so, the Government serves the masters' will. It prefers to remain the right wing of the conservative party. What is the explanation of this very strange repudiation of Labour principles?

The Government is haunted by a bogey—the bogey of inflation—and in order to escape the shadow of the bogey it has retreated into the bog of deflation. The Labour party has always been a party of bold initiative and courage to face realities, but this is a Government of men afraid of the past. Instead of facing

the future, it prefers to live in the past, and that is why it is impossible to find any evidence of the principles of the Labour movement being put forward by the Government. Everything that this Government does is dictated by this bogey of the past. In 1931, the then leader of the Labour Government in this Parliament accepted the doctrine of deflation at the behest of the representative of the international financial reactionaries. It was a defeatist policy. The leader of the present Government was a member of that Government, and the theories that were put into operation in that period of terrible depression are substantially the same theories as are being applied to-day. On the Government side of this House are members who, during the period I have mentioned, belonged to two diametrically opposed schools of thought. There are members who followed the Prime Minister down the path of deflation, and with him found themselves fighting the Labour movement. There are also on the same side of the House members who adhered to Labour principles. They fought to defend wages and they fought to maintain pensions. If this Government persists in its present attitude, then that fight of 1931 must be repeated. The vital spark that gave birth to the Australian Labour party is not dead. The present state of compromise and appeasement cannot last. When the inevitable clash of fundamentals takes place, as it must, members on the Government benches will have to decide whether they will continue to follow the line of right-wing conservatism or whether they will take the democratic trail and return to the Labour party platform and aspirations.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Air Force Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 145.

Air Navigation Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 142.

Aluminium Industry Act—First Annual Report of the Australian Aluminium Production Commission, for period 1st May, 1945, to 30th June, 1946.

- Arbitration (Public Service) Act—Determinations by the Arbitrator, &c.—1946—  
No. 24—Amalgamated Engineering Union.
- No. 25—Hospital Employees' Federation of Australasia.
- No. 26—Commonwealth Public Service Clerical Association.
- Nos. 27 and 28—Hospital Employees' Federation of Australasia.
- No. 29—Commonwealth Temporary Clerks' Association; Federated Clerks' Union of Australia; and Federated Ironworkers' Association of Australia.
- Nos. 30 and 31—Australian Journalists' Association.

Australian Barley Board—Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance-sheets of Nos. 4, 5 and 6 Pools and General Manager's Report.

Australian Wool Board—Tenth Annual Report, for year 1945-46.

Beer Excise Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 137.

Canned Fruits Export Control Act—Twentieth Annual Report of the Australian Canned Fruits Board, for year 1945-46, together with Statement by Minister regarding the operation of the Act.

Census and Statistics Act—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 146.

Commonwealth Bank Act—Balance-sheets of Commonwealth Bank and Commonwealth Savings Bank as at 30th June, 1946; together with Auditor-General's reports thereon.

Commonwealth Public Service Act—Appointments—Department—

Civil Aviation—A. Hepburn.  
Commerce and Agriculture—F. F. Anderson.

Defence—F. O. Chilton.  
External Affairs—B. C. Ballard, A. J. Eastman, J. A. Forsythe.

Interior—E. J. Adams, W. E. Anderton, H. T. Ashton, J. K. Ashton, R. Barnes, S. F. Benporath, A. T. Brunt, R. H. Clarke, M. A. Coote, J. L. Costello, A. W. Douglas, C. A. Glendinning, A. V. Gotley, B. C. Gray, R. G. Handley, F. T. Hannan, R. B. Hargreaves, D. Hart, J. H. Hobba, A. R. W. Lee, K. MacKinnon, G. R. Martin, B. Mason, H. McCann, R. J. McConnell, W. J. Milthorpe, J. E. O'Halloran, D. P. Orr, B. J. Retallack, J. W. A. Riley, W. H. E. Rowe, G. L. Spence, D. R. Stehn, J. F. Thomas, R. W. Walsh, R. W. Warren, R. C. L. White, A. F. Woolecock.

Labour and National Service—J. R. Isherwood, B. O. Plummer, R. L. Want, R. F. Ward, B. A. L. White.

Post-war Reconstruction—B. W. Hartnell, C. S. Hewitt, N. F. Stuart.

Trade and Customs—L. J. Legue.

Treasury—W. K. Allard, T. H. Halsey.

Works and Housing—W. M. Herbert,

B. A. J. Litchfield, J. B. Roderick,

G. A. Soilleux, O. C. C. White.

**Commonwealth Shipping Act**—Commonwealth Shipping Board—Cockatoo Island Dockyard—Balance-sheet and Liquidation Account, together with Auditor-General's report thereon, for year ended 28th February, 1946.

**Customs Act**—

Customs Proclamations—Nos. 657, 659, 661.

Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 138.

**Dairy Produce Export Control Act**—Twenty-first Annual Report of the Australian Dairy Produce Board, for year 1945-46, together with Statement by Minister regarding the operation of the Act.

**Defence Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 150.

**Income Tax Assessment Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 135.

**Judiciary Act**—Rule of Court, dated 10th October, 1946.

**Lands Acquisition Act**—Land acquired for—Banking purposes—Melbourne, Victoria. Commonwealth purposes—Brisbane, Queensland.

Customs purposes—

Bald Hills, Queensland.

Bundaberg, Queensland.

Sarina, Queensland.

Defence purposes—

Ayr, Queensland.

Bridgewater, Tasmania.

Beelerup, Western Australia.

Clairville, New South Wales.

Deer Park, Victoria.

Dubbo, New South Wales.

Geraldton, Western Australia.

Parasfield, South Australia.

Port Kembla (Mount Berkeley) New South Wales.

Prospect, New South Wales.

Toowoomba, Queensland.

Ultimo, New South Wales.

Wagga Wagga, New South Wales.

Postal purposes—

Adelaide, South Australia.

Albany, Western Australia.

Balwyn, Victoria.

Broadmeadows, Victoria.

Brunswick West, Victoria.

Cottesloe, Western Australia.

Eltham, Victoria.

Henty, New South Wales.

Junce Reefs, New South Wales.

Kellerberrin, Western Australia.

Kilkenny, South Australia.

Kingston, South Australia.

Moonah, Tasmania.

Mt. Hawthorn, Western Australia.

Oakleigh, Victoria.

Plympton, South Australia.

Preston, Victoria.

Rockdale, New South Wales.

South Yarra, Victoria.

Wagga Wagga, New South Wales.

**Life Insurance Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 136.

**National Security Act**—

National Security (Capital Issues) Regulations—Order—Exemption.

**National Security (Exchange Control) Regulations**—Order—Sterling area.

**National Security (General) Regulations**

—Orders—

Control of rubber (Distribution of motor tyres and motor tubes)—Revocation.

Prohibited places—Revocation.

**National Security (Maritime Industry) Regulations**—Order—No. 58.

**National Security (Prices) Regulations**—Orders—Nos. 2622-2737.

**National Security (Rationing) Regulations**—Order—No. 131.

**National Security (Shipping Co-ordination) Regulations**—Orders—1946, Nos. 23-42.

**National Security (Supplementary) Regulations**

—Order—Deferment of banking business.

Orders by State Premier—New South Wales (Nos. 64, 65).

Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, Nos. 132, 143, 148, 152, 158, 157.

**Northern Territory Acceptance Act and Northern Territory (Administration) Act**

Ordinances—1946—

No. 8—Medical Benefits and Hospitals.

No. 7.—Darwin Short Term Leases. Regulations—1946—No. 2 (Medical Benefits and Hospitals Ordinance).

**Patents Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1940, No. 140.

**Post and Telegraph Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, Nos. 131, 139, 149.

Postmaster-General's Department—Thirty-fifth Report, for year 1944-45.

**River Murray Waters Act**—River Murray Commission—Report for year 1945-46.

**Seat of Government Acceptance Act and Seat of Government (Administration) Act**

Ordinances—1946—

No. 8.—Liquor.

No. 9.—Theatres and Public Halls.

No. 10.—Hospital Tax Ordinance Repeal.

Regulations—1946—

No. 3 (Building and Services Ordinance).

No. 4 (Workmen's Compensation Ordinance).

No. 5 (Building and Services Ordinance).

**Seat of Government (Administration) Act**—Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the Australian Capital Territory for year 1945-46.

**Social Services Contribution Assessment Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 134.

**Superannuation Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 147.

**Wine Overseas Marketing Act**—Eighteenth Annual Report of the Australian Wine Board, for year 1945-46, together with Statement by Minister regarding the operation of the Act.

**Wool (Contributory Charge) Act**—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1946, No. 133:

House adjourned at 10.2 p.m.

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.**

*The following answers to questions were circulated:—*

**MEAT PRICES.**

**Mr. RYAN** asked the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, upon notice—

1. How many retail butchers in each State are believed to have broken the prices law in order to obtain a margin of profit?

2. How many retail butchers in each State have been prosecuted for proved breaches of the law, and what amounts have been collected in each State in fines and other penalties?

3. How were the prices fixed before the recent increase, and what margin was allowed for profit?

4. What margins of profit for retailers are being allowed under the new prices?

5. When are the cost of living figures reviewed, and when will the basic wage reflect the higher cost of meat?

6. Pending revision of the basic wage, what provision, if any, will be made for wage-earners and their families who have to find the higher cost of meat out of their pegged wages?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—It will be necessary to secure some of the information from the States, and as soon as this is available a reply will be furnished to the honorable member's question.

**CUSTOMS SEIZURE OF LUGGAGE.**

**Mr. HARRISON** asked the Minister for Trade and Customs, upon notice—

1. Is it a fact that portion of the luggage which was brought to Australia by a Miss Rosetta Kelly was seized by officers of the Department of Trade and Customs?

2. If so, what luggage was seized; what names were inscribed upon it, and to whom did it purport to belong?

3. Was this luggage declared to contain departmental documents?

4. Was examination made of the luggage seized by the customs officers; if so, did it contain departmental documents or goods that were dutiable?

5. If it contained dutiable goods, what was the nature of such goods, and what was their value?

6. Was Miss Kelly interrogated by officers of the Customs Department; if so, did the interrogation reveal that any Ministers or former Ministers, officers of the Department of Import Procurement or the Customs Department, or any businessmen of Sydney or other capital city, were in any way interested in the goods contained in the luggage that was seized?

7. If so, what are the names of these persons, and what action does the Government propose to take against them?

8. Did the interrogation reveal that it had been the intention to smuggle these goods into the country without paying duty on them?

9. Was Miss Kelly permitted to leave the country; if so, for what reason?

10. Was Miss Kelly aware of the contents of the luggage which was seized?

11. What was Miss Kelly's official position prior to sailing for Australia with the luggage which she brought to this country?

12. Did interrogation elicit that Miss Kelly had been offered a position in either the Department of Import Procurement or the Customs Department; if so, who made the offer to her, and what were the conditions of employment?

**Mr. POLLARD.**—The Minister for Trade and Customs has supplied the following answers:—

1. Yes.

2. Four (4) foot-lockers or small trunks. When examined by customs officers at Melbourne, to which place the goods were transferred under bond by rail, each trunk had affixed to it by a string a small tag-label bearing the words "Mrs. R. V. Keane" hand-printed.

3. No.

4. Yes. The packages did not contain departmental documents, but did contain dutiable goods.

5. Fancy goods, jewellery, toilet requisites, ladies' shoes, handbags and sundry articles of apparel, of an estimated value of £1,230.

6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Miss Kelly was interrogated by officers of the Customs Department and the results of that interrogation and other investigations have been submitted to the Crown Solicitor for advice as to whether a breach of the law has been committed. Obviously no names can be indicated at this stage.

11. An employee of Australian War Supplies Procurement, Washington.

12. There is no record of such an offer in the official record of the interrogation.

