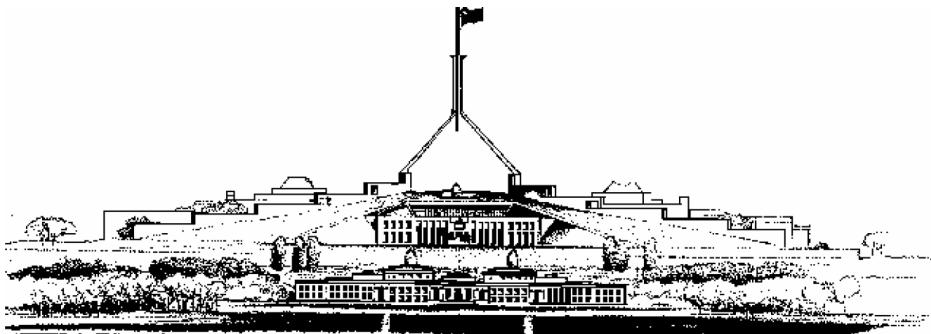




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 50, 1942
Thursday, 10 December 1942

SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—SEVENTH PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION—SEVENTH PERIOD.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

His Excellency General the Right Honorable Alexander Gore Arkwright, Baron Gowrie, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, upon whom has been conferred the Decoration of the Victoria Cross, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

CURTIN GOVERNMENT.

(FROM THE 7TH OCTOBER, 1941.)

| | |
|---|--|
| (¹) Prime Minister and (²) Minister for Defence .. | The Right Honorable John Curtin. |
| (¹) Minister for the Army | The Honorable Francis Michael Forde. |
| (¹) Treasurer | The Honorable Joseph Benedict Chifley. |
| (¹) Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs .. | The Right Honorable Herbert Vere Evatt, LL.D., K.C. (The Right Honorable John Curtin, Acting Minister for External Affairs, and the Honorable John Albert Beasley, Acting Attorney-General, from the 14th March to the 22nd June, 1942, during the absence from Australia of Dr. Evatt). |
| (¹) (²) Minister for Supply and Shipping .. | The Honorable John Albert Beasley. |
| Minister for the Interior | Senator the Honorable Joseph Silver Collings. |
| (¹) Minister for the Navy and Minister for Munitions .. | The Honorable Norman John Oswald Makin. |
| Minister for Social Services, Minister for Health, and, from the 21st February, 1942, Minister assisting the Minister for Munitions .. | The Honorable Edward James Holloway. |
| Minister for Trade and Customs and Vice-President of the Executive Council .. | Senator the Honorable Richard Valentine Keane. |
| (¹) Minister for Air and Minister for Civil Aviation .. | The Honorable Arthur Samuel Drakeford. |
| Minister for Commerce | The Honorable William James Scully. |
| Postmaster-General and Minister for Information .. | Senator the Honorable William Patrick Ashley. |
| Minister for Labour and National Service .. | The Honorable Edward John Ward. |
| Minister for Repatriation and Minister in Charge of War Service Homes .. | The Honorable Charles William Frost. |
| (¹) Minister for War Organization of Industry and Minister in Charge of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research .. | The Honorable John Johnstone Dedman. |
| Minister for Home Security and Minister assisting the Treasurer .. | The Honorable Hubert Peter Lazzarini. |
| Minister for External Territories, Minister assisting the Minister for Commerce, and, from the 21st February, 1942, Minister assisting the Minister for the Army .. | Senator the Honorable James Mackintosh Fraser. |
| Minister for Aircraft Production, and, to the 21st February, 1942, Minister assisting the Minister for Munitions .. | Senator the Honorable Donald Cameron. |
| Minister for Transport and Minister assisting the Postmaster-General .. | The Honorable George Lawson. |

(¹) War Cabinet.

(²) Designation changed on the 14th April, 1942, from Minister for Defence Co-ordination.

(¹) Designation changed on the 17th October, 1942, from Minister for Supply and Development.

AUSTRALIAN ADVISORY WAR COUNCIL.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Government Representatives .. | .. The Right Honorable J. Curtin, the Honorable F. M. Forde, the Right Honorable H. V. Evatt, LL.D., K.C., the Honorable N. J. O. Makin, the Honorable J. A. Beasley, and, from the 16th March, 1942, to the 17th June, 1942, the Honorable J. B. Chifley. |
| Opposition Representatives .. | .. The Right Honorable A. W. Fadden, the Right Honorable W. M. Hughes, C.H., K.C., the Right Honorable R. G. Menzies, K.C., the Honorable P. C. Spender, K.C., and the Honorable J. McEwen. |
| Co-opted Member .. | .. The Right Honorable Sir Earle Page, G.C.M.G., C.H. |

THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE.

(FROM THE 1ST JULY, 1941.)

SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: SEVENTH PERIOD.

President—Senator the Honorable James Cunningham.

Chairman of Committees—Senator Gordon Brown.

Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Senators Stanley Kerin Amour, James Jarivist Arnold (appointed, 21st November, 1941), Walter Jackson Cooper, Benjamin Courtice (appointed, 25th November, 1941), and the Honorable Herbert Hays.

Leader of the Opposition—Senator the Honorable George McLeay.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition—Senator the Honorable Philip Albert Martin McBride.

| | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|-------------------|
| Amour, Stanley Kerin .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| Armstrong, John Ignatius .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| Arnold, James Jarivist .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| Arthur, Thomas Christopher .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| Ashley, Hon. William Patrick .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| Aylett, William Edward .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| Brand, Charles Henry, C.B., C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Victoria |
| Brown, 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, Benjamin .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Queensland |
| Crawford, Hon. Thomas William .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Queensland |
| Cunningham, Hon. James .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Western Australia |
| Darcey, Richard .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| Foll, Hon. Hattil Spencer .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Queensland |
| Fraser, Hon. James Mackintosh .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Western Australia |
| Gibson, Hon. William Gerrard .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Victoria |
| Hayes, John Blyth, C.M.G. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| Hays, Hon. Herbert .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| (*)Johnston, Edward Bertram .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Western Australia |
| Keane, Hon. Richard Valentine .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Victoria |
| Lamp, Charles Adcock .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| Large, William James .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | New South Wales |
| (*)Latham, Charles George .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Western Australia |
| Leckie, Hon. John William .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Victoria |
| McBride, Hon. Philip Albert Martin .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |
| MacDonald, Hon. Allan Nicholl .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Western Australia |
| McLachlan, Hon. Alexander John .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |
| McLachlan, James .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |
| McLeay, Hon. George .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |
| Sampson, Burford, D.S.O., V.D. .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Tasmania |
| Spicer, John Armstrong .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | Victoria |
| Uppill, Oliver .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |
| Wilson, Keith Cameron .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | South Australia |

(¹) Died, the 6th September, 1942.

(*) Elected, the 8th October, 1942, to fill casual vacancy; sworn, the 10th December, 1942.

THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION: SEVENTH PERIOD.

Speaker—The Honorable Walter Maxwell Nairn.

Chairman of Committees—John Henry Prowse.

Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Albert Oliver Badman, the Honorable Janies Allan Guy, George William Martens, George James Rankin, D.S.O., V.D., John Solomon Rosevear, Fred Hurtle Stacey, and David Oliver Watkins.

Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Country Party—The Right Honorable Arthur William Fadden.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the United Australia Party—The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, C.H., K.C.

| | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|-----------------------|
| Abbott, Hon. Joseph Palmer, M.C. | .. | .. | .. | New England (N.S.W.) |
| Anthony, Hon. Hubert Lawrence .. | .. | .. | .. | Richmond (N.S.W.) |
| Badman, Albert Oliver .. | .. | .. | .. | Grey (S.A.) |
| Baker, Francis Patrick .. | .. | .. | .. | Maranoa (Q.) |
| Barnard, Herbert Claude .. | .. | .. | .. | Bass (T.) |
| Beasley, Hon. John Albert .. | .. | .. | .. | West Sydney (N.S.W.) |
| Beck, Arthur James, M.C. | .. | .. | .. | Denison (T.) |
| Bell, Hon. Sir George John, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. | .. | .. | .. | Darwin (T.) |
| Blackburn, Maurice McCrae .. | .. | .. | .. | Bourke (V.) |
| Blain, Adair Macalister .. | .. | .. | .. | (N.T.) |
| Breen, John Patrick .. | .. | .. | .. | Calare (N.S.W.) |
| Brennan, Hon. Frank .. | .. | .. | .. | Batman (V.) |
| Calwell, Arthur Augustus .. | .. | .. | .. | Melbourne (V.) |
| Cameron, Hon. Archie Galbraith .. | .. | .. | .. | Barker (S.A.) |
| Chifley, Hon. Joseph Benedict .. | .. | .. | .. | Macquarie (N.S.W.) |
| Clark, Joseph James .. | .. | .. | .. | Darling (N.S.W.) |
| Coles, Arthur William .. | .. | .. | .. | Henty (V.) |
| Collins, Hon. Thomas Joseph .. | .. | .. | .. | Hume (N.S.W.) |
| Conelan, William Patrick .. | .. | .. | .. | Griffith (Q.) |
| Corser, Bernard Henry .. | .. | .. | .. | Wide Bay (Q.) |
| Curtin, Rt. Hon. John .. | .. | .. | .. | Fremantle (W.A.) |
| Dedman, Hon. John Johnstone .. | .. | .. | .. | Corio (V.) |
| Drakeford, Hon. Arthur Samuel .. | .. | .. | .. | Maribyrnong (V.) |
| Duncan-Hughes, John Grant, M.V.O., M.C. | .. | .. | .. | Wakefield (S.A.) |
| Evatt, Rt. Hon. Herbert Vere, LL.D., K.C. | .. | .. | .. | Barton (N.S.W.) |
| Fadden, Rt. Hon. Arthur William .. | .. | .. | .. | Darling Downs (Q.) |
| Walstein, Sydney Max .. | .. | .. | .. | Watson (N.S.W.) |
| Forde, Hon. Francis Michael .. | .. | .. | .. | Capricornia (Q.) |
| Francis, Hon. Josiah .. | .. | .. | .. | Moreton (Q.) |
| Frost, Hon. Charles William .. | .. | .. | .. | Franklin (T.) |
| Guy, Hon. James Allan .. | .. | .. | .. | Wilmot (T.) |
| Harrison, Hon. Eric John .. | .. | .. | .. | Wentworth (N.S.W.) |
| Holloway, Hon. Edward James .. | .. | .. | .. | Melbourne Ports (V.) |
| Holt, Hon. Harold Edward .. | .. | .. | .. | Fawkner (V.) |
| 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, Herbert Victor .. | .. | .. | .. | Kalgoorlie (W.A.) |
| Jolly, William Alfred, C.M.G. | .. | .. | .. | Lilley (Q.) |
| Langtry, Joseph Ignatius .. | .. | .. | .. | Riverina (N.S.W.) |
| Lawson, Hon. George .. | .. | .. | .. | Brisbane (Q.) |
| Lazzarini, Hon. Hubert Peter .. | .. | .. | .. | Werriwa (N.S.W.) |
| Makin, Hon. Norman John Oswald .. | .. | .. | .. | Hindmarsh (S.A.) |
| Marr, Hon. Sir Charles William Clanan, K.C.V.O., D.S.O., M.C., V.D. | .. | .. | .. | Parkes (N.S.W.) |
| Martens, George William .. | .. | .. | .. | Herbert (Q.) |
| Marwick, Thomas William .. | .. | .. | .. | Swan (W.A.) |
| McCall, William Victor .. | .. | .. | .. | Martin (N.S.W.) |
| McDonald, Hon. Allan McKenzie .. | .. | .. | .. | Corangamite (V.) |
| McEwen, Hon. John .. | .. | .. | .. | Indi (V.) |
| McLeod, Donald .. | .. | .. | .. | Wannon (V.) |
| Menzies, Rt. Hon. Robert Gordon, K.C. | .. | .. | .. | Kooyong (V.) |
| Morgan, Charles Albert Aaron .. | .. | .. | .. | Reid (N.S.W.) |
| Mulcahy, Daniel .. | .. | .. | .. | Lang (N.S.W.) |
| Nairn, Hon. Walter Maxwell .. | .. | .. | .. | Perth (W.A.) |
| Page, Rt. Hon. Sir Earle Christmas Grafton, G.C.M.G., C.H. | .. | .. | .. | Cowper (N.S.W.) |
| Paterson, Hon. Thomas .. | .. | .. | .. | Gippsland (V.) |
| Perkins, Hon. John Arthur .. | .. | .. | .. | Eden-Monaro (N.S.W.) |
| Pollard, Hon. Reginald Thomas .. | .. | .. | .. | Ballaarat (V.) |
| Price, Archibald Grenfell, C.M.G., D.Litt. .. | .. | .. | .. | Boothby (S.A.) |

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

v

SIXTEENTH PARLIAMENT—*continued.*

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Prowse, John Henry | Forrest (W.A.) |
| Rankin, George James, D.S.O., V.D. | Bendigo (V.) |
| Riordan, William James Frederick | Kennedy (Q.) |
| Rosevear, John Solomon | Dalley (N.S.W.) |
| 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.) |
| Spender, Hon. Percy Claude, K.C. | Warringah (N.S.W.) |
| Spooner, Hon. Eric Sydney | Robertson (N.S.W.) |
| Stacey, Fred Hurtle | Adelaide (S.A.) |
| Stewart, Hon. Sir Frederick Harold | Parramatta (N.S.W.) |
| 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.) |
| Wilson, Alex | Wimmera (V.) |

THE COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION.

(SEVENTH PERIOD.)

JOINT STANDING.

BROADCASTING.—Mr. Calwell (Chairman), Senator Amour, Senator Cooper, Senator Herbert Hays, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Johnson, Sir Charles Marr, Dr. Price, and Mr. Riordan.

HOUSE.—The President (Chairman), Senator Amour, Senator Arthur, Senator Aylett, Senator Brand, Senator Cooper, Senator Uppill, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Badman, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Francis, Mr. Guy, Mr. Mulcahy, and Mr. Watkins.

LIBRARY.—Mr. Speaker (Chairman), the President, Senator Armstrong (appointed, 20th November, 1941), Senator Cameron, Senator Collett, Senator Collings (discharged, 20th November, 1941). Senator Fraser, Senator J. B. Hayes, Senator Sampson, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Coles, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Paterson, Mr. Riordan, and Mr. Rosevear.

PRINTING.—Mr. Conelan (Chairman), Senator Arnold, Senator Aylett, Senator Courtice, Senator Gibson, Senator J. B. Hayes, Senator Johnston (died, 6th September, 1942), Senator Allan MacDonald, Mr. Beck, Mr. Falstein, Mr. McCall, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Ryan.

PUBLIC WORKS.—Senator Brand (Chairman), Senator Cooper, Senator Lamp, Mr. Badman, Mr. James, Mr. Jolly, Mr. Martens, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Stacey.

JOINT.

PROFITS.—Senator Spicer (Chairman), Senator Armstrong (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Senator Courtice (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Senator Largo (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Clark (discharged, 25th March, 1942), Mr. Marwick, Dr. Price, and Mr. Watkins (discharged, 12th November, 1941).

RURAL INDUSTRIES.—Mr. Francis (Chairman), Senator Aylett (discharged, 25th March, 1942), Senator Herbert Hays, Senator Johnston (died, 6th September, 1942), Senator Uppill, Mr. Baker (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Breen (appointed, 2nd October, 1942), Mr. Frost (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Langtry (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Mr. McLeod, Mr. Marwick (appointed, 30th September, 1942), Mr. Pollard (discharged, 25th March, 1942), Mr. Scully (discharged, 12th November, 1941), and Mr. Wilson.

SOCIAL SECURITY.—Mr. Barnard (appointed Chairman, 12th November, 1941), Senator Arnold (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Senator Cooper, Senator Keane (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Perkins (resigned chairmanship, 12th November, 1941), and Mr. Ryan.

WAR EXPENDITURE.—Senator A. J. McLachlan (Chairman), Senator Arthur (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Senator Ashley (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Senator Clothier (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Senator Darcey (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Senator Lamp (appointed, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Badman, Mr. Beck (discharged, 6th May, 1942), Mr. Conelan (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jolly, Mr. Lawson (discharged, 12th November, 1941), Mr. McCall, Mr. Morgan (appointed, 12th November, 1941; discharged, 5th March, 1942), Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Paterson, and Mr. Rosevear (appointed, 4th June, 1942; discharged, 3rd September, 1942).

SENATE.

DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS.—Senator Armstrong, Senator Collings, Senator Courtice, Senator Crawford; Senator Gibson, Senator Sampson, and Senator Uppill.

REGULATIONS AND ORDINANCES.—Senator Spicer (Chairman), Senator Cameron (discharged, 20th November, 1941), Senator Clothier, Senator Cooper, Senator Courtice, Senator Herbert Hays, Senator Large (appointed, 20th November, 1941), and Senator Allan MacDonald.

STANDING ORDERS.—The President (Chairman), the Chairman of Committees, Senator Crawford, Senator Darcey, Senator Herbert Hays, Senator Johnston (died, 6th September, 1942), Senator Keane, Senator Lamp, and Senator A. J. McLachlan.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

STANDING ORDERS.—Mr. Speaker (Chairman), the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Beasley, Sir George Bell, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Makin, and Sir Earle Page.

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS.

SENATE.

Clerk.—Until the 30th November, 1942, R. A. Broinowski; from the 1st December, 1942, J. E. Edwards.

Clerk Assistant.—Until the 30th November, 1942, J. E. Edwards; from the 1st December, 1942, R. H. C. Loof.

Usher of the Black Rod.—Until the 30th November, 1942, R. H. C. Loof; from the 1st December, 1942, W. I. Emerton.

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS—*continued.*

vii

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Clerk—F. C. Green, M.C.

Clerk Assistant—A. A. Tregear.

Second Clerk-Assistant—S. F. Chubb.

Serjeant-at-Arms—H. A. Dodd.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTING STAFF.

Principal Reporter—G. H. Romans.

Second Reporter—A. P. Adams.

LIBRARY.

Librarian—K. Binns.

Assistant Librarian—H. L. White.

JOINT HOUSE.

Secretary—Until the 30th November, 1942, J. E. Edwards; from the 1st December, 1942,
A. A. Tregear.

THE ACTS OF THE SESSION.

(SEVENTH PERIOD.)

APPROPRIATION ACT 1942-43 (No. 44 of 1942)—

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

APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1942-43 (No. 45 of 1942)—

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

BLACK MARKETING ACT 1942 (No. 49 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Prevention of Black Marketing.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (CANADIAN PREFERENCE) VALIDATION ACT 1942 (No. 40 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff (Canadian Preference) Proposals.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (EXCHANGE ADJUSTMENT) VALIDATION ACT 1942 (No. 37 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Validation of Adjustments in Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff (Exchange Adjustment) Proposals.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (NEW ZEALAND PREFERENCE) VALIDATION ACT 1942 (No. 39 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff (New Zealand Preference) Proposals.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (SPECIAL WAR DUTY) VALIDATION ACT 1942 (No. 38 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff (Special War Duty) Proposals.

CUSTOMS TARIFF VALIDATION ACT 1942 (No. 36 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Validation of Collections of Duties of Customs under Customs Tariff Proposals.

DAIRYING INDUSTRY ASSISTANCE ACT 1942 (No. 58 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the granting of Assistance to the Dairying Industry with the object of aiding the Prosecution of the War, and for other purposes.

ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT 1942 (No. 42 of 1942)—

An Act to impose Tax upon Payments for Admission to Entertainments.

ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ASSESSMENT ACT 1942 (No. 41 of 1942)—

An Act to provide for the Imposition, Assessment and Collection of a Tax upon Payments for Admission to Entertainments.

INCOME TAX ACT (No. 2) 1942 (No. 51 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *Income Tax Act* 1942.

INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT (No. 2) 1942 (No. 50 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *Income Tax Assessment Act* 1936-1941, as amended by the *Income Tax Assessment Act* 1942, and for other purposes.

LOAN ACT (No. 3) 1942 (No. 47 of 1942)—

An Act to authorize the Raising and Expending of a certain Sum of Money.

PAY-ROLL TAX ASSESSMENT ACT 1942 (No. 48 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act* 1941.

SALES TAX ASSESSMENT ACT (No. 1) 1942 (No. 54 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *Sales Tax Assessment Act* (No. 1) 1930-1940.

STATES GRANTS ACT 1942 (No. 46 of 1942)—

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 GRANTS (ENTERTAINMENTS TAX REIMBURSEMENT) ACT 1942 (No. 43 of 1942)—

An Act to make provision for the Grant of Financial assistance to States, and for other purposes.

STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER ADOPTION ACT 1942 (No. 56 of 1942)—

An Act to remove Doubts as to the Validity of certain Commonwealth Legislation, to obviate Delays occurring in its Passage, and to effect certain related purposes, by adopting certain Sections of the Statute of Westminster, 1931, as from the Commencement of the War between His Majesty the King and Germany.

SUPERANNUATION ACT 1942 (No. 53 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *Superannuation Act* 1922-1937, and for other purposes.

WAR SERVICE ESTATES ACT 1942 (No. 57 of 1942)—

An Act relating to the Estates of Deceased Members of the Naval, Military and Air Forces of the Commonwealth, and for other purposes.

WAR-TIME (COMPANY) TAX ASSESSMENT ACT 1942 (No. 52 of 1942)—

An Act to amend the *War-time (Company) Tax Assessment Act* 1940-1941.

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT ACT 1942 (No. 55 of 1942)—

An Act to Encourage and Regulate the Employment of Women for the purpose of aiding the Prosecution of the present War.

THE BILLS OF THE SESSION.

(TO END OF SEVENTH PERIOD.)

- COMMONWEALTH BANK BILL 1942. Initiated in the House of Representatives; second reading.
- COMMONWEALTH CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL 1941. Initiated in the House of Representatives.
Leave to bring in granted in Third Period.
- CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (WAR AIMS AND RECONSTRUCTION) BILL 1942. Initiated in the House of Representatives; second reading.
- EXTRADITION BILL 1941. Initiated in the House of Representatives. Leave to bring in granted in Second Period.
- NAVIGATION BILL 1941. Initiated in the House of Representatives. Leave to bring in granted in Fourth Period. (Bill initiated in Senate in Sixth Period of Session and passed through both Houses; reserved for Royal Assent.)
- PATENTS BILL 1941. Initiated in the House of Representatives. Leave to bring in granted in Second Period.
- TRADE MARKS BILL 1941. Initiated in the House of Representatives. Leave to bring in granted in Second Period.
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CONTENTS

THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER 1942

CHAMBER

| | |
|--|------|
| Death Of The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith | 1686 |
| International Affairs | |
| Review of War Situation | 1687 |
| Government Members. - Ah ! | 1695 |
| Adjournment | |
| Friday, 11 December 1942 | 1744 |

QUESTIONS IN WRITING

Answers To Questions

| | |
|---|------|
| Western Australia: Importationof Merchandise..... | 1747 |
| Public Service Salaries | 1748 |
| Coal Charges | 1749 |
| Trading Banks : Country Branches | 1750 |

The late honorable gentleman resigned from a position in the Tasmanian Railways Department to contest the Denison seat in the House of Representatives at the general elections in 1910, in which he was successful. He was re-elected in 1913, 1914, 1917, and 1919. He was a member of the parliamentary party that visited England in 1911 at the invitation of the Government of the United Kingdom on the occasion of the coronation of King George V. He was a member of the Royal Commission on Electoral Laws in 1914, and of the Public Works Committee from 1914 to 1916 and again from 1917 to 1919. He was an Assistant Minister from November, 1916, to February, 1917, and an Honorary Minister from the 3rd February, 1920. He held the portfolio of Minister for the Navy from the 28th July, 1920, to the 21st December, 1921. He was defeated at the general election in 1922.

Mr. Laird Smith subsequently took up farming pursuits in the Burnie district and continued to take an active interest in public affairs, particularly in relation to the organization of primary industries. He took a leading part in the formation of the now defunct Agricultural Bureau of Tasmania, and became the first chairman of the State Potato Marketing Board. He was also prominent in other public movements. He worked unsparingly in the service of his country and was held in the highest esteem by his fellows. I move—

That this House records its sincere regret at the death of the Honorable William Henry Laird Smith, a former member of the House of Representatives for the Division of Denison and a Minister of the Crown, places on record its appreciation of his meritorious public service, and tenders its deep sympathy to his widow and adopted son.

MR. HUGHES (North Sydney—Leader of the United Australia party).—I second the motion and associate the members of the Opposition and myself with the Prime Minister's expressions of deep regret at the death of the late Honorable W. H. Laird Smith, and of profound sympathy with his widow and adopted son.

The news of his death came as a great shock to me. During all the years we were associated I never knew him to be ill; he always seemed to me to be

House of Representatives

Thursday, 10 December, 1942.

MR. SPEAKER (Hon. W. M. Nairn) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

DEATH OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM HENRY LAIRD SMITH.

MR. CURTIN (Fremantle—Prime Minister).—I deeply regret to inform honorable members of the death of the Honorable William Henry Laird Smith, a former member of the House of Representatives and a Minister of the Crown, which occurred at Burnie, in somewhat tragic circumstances, on the 21st October, 1942.

the embodiment of radiant health. Physically, he was a magnificent specimen of manhood. Of all the men I have known in public life he seemed to me the one destined to outlive his contemporaries.

He was my colleague for many years, and I entertained for him feelings of profound esteem and warm affection. In and out of office, I found him to be honorable and upright. He was a forthright man—one who spoke his mind freely. He held definite opinions which he did not fear to declare to the world. What he believed in he fought for, and he never feared to speak his mind. His character may be summed up in the phrase—"He faced life boldly".

Mr. Laird Smith was as firm in his friendships as he was in his beliefs. He was no fair-weather friend; but a man who, in the darkest hour when the storm raged fiercely, was ever at one's side. He had a genial disposition. He made no personal enemies. Although he met life boldly he met it with a smile. He was a very manly man. There was nothing petty or mean about him. In and out of Parliament he served his country faithfully and with great ability. His death, which will be deeply regretted by the people of his State, robs me of a dear friend, whose loss I sincerely mourn.

Question resolved in the affirmative, honorable members standing in their places.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

REVIEW OF WAR SITUATION.

Mr. CURTIN (Fremantle—Prime Minister).—*by leave*—When the House adjourned on the 9th October I stated that the Government proposed to call Parliament together before Christmas. I added that, if the war situation necessitated it, an early sitting would be held. As I announced on the 13th November, it was decided to summon Parliament for a meeting extending over two days, in order that honorable members might hear and discuss a statement on the position of the war. As stated at the time, it is not the intention of the Government to submit any legislative proposals to Parliament. I now propose to give to honorable mem-

bers a brief review of the important developments which have taken place in the war situation since the House last met.

The battle to drive the Japanese back over the Owen Stanley Range and out of the south-eastern part of New Guinea has been fought in one of the most difficult campaigning areas in the world. The terrain has been described by General MacArthur as "incredibly difficult" and presenting "almost insuperable complications in the maintenance of supply lines". The Australian and United States forces have had to endure extreme hardships in one of the worst tropical climates. In addition to the strain imposed by the nature of the country and climate, these troops have had to withstand the incidence of malaria, though every endeavour is made to minimize the risk of this illness. Finally, under conditions to which white men do not readily become inured, these troops have had to fight against no mean foe. Nevertheless the allied troops have fought tenaciously, gallantly, and, most important of all, victoriously. I pay a tribute to these men and to their distinguished leaders, General MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific area; General Blamey, Commander of the Allied Land Forces; and General Kenney, Commander of the Allied Air Forces. To them, to the subordinate commanders, and to the officers and men of the Australian and United States forces, Australia owes a debt of gratitude.

I have said on an earlier occasion that Port Moresby is a vital key-point in the defence of Australia against an attack from the north-east where the main Japanese bases lie. Its possession by the enemy would open the way for a direct attack on the mainland of Australia. The landward defence line of Port Moresby is the Owen Stanley Range. The Japanese first made an effort to turn its left flank from Lae and Salamaua, but this was unsuccessful. They then launched a sea-borne attack against its rear, but this was repulsed by the Battle of the Coral Sea. A frontal attack was then attempted by way of Buna, Gona and Kokoda, but this had largely spent itself by the time it had reached Ioribaiwa. The next effort of the enemy was an attempt to turn the right flank by a surprise attack at Milne

Bay, but this move had been anticipated, and was frustrated. Provided the flank of our defence line in New Guinea is not turned by the southward advance of the Japanese in the other islands to the east of Australia, the Owen Stanley Range remains the front line defence of eastern Australia. We have experienced fluctuating fortunes in the land campaign in New Guinea. In the early stages the fight went against us, and there were many criticisms of the commanders' conduct of the operations. The results provide a complete answer, but there are one or two aspects of the operations to which I shall refer.

First, the operations at Milne Bay. Plans had been drawn up by the High Command for the establishment of a strongly defended base at Milne Bay long before the Japanese landed at Gona and Buna. The High Command had anticipated the Japanese attack on Milne Bay, and when it came we were ready. A few days of sharp fighting brought a complete Australian victory. The Japanese evacuated such of their surviving forces as they could, while the remnants scattered in the jungle and have since been mopped up. The success of this operation lay in the absolute secrecy that was ensured in the movement of forces to this area. The Government was fully aware of the move. It was known also to members of the Advisory War Council.

The second aspect is the counter-offensive against the Japanese. Prior to the launching of our attack from Ioribaiwa towards the end of September, we had marshalled considerable forces in New Guinea. Actually we had more than doubled the strength of the land forces that were there in the early stages of the campaign. There had also been a transformation in air strength, amounting to multiplication of air forces and aerodromes. All of this was, of course, highly secret information. The High Command had drawn up plans for an outflanking movement against the Japanese, and bases were established on the north-eastern coast of New Guinea, to which American troops in considerable strength were transported by air. These troops attacked Buna from the right, whilst other American units joined up with Aus-

tralian troops in a frontal assault. Concurrently with this, Australian forces attacked Gona. These plans had been formulated before the critics had voiced their opinions, and, while they were urging outflanking movements and the like, the High Command was pushing ahead with its preparations. As Mr. Churchill recently explained, it takes considerable time to marshal forces and supplies to mount an offensive. What may appear to be a period of inaction is really one of intense activity covered by a veil of secrecy.

In actual fact, had two brigades of the Sixth Division, Australian Imperial Force, not been diverted to the defence of Ceylon on their way home from the Middle East, the Commander-in-Chief would have had these additional resources of battle-trained troops for the defence of New Guinea. Australian troops were the only forces readily available to meet a critical situation in the defence of a vital base in the Indian Ocean. The Government readily agreed to the request and the Advisory War Council endorsed the decision. The full facts of the position could not be disclosed at the time without prejudicing our own interests and benefiting those of the enemy.

I would make these observations: It is a misrepresentation of the spirit of the Australian people and the Anzac tradition to cry out when things appear to be going against us. It is premature for critics to rush in and criticize a phase of an operation as though it were the whole campaign that was being decided. The Government has all the facts before it. If it is dissatisfied with the commanders, it will take appropriate action. Unless and until that position arises, it will place the fullest confidence in the commanders and the troops under them, and give them the utmost support against ill-informed or unwarranted criticism.

After the Australian troops had pushed the Japanese out of Ioribaiwa they continued their advance without making contact with the enemy for ten days. The difficulty of communications, which had so greatly hampered us in the early stages in maintaining supplies and reinforcements for the forward areas, also proved a stumbling block to the enemy.

General MacArthur expressed the position as follows in his communiqué of the 8th October:—

The enemy, as we expected and anticipated, has discovered that his supply problems, aggravated by our constant air attacks, were impossible of immediate solution. His dislodgment at his farthest point of advance and the pursuit of his exhausted forces have been accomplished with practically no loss to our troops up to the present time. The same difficulties of terrain are now progressively slowing down the advance of our ground troops.

The Japanese put up some resistance in the area of Templeton's Crossing, Eora Creek and Alola, but this was overcome after stiff fighting. Kokoda was taken on the 2nd November with little or no opposition, but the enemy again endeavoured to halt our advance at Oivi, Gorari and Wairope. He was pushed out of these places and heavy losses were inflicted by Australian troops. I have just received advice from the General Officer Commanding that allied forces have completely occupied the Gona area and that the Japanese are now pinned down in a narrow coastal strip in the Buna area. Allied air forces are maintaining continuous bombing and strafing attacks upon enemy ground troops and the enemy air base at Lae. The Japanese have made frequent attempts to land reinforcements. Many of them have been repulsed by allied air forces, which have taken a heavy toll of enemy naval forces and shipping. It is known, however, that some attempts made under cover of darkness, and in weather conditions unfavorable for the effective employment of our aircraft, have been successful. The Japanese, operating in prepared defence positions, are resisting stubbornly, but Australian and American troops are gradually pressing home the attack.

This operation has been notable for the manner in which it has been achieved. The original occupation of Gona and Buna was rendered possible because of Japanese control of the sea to the north of New Guinea. In the absence of allied sea-power in this region, our advance has been overland and by air. Now that we have aerodromes on the northern side of the Owen Stanley Range, it remains to be seen whether the enemy is prepared to risk heavy losses against our land-based aircraft in an endeavour to

re-establish himself again in this region. The Australian Army battle casualties in New Guinea, excluding Rabaul, to the 1st December were 2,190, of whom 640 were killed in action or died of wounds. The figures do not include the sick. I speak for the whole Parliament when I offer the tribute of the nation to those who gave their lives in its defence. The same gratitude is due to the wounded and the sick.

There has been increased enemy activity in Timor, and allied air forces have maintained bombing attacks on enemy occupied areas in this island. Successful raids have been made on enemy aerodromes, supply installations and barracks at Dilli and enemy occupied villages, and also at Koepang. Last week's daylight raid on the aerodrome at Koepang had excellent results. The enemy was taken by surprise and 21 of his aircraft, caught on the ground, were damaged or destroyed. Japanese aircraft raided Darwin three times during the last week of November. The raids were made at night and little damage was caused.

Our guerrilla forces in Timor have been doing bold and courageous work. Though the spotlight has been more on New Guinea because of the larger forces engaged, the people of Australia should not overlook the importance of Timor as a base for operations against the north-west of Australia. Timor is the counterpart in the north-west of New Guinea in the north-east. Known Japanese dispositions and movements of their forces indicate that the enemy realizes this fact equally with ourselves. We must be prepared to repulse all air and sea-borne attacks against Australia from this quarter. It is equally important that when the time comes we should be ready and able to eject the Japanese from their bases in this region as much as from New Guinea.

The severe naval defeat inflicted by the American forces on the Japanese in the middle of November frustrated a determined attempt to recapture Guadalcanal. Like the Coral Sea battle, it was a victory which had great significance for the security of Australia, and I expressed to the President of the United States of America the admiration and

gratitude of the Australian people for the gallant deeds of the American forces.

The Japanese have sought to exploit two lines of advance from bases at Rabaul and other centres in this region of the Pacific. One was against New Guinea, which has been several times frustrated—in the attempted advance from Lae and Salamauā, in the Coral Sea battle, at Milne Bay, and in the counter-offensive over the Owen Stanley range. The other thrust has been the attempt to advance through the Solomons to islands in the Pacific in order to secure bases nearer to the American line of communication across the Pacific. This would also assist in isolating Australia and would turn the flank of our position in New Guinea.

The importance of the Solomon Islands to the Japanese plan will be evident from the heavy price they are prepared to pay for the recapture of the footholds secured by the Americans. The enemy is, of course, still powerful, for he has naval, land and air forces of considerable strength. As he is a determined foe, we can expect that he will come again. The Americans have demonstrated a superiority on land, sea, and in the air and a capacity to reinforce their forces at Guadalcanal, which, it is hoped, is a good omen for the ultimate result of the conflict in the South Pacific Area.

There has recently been some public discussion in the press of the United Nations on two questions:—

- (i) The machinery for operational control in the Pacific;
- (ii) The flow of forces to the South-west Pacific Area.

The grand strategy for the whole war, insofar as the British Empire and the United States of America are concerned, is determined by the Combined British and American Chiefs of Staff in Washington. They are responsible to Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt. The Pacific Ocean is a zone of American strategic responsibility, and is divided into several areas, each of which is under an American commander. In the case of the South-west Pacific Area, which includes Australia, the Government, with the concurrence of the Advisory War Council, agreed to a set-up under which

Mr. Curtin.

General MacArthur is the Supreme Commander. He is responsible for operational strategy to the Chief of Staff of the United States of America Army as the executive agency for the Joint United States of America Chiefs of Staff. The directive issued to General MacArthur and agreed to by the Australian Government specifies the objectives which his operations will be designed to accomplish. In fulfilment of the commitments accepted under this directive, the Australian Government assigned to the command of General MacArthur the combat forces of the Australian Navy, Army, and Air Force.

I make it clear that there is the closest and most harmonious co-operation between the Commander-in-Chief and myself as head of the Australian Government. There is also close and effective co-operation between the Commanders of the South-west and South Pacific Areas. This is demonstrated by General MacArthur's communiques on the operations of his aircraft in the South Pacific Area, and by the presence of H.M.A.S. *Canberra* in that region, when it was unfortunately sunk.

When the Australian Government agreed to this unique set-up, under which it surrendered a part of its sovereignty and placed its defence forces under the control of a commander of an allied nation, it did so, of course, on the clear understanding that its action would facilitate the achievement of two results:—First, there would be unified direction of the operations in the South-west Pacific Area under an American commander; and, secondly, the Australian Government, having placed its military resources under this commander, would have made the maximum contribution of which it was capable towards the achievement of the objectives laid down in the directive for the South-west Pacific Area. Having done so, it would have every right to expect that any additional strength required would be furnished from other sources.

This view was based on no selfish motives. It was dictated by the strategical needs of a war with Japan. It was warranted by the co-operation which Australian naval, land, and air forces had given in other theatres of war.

I explained, in some detail, at the last secret session, the exchanges of views that had passed between Mr. Churchill, President Roosevelt, and myself on Pacific strategy, and the needs of the South-west Pacific Area in particular. Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt were unable fully to accept the views of the Australian Government on Pacific strategy, and the provision of the forces and supplies sought. However, they gave certain assurances and practical support, for which the Government is deeply grateful, and it felt bound to accept their conclusions in a spirit of united comradeship.

The essential question confronting the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington is how the war can be most vigorously waged on all fronts, and the resources of the United Nations disposed to bring about the speedy and certain defeat of the enemy. The landings in the French colonies in North Africa, which entail large demands on these resources, have now been publicly explained by the President as having been based on a decision reached by Mr. Churchill and himself during Mr. Churchill's visit to America at the end of last year. At the time that the President and Mr. Churchill reached their decision to defeat Germany first, the transformation had not come over the Pacific situation by the loss of the Philippines, Singapore, and the Netherlands East Indies. We should therefore not lose sight of the significance for us in Australia of the predictions of Mr. Churchill, during his broadcast of the 29th November, on the duration and course of the war. Notwithstanding the concentration of Anglo-American strength against the Axis powers in Europe, Mr. Churchill said—

I know nothing that has happened yet which justifies the hope that the war will not be long or that bloody years will not lie ahead.

Predicting that the war in Europe may end before the war in the Pacific, he brings out clearly the significance of the warning in my own broadcast on the 4th October—

Australia, therefore, has the task of holding the enemy until the potential becomes the reality and we can strike with all the punching power of the United Nations. Until that day comes, we must hang grimly on.

In Libya, the Eighth Army is now in contact with Rommel's forces near El-

Agheila. When plans were laid for the offensive against Rommel's position at El Alamein, the fact was recognized that it would be necessary to make a direct frontal assault on those positions, and that this might involve protracted fighting and heavy casualties. After twelve days of bitter combat, the German forces, who for once proved swifter than their Italian comrades in reaching the available transport, were in full flight, leaving the bulk of the Italians to their fate. The Australian Ninth Division played an outstanding part in this battle, and Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt, in congratulatory messages to me, have both generously acknowledged the distinguished services rendered by the Australian troops. It will be recalled that Mr. Churchill announced that the total casualties sustained by the British and Allied Forces were 13,600 officers and men. The Ninth Division lost 2,740, of whom 620 were killed in action or died of wounds. To these men who have fought in distant countries for the defence of their homeland, we pay the same tribute as we do to their comrades in arms who have defended their country in New Guinea and in other parts of the South-west Pacific Area.

Following closely on the victory of the Eighth Army in Egypt, the allied landings in French North Africa have exerted fresh pressure on the enemy. This new campaign has compelled Hitler to divert troops and aircraft to the defence of Bizerta and Tunis. It has also forced him to move into unoccupied France, and has deprived him of his final hope of securing the French Fleet for the Axis. Although not a second front in Europe, it has, in President Roosevelt's words, provided "effective second-front assistance for our heroic ally, Russia", and its effect in relieving pressure on the Russian front should be considerable. We look forward to the time when the allied drives from east and west will achieve the final expulsion of the Axis from the African continent. When that is done, the United Nations will have fresh bases for offensive action against the enemy, and especially against Italy. As M. Stalin has said, the allied campaign in Africa "demonstrates the growing might of the

allied armed forces and opens up a prospect of the disintegration of the Italian and German coalition in the very near future".

The magnificent fight by the Russians is one of the inspiring things of this war. Attacked when the Germans were at the height of their military power and able to concentrate their forces on a single front, the Russians have heroically withstood tremendous enemy pressure through two bitter campaigns. They suffered immense territorial losses, but the Russian armies were not destroyed. Hitler underestimated Russian powers of recuperation and the strength of Russia's reserves, and our gallant ally is now striking back fiercely against the invader.

Air activity on the Western Front continues. Whilst the British heavy bombing raids have recently been directed more at Italy than formerly, Germany and German-occupied parts in France have received their share. New types of aircraft and new and heavier bombs up to 8,000 lb. in weight are being employed. American bombers are taking an ever-increasing part in raids over the Continent. The heavy raids on Genoa, Milan and Turin, which have been achieved with exceptionally low casualties on our side, are a foretaste of what Italy may expect when the occupation of the North African coastline is complete. Australian Empire Air Training Scheme squadrons are participating in these raids, whilst the Australian Sunderland Squadron, based on Britain, is operating effectively for the protection of shipping and offensive patrols against U-boats. Our fighter squadron in the Middle East has continued to add to its great reputation.

Despite acute economic difficulties and supply problems, the Chinese people continue their resistance to the Japanese. In Central China, the Chinese armies have reoccupied the territory which was occupied by the Japanese in June and July. A notable feature of recent fighting has been the work of the American air force, which has attacked, with success, enemy aerodromes, troop concentrations and shipping. Attacks on shipping are particularly important in view of the increasing evidence of a Japanese shortage of shipping tonnage.

Mr. Curtin.

As honorable members know, I forwarded a message to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek; on the occasion of the first anniversary of the outbreak of the Pacific War, in which I conveyed to him our deep appreciation of the courage and tenacity with which the Chinese armed forces and civil population have resisted the Japanese aggressors for so many years, and our confidence in the power and determination of China, under his leadership, to wage this war to a successful conclusion.

The strategic position of Madagascar has always made it a matter of special interest to Australia that it should not be permitted to come under enemy control. The renewed military operations in the island, which were rendered necessary by the refusal of the local authorities to allow proper measures to be taken to deny the use of the island to the Axis, were successfully concluded early in November. The occupation by the Fighting French of Reunion, which lies between Madagascar and Mauritius, will further strengthen the position in the western Indian Ocean.

Shipping continues to be a grave problem. Whilst we look forward to a steady increase in the flow of new tonnage from the shipbuilding yards of the United Nations, it must be remembered, as Mr. Churchill has recently pointed out, that the U-boat war is not diminishing but growing. Moreover, the offensive phase of our strategy creates extremely heavy demands for sea transport. In our waters, there has been reduced submarine activity and the Australian and American naval forces in the South-west Pacific area have been continuing their effective work. Enemy submarines have been active in the Indian Ocean and, as announced, surface raiders and supply ships have been sunk. Our shipping position is that, in addition to our increased war-time industrial requirements, we have had to divert ships from normal services to cope with increased military requirements. This has placed a severe strain on our limited transport facilities. The Government has had some success in its endeavours to secure additional shipping from overseas sources, and our own shipbuilding programme will be of material assistance; but the position is

still acute. In order to ensure that the maximum use is made of the shipping actually available, it was recently decided to establish a new department, known as the Department of Supply and Shipping, which brings under a single co-ordinated direction the various agencies which are concerned with the control of shipping.

Australia has much to be thankful for. We have felt the impact of enemy bombs on a number of our northern towns and Sydney has been attacked, but we have been spared the horror of the devastation of war on our own soil. The victories won at Coral Sea, Midway Island and in the Solomons were of crucial importance to us. There should be throughout the whole continent a universal feeling of deep gratitude and thanksgiving for what we have so far been spared. Originally, Britain stood alone between Germany and the world. Later the gallant Russian people withheld the full might of the German military machine. Recently, it has been American sea-power which has been the shield between Japan and Australia.

The immunity from attack which we have enjoyed has enabled our war production programme to proceed unhindered. Our greatly improved defensive position has made it possible to relax in some measure the air raid precautions originally imposed, but constant vigilance and perfection of their training and preparations should be the aim of the Home Security Services.

The production of war material of all kinds has greatly increased, so much so that it has now been thought desirable to set up in Australia machinery for the allocation of Australian munitions production similar to that which exists in the United Kingdom and the United States. This does not mean, of course, that there is a surplus of all classes of munitions in this country. It does indicate, however, that our output of many kinds of munitions is sufficiently large to justify the extension to Australian production of the pooling arrangements agreed upon between Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt in January last, with respect to British and American production.

In some items of munitions we are within measurable distance of fulfilling

the whole of the needs of the Australian forces. But, as fast as one requirement is fulfilled, other demands arise and must be met. We are faced with problems associated with the re-allocation of productive capacity, and it will be necessary to divert our technical resources and skilled man-power from projects which have been fulfilled or whose completion is in sight, to other high priority projects. In doing this, the Government will be guided by the advice of its service and technical advisers, which will, of course, be related to the plan of operations for the South-west Pacific area. The primary concern of the whole nation must be to supply the needs of our fighting men. This will be the essential consideration which will govern the allotment of manpower, including women, and use of our material and financial resources.

As to the prospects for the future and the duration of the struggle, I would remind every Australian of the basis on which Mr. Churchill reached his conclusion that there is nothing to justify an optimistic view that the end is in sight. He referred to an enslaved Europe with all its resources at Germany's disposal. He pointed out that the Eighth Army in Africa had defeated only a few divisions of Germany's great army. He mentioned that the U-boat menace is not diminishing, but growing. So much for the task of defeating Germany, but what about Japan? It, too, is master of vast territories with large populations and vital resources for the waging of war. Though Japan has suffered certain naval and air losses, its strength is still great. Like Germany, Japan prepared for this war for years and did not strike until it was ready to do so and considered the situation favorable for success. It should not be overlooked that we are fighting the enemy at places vital to our own security and far removed from his own final ramparts of defence.

We must realize that we are up against a powerful fighting machine. It is backed by a people whose training and discipline produce a national morale which willingly accepts the utmost sacrifice, including death itself, for the national cause. Such a race can be beaten only by actual physical defeat. We, therefore, must be

prepared to make such sacrifices for victory as will enable us to match and overcome a foe so thoroughly trained to the needs of total war. This is the prescription for victory which I adjure all Australians to observe.

I lay on the table the following paper:—

Review of War Situation—Ministerial statement, 10th December, 1942.

and move—

That the paper be printed.

Mr. FADDEN (Darling Downs—Leader of the Opposition) [3.43].—The specific reason why Parliament has been called together for this two days' sitting was to hear the statement which honorable members have just been privileged to hear from the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin). That statement sets out the problems which the Government considered should be placed before honorable members as the trustees of the people of Australia. Consequently the House was entitled to believe that the contents of the statement would set out the major problems that are confronting the Government to-day. On that assessment, the House must be profoundly disappointed because the Prime Minister's review contained no reference whatsoever to the need for a united Australian Army available for service anywhere as required, without limitation. The House in general, and honorable members on this side of the chamber in particular, must be alarmed at the action of the Prime Minister in neglecting to place before Parliament, which consists of the elected trustees of the people of this country, information at least similar to that which he placed before the conference of the Australian Labour party which met on the 17th November last. As the Prime Minister, in his statement, has completely ignored this very important matter, which must be as disturbing to the Australian strategy as the right honorable gentleman has said it is to the High Command, I intend to make a precise statement of the facts in chronological order, so that this House and the people of Australia may have clearly before them the attitude that the Opposition has persistently and consistently adopted in urging a maximum war effort for the defence of Australia, since the outbreak of war with Japan.

This House was called together on the 16th December, 1941, a little more than a week after Japan had invaded, and ruthlessly and treacherously attacked, British and American territory. Australia was then at war with Japan. As the Prime Minister said on that occasion, Australia was "the stake in the conflict".

On the 17th December, on behalf of the Opposition, I wrote to the Prime Minister a letter, the full text of which appears in *Hansard* of the 1st May, 1942. I shall quote some of the more important passages from it. I said—

. . . it appears to the Opposition that it is all important to create an Australian army for the defence of the Commonwealth which the Government can employ anywhere without any statutory restrictions whatsoever. Malaya and the Pacific Islands are as truly part of Australia's defences as are our own coastal ports. In our opinion the Government must be able to employ as it may wish, and as the necessity demands, any Australian troops anywhere, be they voluntarily enlisted or raised under the Defence Act.

The letter continued—

. . . The Opposition stresses the importance of meeting the enemy outside the shores of Australia as well as within, and the distinction which must be drawn between Australian Imperial Force and Militia at the present moment may seriously hamper the strategy of your Government and interfere, the Opposition feels, with the adequate defence of this country.

The Prime Minister himself has emphasized the importance of meeting the enemy outside Australia. Surely there is not an honorable member of this House who does not recognize and appreciate to the full that the farther from Australian shores the enemy can be met the better will the result be for us. Therefore, I assume—and it cannot be disputed—that in regard to this desirable objective the Opposition and the Government are on common ground. In my letter to the Prime Minister I stated further—

While having no desire to raise any controversial political question, but animated with a sincere wish to free the hands of your Government, the Opposition would be prepared to give unanimous support to a measure amending the National Security Act in such a manner as to enable the Government to employ any of our troops in *any area* vitally necessary for the defence of the Commonwealth.

That is evidence of a sincere desire on the part of the Opposition to co-operate with the Government in the provision of

what, in its opinion, was needed at that particular time for the adequate defence of Australia. Every member of this House supported a resolution which pledged the Government to take every step deemed necessary to defend the Commonwealth and its territories, to carry on hostilities in association with our Allies, and to achieve final victory over our enemies. That pledge was given unanimously irrespective of party affiliations by the trustees of the people of Australia who constitute the members of this House. I repeat, that the Opposition was mindful of the weakness that existed for forward planning, particularly for an offensive campaign, and was motivated entirely by that consideration when I, on its behalf, wrote to the Prime Minister on the 17th December of last year. But the Government ignored my letter, and we have not since heard anything concerning it.

When the House met last April, the matter of an army merger was pressed. The Prime Minister then stated that the use of Australian forces, whatever their composition, involved advice from the High Command upon military strategy, and a statement of the forces that were required. He said that he knew of no demand imposed by military necessity upon his Government that he had not already satisfied, and declared that the Government regarded an outright Japanese attack on Australia as a constant and undiminished danger. Yet he was prepared to countenance the existence of a divided army in Australia; and, indeed, he is still countenancing it, to the detriment of the adequate and indispensable defence of this country. At the same time, the Government looks to the United Nations to provide fighting forces that will amalgamate with our own forces wherever the enemy has to be met.

I now move—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.—Ah!

Mr. FADDEN.—I now move to the events of the 1st May.

Mr. CURTIN.—The right honorable gentleman gave them a fright.

Mr. FADDEN.—Some honorable members will be greatly relieved when they learn that I do not intend to move in the direction that they feared I would.

They need not be frightened, because the Opposition is mindful of the necessity to place national responsibilities and consequences above party political considerations. On the 1st May, a patient but responsible Opposition, through me, moved the following amendment to the motion for the printing of the statement on international affairs that had been made by the Prime Minister:—

In order that the Australian Imperial Force and the Australian Military Forces may be effectively welded into one fighting army available for offence as well as defence, this House is of opinion that all territorial limitations upon the power of the Commonwealth Government to employ the Australian Military Forces should be removed.

Not one Minister or Labour member advanced a convincing reason for refusing to take the action then suggested by the Opposition. My amendment was rejected on party lines by 31 votes to 27, with the assistance of alleged independents, and the Government again took refuge in silence. The gravity of the position was becoming greater. The situation in the Pacific had deteriorated so markedly that Sydney was raided, bombs were dropped on Townsville, Darwin was consistently raided, Horn Island and Port Hedland were raided and bombed. Yet the Government took no action, and was not mindful of its true responsibility.

In July and August last, the federal Opposition executive twice brought before the Government the need, in our opinion, for the merging of the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia into one army for the adequate defence of Australia. The executive charged the Government with having deliberately evaded the issue for many months. It merely asked that preparations be made, by amendment of the Defence Act, to enable the Government, in its wisdom, to send Australian forces wherever, in the opinion of military experts, they might be required.

We now move to September, 1942, in which month Parliament re-assembled and honorable members were given a review of the war situation along lines similar to that made to-day; but the Government then, as it had been on the previous occasion, and as it was again to-day, was silent on the proposal for the establishment of one army.

In October, 1942, my colleague the honorable member for Gippsland (Mr. Paterson) raised the matter of having one army. The Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) then began what subsequently developed into a policy of evasion on a grand scale. He revealed himself as one who was completely lacking in candour, and apparently afraid to risk saying anything that might make him unpopular with his political party and supporters. Either he did not know what was going on, or he was not frank enough to place the facts before the members of this Parliament as the trustees of the people of Australia. He side-stepped the issue. He had much to say about transfers of the Militia to the Australian Imperial Force, and of Australia honoring its obligations to the democracies, but he evaded a direct reply to a direct question. He must have known that adoption of the proposal put forward by the Opposition was necessary for the defence of Australia and its territories. As Minister for the Army, he must have been in close contact with the High Command, and with other officers who were competent to give him requisite advice.

Parliament again went into recess without any action by the Government to give one army to Australia, as had been consistently and persistently proposed by the Opposition. On the 28th September last, the press reported that there was reason to believe that the Government had no immediate intention of welding the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia into one army. The Minister for the Army said that the Militia in New Guinea had already built up a tradition that would make any government hesitate before taking action to destroy its separate identity. Members of the Opposition are fully alive to, and appreciate to the utmost, the valiant deeds of the Militia Forces in the theatres of war in which they have served. We pay tribute to them, and honour them for their heroic actions. We owe them a debt of gratitude. They have been in the fight to keep the Japanese forces away from Australia. The members of the Australian Imperial Force have the same objective. Why, then, should the Minister for the Army make a distinction between them?

Mr. Fadden.

Are not all these men Australian? Have they not shown themselves ready to sacrifice their lives in the cause of liberty? Have they not been fighting alongside an allied force which may be sent to any theatre in which the Japanese menace may be encountered? All this talk about Australia honouring its obligations has a hollow ring. Could anything be more hypocritical than mouthing phrases about an all-in war effort and of driving the enemy from our shores, whilst at the same time refusing to allow a section of the Australian Army to fight alongside the forces of other nations beyond Australian territories and, indeed, if the occasion should arise, to help their own kith and kin who are members of the Australian Imperial Force? Let us face the facts. We have powerful allies in this fight. The members of their forces are available to meet the enemy wherever he has to be fought. Their reason for being in this war is no different from ours, and their object is to defeat a common enemy. Many of them have known the ravages of war in their own lands. Some of them have lost their homes, their possessions, and their families. Yet, whilst we expect them to help us, the Government has so far refused to give them the maximum assistance which would be available if the existing limitations upon the use of the Militia were expeditiously removed. Why should we have a divided army? On what grounds can the Government possibly justify its refusal to weld the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia into one force, to fight alongside the forces of our allies? These are questions which have exercised the minds of not only the Opposition, but also the people of Australia, and, particularly, our allies.

On the 27th October, the Minister for the Army, speaking as Deputy Prime Minister, made the following statement:—

There is neither necessity nor justification for conscription for overseas service to-day. I ask the House to link that statement with what has happened since the 17th November. The Minister went on to say—

The Opposition believes that there is one issue which would certainly split the Labour party and divide the people of Australia.

He said further—

The Government's attitude has been clearly defined. It is opposed to conscription for overseas service, and the introduction of the issue at this critical period does a great disservice to Australia.

He declared that, with the changed position following Japan's entry into the war, and the great increase of voluntary enlistments in the Australian Imperial Force, there was less need for conscription for overseas service to-day than there had been at any previous time. After reiterating that the Opposition was doing the country a great disservice in raising the issue, the Deputy Prime Minister said—

This issue, if put into effect, would not only destroy the Government, but would also divide the people and bring about disunity where unity and co-operation exist.

The Deputy Prime Minister's statement had at least one merit: It was exceedingly frank. He admitted unshamedly that the issue was one that would split the Labour party and destroy the Government. The honorable gentleman is also Minister for the Army. Are we to assume that the Army leaders advised him as to the nature of the statement he made on that occasion? Are we to assume that he and the Prime Minister are at variance now, and that it is still his belief that those who advocate the unity of the forces are doing a disservice to Australia?

The Deputy Prime Minister also stated that if the Government failed, either in its defensive or offensive preparations, then would be the time for the Opposition to criticize. I remind the House, however, that if the Opposition remained silent until then, it would be too late to do anything, and the fate of political parties and of governments would be of little account.

We come now to the memorable 17th November. The Interstate Conference of the Australian Labour party was sitting in Melbourne, and the Prime Minister was there as a delegate of his own State of Western Australia, not as Prime Minister. According to press statements, it was announced to that conference that it would be asked to agree to an amendment of the Defence Act to permit the use of the Militia in certain defined areas in the Pacific. The Prime

Minister, we read, told the conference that limitations upon the use of the Militia imposed by the Defence Act were hampering the war plans of the Allied High Command in Australia. We may take it for granted that, before he made the statement, he had been in consultation with the High Command, and was aware of official opinion. We may assume that he had been told that the change was necessary, that the merging of the two armies was essential so that our forces might be used wherever required. We may also assume that the Prime Minister would tell the conference as much as he was able without violating official secrets. He would reveal to delegates enough to convince them that his decision on the subject should not be questioned, and that the Labour organizations should support him.

When the Prime Minister sought leave to introduce his motion, it was given by 28 votes to 8, the eight in opposition including a member of his own Government, Senator Cameron, and the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell). The text of the Prime Minister's motion is as follows:—

That having regard to the paramount necessity of Australia's defence as set out in section 5 of the special resolution adopted in June, 1940, by federal conference the Government be authorized to add to the Defence Act in the definition of the Commonwealth which at present defines the territories to which this act extends the following words: "And such other territories in the South-west Pacific area as the Governor-General proclaims as being territories associated with the defence of Australia."

As the motion contains a reference to the resolution carried in June, 1940, I shall quote the text of that resolution for the information of honorable members and of the Australian people. It was as follows:—

National training for defence in the terms of the present Defence Act be maintained on the highest basis of efficiency with provision for an adequate system of physical training throughout Australia, by participating in the Empire Air Scheme; necessary provisions for reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force; the extent of European participation by volunteer army to be determined by circumstances as they arise, having regard to the paramount necessity of Australian defence.

No doubt the Prime Minister put forward the plea, as would any responsible Australian, that the adequate defence of

Australia cannot stop at the 3-mile limit. Would any one suggest that Australia has not for years been defended by what has taken place in the English Channel, the Mediterranean, Burma, China, and Russia? Obviously, Australia is to be defended wherever the enemy can be met and fought. It is for that reason that the Prime Minister asked the Australian Labour party to agree to the amendment of the Defence Act so that Australia might be defended in the manner stated to be necessary—stated not by the Government or by the Opposition, but by those best able to offer an opinion, the High Command.

The conference decided to adjourn consideration of the matter, and it was referred to the State branches for consideration so that they might direct their delegates how to vote at a special conference to be held not later than the end of December. Whilst the Prime Minister is to be commended for taking a realistic view of the situation, the manner in which he acted calls for comment. My view is that such an important matter was one for consideration, in the first place, by Cabinet and the Advisory War Council. The next move would have been to summon Parliament to consider it. However, I recognize the position of the Prime Minister. He is a member of a party to which he has given a pledge, and he must submit to the rules and regulations of that party. The people must understand that every Labour representative whom they elect immediately passes beyond their control, and comes directly under the control of an irresponsible party junta.

One would have thought that the Prime Minister would have at least received the unanimous support of those whom he leads. He has persevered in support of the platform of his party up till now, and has resisted the consistent pressure of the Opposition to amend the Defence Act. No doubt he hoped from day to day that the war situation might improve and that it would not be necessary for him to humiliate himself by having to approach an outside organization and ask it to give him power to govern the nation in time of war. I am sure that the Prime Minister recognizes the humiliating position in which he has placed himself. Even then,

the Labour conference would not support him. It "passed the buck" to the State executives, and in the meantime the war is raging and the position in the Pacific is no less grave than it was on the 17th November. It is, as I have said, humiliating that a war-time Prime Minister should have to approach a gathering of men representing, not the whole of the Australian people, but only a section of them. It is a body entirely lacking in official status, and we, as the elected representatives of the people, cannot condone the method followed by the Prime Minister. We are the elected representatives of the people, and there is only one place where the military requirements of the nation should be decided—that is, in this Parliament. We recall the Prime Minister's bold declaration in December, 1941, a few days after Japan entered the war—

I say to the people of Australia, I cannot wait upon debate.

Yet, in November, 1942, the Prime Minister has been forced to wait until his party supporters debate an important question of national defence. He has told the people and his own organization that this is not a political matter, that it is a military necessity, one that is regarded as of the first importance by the High Command of the South Pacific.

On the 19th November, there was still further delay. The federal executive of the Australian Labour party decided that the special conference would not be held until the 4th January of next year. In the meantime, the war continues to rage, and necessary defence measures are being delayed. The Labour party is itself divided on this question, and for that very reason Parliament should have been taken into the Prime Minister's confidence at the very earliest date. It is an unpardonable thing that this House should be denied information which was placed by the Prime Minister before the executive of a political party. The Australian Labour party has decided to hold a further special conference on the 4th January—a delay of six and a half weeks following the first conference. These little dictators were afraid to give the Prime Minister the authority he sought because they feared to risk their own political hides.

The risks of the men who are fighting, the danger of the Japanese moving farther south, and all the implications of the Japanese menace did not matter. Visualize what might happen if our own fighting men and those of our allies adopted the standstill attitude. Would they have captured Gona, as we learn to-day they have done? Subsequent to the interstate Labour Conference in Melbourne, the Prime Minister declared that one army under one command in the South-west Pacific had become a military necessity because of "the bitter handicap imposed in dealing with the enemy by factors hindering military mobility". On the 24th November, it was reported in the press that the full Cabinet supported the Prime Minister's proposal. However, three members were not in agreement with the proposal. The Prime Minister went first to an outside junta, and, secondly, to the Cabinet with his proposal, but the Cabinet was not unanimous and three members publicly declared their disagreement. Cabinet government is in jeopardy as the result. The Prime Minister discussed this matter neither with the Advisory War Council nor, so far, with this Parliament, the only constitutional body with which it should be discussed. The *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 28th November, in its report of the meeting of the Cabinet, stated—

He (Mr. Curtin) strongly combated the argument that his proposal amounted to the general introduction of conscription. It meant nothing of the sort, he said. There would still be a Militia and an Australian Imperial Force as separate entities.

If the idea of the Prime Minister, as originally submitted to the interstate Labour Conference, does not mean that the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia are to be welded into one army, with an equal liability to serve and enjoying similar conditions, the Australian people have been misled. If there is to be a distinction between the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia in the South-west Pacific area, the Government will only be aggravating the unsatisfactory state of affairs which has existed since the Opposition first raised the matter. The Prime Minister should tell this House and, through this House, the

people of Australia exactly what his proposal means.

Only a little more than a week ago, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Churchill, in a world broadcast, made a telling point when referring to the fact that the war in Europe might end before the war in Asia. Mr. Churchill said—

Should events take such a course, we should immediately bring all our forces to the other side of the world to the aid of America and China and, above all, to our own kith and kin in Australia and New Zealand in their valiant struggle against Japan's aggressions.

Contrast the British Prime Minister's pledge with the reluctance—the enforced reluctance—of the Prime Minister of Australia and his Ministers to merge the Australian Imperial Force and the Militia into one army for service wherever required. Though Britain is prepared to come to our aid, we are not prepared to send more than a section of our army to the aid of Britain. Such a state of affairs is cowardly; it demonstrates the political cowardice of the Ministry.

I now propose to state the conclusions that the Opposition has reached as the result of careful analysis of developments over the last thirteen months or so. First, the Government stands condemned for its attitude to this proposal since it was first raised by the Opposition twelve months ago next week. The Opposition has consistently brought this matter forward. We have been decidedly patient, but we recognize that the merging of the two armies and the employment of the Militia wherever circumstances require are indispensable and are an inescapable necessity if we are to wage total war in the defence of Australia. We have been motivated by no other reason than our desire to ensure that we shall be able to do that. We could have made political capital out of this matter had we so desired; we desire with a full recognition of its position to assist and co-operate with the Government in obtaining adequate defence for Australia. That, we consider, can be got only along the lines of policy advocated in our letter to the Prime Minister of the 17th September, 1942. [Extension of time granted.] The Government has been guilty of procrastination, deliberate evasion, and a

complete failure to measure up to the proper defence needs of a nation threatened by a powerful enemy and dependent on association with our allies. The Government's attitude contrasts strikingly with the speed with which it has acted in matters which it has considered politically favorable.

Secondly, when the Prime Minister very belatedly did move in the matter, he did so in a way to which the Opposition takes the strongest possible exception. We submit that in Parliament the elected representatives of the people should have been first advised of this very important matter, particularly in view of the attitude of the Opposition, which has been consistent since the 17th September last. The urgent need to extend the use of the Militia must have been impressed upon the Prime Minister. He must have been advised and convinced by his advisers that the limitations on the use of the Militia were hampering the war effort. Why did he consider it to be a matter requiring the consideration of an outside organization? Why did he not regard the matter as one calling for an urgent decision. Parliament could have been summoned immediately he was acquainted with the requirements of the High Command. Had the Prime Minister taken this course—the right and proper one—the decision could have been taken by the elected representatives of the whole Australian people. Parliament, and not the executive of the Labour party, has the responsibility to ensure that the war shall be prosecuted with the maximum degree of effectiveness. Likewise, the Prime Minister has a responsibility to discharge to the people of this country. His action with the resultant indecision and delay by the Australian Labour party was an affront to Parliament and to the people which honorable members cannot condone.

Thirdly, the reference of this matter to an outside organization obviously has put Australia in a bad light in the eyes of our allies. Already we have had evidence of a misunderstanding in the United States of America because we are not prepared to allow the whole of our troops to fight wherever required. Those of us who are jealous of Australia's

reputation and integrity are anxious that anything likely to cause ill feeling between ourselves and our allies should be speedily removed.

The Opposition demands that Parliament shall be called together as early as the circumstances will permit. Parliament should provide the means to meet the requirements of an all-in war effort. We do not assure the Prime Minister that we shall accept whatever proposal he may put before Parliament, but we shall give careful consideration to it. We shall be guided by the conditions which exist in the light of military advice and strategic information placed before us by the Prime Minister as to what is needed for the adequate defence of Australia, and as to the best means of bringing it into existence.

Mr. BLACKBURN (Bourke) [4.25].—I move—

That all words after "That" be left out with a view to insert in lieu thereof the words "this House, reaffirming the policy upon which the majority of its members were elected, opposes the imposition of any form of compulsory service outside Australia and the Territories of the Commonwealth.

The amendment is really the obverse of the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fadden) on the 1st May, 1942. There are two things in this amendment. First, it reminds the House that the majority of its members were elected on a policy of opposing the extension of compulsory military service. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his phrase, repeated several times, "We are the elected representatives and the trustees of the people". We are not here to do what we think fit. We are elected on pledges which we gave to the people, and I submit that before any member is false to the pledge which he gave to the people, on which he was elected and without which he probably would not have been elected, he should cease to be a member of the House and submit himself again to the electors. The last election was fought on a pledge given by all parties and by most members. I except the honorable member for Deakin (Mr. Hutchinson), the honorable member for Boothby (Dr. Price), the honorable member for

Barker (Mr. Archie Cameron), and the honorable member for Wakefield (Mr. Duncan-Hughes)—there are, I suppose a round half-dozen whom one can except—but the other members agreed with their parties in saying that they would not support alteration of the Defence Act to provide that men shall be sent to serve beyond Australia and its territories. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the resolution carried in June, 1940, at the Australian Labour party conference, but the very words in that resolution made it perfectly clear that the service was to be within the terms of the Defence Act. That Defence Act contains section 49 which provides against service outside Australia and Australian territories. Immediately after that conference had met, this House met, and the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies), who was Prime Minister, submitted to this House an amendment of the National Security Act which was carried and which provided that nothing in that act should authorize the imposition of any form of compulsory service beyond the limits of Australia. That was common ground. It was common ground with every body that whatever else might be done, service outside the limits of Australia should not be imposed. There were people who thought we should not go so far as that implied. This House is now asked by my amendment to reaffirm the policy on which the majority—the great majority—of its members were elected. That policy was opposition to any extension of compulsory service. Almost 40 years have elapsed since, after a conflict of opinion in this Parliament, there was put into the Defence Act a provision that voluntary forces should not be required to serve outside Australia. That was inserted in 1903 as a result of a difference of opinion which arose in the early days of federation. The then government introduced legislation to enable it to send citizen forces anywhere in the world. That was opposed by nearly all honorable members. The government said that that was not really its intention, and the bill was abandoned. The bill as finally passed in 1903 contained section 49, which is the only guarantee that we shall have in Australia adequate forces

for the defence of our hearths and homes. My objection and the objection held by a large number of people, which would decide me if there were no other reasons for my attitude on this matter, is that I believe that the community has not the moral right to compel persons to go abroad from this land to fight. If a man of his own free will volunteers for service overseas, it is no doubt because of his having arrived at a reasoned conclusion that he should do so. But many persons in this community, of whom I am one, believe that it is entirely wrong to compel people to bear arms in a country other than their own.

MR. ABBOTT.—Does the honorable member think that it is wrong to compel people to bear arms in defence of their own country?

MR. BLACKBURN.—Except in the case of conscientious objectors, I agree that people should be required to bear arms in defence of their own land. But a small minority of persons will not resist violence, and I believe that it is practicable to make special provisions to meet their case. There is a vast difference, however, between requiring persons to bear arms in their own country in order to resist other persons who are undoubtedly aggressors, and requiring them to bear arms in a country other than their own. If a person considers it his duty to take up arms in a country other than his own that is his business; we should not compel him to do so. In the one case it seems to me that the compulsion is a form of organization. There is an instinct in a man which causes him to resist an aggressor. There is reason in requiring a person to bear arms in defence of his own country. There can be no instinct in a man which will compel him to bear arms in defence of another man's country. Although some persons may be forced by reasons which they regard as sufficient to take up arms in defence of a country other than their own, that is a very different thing from compelling them to do so. If we compel a person to take up arms for the purpose of fighting overseas that person may be obliged to bear arms against subject populations which have no interest at all in the quarrel that has

to be settled. I have in mind, for example, Malays, Burmese and the people of India, who have no interest in the present quarrel except their desire to keep out of it.

Mr. RANKIN.—The honorable gentleman is prepared to accept the help of conscripts from another country to defend Australia.

Mr. BLACKBURN.—The honorable member for Bendigo (Mr. Rankin), even so recently as last year, was opposed to conscription. In support of that statement I direct attention to the following remarks that he made in this House on the 2nd July, 1941, as reported in *Hansard*, vol. 167, page 765:—

Personally I do not believe in conscription. During the last war I did not vote for it, and specific reasons have prompted me to adopt this attitude. For example, a general in battle will take the best weapon that comes to his hand and will use it again and again. If Australia had four divisions in the field with an unlimited supply of reinforcements they would be employed repeatedly, and this country would be bled white.

I was in agreement with the honorable member at that time; but if he has changed his mind since then I regret that I cannot follow him.

Mr. RANKIN.—I was talking about a European war.

Mr. BLACKBURN.—It is quite clear that if we sent our men abroad Australia might easily exhaust its man-power.

I take a definite position on this subject. Certain members of the House, like the honorable member for Deakin and the honorable member for Barker have advocated consistently, at all times since the commencement of the war, that our men should be compelled to serve overseas. I have no quarrel with them on that account. They have fought elections upon the issue. The great majority of honorable members, however, including the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies) and the right honorable member for Darling Downs (Mr. Fadden) and many of their followers have not only refused to consent to the introduction of conscription in Australia, but have also repudiated any such idea. The right honorable member for Kooyong was responsible for the insertion of a provision in the National Security Act that conscription could not

be introduced by regulation. In other words, section 49 of the Defence Act cannot be overridden by regulations.

Mr. CALWELL.—And the Government and party of which he was the leader supported him on that issue.

Mr. BLACKBURN.—That is so. If those honorable gentlemen now desire release from undertakings that they have given in that regard they should seek them in the democratic way by approaching the electors on the subject. Other honorable members of the House also have opposed conscription consistently. I am one of them. I do not desire to traverse the reasons which I have previously given for my attitude. I consider it sufficient for me to say at this stage that I am opposed to conscription on ethical grounds. The evils of industrial conscription which have been forced on this country will be aggravated one hundred-fold in the minds of militant unionists and other supporters of the Labour party if the Government's present policy be applied. Other evils also may fall upon the country if more of our men are sent far afield. We know very well that the Prime Minister not long ago threatened the coal-miners of Australia that if they continued to strike they would be put in uniform, which would mean that they would have to bear arms in defence of Australia.

Mr. ABBOTT.—Would there be anything wrong with that?

Mr. BLACKBURN.—I call it an insult to the coal-miners of Australia to tell them that they would be compelled, as a punishment, to bear arms in defence of Australia and Australian territories.

Mr. ABBOTT.—The honorable member should not cry about it.

Mr. BLACKBURN.—I am not crying about it; but I object to the coal-miners being insulted in such a way. They would not regard it as a punishment to have to defend their country. In any case, the honorable member for New England (Mr. Abbott) need not work himself into a passion. Section 49 of the Defence Act guarantees, for this country, a force adequate for its defence. I believe that had it not been for that section of the act this country would have been denuded of its natural defenders, just as I believe that New Zealand has been denuded of its

defenders. I believe that we should retain in this country a force adequate for its defence; and therefore I am opposed to the compulsory sending of more of our men abroad. I hope that my amendment will be agreed to.

Mr. CALWELL.—I second the amendment and reserve my right to speak.

Sir CHARLES MARR (Parkes) [4.45].—The House has been called together for the specific purpose of hearing a statement by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) on the war position. We are glad to have had the report that the right honorable gentleman has placed before us today. The speech that he made shows the seriousness of the position that obtains throughout the world. Honorable members, however, expected to hear something in regard to the way in which Australia was to play its part in conjunction with its allies in driving the enemy from occupied territories and in preventing it from attacking our own. We have listened to the remarks of the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn).

Mr. CALWELL.—Very wise ones, too.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—He prefaced them by giving notice of an amendment that he proposed to move for the addition to the motion of words that would prevent the introduction of conscription for military service abroad. Many of us, in our hearts, are opposed to conscription as such. But I have, in this Parliament during this war, consistently supported it. The workers, above all others, should be prepared to fight in defence of privileges and rights which have been handed down to them by their forbears. The speech of the honorable member for Bourke would lead one to believe that we can cringe to our allies; that we can say to the United States of America, New Zealand, Canada, the British Isles, China, and all others who are allied with us, "For the Lord's sake, come and help us; but, unfortunately, we cannot go to your help".

Mr. CALWELL.—When did the honorable member change his mind?

Sir CHARLES MARR.—I have never changed my mind on this matter.

Mr. CALWELL.—The honorable member was an anti-conscriptionist six months ago.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—Never! The people whom the honorable member for Bourke represents in this House—the Communists—are to-day the most outspoken in favour of conscription.

Mr. CALWELL.—I rise to a point of order. Is the honorable member in order in accusing the honorable member for Bourke of being the representative of the Communists in this Parliament? Is it not a fact that the honorable member for Bourke represents the electors of Bourke, and no one else?

Mr. SPEAKER.—Objection to any remark must be made by the honorable member concerned.

Mr. BLACKBURN.—What the honorable member has said will not do me any harm.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—If the honorable member for Bourke is hurt by what I have said, I withdraw it. I have too much respect for his convictions, and his attitude in this House, to "throw stones" at him. He has a right to his opinions, and he has been courageous enough to voice them. It appears to me that responsibility for the present lack of man-power, which is so much deplored, must be laid at the door of Ministers. It has been considered necessary to issue regulations in respect of the employment of domestic help, in order to obtain more women for engagement in war activities. Surely, if Ministers were to abolish the loading that is evident in some of our munitions establishments and other activities, if the employees could be encouraged to devote their full energies to the war effort instead of slacking and making overtime necessary, much better results would accrue. Our sister dominion of New Zealand has always had compulsory service. New Zealanders served during the last war, and have again on this occasion, not where they desired, but where the advisers of the Government of that dominion considered that they could best be engaged. Has the honorable member for Bourke, the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell), or any other honorable member, with the possible exception of the honorable member for Batman (Mr. Brennan)—who has denounced the British Navy—ever denounced the provision that requires any

member of the Royal Australian Navy to serve wherever required? Those men are not invited to enlist to serve only in Australian waters. On one occasion, I heard the honorable member for Batman say that they were a menace to mankind.

Mr. BRENNAN.—Never in my life.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—That statement appears in *Hansard*.

Mr. BRENNAN.—It does not.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—Is the honorable member now in favour of the regulations relating to the enlistment of men in the Royal Australian Navy?

Mr. BRENNAN.—That is a vastly different proposition.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—Is the honorable member in favour of the regulations relating to the enlistment of members of the Royal Australian Air Force?

Mr. BRENNAN.—I do not think so; but I do not know what they are.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—Members of the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal Australian Navy, and the Mercantile Marine, can be sent to serve anywhere. One cannot enlist in the Air Force to serve only in Australia, but must be prepared to go wherever one's services can best be used.

Mr. CALWELL.—But one enlists voluntarily.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—One enlists voluntarily in other organizations. My quarrel with the Government is, that it does not go far enough in the application of compulsion. It ought not to make the Parliament an exempt establishment.

Mr. CALWELL.—Is the honorable member in favour of compulsory unionism?

Sir CHARLES MARR.—If the honorable member is in favour of compulsory unionism, he ought to be in favour of compulsory service for the defence of those things for which unionism has fought and won battles. Honorable members who sit on the Government benches never raise their voices against enlistment in the Navy or the Air Force; yet they contend that members of the Citizen Military Forces must serve only in Australian territory! It appears to me that some Ministers give indirect encouragement to those who desire to avoid service, by finding positions for them in Government departments. One depart-

ment in Sydney contains a large number of eligible men. Yet men of 59 years of age have been industrially conscripted! The men in that category are not invited to say whether they will serve near their homes in Melbourne or Sydney, but may be sent to the farthest parts of Queensland, or elsewhere. Was the honorable member for Melbourne in favour of that industrial conscription?

Mr. CALWELL.—The honorable member was.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—I did not vote for it. But I am in favour of conscription for every war activity, and would put a man to work in a munitions factory or any other undertaking in which he was best fitted to serve. In a factory that I visited, a foreman told me that women who were engaged on the production of shells, were, after three months' experience, making twenty shells a unit a shift more than trained men. I have informed the Minister for the Army that thousands of Australians who voluntarily went overseas in order to prevent the enemy from approaching our shores, and escaped from countries to which their activities had taken them, are now engaged in guerrilla warfare in the hills of Java, in Timor, and in other islands of the Pacific. The Government says: "They are outside Australian territory. They were fools enough to enlist; let them stew in their own juice. We shall not compel any Australian to rescue them and bring them back". That is the view that honorable members opposite held in the last war, and one cannot expect them to change it. They will not oblige their good trade unionists friends to serve if it be possible for them to avoid service. The Prime Minister's eloquence and ability are of no avail. It is shameful that the leader of the country, the first man in the nation, should have to seek the direction of an outside junta as to the way in which he should lead this country.

Mr. CALWELL.—Does not the honorable member go to an outside junta?

Sir CHARLES MARR.—I have never been to one in my life.

Mr. CALWELL.—Did not Mr. Bruce go to Collins House?

Sir CHARLES MARR.—No. Neither Mr. Bruce nor the right honorable member for North Sydney (Mr. Hughes)

went to any outside junta. In the last war, the right honorable member for North Sydney led this country as a leader should. What did the Labour party do? It did to him what it would do to John Curtin, if that right honorable gentleman were to do the right and noble thing without fear of consequences; but he would find that the country was solidly behind him. It would be a waste of time to try to convince my friends opposite that their colleagues in the unions are opposed to their attitude.

Mr. CALWELL.—How does the honorable member like the idea of the Communists supporting him?

Sir CHARLES MARR.—I welcome the co-operation of anybody who can assist to win the war. I have listened with great pleasure to the representative of the Communists in the Sydney Domain. If he could make a speech in this House to my friends opposite, he would open their eyes and show them how they should act.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—On a point of order, I should like to know whether the motion should be discussed in the absence of every member of the Ministry. Not one of His Majesty's Ministers is on the treasury bench, and the proceedings are entirely out of order.

Mr. Scully having entered the chamber,

Sir CHARLES MARR.—The amendment has placed the Cabinet in a dilemma.

Mr. CALWELL.—It will place the honorable member in a dilemma later.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—It will never place me in a dilemma. Because it proposes to add to the motion a declaration that in no circumstances shall conscription be introduced, I cannot support it; nor, in my opinion, can the Ministry or the members of the Labour party.

Mr. CALWELL.—That is our policy.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—Is it? Then why were workers conscripted industrially? Honorable members opposite say that they represent the workers in this Parliament. All that I can say is, "God help the workers who have that sort of representation". If the honorable member for Melbourne had blood relations serving overseas, he might take a different view. Since the 11th July last, I have been fighting the Minister for the Army on

behalf of men who, having fought valiantly for the defence of this country throughout the campaigns in Greece, Crete and Syria, were tried by court martial in the Middle East because of what they had done when an officer who had never been in action marched them over the desert in order to give them further training. These men were tried for mutiny and sentenced to 26 months' imprisonment, some being imprisoned in Pentridge and others at Long Bay. I shall never cease to oppose such treatment. It is monstrous that a Labour government should put soldiers who volunteered to fight for their country in gaol with common criminals. This is the first time that it has ever been done by any Australian government. No civilian can be placed in a gaol with criminals until he has been tried by a jury and found guilty of the offence of which he was charged. If these soldiers were guilty, they could have served their sentences in concentration camps, but they should not have been put into gaols with criminals. I have been fighting this case ever since the 11th July last. Only to-day I received a letter from the Prime Minister to say that he understood that the matter which I had brought under his notice had been dealt with by the Minister for the Army. I may say that I have never once received an affirmative reply from the Minister for the Army on any subject.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable member must confine himself more closely to the subject-matter of the amendment.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—The Prime Minister made a very comprehensive statement which took us into many fields. He travelled from the Philippines to the Middle East. I have not yet gone so far; I have not even got to Europe yet. Mr. Miles, the Communist, said in the Sydney Domain recently that he did not care whether we had one army or ten so long as we all combined to chase those little yellow swine back to their holes in Japan. Do honorable members think that we can defeat Japan by passing resolutions in this House? I was disappointed that the Prime Minister did not finish his statement by making a report upon his attendance at the Australian Labour party conference in Melbourne. In my opinion, he had no right to go to

the conference at all. I take it that he attended as Prime Minister and, if he visited one outside organization in that capacity he should visit all. Seeing that he did go, he should have made a report to Parliament on his visit. He should have said that, while Parliament was in recess, he went to the Trades Hall and outlined the Government's proposals to the delegates there. He might have added that he was not quite sure whether those proposals would be turned down or accepted. I am curious to know what he proposes to do if the trade unions decide against him. However, it is not for us at this stage to make the way too hard for him. We must give him a chance to get away with it if he can, but I should like to know what he proposes to do if he does not get away with it.

Mr. CALWELL.—He will not join the United Australia party, anyway.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—I should like the leader of the Parliament to be the leader of the people. There should be complete unity at this time. We do not want political party divisions now. We should have a national government, which would be representative of all the people. The Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) and the Minister for Air (Mr. Drakeford) flew to New Guinea, and came back with harrowing tales, but what could they have seen in a few days? I happen to be one who went over the Owen Stanley Range, and at one stage it took more than 30 natives over four days to cut a track a mile long. Our men have played a noble part in New Guinea, whether they be members of the Australian Imperial Force or the Citizen Military Forces. We should give to our military advisers the support which they have a right to expect. If they are worth having as advisers it is worth our while to accept their advice. The trouble is that we have too many pettifogging critics in this country who can all tell the Army, the Navy and the Air Force how they are doing things wrongly. The Australian Imperial Force was brought back from overseas and split up among Militia units. What is to happen if the Government's proposal for merging the two forces be not given effect? I suppose the men will be lined up and an officer will say, "Hands

up all those who are members of the Australian Imperial Force. Take two paces to the front. Those who are not of the Australian Imperial Force will stay at home and look after the women." Armies do not fight as individuals; they are trained and fight as organizations, and that applies with greater force than ever in these days of mechanization. Much as I admire the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn) and much as I like to listen to his speeches, I cannot support his amendment.

Mr. BRENNAN (Batman) [5.9].—I think that it may be candidly admitted—because I feel that I cannot honestly deny it—that Government supporters find themselves in the present circumstances in a very embarrassing position in regard to discussions upon defence measures. The Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) has made a statement, and moved that the paper be printed. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn) has moved an amendment affirming the desirability of maintaining the historic Labour policy regarding conscription for overseas military service. To this policy, not one word of reference was made by the Prime Minister. Nevertheless, as is well known, he had publicly made a declaration of an intention on his part to depart from Labour's historic policy and to substitute a new one.

The attitude of Labour has always been one of implacable opposition to overseas conscription. That faith was so firmly held that many good Labourites and true thought that the principle should be embedded in the Australian Constitution so as to ensure its permanence. Most people who are interested in the Labour movement believe that its greatest achievement, next to the famous attack made upon vested interests in the early 'nineties during the period of the foundation of the Labour party, was its repeated and continued resistance to the policy of compulsory military service in a foreign country. To-day, our policy is still anti-conscriptionist, but we meet this Parliament in the extraordinary position that the leader of the party and the head of the Government has publicly declared his opposition to what many of us regard as not merely a plank, but a cardinal principle of Labour policy. This new policy

advocated by the Prime Minister has not yet been adopted. Indeed, in my opinion, it is not likely to be adopted by the Labour movement. If it had pleased the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fadden) to-day to move an amendment affirming allegiance to the principle of conscription as laid down by the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister himself and every member of his party would have been bound to oppose the motion—a most extraordinary position—just as they will be bound to support the spirit of the motion of the honorable member for Bourke, as I most cordially do.

It may as well, I think, be frankly admitted that we have been led into a position in which we are exposed to the ridicule and contempt not only of the Opposition and our own supporters, but also of the electorate as a whole. Almost every honorable member of this House, certainly every party, has come from the electors pledged and, so far as I know, continues to be pledged against the policy of conscription for service in foreign countries. There were, of course, some die-hards. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn) excepts them in more pleasant words than I feel disposed to apply to them. There were those of the Opposition, who piping very loudly in this House, piped not so loudly in the electorate at the time that military service in foreign countries was regarded as very unpopular.

MR. ARCHIE CAMERON.—If the honorable member had accompanied me on the campaign he would have formed a different opinion.

MR. BRENNAN.—The truth is that the great majority of the members of the Opposition exhibited extraordinary sensitiveness about any suggestion that they were favorable to conscription. I remember gravely offending a former member of this Parliament, who was an anti-conscriptionist of an earlier war, by suggesting that his protests of recent date against conscription for foreign service were not entirely genuine or sincere. I took that occasion to point out that it was doubtful, if they were submitted to the test, whether Opposition members would not be shown to run true to form

and prove themselves, in reality, con-scriptionists.

It must be admitted that there is little difference between the policy of the Labour party acting by its majority and that of the United Australia party and its somewhat uncertain satellite, the Country party. It must be granted that the sometimes doubt whether it should be Opposition is a kid-glove opposition. I described in its relationship with the Government as a Siamese twin, or whether the Country party and the Government are merely a married couple. I do know, however, that the United Australia party's opposition to the Labour Government, as at present constituted, is much more apparent than real. I do know that the Leader of the Opposition, so far as he is the leader, and not merely a political accident, speaks much more valiantly than he acts. I do know that he makes statements of tremendous ferocity in the press and that he soft pedals them remarkably in Parliament, and that finally he is wont to express his complete satisfaction with the explanation tendered by the Prime Minister. All differences between them end in pleasant felicitations exchanged between "Jack" and "Artie", and there the matter ends. The Advisory War Council is usually the incubator of these downy chickens of complete harmony. Nobody was surprised, therefore, to learn that the Opposition would spare us in the moment of our humiliation. Nobody was surprised to find that the Opposition, finding the Government through its head, promising to "go quiet", decided that it should be encouraged rather than that it should suffer the indignity of forcible arrest. If one had had an ear to the keyhole when the Opposition party meeting was being held on this matter of defence no doubt one would have heard that genial phrase-maker, the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies) suggesting that the Government should be allowed to stew in its own juice. I can quite imagine the honorable member for Barker (Mr. Archie Cameron) saying that they should not throw a stone at a stewpot of disruption which was already simmering nicely on the Labour

hearth. I have said that there is little difference between parties, and there is; but I always thought that anti-conscription was safer in the hands of the Labour party and a Labour Government than any other party in this House, for reasons which I have already given.

MR. ARCHIE CAMERON.—I think I told the honorable member at the 1939 election that it was not.

MR. BRENNAN.—Yes, I believe so, and I myself said something in support of the honorable member's logic. I said that the honorable member might be right. But there is an old saying, "Once a policeman always a policeman". I do not agree with that, because I know many gentlemen who, having been very good officers of police, have for many years since retirement proved themselves very good citizens. But I do say, "Once a conscriptionist always a conscriptionist". You can trace the continued presence of the virus. You know him as a conscriptionist even when he is most loudly proclaiming himself an anti-conscriptionist. If conscription for overseas service is such a good thing, why bastardize it? Why call it out of its name? Why apologize for it? Why explain, "We do not mean conscription, we merely mean merge—one army. We do not mean territories far away in Europe, we merely mean lands—the territories of foreign powers, certainly—relatively near to Australia"? When the honorable member for Bourke was speaking on that subject he endeavoured to define the indefinite and to tell us what was meant by the South-west Pacific. We might have hoped that he would tell us also what was meant by the phrase "associated with the defence of Australia"; but the Prime Minister waxed a little indignant and said that these were secret matters which could not be disclosed. I hardly understand how we are to determine what we mean by conscription in the South-west Pacific, unless the geographical area referred to is disclosed in the discussion on the amendment of the Defence Act. I make this further observation that the anxiety of the Prime Minister was a little belated because it appears that the definition has already been published in a Sydney news-

paper only this morning. In the good old days when we were fighting conscription before, the Prime Minister did me the honour of presiding at a fateful meeting which I addressed at the Bijou Theatre on the 4th July, 1915. He was then a militant opponent of conscription for overseas service. In those days the men who stood for conscription were not ashamed of the name. They called it for what it was. The immortal "Billy", and men like Paddy Lynch and George Pearce, all arch conscriptionists, advocated conscription without using euphemisms. They said what they meant. They called a spade a spade. The reference to the two last gentlemen I have mentioned—who came from your own State, Mr. Speaker—suggests that the blossom of conscription flourishes remarkably well in the congenial atmosphere of Western Australia. The words used by the Prime Minister in setting out his proposal were, I think, sufficiently clear to be understood. They were—

That, having regard to the paramount necessity of Australia's defence, as expressed at the federal conference of the Australian Labour party in June, 1940, the Government should be authorized to add to the Defence Act, in the definition of "Commonwealth", which at present defined the territory to which the act extended, the following words:—"and such other territories in the South-west Pacific area as the Governor-General proclaims as being territories associated with the defence of Australia".

MR. ABBOTT.—Is that official?

MR. BRENNAN.—I am quoting from the *Labor Call*. I hope that even though Labour policy may be somewhat in the balance at the moment the honorable member for New England (Mr. Abbott) will not regard it as an offence for me to quote from a Labour newspaper. The words that I have quoted have been stated in many places. The words are sufficiently clear to remove all doubt that the Government desires power to compel the youth of Australia to serve in foreign countries. The general intention of the proposal is, undoubtedly, conscription for service overseas. Such phrases as "South-west Pacific area" or "associated with" are not at all clear, but the general purpose of the proposal is, beyond any question, to give the Government power to conscript Australian

youth for military service in foreign countries. If this proposal were adopted, our young men could be sent against their will anywhere in the world, according to the whim of the Government in power at the time. The expression "such other territories in the South-west Pacific area as the Governor-General proclaims as being territories associated with the defence of Australia" is broad enough for anything. At the most, a further trifling amendment of the law would be required. If this proposal should become law, the policy of the Labour party in respect of military service would be entirely changed. If we yield to the present clamour for this amendment, we shall yield the last ditch. The proposal now before us is conscription for foreign service, stark and unashamed. In order to see clearly what is intended we must follow the steps, one by one, which have brought us to this position. In 1940, when the then honorable member for Corio, Mr. Casey, felt impelled to accept a safe sinecure somewhere beyond Australia, a by-election was held for the Corio division. In due course the representation of the electorate passed to a competent Labour man who, as Minister for War Organization of Industry, has been required to bear, personally, the venomous attacks of Labour's enemies which should have been, and in ordinary circumstances would have been, directed to the Government as a whole. The Prime Minister, then Leader of the Opposition, called the Victorian members of the party together and urged that the policy of Labour in respect of overseas service should be modified to a material degree. Later he acted upon the equivocal and doubtful approval which he received. He then acquiesced in an enlargement of the definition of "Australia" to include the Mandated Territories. Still later he urged and encouraged the sending of unlimited numbers of Australian troops to Malaya and other more or less adjacent areas. It was not his responsibility, but the responsibility of the Government then in power, that our men were sent to the Middle East, to Crete, and to Greece so desperately ill-equipped that in the Middle East, at any rate, the Australian commander refused to take them into action. It was not the

present Prime Minister's responsibility, but that of the present Opposition, that Australian troops were thrown into these various distant theatres of war, where so many lost their lives. But it is only fair to admit that all of these movements had the ready acquiescence of the majority of the members of the then Opposition. I have pointed out more than once, and so have certain other honorable members on this side of the chamber, that conscription was the inevitable result of such a policy. Obviously, it would be necessary to reinforce troops sent to foreign countries. If the men in Australia were not prepared to volunteer for such service, it appeared to me to be inevitable that the Government of the day would ship them abroad compulsorily to fight and, if necessary, to lay down their lives on foreign soil. There is a legal maxim that a man is presumed to intend the natural consequences of his acts. Many honorable gentlemen who supported the Prime Minister in this gradual process of breaking down Labour policy in respect of overseas military service did not perhaps realize the natural results of their actions, but I have too high an opinion of the intelligence of the right honorable gentleman to believe that he did not realize what must be the inevitable result of his policy.

Inasmuch as Labour policy is opposed to compulsory service in foreign countries—and we on this side of the House are under an obligation to defend that policy at this moment—I must confess that I have never heard the Prime Minister make a forthright declaration against the principle of conscription. I have never heard him made a positive declaration that conscription for overseas military service was a hateful thing, or that it was an unchangeable and deep-rooted belief of the Labour party that the bodies of Australian youth should not be seized and rendered up as a sacrifice in foreign countries against their will.

When the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fadden) moved the adjournment of the House some time ago to discuss this subject, the present Prime Minister replied to him on purely strategical grounds. He said the course suggested was not necessary, that other courses were open, and that conscription would divide

the people. There is one matter upon which the Prime Minister is absolutely sincere. He believes that he is the greatest military strategist since Hannibal, not excluding Napoleon Bonaparte. His opposition to the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition was based on military considerations, not on principle.

It will be remembered that a "government spokesman" foreshadowed some months ago the proposal that the Prime Minister has now made. The honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell) and I, as well as other honorable members, addressed questions to the Prime Minister with the object of eliciting whether any person had authority to speak for the Government on the subject. We wanted to know, particularly, who was the "Government Spokesman". The reply to a searching question by me as to whether such a spokesman had any kind of governmental authority was: "The answer must be 'No'". The answer should have been: "'Yes,' but must for political reasons be 'No'". The answer should be known. [*Extension of time granted.*] As a barrage of questions followed from the other side of the House, honorable gentlemen in opposition must have had their suspicions.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—Not suspicions, but hopes.

Mr. BRENNAN.—I think that the "Government Spokesman" had certain knowledge, and that knowledge was not confined to him. That the head of the Government should spring upon the public a declaration of a radical change of policy of the kind here foreshadowed, without consulting his Cabinet, or his party, the electorate to which he was pledged as a deeply dyed in the wool anti-conscriptionist, or even his Army Minister, and without knowing whether or not, at the very moment at which he was expounding his new policy, one of his faithful Labour Ministers might have been expounding the old policy is as amazing as it is inexplicable. My self-esteem in this matter is of minor importance to honorable members, but it is of great importance to me. I, too, am pledged against conscription for foreign service; I renewed that pledge at the last

elections, and I was returned to this Parliament faithfully to observe it. Most of my constituents, knowing my beliefs, were confident that I would faithfully observe it. Some of them knew that, as a member of a Labour Government, and with Labour approval, I had visited Geneva as the head of an Australian Government delegation, and that there, in the presence of the representatives of 53 nations, I had declared that the Labour party of Australia was implacably opposed to the policy of conscription for foreign service, through which, I ventured to say—foolishly, as the event has proved—Labour had deliberately, definitely, and finally, drawn its pen.

I invite honorable members to read in the Australian *Worker* of Wednesday, the 2nd December, a leading article by my old friend Mr. Boote, who has been associated with that newspaper so long and honorably as a champion of freedom. In this well-reasoned article against conscription he speaks for the great body of the Labour party, and in his concluding words, referring to the fact that certain executive bodies had declared themselves favorably to the Prime Minister's new policy, said—

Should the Prime Minister get his way, the State Labour executives or the Interstate Labour Conference will have agreed to something profoundly and nationally serious for which nothing worthy of being called justification has been advanced.

In that event a mere handful of men will have destroyed, at the request of a single person, a principle which more than a million people established by their votes on two historic occasions.

What Australia did in the last great war commanded the world's admiration.

And this applied not only to the deeds of our soldiers on the fields of battle, but also to the magnificent determination of the nation to carry its love of freedom to the length of forbidding the conscription of its sons even in the hour of dire peril.

THERE SHOULD BE ANOTHER REFERENDUM ON THIS ISSUE. ONLY THE NATION SHOULD REPEAL WHAT THE NATION HAS DECREED.

If those who are to settle this vital question are as deep-thoughted as they are patriotic they will decline to obliterate from our annals one of the grandest decisions ever recorded by a democratic people.

Having carefully studied all the facts, I am driven most reluctantly and painfully to the conclusion that, whilst

other members of the Cabinet were making crystal clear their opposition to conscription in principle, the Prime Minister has never been in sympathy with the policy of the party on that vital issue.

Mr. HARRISON (Wentworth) [5.53].—During the last war, when the boys "on the other side" wanted a little relaxation, they took a charge of cordite out of a shell and jammed it down the rat holes of the infested trenches. Having placed a necessary weight on top of the cordite, they would ignite it. Immediately, there would be a wild rush of rats out of the holes in an effort to get away from the fumes of the cordite. The honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn) has put down the rat-holes on the Labour side the biggest charge of cordite ever used, and honorable members have been scampering away in order to dodge the fumes. This exhibition must cause the country grave concern. The division on the amendment will be an extraordinary one, and I shall be most interested to witness it. Immediately the amendment was moved, members of the Cabinet went into conference, leaving the House without a single Minister to take charge of the front bench until the honorable member for Barker (Mr. Archie Cameron) drew attention to the fact. Consternation reigned supreme. It is passing strange that the honorable member for Bourke, who is a Socialist, who possibly would like to be known as a Communist, and who certainly is a pacifist, should have introduced something that cuts right across the very principles of socialism. As I view the matter, the fundamentals of a democracy are based on common privilege. Indeed, democracy has evolved to its present stage only after a long, bloody, and bitter struggle against autocracy. The privileges conferred by a democracy are enjoyed by every person in it. It is claimed by some persons that communism is the next step from democracy to the ultimate achievement. I do not agree with them. But it can at least be said that those privileges which are common to socialism and communism have been defended by the very means to which exception is now taken; in other words, communism has reverted to the very elements of autocracy in an

endeavour to defend its privileges, including the compulsion of every unit in the communistic State. We regard democracy as more enlightened than communism. The honorable member for Bourke would resist any attempt by an autocracy to introduce autocratic methods; yet he is not prepared to call upon every individual in the community to protect those communal privileges that we enjoy to-day. I know that it is difficult in a democracy to furnish convincing evidence of the need for war. Every person who enjoys the comforts and privileges of a democracy seeks to preserve them selfishly for himself, and is not prepared to forgo them. Democracy was designed to become effective in all its ethical relationships, not in a period of war, but in a peaceful world. But when there are those who will not observe the fundamental principles of democracy, but abuse the privileges that make for peace, their own methods must be employed against them in order that the standards and privileges of democracy may be preserved. This is recognized by communism. Every person who considers that the privileges he enjoys are of sufficient worth to justify the use of autocratic, dictatorship methods in order to retain them, is prepared to use them.

The supporters of the Government have used it extensively for the recruitment of their industrial army. They claim to be the champions of industrialism, to be the only persons who adequately represent the workers, and they have not hesitated to exercise dictatorial powers for the conscription of their industrial army. What, in the name of Heaven, is the use of conscripting an industrial army if you are not prepared to conscript a military force to defend it when its existence is threatened?

Mr. CALWELL.—What about the conscription of wealth?

Mr. HARRISON.—If taxation at the rate of 18s. in the £1 does not represent a pretty fair measure of conscription of wealth, I do not know what would; and moreover, those who are paying at that rate are not squealing. All our boasted industrial and social standards would go by the board if Australia were successfully invaded. No one with any

common sense would pretend that Australia can be defended by waiting within the borders of Australia to meet an invading enemy. It has always been a cardinal principle of military strategy to fight your wars, if possible, in the enemy's territory. Germany knows that. Germany has never fought a war on its own soil since the time of Napoleon. Japan adheres to the same principle. I do not say that we should become unduly aggressive, but we must recognize that it is necessary to employ force to uphold our democratic principles and privileges when they are threatened by an enemy. Now the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn), the arch-priest of socialism, has directed a dagger at the heart of democracy and socialism. The Prime Minister, as a champion of democracy, must admit that Parliament is necessarily the highest tribunal in the land. It is an assembly of the representatives of the people, and it is a duty of those representatives to make laws for the good order and government of the country. I have no wish to traverse the Prime Minister's record during the last war, nor the record of some of his Ministers during that time. I believe that the Prime Minister, by his diligence, energy and patriotism during this war, has wiped out many blots on his escutcheon. Would to God that he would go a little farther in the interests of his country! Unfortunately, he is restricted by party affiliations, and there can be no great leader in this country, or in any other, who is prepared to bow the knee to party dictatorship. Therefore, the Prime Minister must still be regarded as a political opportunist. As Leader of the Opposition, he resisted the despatch overseas of an expeditionary force until the logic of events forced him to change his attitude. He resisted the participation of Australia in the Empire Air Training Scheme until events forced him to withdraw his opposition. He resisted the merging of the Australian Imperial Force and the Citizen Military Forces until he was forced by events to agree to it. He declared that he would not be bound by debate, and that the requirements of General MacArthur would not have to wait upon political considerations. Nevertheless, when a request is

Mr. Harrison.

made that he should follow a line of action necessary for the preservation of Australia, he does not come to Parliament, but by back-door methods approaches a group of union secretaries, an industrial and political junta, and tells them what must be done in order to save the country, while withholding that information from the elected representatives of the people. He even refuses to allow the matter to be debated in his own caucus. This is the man who, at the moment, is Prime Minister of Australia, the leader of the nation, the man against whom a member of his own party has directed an amendment designed to reassert the rights of individual members who refuse to be tricked by methods which are other than straight.

I wish here and now to register my protest against the gratuitous insult which has been offered to the people of Australia through their elected representatives by the Prime Minister in seeking the permission of an irresponsible political junta to introduce legislation vitally affecting the welfare of the country. And these outsiders, instead of being impressed by the fact that they have been treated as the power behind the Government, as a set of all-powerful political commissars, have refused to give the authority for which the Prime Minister asked, and have told him to come back on the 4th January for their decision. "Or better still," they say, "try to convince those who are less than we are, but greater than you—the members of the State executives." Such a situation cannot be tolerated in Australia or in any other democratic country. The Prime Minister must answer to the people of Australia for what he has done. I am in complete accord with the Leader of the Opposition on this issue. I cannot support the amendment, because I believe that it threatens the very existence of democracy. I believe in conscription because I know it to be necessary if we are to preserve the rights and privileges which we enjoy.

Mr. Frost.—For two years the honorable member supported a government which never had the courage to bring in conscription.

Mr. HARRISON.—My attitude on this matter has always been straightforward, and will bear any investigation. I hope that as much may be said of the attitude of the Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Frost) when the division is taken on this amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 8 p.m.

Mr. CALWELL (Melbourne) [8.0].—I support the amendment moved by the honorable member for Bourke (Mr. Blackburn). I am at a loss to know why the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fadden), with all his fire and argument in recent weeks, was unable to screw himself to the point of moving an amendment to-day in accordance with the policy which he has expressed and applied for some time past. Why did his courage evaporate when it came to the question of submitting an amendment on the 10th December in identical terms with the motion he submitted in this House on, day of all days, the 1st May last? I take it that he is quite satisfied at the moment with the stepping-stone instalment of conscription which he hopes will receive the approval of the Labour party conference on the 4th January next. As a youth, I was an anti-conscriptionist in the 1916 and 1917 campaigns, and I am as much an anti-conscriptionist in 1942. I see no fundamental difference, and I moved a resolution at the meeting of the Victorian Central Executive of the Australian Labour party expressing the view that there was no fundamental difference between the proposals enunciated by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) in 1942 and those enunciated by the right honorable member for North Sydney (Mr. Hughes) in 1916. To me it does not matter where a man goes after he leaves Australian territory on compulsory service. To me geography does not matter. Whether the compulsion is for the Southwest Pacific or for Europe, it is still military conscription for overseas service, and, therefore, abhorrent to the traditional democratic principles of this country, and something that should be abhorred and shunned. Whether they were honest or not, members of the Opposition, in the early days of this war, agreed with members of the Labour party in expressing their detesta-

tion of this obnoxious thing, and, as has been pointed out, the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies) as Prime Minister went so far, with the unanimous support of his Government and his party, as to incorporate in the National Security Act a provision that regulations under that act should not be used for forcing conscription for overseas service upon the people of this country. The people of Australia on two occasions rejected conscription. The then Labour Prime Minister went around the Labour executives of the Commonwealth in the same way as the present Prime Minister has toured the executives in his day. The leader of the Labour party to-day was no more successful in Victoria in 1942 than the then leader of the Labour party was in 1916. The honorable member for Parkes (Sir Charles Marr) and the honorable member for Wentworth (Mr. Harrison) see something to be greatly deplored in the fact that Labour Prime Ministers go to the bodies that create Labour governments and consult with them in the democratic way on the question of the alteration of the party's platform. How would they make their wishes known except in conference?

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—There is the electorate.

Mr. CALWELL.—The Labour movement in this country is the expression in our time of the protest against the forces of reaction and privilege. The Labour movement in Australia has always obliged its parliamentary representatives to give an account of their actions to the movement which created them and made their political existence possible, and when it was displeased with their actions it told them that it no longer wanted their company. It did that to members of the party on the conscription issue in 1916, and the rank and file endorsed its action. I can see no conflict between the position of a Labour member of this Parliament and that of any other member of this Parliament. The electors in choosing representatives know the party allegiance and the obligations of membership of the respective parties. Honorable members opposite talk about juntas while they consult with big financial interests who give them

their financial support and pay their expenses. Was it not a certain person named Sir Kelso King in New South Wales who, as chairman of the Consultative Council of the National Union, collected from £60,000 to £100,000 at election times to pay for all the propaganda members of the United Australia party put out to secure their return to parliament? These people opposite are creatures of the financial interests. They are here to ensure that the present capitalist order of society shall be maintained and perpetuated. We are here as Labour members to ensure that the present order of society shall be replaced by another one in which production will be based upon use and not upon profits. There is a very wide distinction between the Labour movement and the people who sit opposite.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—Is the honorable member speaking for "brother" Coles?

Mr. CALWELL.—He can give his own testimony in due course. The capitalistic society which honorable members opposite defend was well described a few years ago as a system of anarchy plus a police force. We on this side believe that the capitalist forces of society, who want to conscript the young manhood of this country to send them abroad, are concerned not with the defence of Australia, but with the interests of big business—those who provided the funds for the conscription fight in the last war—the land sharks and the profiteers and all the other enemies of society. The people who support conscription to-day outside this Parliament are the enemies of Australia.

Mr. ABBOTT.—What about those inside this Parliament?

Mr. CALWELL.—Some people inside Parliament support conscription because they have not the intellectual integrity or moral principle to do the right thing. One of the people supporting conscription is a gentleman named Sir Keith Murdoch. In an article in the Melbourne *Herald* last night in support of one army this gentleman descended to the gutter and attempted to inflame the feelings of the Australian populace by starting a sectarian war and reflecting on certain people in this community of Irish birth. There are many people in Australia with

Irish blood. I am one. None of my ancestors who came to this country came here later than 90 years ago. I am of mixed lineage. I have Irish, Welsh and American blood and I am proud of my ancestral strains. I, therefore, resent as one who is second generation Australian-born, the attempts of this individual to stir up strife. In his long article he used these words—

As this is one of several questions of the greatest seriousness in our nation, no aspect must be shirked, and no feelings spared. I do not propose, therefore, to shirk any issue and I do not propose to spare the feelings of Sir Keith Murdoch. This is the gentleman who sets himself up to dictate the policy of Australia, who brought down the Federal Labour Government of 1932, who by various devious ways and means used his agents to try to bribe Labour members of this Parliament into deserting the Labour movement, but failed. To the eternal credit of the members concerned they refused his offers to betray the Labour movement and suffered defeat at the polls rather than ensure continued membership of this Parliament by an act of treachery. If there are any of them here who desire to speak on the subject they can speak for themselves. In 1915 Sir Keith Murdoch, then plain Mr. Murdoch, went to Gallipoli. I quote some extracts from *Gallipoli Diary*, volume II., by General Sir Ian Hamilton—

Mr. Murdoch, an Australian journalist, paid me a visit to thank me for having stretched a point in his favour by letting him see the Peninsula. Seemed a sensible man.

He was soon to be disillusioned. He adds—

Another thing; a correspondent writes in and tells us that for the honour of his profession he feels bound to let us know that Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has secretly sent home an uncensored dispatch per, of all people in the world, Mr. Murdoch!

I had begun to wonder what had come over Mr. Murdoch and now it seems he has come over me!

This gentleman who is attacking the Labour party on the conscription issue, whose bona fides have been accepted by the Australian people, is due for exposure, and I propose to proceed to expose him in the words of none other than that distinguished and gallant gentleman and soldier, Sir Ian Hamilton.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. W. M. Nairn).—Order! I do not think the honorable member will be in order in proceeding to expose any one outside this Parliament on this motion.

Mr. CALWELL.—If some person, supporting conscription outside this Parliament, vilifies sections of the Australian people and misrepresents the party to which I belong, surely I am entitled to use the forms of this House to indicate just what kind of individual this man is who went into Gallipoli, gave his word of honour that he would respect conventions, and then sneaked an uncensored dispatch off the peninsular and had to be stopped at Marseilles by the order of Sir Ian Hamilton and have the dispatch taken from him. I think I have the right to indicate to you what sort of person this man is and the things he said about the British soldiers fighting on Gallipoli in association with the Australian soldiers in the last war.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! I rule against the honorable gentleman.

Mr. CALWELL.—On what grounds? Am I forbidden to quote anything from this most interesting, informative and condemnatory book?

Mr. SPEAKER.—We shall see when it is quoted.

Mr. CALWELL.—You will interrupt me if you feel that I have gone outside the bounds of the Standing Orders. Sir Ian Hamilton said this a little later—

A reminder of mine re the Ashmead-Bartlett incident has drawn an amusing and highly unexpected answer from the War Office: "Murdoch was found to be carrying a dispatch for the Prime Minister criticizing military operations in Gallipoli".

That is a most extraordinary state of affairs.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable gentleman must not proceed further on those lines. His comments concerning Sir Keith Murdoch are not relevant to the subject-matter of either the motion or the amendment.

Mr. CALWELL.—Perhaps I may be allowed to read another extract about what Sir Ian Hamilton said of the stolen cablegrams which Murdoch tried to get to England. Surely that must have relevance to military operations in which

Australia is engaged. The extract is as follows:—

The following statement has been made in letter to the Prime Minister, Australia, by Mr. Murdoch—

Mr. MENZIES.—Sir Keith Murdoch's statements were not made under cover of parliamentary privilege as are the statements which the honorable member is now making.

Mr. CALWELL.—I am not taking advantage of parliamentary privilege. The extracts that I am reading are taken from a volume which can be obtained from the Parliamentary Library. Sir Ian Hamilton published the statements and if Sir Keith Murdoch had so desired he could have taken action against that distinguished soldier in the law courts of England. He did not do so because he knew that Sir Ian Hamilton had stated the truth. No legal tribunal would have condemned that gallant soldier for having stigmatized Murdoch as a menace to the lives of the Australians serving on Gallipoli and to the successful prosecution of the general campaign. Murdoch has been a menace to Australia ever since he returned to this country.

Mr. SPEAKER.—If the honorable member does not observe my ruling I shall ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. CALWELL.—I shall bow to your ruling, sir, and shall make no further references to the stolen cablegrams which Sir Keith Murdoch published in later years and to the other details mentioned by Sir Ian Hamilton about the Gallipoli incidents.

If honorable gentlemen opposite do not desire me to speak about Sir Keith Murdoch, who is one of their press allies in this campaign, perhaps they will not interrupt me if I read some of the opinions expressed by the leaders of the Communist party who are now the allies of the United Australia party and consequently the allies of the right honorable member for Kooyong. The Communist party had this to say a few months ago—

The British Government was quite insincere in its negotiations for a peace front.

At present the Communist party is allied with the United Australia party in the campaign for conscription. Only a few

weeks ago the honorable member for Parkes (Sir Charles Marr) occupied a seat, in company with the leader of the Communist party, on a platform in the Sydney Domain.

Sir CHARLES MARR.—The Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) also occupied a seat there.

Mr. CALWELL.—I wonder how honorable gentlemen opposite will enjoy listening to some other views, expressed earlier in the war, by the Communist party. Here is one—

Soviet Russia was not going to be made a "cat's-paw" of British imperialism.

Honorable gentlemen opposite are silent. They do not desire to be reminded of these Communist views. Some members of the Opposition are moving uneasily in their seats, but they cannot dispute the accuracy of my quotations. Here is another extract—

The pact of non-aggression with Germany marked the complete defeat of British foreign policy, which aimed at an anti-Soviet war, with German fascism as the spearhead of the attack.

By torpedoing the peace front the British Government opened the gates of war. Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax are as much responsible for the war as Hitler.

I have no doubt that various means will be taken by honorable gentlemen opposite to slide out of the difficulty in which they find themselves; but not even their acrobatic capacity to "float through the air with the greatest of ease" will enable them to evade the issues I am raising. I have no doubt that, with the help of the forensic skill of their legal advocates, they will deny, as effectively as they can, my statement that at present the United Australia party and the Communist party are allied in an effort to force conscription on this country, though the objects each party has in view are, no doubt, very different.

Mr. MENZIES.—I shall have to ask leave to cross-examine the honorable gentleman.

Mr. CALWELL.—At the moment the right honorable member for Kooyong must listen to a few questions from me. I ask him if he agrees with the following view expressed by his friends in the Communist party:—

Soviet neutrality is the worst blow of all to the ruling class in the capitalist world.

While the imperialist powers are destroying each other, the Soviet Government is standing aloof and strengthening itself.

Although these were the views of the Communist party not long ago, that party is now doing its utmost to introduce conscription for overseas service. Most of these eligible, non-combatant communists want to keep their safe jobs in protected industries whilst forcing the youth of this country to go abroad to fight, and, perhaps, to die. On the other hand, in the security service of Australia there are many officers who owe their positions to the fact that they are wearing the right "old school tie". Many of these people did not see a shot fired in the last war, and they have no intention of seeing shots fired in this war. So we have our "ersatz" colonels and arm-chair generals doing their best, through the United Australia party and otherwise, to force other people into active participation in a war in which they have no intention of participating.

I have a very great respect for the military record of the honorable member for Bendigo (Mr. Rankin), and in these remarks I am not referring to him or to any other honorable gentleman who saw service in the last war. I am referring to those who are using the present war to ensconce themselves in positions which they have neither right nor title to occupy. Never having seen military service themselves, they are yet yelling for conscription for other people.

Let us return for a moment to the Communist friends of the United Australia party. Honorable gentlemen opposite are in a disordered state of mind concerning these new colleagues of theirs. Perhaps while I am reading a little more from a Communist publication they may be able to collect their thoughts. In the early stages of this war the Communist party published the following comments:—

At the beginning of the war, Mr. Curtin declared, much to the satisfaction of the imperialists, that the Labour party "whole-heartedly" supported the war. At the same time, in a half-hearted way, he said that the Labour party was opposed to conscription and the sending of Australian troops overseas. Now there is a contradiction in whole-heartedly supporting the war and refusing to send troops overseas—a contradiction which is leading to a reversal of Labour party policy.

Since the war compulsory military training, which is only one step from conscription for overseas service, has been introduced, and yet the Labour party, officially, has done very little about it.

The Communist party declares that not only must no more troops be sent, but that those Australians overseas must, at all cost, be withdrawn.

Curtin's somersault recalls that at the beginning of the last war, Hughes, Holman and other Labour leaders said they were opposed to conscription. After a few months, however, they were the chief advocates for conscription for overseas service.

The threat of conscription hangs over the working-class movement once again. If the Labour movement is to fight it successfully, we must be united, not only in our opposition to conscription, but to the imperialist war as well.

Yet these are the people who are to-day outbidding the Opposition in hysterical appeals to the Government to apply conscription in Australia so that Australian troops may be sent beyond the territorial limits of this country.

Mr. HARRISON.—Why does not the honorable gentlemen deliver the speech he intended to deliver before 7.30 p.m.?

Mr. CALWELL.—My speech has not been changed one iota in the dinner hour. The honorable member for Wentworth was a conscriptionist during the last war, and an anti-conscriptionist during the early days of this war. He has now become a conscriptionist again.

Mr. HARRISON.—I was always a conscriptionist.

Mr. CALWELL.—The proposals elaborated to-day by the Leader of the Opposition are designed to introduce conscription in Australia so that our troops may be sent to Europe or anywhere else in the world. Honorable members of the present Opposition were responsible for sending Australians to Greece and Crete, to parts of the Middle East and to Africa. The Prime Minister has told us that his proposal is to send Australian troops to any part of the South-west Pacific area. That, of course, includes the north islands of the Philippines and areas as far away as the borders of China. I do not believe that the Australian people will ever agree to such a proposal. There are several theatres of war in which our troops are engaged to-day, but Australia has a special responsibility in relation to the Pacific theatre. One school of thought in Eng-

land—it is the dominating school—considers that Hitler must be defeated first. I do not believe that any patriotic Australian can agree to concentrate on the defeat of Hitler to the point, if necessary, of sacrificing Australia to the Japanese until it could be recaptured at a later date. In the early stages of this war the late Mr. Chamberlain told the people of Great Britain that the defeat of Hitler was the first objective of the British Government. The British Prime Minister has resisted every attempt of the Australian Government to secure the return to this country of Australian divisions, and the Opposition has assisted him.

Mr. FADDEN.—That is not true.

Mr. CALWELL.—It is true. We have a part to play in this war. Some honorable gentlemen opposite who did not participate in the last war are doing their utmost to conscript Australians for service overseas in this war, knowing that they themselves are too old to fight.

Mr. HARRISON.—Where is the speech the honorable gentleman intended to deliver before 7.30?

Mr. CALWELL.—Does it not sound as though I am delivering it? I repeat that we have a part to play in this war, but we can never consent to the doctrine that Hitler must be defeated first. It is more important to the Australian people that Japan should be defeated in the Pacific theatre than that we should participate in the European theatre. We should concentrate upon the defeat of the Japanese. Australia is a large country, 25 times the size of Great Britain and Ireland, but with a population that could be accommodated in London. We have an enemy in the Pacific whose population numbers 80,000,000. Is it to be expected that the Australian people can fight the Japanese more or less alone?

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—We have American conscripts here to help us.

Mr. CALWELL.—Is it intended that the Australian people shall fight the Japanese with such assistance as the United States of America can spare us whilst it concentrates its major effort in the European theatre of war? Is it expected that the Australian people shall agree to the policy of the conscription of troops sufficient to form

about twelve divisions, while we have five or six divisions in support? I have to say these things in this Parliament in order that the people may know the facts. I have a very great regard for the American people, as well as a blood relationship with America, distant though it be, of which I am extremely proud. I remind honorable members opposite, who protest their friendship for America to-day, that for about twenty years they were "squealing" over the matter of war debts to America. They were responsible, in part, for building up in the United States of America the isolationist *bloc* which kept America out of the war for two years. Those are facts which none of their new-found fervour for America can hide. We are entitled to expect from an Australian Government a statement of what our liabilities are as to the number of men to be used outside the borders of Australia. We could have all of our divisions against Japan and there would still be many more divisions of Japanese to attack us. Before we can think of taking the offensive against Japan, we must have in this country as many divisions as will be necessary effectively to defend it. The number of divisions needed for its proper defence is 25.

Mr. ABBOTT.—Where did the honorable member get that information? Is he also a Hannibal?

Mr. CALWELL.—I should never make the mistake of considering the honorable member for New England is a Napoleon or a Caesar.

Mr. ABBOTT.—I do not set up to be one.

Mr. CALWELL.—I am not setting up as anything but an honest man facing a position and not running away from it. I point out to the House that we have the right to expect from the British Government, too, a statement as to the assistance which this country will get in the Pacific when it mobilizes its full resources of man-power, simultaneously with any movement which the British and American Governments contemplate making in Africa, Europe, or anywhere else. To Australians, Australia is the most important part of the world. Any Australian who will not consider Australia in that light may be a good

imperialist, but certainly is not a good Australian. A good Australian must consider the interests of his own men, women and children as being more important to him than the interests of any other persons. I remind honorable members opposite, in their enthusiasm for conscription, that the fate of the British people, if they were overwhelmed by Germany, would be less dreadful than the fate of Australians if they were overwhelmed by the Japanese. We have not failed to mobilize and train our men. Comparatively, we have done more than any of our allies. Any man who said the opposite would not be telling the truth. The man-power of this country has been dragged from the factories and the farms. In the rural districts of Australia, only children, old men, and women are left to attempt to carry on. In the cities, except for those who have been able to use some influence to evade service, there are very few young men of military age who are capable of serving. Our honorable friends opposite do not consider all these aspects of the case. They say, as the honorable member for Barker said in the beginning of the war, "Let us send ten divisions overseas". For this country, the sending of ten divisions overseas would be a physical impossibility; it could not send five divisions. The voluntary system has not been found wanting in this crisis, any more than it was in the last war, when over 300,000 Australians went overseas as volunteers, despite the attempt of the right honorable member for North Sydney to introduce conscription for such service.

Mr. HUGHES.—Did I introduce conscription?

Mr. CALWELL.—The right honorable gentleman tried to do so, and failed.

Mr. HUGHES.—I did not try to do so.

Mr. CALWELL.—The right honorable gentleman made a good attempt.

Mr. HUGHES.—All that I did was to ask the people.

[*Extension of time granted.*]

Mr. CALWELL.—The honorable member for Richmond is anxious to hear what I am about to say. As I remarked on a

previous occasion, I have no hope of convincing anybody with that bovine mentality which this House has long since accustomed itself to associate with membership of the Country party.

There was very little in regard to the Pacific in the statement which the Prime Minister made to the House. I, for one, am disturbed at the failure of members of the War Cabinet, the Advisory War Council, and all the others who are running this war, to tell us precisely what our obligations are, what assistance we are likely to get from our allies, and just what we are to do in the coming months. The Prime Minister, for one, has told us that we must hold on for six months. Therefore, there can be no necessity for conscription for many more months to come. He has told us that he wants to merge the two forces. At the federal conference of the Australian Labour party in Melbourne, he said, "Gentlemen, there is no argument against one army".

OPPOSITION MEMBERS.—Hear, hear!

Mr. CALWELL.—I disagree with that, because I do not want to send ten divisions out of this country; and I certainly would not trust honorable members opposite with the arrangements in connexion with our military activities or with the disposal of the lives of young Australians. They failed ignominiously in time of peace. In the depression years, they starved the kiddies of this country. They had 30 per cent. of the bread-winners out of work and on the dole; and while that was happening, those of them who were members of anti-Labour governments passed bills through this Parliament designed to make the capitalist edifice more secure, by reducing the taxes imposed on their wealthy supporters. They were entirely indifferent to the sufferings of the masses of the people. But now, when those half-starved and undernourished kiddies reach the age of eighteen years, these conscriptionists want to take their bodies and say, "Go out and fight in defence of the country that starved you". They would have them fight to win back for their former owners the tin-mines in Malaya, and the rubber plantations which were not destroyed but were left intact to the Japanese so that they might be reclaimed

at some future time. That is the record of statesmanship—I use the expression satirically—of honorable members opposite. They have left behind them no legislative monument, no administrative act, by which they will be remembered by a grateful country. Posterity will say of them that they were the creatures, the willing tools, of the Niemeyers, the Montagu Normans, and others, in the mis-government of this country in a time of crisis. They are anxious to regain office. They want to destroy this Government if they can; because, with whatever faults it may possess, it is infinitely preferable to the collection of political failures who occupied the ministerial bench of this country for too long a period. My criticism of the present Government is, that it is not proceeding fast and hard enough to implement the policy of the party for the destruction of the capitalist system of society and the giving of a fair share of the products of their labour to the workers of Australia. I have no doubt that honorable members opposite will try to put their thoughts into words a little later. It will be a difficult task. They wish, if they can, to use the present situation, to destroy our national unity, which can be maintained only upon the basis of no conscription. Any attempt to conscript Australians will divide the nation in two. I do not don the mantle of the prophet, but look at the position as I saw it in the last war, and take the past as a guide to the future. I have not the slightest doubt that the introduction of conscription in this country will destroy our war effort, and will create a schism in the community which could very well be avoided. The Prime Minister told the conference in Melbourne that whereas many thousands had volunteered for the Australian Imperial Force, it was not desired that any more should volunteer because the Government wished not to destroy the Citizen Military Force divisions but to take the whole of these soldiers as conscripts and use them in Timor or somewhere else. The honorable member for Wentworth, of course, agrees with that policy. I have not had the opportunity, the time, or even the inclination, to check up entirely on his political activities, but I accept the

assurance of the Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr. Ward) that, at the time of the existence of the New Guard in New South Wales, he was friendly disposed towards some of its members, if not actually a member of the organization. I know why honorable members opposite want to introduce conscription. They wish to get rid of the man-power of this country so as to break down labour conditions, introduce a larger number of women into industry, and force the workers, after the war, to fight their way up from the bottom of the pit once more. During the last war, the right honorable member for North Sydney was accused of bringing Maltese into this country—in fact, he was called "William Maltese Hughes"—to take the place of Australians who were being shipped abroad.

Mr. HUGHES.—Three got in.

Mr. CALWELL.—I have read in the *Melbourne Herald* of the 3rd December that—

Coloured labour might even be imported for food production.

It looks as if the conscriptionists want to introduce coloured labour, despite the White Australia policy. This conscription propaganda is all a part of a gigantic swindle, and I greatly regret that the Prime Minister should have even toyed with the idea. The Leader of the Opposition proposes to administer conscription to the nation in one gulp; the Prime Minister would give it in a series of little doses. I am as much opposed to conscription in little doses as in one big one. I see in the proposal an attempt to break down the conditions which the working people of Australia have established for themselves during the war.

Mr. FADDEN.—Does the honorable member think that the Prime Minister is a party to that?

Mr. CALWELL.—I think that the Prime Minister was most unfortunately influenced by persons associated with him on the War Council—persons who write letters of the kind which the Leader of the Opposition read to the House this afternoon. Conscription is the only issue upon which the Opposition can divide the nation, the only issue upon which, with the help of its press backers, it has

any chance of being restored to power. Behind all these schemes for conscripting man-power is the idea of introducing coloured labour into Australia. This country rejected conscription during the last war, and opposition to conscription has become a tradition in the Labour party. We even went so far as to include in the platform of the party a demand that the principle of opposition to conscription be written into the Constitution of the country, and I hope that that will yet be done. If the manhood of Australia is to be sacrificed in military operations abroad as it was sacrificed in Greece, in Crete and in Libya, where Australians bore the brunt of the fighting in this war as they did in France and elsewhere during the last war, then the future of the white race in this country will be a very doubtful one indeed. We have a big country to defend, and we must recognize the possibility that in another 25 years we may have to fight in its defence again, and at a time when Europe is quiet and nobody is interested in us. We have done as much in this war as any country could do, and we have certainly mobilized a greater percentage of our manhood than most other countries. But for the speed with which the Americans came to our assistance, our plight would have been perilous indeed.

Mr. HARRISON.—Yes, they sent their conscripts here.

Mr. CALWELL.—We did not ask the American people to conscript armies for our defence, and it is only the fifth-column talk of members of the Opposition which is creating misunderstandings between Australia and the United States of America by making comparisons between our volunteers and their conscripts. The newspaper articles referred to by the Leader of the Opposition which, according to him, were arousing distrust in the United States of America, were written by Australian journalists. Many of them were the product of the chief press backer of the Opposition, the man who is trying to burst his way into this Parliament, the gentleman who goes by the name of Keith Murdoch. [Further extension of time granted.]

Having been favoured with a further extension of time, I desire now to refer

to the part played by some of those who control the finances of Australia. This year, we have voted £500,000,000 for war purposes, and it was done on the distinct understanding that the money would be used for the prosecution of the war, and not for making profits for the shareholders of big companies. It was certainly not voted for the purpose of providing the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited with a profit of millions for the last financial year, but that was what, in fact, happened.

Mr. HARRISON.—What has this got to do with the amendment?

Mr. CALWELL.—The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited is one of the organizations which support the Opposition, and which pay the election expenses of the honorable member for Wentworth.

Mr. HARRISON.—I wish that were true!

Mr. CALWELL.—Similarly the Graziers Association pays the expenses of the members of the Country party. The gross earnings of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited for 1940 were £2,600,000; for 1941, £3,500,000; and for 1942, £3,100,000. And these huge profits have been made out of the sacrifices of the people. The value of the stores held by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited increased from £1,800,000 in 1940 to £2,500,000 in 1941, and in 1942 they stood at £3,250,000.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable member must connect his remarks with the subject before the House.

Mr. CALWELL.—The relevancy of my remarks is perfectly obvious to honorable members on this side of the House. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited supports the party which is now pressing for conscription. The honorable member for Bourke has moved an amendment asking the House to register its opposition to the attempt to stampede the country into conscription.

Mr. HARRISON.—How is the honorable member going to vote?

Mr. CALWELL.—Having seconded the amendment I propose to vote for it, and I expect to see honorable members opposite, with their mixed ideas on conscription, being forced into the position of showing by their votes where they

stand. They had not the courage to make a motion of their own when they had the opportunity, and that was when the Leader of the Opposition addressed the House.

I regret that, by your meticulous regard for the Standing Orders, exercised, as it was, by your well-known sense of fairness, you prevented me, Mr. Speaker, from telling the story of the gentleman whose press activities have never redounded to the good of Australia. I suggest that the Minister for War Organization of Industry (Mr. Dedman) and the Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr. Ward), and those other Ministers associated with the calling up of man-power for the service of the country, should have another look at the newspaper offices of Australia. There is no reason why the newspaper industry should not be rationalized. If we have to put up with a lot of other privations, then let us gladly suffer a situation in which there would be only one morning paper and one evening paper in each capital city. If people engaged in a sheltered industry are prostituting their talents in an attempt to force conscription on the country there must be surplus man-power in that industry. This surplus man-power in the newspaper offices could be put to better use, as also could the stocks of paper. They might be used for the printing of important documents for official purposes. Not only have the newspapers been a protected industry, but they have also been a specially privileged industry. I have no doubt that the influence of honorable members opposite has been used—though perhaps it was not altogether needed—to save the newspapers from having to play their part in the war effort. There are many young, eligible men in the newspaper profession who are screaming for conscription. They are like the Communists, who do not want to go to the war, but want others to do the fighting. Let those who want conscription be themselves conscripted, and those who want others to fight do a bit of fighting themselves. Let there be equality of sacrifice. So far as a great many people are concerned there is no such thing as equality of sacrifice. Only those who are doing the actual fighting, and their

close relatives, are making a 100 per cent. war effort. Among a great many others there is nothing but selfishness, greed and cupidity. Everywhere people are trying to make themselves rich. For some this is a very good war, and they never want to see the end of it. I finish almost where I began: The voluntary system has never failed in this country, and it will not fail now. There has never been any need for conscription, and the conscriptionists are the worst enemies which Australia has at the moment.

Mr. BARNARD (Bass) [8.59].—Apparently, honorable members opposite are not disposed to speak on this subject, and the reason for their silence may be well imagined. They are satisfied apparently to rely on what the Leader of the Opposition has said.

I regard the statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) as a most excellent statement. In the first place, it keeps faith with Parliament by honouring a promise which was made by the right honorable gentleman that Parliament would meet before Christmas to hear the latest news of war developments. The Prime Minister's statement records not only the deeds of valour of our troops, but also the casualties that have been inflicted upon them by our enemies. It also gave a review of the position up to the present. It is cheering to have presented to us in a concise form a balanced statement indicating that the position has materially improved. The statement was worth while for that alone. I am sure that we all feel deeply for those who have lost their relatives in this awful conflict—not only our own people, but also our allies who are fighting side by side with us. Our losses have been considerable, but perhaps they are not so severe in the numbers killed and wounded as had been inflicted upon us after three years of the war of 1914-18.

Mr. RANKIN.—They are only a bagatelle in comparison.

Mr. BARNARD.—That may be so, but that does not minimize the effect upon those who have lost relatives. The war to-day is very different from the last war. It is mechanized, and, while it is more costly in materials, it appears so far to have been less costly in man-power.

Nevertheless, I am sure that our sympathies are extended to those who have suffered the loss of loved ones in battle.

The Leader of the Opposition made quite a dispassionate, temperate statement. He did not, as the press forecast he would do—the press seem to have been ill advised on this occasion—move an amendment to the motion that the paper be printed. But he did indulge in a good deal of criticism of the Labour party. He compared statements made from time to time over the last few months by responsible Ministers. He of course marshalled them in such a way, and used only such extracts from speeches, as would develop a case that would, in his view, damage this Government in the eyes of the people of Australia. He set out as far as he was able, not only to damage us now, but also to prepare material which will be useful in the impending election campaign. He criticized the Labour party and its form of organization. He criticized the Prime Minister for presenting to a Labour conference the views that he had formed in consultation with those who are conducting the military campaign for Australian and American forces in Australia and Australian territory. The Leader of the Opposition went only a certain distance with this. He cited certain of the planks of the Labour party's platform and its methods of organization to suit his own case. Now I propose to present the full facts about Labour's platform and organization. I assume that I shall be in order in setting out in more detail the aims and objectives of the Labour party as stated in the official documents of the party and in thereby placing on record all the facts of the Labour organization. It is true that the Labour party has a written constitution, which lays down certain broad principles upon which the party operates. It is true that men before they can be officially endorsed as Labour candidates must sign a pledge. They sign a pledge to support the principles, platform and policy of the Labour party, which is available in published form not only to Labour supporters, but also to anybody who cares to pay the small sum of 6d. to purchase a copy. Copies are distributed—almost broadcast! But what do we find in the parties in Opposition?

They have no definite policy or plan. There is no difficulty in becoming a candidate for either the United Australia party or the Country party.

Sir GEORGE BELL.—There is difficulty in being elected, though.

Mr. BARNARD.—That is true; and I believe that in the future there will be even greater difficulty for United Australia party members to be elected, simply because the people are becoming more enlightened and educated. They are beginning to realize after passing through the years of the last war, the years of depression and the years of the war in which we are now engaged that all this talk about not being able to find money for social services, improved living conditions and the distribution of goods and services among the people is idle and worthless. As the people are becoming more enlightened, so also is the United Australia party organization itself becoming a little more democratic, if we can believe the reports we read in the press from day to day. Only this week I read of a plan which has been formulated in Sydney by the United Australia party, but which only follows the trail which has been blazed by the Labour party over the years. As I was saying, there is no difficulty in becoming a United Australia party candidate. If two or more people want to cut the throats of one another in a scramble to enter Parliament, the United Australia party finally endorses them all. That happened at the last general elections, and indeed the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. Anthony) displaced a member of his organization, the Country party. Probably both were endorsed for the same contest. The Labour party does not do things that way. It has a definite plan and policy and a written constitution, and it endorses only its selected candidate. It is on the platform and policy as laid down from time to time by the properly constituted body representing the Labour organizations in the various States that our members are elected. That body is elected on the same basis as the Australian people elect the Senate. There are six representatives from each State regardless of the size of the population of the

State. The six members from each State gather in conference and discuss the items which have been listed for consideration, and the majority decides what is to be the policy of the organization. Once that body makes its decision unanimously or by a majority, the decision is accepted by all those assembled at the conference and by the Labour movement as a whole. There can be nothing more democratic than that. There may be some handicaps in difficult times. We are living in difficult times now and it may not be quite so easy to follow the normal procedure, but the Prime Minister, in his capacity as a delegate from the Western Australian branch of the Australian Labour party, presented to the federal conference certain ideas based on his experience as the leader of the Government in these dark and difficult days. I am reminded that this party, although it has not a majority in either House, is in power because of the solidarity that it has displayed over the years and because of the lack of solidarity that has been so marked in the parties in opposition. We have not a majority of our own members, but at least we have displayed solidarity. This Government has a very notable record in this war. I do not suggest for a moment that we did not inherit some advantages from what had been done by our predecessors. It is perfectly true that we did. Every Government inherits good things and bad things, advantages and disadvantages, from its predecessors. The Scullin Government inherited from the Bruce-Page Government the legacy of debt which finally wrecked it, and the Lyons Government inherited from the Scullin Government the foundation upon which we rebuilt our solvency through the tariff having been placed on a much firmer basis. The Government that preceded the Curtin Government did something to lay a foundation of a successful war effort, but the latter, because of its ability to make up its mind, has been able to accelerate the pace remarkably. It has been able to secure the co-operation of organized labour in its endeavours to marshal the man-power and woman-power of this country, and also its material resources, so that the war effort has been prosecuted with zeal and vigour.

I wish to bring to the notice of honorable members some points in the platform of the Labour party as it was altered in 1936. Our objective, "the socialization of industry, production and exchange", remains the same, but we are realists, and, in 1936, we saw that only the complete organization of our resources, whether it was called socialization or something else, could secure for our people the advantages that they desired and deserved. Consequently variations were made in the details of the platform which were designed to quicken our march towards national control of many of our institutions. We set about the work in a truly democratic way. Great Britain has made tremendous strides in relation to social security since the outbreak of the war. I have read the published extracts from the report of Sir William Beveridge. Whilst I do not regard his proposals as providing a perfect scheme for social security I believe they are a step in the right direction, and that they will go some distance in assuring to the people of Great Britain an improved minimum standard of living. As Sir William Beveridge said, his scheme provides for people from the cradle to the grave. If we are to survive as a democratic community we also must have a sound social policy. I am not concerned whether we use the word "socialization" or some other word to describe the goal at which we are aiming. I am concerned that we shall have a policy to which we can devote ourselves with enthusiasm. I believe that the policy of the Labour party will take us much farther along this road than any other policy. Some of the general principles on which our activities are based are stated in our platform in the following words:—

Cultivation of Australian democratic sentiment, development of an enlightened and self-reliant community and maintenance of White Australia.

Complete Australian self-government as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Commonwealth Parliament alone controlling administration with the vice-regal representative at all times acting on the advice of Commonwealth Ministers, except where such appears inconsistent with Imperial Treaty obligations.

The platform also provides for progressive reform in banking. We believe that the Government should take control of

Mr. Barnard.

the credit resources of the nation, and use them in the interest of the people and for the development of the nation. Our monetary system should be applied to the advantage of the nation as a whole. We believe in the progressive reduction of working hours so that every body will have an opportunity to render some useful service to the community. That, I believe, is a democratic provision. The Labour party also has a definite policy for agricultural advancement. This is set out clearly and concisely in our printed platform. I referred earlier to the rules of the Australian Labour party. These, also, have been published for any one who cares to read them.

So that it may be clear that we are not static but move with the times, I bring to the notice of honorable members the following resolutions of the Australian Labour party conference held in Adelaide on the 18th and 19th June, 1940:—

Having regard to the gravity of the world situation and the imminent danger to the Commonwealth of Australia, the Empire and the allies, this conference of the Australian Labour party definitely declares as its policy—

1. Complete and indissoluble unity with the allies in the war.

2. The entire resources of Australia (which include all productive and financial organizations) to be under the control of the Commonwealth Government for national service in the urgent and adequate defence of Australia and the prosecution of the war.

3. That to secure maximum productive efforts, all idle employable labour be absorbed into industry.

4. Speeding up of our war and other services on a planned scale, aiming at the highest efficiency and the most economic use of the resources at our command.

5. National training for defence in terms of the existing Defence Act to be maintained on the highest basis of efficiency, and provision for an adequate system of physical training throughout Australia. Complete participation in the Empire Air Force scheme. Necessary provision for reinforcement of the Australian Imperial Force divisions, the extent of European participation by volunteer army to be determined by circumstances as they arise, having regard to the paramount necessity of Australia's defence.

6. Full recognition of trade unions, safeguarding industrial standards and the participation by Labour organizations in the successful organization of the nation.

7. An excess war profits tax of 100 per cent.

This conference is firmly convinced that Australia can be united on these principles and calls to Australians to stand together in resisting aggression from any source, to bear willingly any burden that may be imposed in

the interests of Australia's security and to demonstrate to the Empire and its allies that we shall not be found wanting in the struggle for human liberty.

The conference also decided—

In order to implement effectively the policy agreed upon by conference and to achieve and maintain the maximum of national unity and to ensure the preservation of the utmost degree of civil liberty consistent with the conduct of the war, this conference declares—

- (a) That Parliament should be regularly consulted.
- (b) That the Labour party should maintain its integral identity in the people's interests.
- (c) That a National War Council, including representatives of Labour, should be established to advise the Government in respect to the conduct of the war and in preparing for the post-war reconstruction.

The events of the last two years have caused the Prime Minister to make further proposals to the governing body of the Labour party. These have been referred to a special conference for consideration. Surely it will be agreed that it is of the essence of democracy that such consultations shall be had with bodies responsible for the election of honorable members to this Parliament. The gibe of the Leader of the Opposition at the Prime Minister for having consulted the representative body of the Australian Labour party was unworthy of the right honorable gentleman. I believe that the right thing has been done. We shall be unable to marshal our physical and material resources to their highest pitch of production unless we can retain the goodwill of the men and women who comprise our organizations. I believe that it has only been because of the effective co-operation of the working men and women of Australia that the manufacture of munitions, the building of aerodromes and runways, and the production of war equipment generally have been stepped up so remarkably in the last twelve months. Had the Government attempted to achieve these essential objectives without first obtaining the co-operation of the working men and women of the country it would have failed. Because of the loyalty of the working people, the Government has been able to make the utmost use of the labour resources of the country. If men and women serving in one locality and in one industry have been needed more in

some other industry in another locality they have been transferred, and so the war effort has been stimulated to the satisfaction of the whole community. Instead of criticizing the Government for what it has done in this respect, the Leader of the Opposition should have congratulated it. Many men and women have readily agreed, at great personal discomfort, to leave their usual places of employment and even their homes, to go to some other locality in order to engage in other work which was regarded as being more essential to the war effort. I would not have believed, five years ago, that we could possibly have organized our resources so completely, and I am quite sure that we should never have been able to do it except for the sympathetic co-operation of the leaders of our industrial organizations. We should pay tribute to the men and women who have responded so readily to the imperative demands of the nation. It is only because of the democratic way the Government has set to work that this end has been achieved. I take no credit whatsoever for what has been done, for I have had little part in it. The credit is due to the Cabinet Ministers who have spent themselves without restraint in the service of the country, particularly in organizing its resources of man-power and material. I have often criticized the Minister for War Organization of Industry (Mr. Dedman) because of the way he has done certain things. I believed that they could have been done more effectively with less dislocation, but the honorable gentleman had a tremendous job to do, and he had no precedents to guide him. He had to work hurriedly and to make plans almost from day to day. In such circumstances it was inevitable that mistakes would be made. I have no doubt that had the honorable gentleman had time to lay plans carefully, and to give due consideration to them he would have been able to achieve results with less inconvenience to the general community; but I pay tribute to him for the splendid work that he has done. He deserves praise and not criticism, and we should be more ready to give praise and less ready to criticize. The honorable gentleman has done a very important job for the whole community. He, and his

Cabinet colleagues, have been mainly responsible for the marshalling of our man-power and resources for the war effort. It cannot be denied that there is complete conscription of the man-power and woman-power of this country, and that it has the approval of the Labour organizations.

Dr. PRICE.—Not conscription, only disemployment.

Mr. BARNARD.—I should like to know what the honorable member for Boothby (Dr. Price) regards as conscription if it is not conscription to take a man from Tasmania and send him to the north of Queensland to work in the Civil Constructional Corps. I know men who have come from Tasmania to the mainland because, having completed their training in munitions annexes or technical schools, no work was offering in their trades in that State. Because it was necessary to the war effort, they left their homes, their wives and families in Tasmania; and they are unable to return. Is not that conscription? They desire to be fitted into an organization in which they can render service at home. That is a natural inclination. Men who have been taken from one place and sent to another in order to protect this country against the aggressor have for the most part done willingly and without complaint what has been required of them. We ought to place on record our appreciation of the services they have rendered, because in their way they are playing just as important a part in the defence of this country as is the man who shoulders a rifle and goes away to fight.

Mr. RANKIN.—They are in a much safer job.

Mr. BARNARD.—The honorable member for Bendigo (Mr. Rankin) willingly left Australia to fight in the last war because he was then younger and physically fit. He would not criticize another who, because of unfitness and advancing years, remains on the home front. Let us not lose our sense of proportion! All cannot be soldiers in the line, but all can be workers in the interests of the nation to the degree of their mental and physical fitness.

Mr. ARCHIE CAMERON.—If the honorable member will quote Mary and

Martha, he will round the story off properly.

Mr. BARNARD.—I would not quote the honorable member for Barker. His judgment was wrong when he howled down the policy of the Labour party, which was designed to have the sky black with aeroplanes. He wanted man-power to be conscripted and sent overseas. The present war has shown that an army which has not an effective air-screen is decimated. I have received a letter from an officer friend in Egypt. In it he said, "Thank God for the planes that are coming from America. It was hell before we got them." What happened in the Coral Sea, in Midway, and off Guadalcanal? Some of those happenings will not make pleasant reading when the history of them is written. [*Extension of time granted.*] A week ago, I had the privilege of visiting an aircraft factory, at which I saw some of the work that is being done by Australian men and women. I was very pleased to note the production that had resulted from that organization, which was established in a very short space of time. Not very long ago, an honorable member who sat on this side, consistently in season and out of season advocated the building of a complete motor car in Australia. I recalled that fact during my visit to this aircraft factory, when I saw the type of machine that is being built there. Those aircraft are regarded as the equal of any of their type in the world. They are now being used everywhere for the defence of this country and its allies. If I were permitted, I could mention what is being produced, the objective of the management, the enthusiasm of all, and the willingness of the men and women employed to make sacrifices in order that this work may be done for Australia.

I have said something about the form of organization that the Labour party has; how we operate; how we are governed, always by the majority; and our tolerance and recognition of the rights of minorities. We are waging this war in order to ensure that the majority shall recognize the rights of the minority at all times. Our aim is to have a community actuated

by a spirit of tolerance, and a readiness to recognize the rights of all who live in it.

The statement made by the Prime Minister to-day gave us a picture of the state of the war and the results that have so far been manifested. We are entitled to feel a certain degree of gratification, but must not be unduly optimistic. There is a long way yet to go, and probably we shall suffer further reverses. I want to see in conjunction with the prosecution of the war the development of the social aspects of life, as is being done in England and New Zealand. I should like plans to be prepared for post-war reconstruction, and during the progress of the war an attempt to ameliorate the lot of the less fortunate members of the community. The record of the present Government in that regard has been marvellous; but it has not yet done all that might be done. I trust that further efforts will be made during the life of this Parliament, and that ere long there will be peace throughout the world on the basis of equality, justice and fraternity.

Mr. MAKIN (Hindmarsh—Minister for the Navy and Minister for Munitions) [9.44].—It is due to the House that I as one of the Service Ministers, should supplement the speech made this afternoon by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) with certain comments relating to the service of which I am ministerially in control. I am sure that these will prove interesting to both honorable members and the country. I shall also indicate the progress that has been made industrially in the mobilization of our resources for the provision of equipment of war, which is so essential if victory is to be secured.

The Prime Minister, in his most comprehensive statement, gave a clear indication of the considerable improvement that had occurred in connexion with world strategy. In every theatre of war, the United Nations are now on the offensive. The disappointment and difficulties which earlier were almost the unbroken experience of the Allied forces, have now given way to what promises to afford much greater satisfaction to those who are concerned with the fortunes of the war.

The Prime Minister was good enough to compliment the various

fighting services, and none of them, I venture to say, was more worthy of his praise than that which I have the honour to administer, namely, the Royal Australian Navy. It has consistently maintained the lofty traditions which were handed on to it by the Royal Navy. Units of the Royal Australian Navy have been distributed throughout the various theatres of war, and everywhere the men have shown the resource, initiative, valour and determination which are characteristic of the races from which they spring. I desire, as their Minister, to add my tribute to that of the Prime Minister for the work which they have done. In the course of the war we have suffered grievous losses, and we honour those who have made the supreme sacrifice in their devotion to duty. Their heroism will be recorded in the history of this struggle, and they themselves will always be honoured by the Australian nation. The men of the Navy are regarded by members of the other services with the greatest respect. In the battles of Greece and Crete our naval forces were in the thickest of the fight, and brought what help was possible to those engaged in land operations. Units of the Royal Australian Navy were the last to leave Singapore, bringing with them all those whom it was possible to evacuate. At Java also, our ships played an important part, and were among the last to leave the scene of hostilities. When the history of this war is written, Australia will have reason to be proud of the officers and men of the Royal Australian Navy. I desire to acknowledge our indebtedness to the people of Great Britain for their gift to us of the cruiser *Shropshire*. No gift could be more appropriate at this time, or more expressive of the bonds which unite the component parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. We desire at this time to express our appreciation of the help which Great Britain has given to us in this and in many other ways. Security reasons prevent me from disclosing everything which Britain has done for us.

Mr. FORDE.—The safe transport of our troops to and from the Middle East would have been impossible but for the British Navy.

Mr. MAKIN.—That is so. We have received generous help from Great Britain, and the gift of the cruiser *Shropshire* to replace H.M.A.S. *Canberra* was an expression of the goodwill of the people of Britain towards Australia.

Whilst we have suffered the loss of several fine ships, I am glad to be able to say that, from the shipyards of Australia there has come a continuous flow of vessels which have done valuable work in keeping our coasts free from enemy raiders. These Australian-built ships have proved most efficient, and are a credit to those responsible for their design and construction. I hope it will be possible to speed up production still more. The more vessels of this kind we have in commission, the greater protection we shall be able to afford to our extended Australian coastline, and to those territories for the defence of which we are responsible. I am confident that Australian workmen will respond to this call.

The latest addition to the personnel of the Royal Australian Navy is the Women's Auxiliary, and I feel sure that those women who have identified themselves with our work will do their part to uphold the great traditions of the service. I welcome their help, which, at this time, is so important to us.

Now, as Minister for Munitions, I desire to say a word on the subject of the production of equipment which is necessary if our forces are to succeed in this conflict. One of the great difficulties which beset the Allied cause from the beginning was their lack of equipment. For many years our enemies had been preparing for this war, and they were able to time to a nicety the beginning of their offensive against us. The United Kingdom, and the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, had placed their trust in disarmament, and were thus severely handicapped during the initial stages of our conflict with the Axis Powers. It was only by great courage and initiative that the peoples of Great Britain and the dominions, who were left alone in the early stages of the war, were able to gather the essential munitions needed to hold back the onward rush of the enemy while they gathered the

greater strength that they have to-day. There was great sacrifice of life in those days. It was as if human life had to take the place of equipment. I say, therefore, that it is indeed marvellous that we have been able to emerge from those dreadful days when we were so ill-equipped and ill-prepared to meet the emergency of war. The response of those working in the industries of the United Nations has been so marvellous that to-day we are able to proclaim that we have equality with the enemy in respect of aircraft, ships and all armaments and are able, therefore, to take the offensive against those who have threatened our existence. It is appropriate that I should indicate that in this country we have made marked progress in the provision of armaments. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in the South-west Pacific area, General Douglas MacArthur, I suppose would be the best man to express an opinion on this matter, and he has indicated his profound admiration of the wonderful way in which this country has mobilized to meet needs in the factory and on the field. Recently he sent a message to the manufacturers and workers in the war industries of the United States of America, which I believe has equal application to ourselves. It was in these terms—

From Bataan and Corregidor, from our soldiers and sailors in the combat zone, from our Australian and Dutch allies, from the souls of those who have already shown us how to die, anxious thoughts go to you who drive the wheels of war production. Without your help the blood at the front will avail little against an enemy rich in numbers, planes, guns and ships.

Industry is an indispensable factor in war. There can be no line of demarcation between the man who uses a weapon and the man who makes it. If one fails, the other must perish. We, your comrades of the firing line, bless you for what you have already done for us and wish you Godspeed.

That message which he so appropriately addressed to the industries of the United States of America could rightly be addressed to those who are engaged in industry in this country, and who are rendering magnificent service. The greatness of that service can be realized when it is remembered that before 1937 not one gun was made in this country, whereas to-day almost the full range of ordnance required by the armed services—the Navy, the

Army and the Air Force—is being manufactured in Australia, and that the quality is second to none in the world. Those guns are being used in the various theatres of war with wonderful results. One striking example of the efficient workmanship of Australian industry is the 3.7 inch anti-aircraft gun, a most effective piece of ordnance that we use to defend coastal zones in this country. Recently 21 Japanese aircraft passed over an area in which seven of these guns were located. A battery of four guns, using Australian-made ammunition, at the first salvo brought down four Japanese aircraft. I regard that as outstanding evidence of the great merit of the equipment that we are supplying to our men. But it does more than that. The feat of the gunners with Australian-made weapons and ammunition will increase the confidence of the men using them that they are capable of doing the job required of them. Our men can feel content that they are using the best weapons that it is possible to provide them with. But it is not only in the manufacture of the 3.7 inch gun that we have excelled. Every other class of weapon which we are turning out for our men in the fighting services is of a high order. The vast range of armaments manufactured in Australia was brought to public notice at a huge demonstration recently in the streets of Melbourne. Every one who saw that demonstration must have been impressed with the fact that the industries of this country have achieved wonderful things. On Saturday next there will be an even larger display in Sydney of Australian ingenuity and manufacturing skill, and I hope that the Australian people will be further stimulated by evidence of the gigantic efforts that are being made today throughout the length and breadth of Australia, to make us more secure against any attempt by the enemy to trespass upon our soil. I believe, with General MacArthur, that we shall not concede one single inch of this country to the enemy. But only by providing our forces with the weapons of war they need shall we be able to achieve that resolve.

Mr. FORDE.—The 25-pounder gun did a wonderful job in New Guinea.

Mr. MAKIN.—I am glad to have the commendation of the Minister for the Army of the 25-pounder gun. Those who have seen the splendid photographic display by the Department of Information of our fighting forces in service in New Guinea will have seen that our 25-pounder gun has been used in that area with great effect. It is one of the most powerful weapons our men possess in that battle zone and I know that the Minister for the Army has received the most encouraging reports of its work. Not only in the production of the heavier artillery and anti-aircraft guns have our manufacturers of munitions been excelling. We have been able to provide the very best of sub-machine gun equipment. We have even been able to improve upon the latest designs from overseas, thereby making the weapons far more efficient in doing the job required of them. I pay tribute to the ingenuity of the Australians, both the scientists in the laboratories and the men in the workshops. They all have contributed towards reaching the high degree of efficiency that stands to our credit in all classes of war-time production. A further example of the skill of Australian industry is the fact that we have been able to manufacture all the different classes of armour-plate required and kept up the flow of the material to the various factories. That proves how valuable these industries are to Australia. It is perhaps an astounding fact that we are able to manufacture this steel at half the price that we should have to pay if we imported it.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—The credit must go to the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited.

Mr. MAKIN.—And to others, for others are providing munitions to the department. I do not desire to deprive anybody of due credit. All praise to the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited and to the others who have made these wonderful contributions towards our safety! One class of armour-plate we produce at one-sixth of what we used to pay for it when we imported it. These examples indicate that in Australia very fine work is being done. We have increasingly sought to make Australia self-contained and self-sufficient, so

that it shall be able to provide all the essentials of warfare.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—I think the Minister will be fair enough to admit that both the 3.7 anti-aircraft gun, and the 25-pounder field gun were put into production by the previous Government.

Mr. MAKIN.—I am not trying to make any political capital out of this matter. I deprecate attempts to place responsibility with this or that government. All I say is that the guns were made available for the fighting services by this Government. This essential equipment, and other war material, have been turned out from the workshops of this country in a way that reflects the highest credit upon our workers. Not only have artillery pieces, anti-tank guns and anti-aircraft guns been turned out in quantity but, as the Prime Minister announced recently, we have been able to produce 1,000,000,000 rounds of ammunition.

What I have said shows that our establishments have made remarkable development. In the past our war industries have been concentrated too largely in our capital cities, but ever since I assumed office, I have taken all possible steps to apply a policy of decentralization in this regard. I believed that only in this way could we use, to the greatest possible degree, our resources of equipment and man-power. All of the twenty factories which have been put into production during the fourteen months that I have been Minister for Munitions have been located in country centres. This has made possible the best use of existing housing and transport and other essential services required for war production. I believe that through centralization in our capital cities, our war industries were extremely vulnerable. For that reason, and also because I realized the need to bring into production all available resources of equipment, I have concentrated on establishing our new centres of production in country areas.

It has been a common practice for people to criticize and find fault during the years of the war. It is a great pity that such persons could not accompany their criticism with a few constructive suggestions. My colleague

the Minister for War Organization of Industry (Mr. Dedman) has been singled out for special criticism; but I wish to inform the Australian public that it is largely because of his untiring efforts and loyal devotion to the imperative needs of the country, and by his endeavours to divert labour and equipment from the production of non-essential goods to the production of essential needs, that our war effort has reached such a high degree of efficiency. The Minister has been able to secure the co-operation of the working people, and so has made possible the utmost use of factory and man-power resources. Certain materials which were in desperately short supply have been diverted by him from non-essential industries to war industries. As I have been in charge of munitions production I am able to assess the value of the work done by the honorable gentleman, and I regard it very highly indeed. [*Extension of time granted.*] I am afraid that the Minister has accepted a good deal of the criticism which should have been shared by the Production Executive. As I am a member of the Production Executive I wish to inform the House and the country generally that my colleagues and I on that executive accept our full share of responsibility for what has been done. We are well aware of the fine work that the Minister for War Organization of Industry has performed in mobilizing production for the benefit of the fighting services. When the story of our achievements in this regard can be fully told, and when it is realized how effectively essential materials in short supply were used, I am sure that many people will regret their carping criticism. I pay high tribute to the Minister for his service. I believe that those honorable members who are able to witness the display of munitions in the streets of Sydney on Saturday will be surprised at the diversity and quality of the equipment produced from our factories.

I thank honorable members for their attention to what I have said concerning the activities of the Department of the Navy and the Department of Munitions. I have been proud and honoured to be identified with the administration of both departments, and I hope that my remarks will give honorable members and the

country a better appreciation of what has been done through these instrumentalities to assist the country in its time of serious emergency.

Debate (on motion by Mr. DRAKEFORD) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION:
BANNING OF SUNDAY AFTERNOON
BROADCASTS—DOMESTIC SERVANTS—
LAND ACQUIRED FOR MILITARY PUR-
POSES—WHEAT INDUSTRY: REDUCTION
OF CROPPING IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA;
SUPPLY OF SUPERPHOSPHATES: DOCK-
AGE FOR WHEAT BELOW STANDARD;
WEIGHBRIDGE CHARGES—APPLES AND
PEARS—POTATO INDUSTRY—ARMY IN-
VENTIONS DIRECTORATE—CENSORSHIP.

Motion (by Mr. CURTIN) proposed—
That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. RYAN (Flinders) [10.26].—I bring to the notice of the Government the very great dissatisfaction that has been caused to a large section of the public by the banning of the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts from Wesley Church, Melbourne, by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. These broadcasts have been a feature of broadcasting in Victoria, and in other parts of Australia, for many years and the protests that have been made against the banning of them have come not only from denominational bodies but also from organizations and prominent citizens not associated with religious institutions. The Wesley "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts have filled a good portion of the Sunday afternoon of many people for years past. I am informed that the broadcasts began thirteen years ago and that they have increased in popularity, year by year; so much so, that in many households the middle of the Sunday afternoon is regularly devoted to listening to them. I have some figures which, though not official, accurately indicate the popularity of the broadcasts. I am informed that in New South Wales 10 per cent. of listeners tune in to the Wesley "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon". That is a high percentage. In Victoria, however, the figure is 40 per cent., which, all honorable members will agree, is impressive. These figures represent many

thousands of listeners. So far as I have been able to learn no reason has been given by the Australian Broadcasting Commission for the banning of the broadcasts.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—The honorable member must have a good idea why they have been banned. Is it not a further evidence of the influence of liquor interests?

Mr. RYAN.—I have my suspicions that this may be so, but the fact remains that the Australian Broadcasting Commission has given no reason for its actions. The final banning of the broadcasts came shortly after there had been a public controversy on the liquor subject. Many people believe, rightly or wrongly, that liquor interests are responsible for what has been done. However that may be, the Australian Broadcasting Commission's action has caused great dissatisfaction. The "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" forum at Wesley Church has been used by all sorts and conditions of people to discuss almost every subject under the sun.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—The Prime Minister recently used the forum.

Mr. RYAN.—I believe that it has been occupied recently also by politicians of every party. I know that both the Prime Minister and the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies) have spoken at the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" recently. Distinguished visitors, including Mr. Noel Coward, have also spoken there. The broadcasts to my knowledge from listening, and from reports by my friends, have been non-political, undenominational and non-sectional. Moreover, they have been of educational value. For these reasons I cannot understand why they should have been banned.

On Sunday afternoons Dr. Irving Benson, the minister of Wesley Church, has conducted a Questions and Answers session in which he has dealt with subjects of a religious character. The answers are appropriate to the questions, and in them can be found no sectional or denominational trace. Why the broadcasts should be banned, I am completely without knowledge. I can see no reason for the ban. I ask the Government to look very carefully into the matter, and to take what steps may

appropriately be taken to have the broadcasts restored to the programme of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, thus satisfying a large number of persons. A great deal of good will be done to the people as a whole if they are allowed to have the advantage of the broadcasts.

In conclusion, I shall read extracts from a letter I received a few days ago from a lady; it is typical of a large number of others, and admirably expresses the thoughts of these who have suffered the loss of these broadcasts, to which all looked forward with interest and anticipation—

I am writing on behalf of the family and myself and friends to ask you to use your influence in the matter of the ban on the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon session from Wesley Church, and the Question and Answers session. This act of the commission appears to be a direct challenge to the public. Mr. Churchill once said, "Never did so many owe so much to so few" (correct, am I not?); that can be reversed—Never did so few deprive so many of so much. It savors of Hitlerism and dictatorship. The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon is regarded as a national institution and should be broadcast from a national station, the people's station, and the one supported by the people. The commission is well aware of the very great popularity of this session; throughout the years it has been the highlight of the Sunday afternoon session. Strange that, at this late hour, the Australian Broadcasting Commission has banned it. No other form of entertainment can take its place, nor is the Australian Broadcasting Commission equal to giving anything to approach the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. It cannot be done, adequately, not even by the commission.

The ban on Questions and Answers came as a second bomb. A session as highly appreciated in its own sphere as the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. Again, why has it taken just on thirteen years for the Australian Broadcasting Commission to wake up to the fact that it's taking a risk, that it may give pain or offence to important sections of the community. No doubt you read "A.B.C. bans Talks by Dr. Benson" in the *Argus*, Saturday, November 28th, and know what I'm referring to. Now, who are these important sections of the community? Easily answered, I think. Why don't they turn the dial of their radio, as we do when the Australian Broadcasting Commission broadcasts modern arrangements of the grand old masters played by swing bands and our lovely old songs modernized or sung (?) by moaning crooners. It's ghastly and the mutilation of our best music is absolutely disgraceful.

No denomination is represented in Questions and Answers; they are absolutely unsectarian. If listeners have been satisfied all

this time and wish for no other to conduct the session, in fact do not want any but Dr. Benson, that is all sufficient, and really no concern of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

The present controversy *re* religion and eliminating some church services now being aired in the *A.B.C. Weekly* is rather disquieting and apparently the thin end of the wedge. We are at war—some of our nearest and dearest are giving their all to save our land, to save every one of us from the Godless, inhuman monsters that threaten to plunge the world back to the dark ages, the days of barbarism, or worse. Church services must not be interfered with. Are we not fighting for a Christian world? The radio church is a spiritual force in the community. It reaches thousands who would never hear a service but for it. The sick in their own homes and in hospital, the aged, shut-in invalids, people of the far out-back country, people nearer who are unable to attend divine service for various reasons, and many others. The best the States have to offer from cathedrals and all leading churches (this list of those who benefit applies to the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, too).

Dr. Haire and other writers to the *A.B.C. Weekly* do not appear to consider others. All they need do is turn the dial of their radio. They will find a galaxy of entertainment to select from the commercial stations, even the class of music they ask the Australian Broadcasting Commission to broadcast in place of church services.

I hope that the Government, at a very early date, will give serious consideration to the restoration of these broadcasts, which are of immense benefit and give considerable enjoyment to a vast section of our population.

Mr. BLACKBURN (Bourke) [10.36].—I support what has been said by the honorable member for Flinders (Mr. Ryan) in relation to the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts. In Melbourne, I have expressed the opinion that the Australian Broadcasting Commission may not be altogether to blame, because I have associated its action with a provision of the Broadcasting Act that was passed during the last sessional period. Section 92 of that act enables the Minister to prevent a broadcaster from repeating anything which he considers may have given offence to the public or any section of it. I noticed that that phrase was used in the letter sent by Mr. Cleary to Dr. Benson. I believe that the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts satisfied a widespread public demand, not merely in Melbourne, but also

in the country districts of Victoria and probably in the other States as well. I consider that these broadcasts should be continued, and that their discontinuance was a great mistake. When the matter was mentioned previously in this House, the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) said that he was surprised to hear that any religious denomination regularly had the exclusive use of the Australian Broadcasting Commission service for any given time. The right honorable gentleman was under a misapprehension. This service is not used for the denominational or religious purposes of the Methodist Church. The "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" service is a meeting at which addresses are given by persons of all denominations and all faiths on matters of social interest. The Prime Minister has been invited to it, and the Minister for Social Services (Mr Holloway) has spoken at it. The secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council has given an address on several occasions. It is entirely a non-partisan institution, and the discontinuance of it should not be permitted. It is quite true that these meetings are now being broadcast by a commercial station. If they offend sections of the public, they are much more likely to offend the advertisers on a commercial station than the constituency of a public broadcasting commission.

MR. HOLT (Fawkner) [10.39].—I accord general support to the plea made by the honorable member for Flinders (Mr. Ryan). Like him, I have had a number of protests from persons in my electorate, and these have confirmed the conviction I previously held that this particular Sunday afternoon broadcast was being made to a very wide and appreciative listening public. The service was not in its nature religious or denominational.

Before proceeding with the points raised by the honorable member for Flinders, I remind the House that we had a discussion on the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" service during the last sessional period, when a particular talk proposed to be broadcast was banned. I am prepared to admit, and possibly, upon reflection, those associated with the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" service

will concede, that they committed an error of judgment in attempting to repeat at such short notice two talks on a highly controversial political matter. Surely, there must be some significance in the action which followed so quickly on the controversy that then ensued. The arguments have been stated by the chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. It seems odd, to say the least, that suddenly, after the discussion had developed, first the talk itself, and secondly the Questions and Answers session, were banned. When the matter was raised in this House, the Prime Minister expressed some surprise that one particular service should enjoy a monopoly of a particular radio time in a national programme. Later, the right honorable gentleman said that he had made inquiries on his own account, and was satisfied that the Wesley services could not be regarded as denominational. He said, "They have been conducted to the satisfaction of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, which broadcasts them". It may be that there are satisfactory reasons why the action of the Australian Broadcasting Commission should be upheld, but I have yet to be convinced that those reasons exist. I think that the commission did not have a proper estimate of the interest in, and the value placed upon, these services by the listening public, particularly in Victoria. Otherwise it would not have acted as it did. The suggestion has been made that some of these talks might continue to be broadcast, but that the script should be in the hands of the commission for a period of about three weeks before a talk was delivered. Members of the Broadcasting Committee will remember that they commented on the fact that over-centralization of the work of the commission in Sydney had meant that some services could not be rendered in the other States. The committee's report stated—

We were astonished to learn that all contentious talks and commentaries are now referred to head office. This, owing to the time factor, gives residents of Sydney a monopoly of certain broadcasting.

I do not know what effective action Parliament or the Government can take, but if no other course be open I think

that it should at least be a matter for inquiry by the Broadcasting Committee. That body could inquire into the circumstances of the ban, and also into the value of the services rendered in the past; and should it be convinced, as I and many members on all sides of the House are convinced, that a very real and valuable service was being rendered, that committee might make representations to the commission to have the service restored.

Recently, the Minister for War Organization of Industry (Mr. Dedman) announced a policy in relation to the engagement of domestic servants. I am told, by interjection, that that policy is not to be persisted in. If the Minister would indicate that that is so, time will be saved.

MR. DEDMAN.—That is so. The validity of the regulation has been called in question and the matter is being examined.

MR. HOLT.—The Minister's interjection indicates that the Government has not definitely decided to abandon the policy that has been announced. If it be merely a matter of the validity of the regulation, the Minister will have time for a little more reflection on the wisdom of the policy itself. I desire to make a few comments which may assist him to reach what I regard as a sound decision in the matter. Should he proceed with the policy that he has announced, and should the legality of the regulation be confirmed, the Minister will have committed a grave administrative and psychological blunder. As to the merits of the proposal as a means of helping the war effort, I direct his attention to figures, which I understand came from the Commonwealth Statistician, showing that the number of domestic servants, or persons classified under that heading, declined from about 120,000 in July, 1941, to about 90,000 in June or July of this year. Since those latest figures were made available, several more months have elapsed and, thanks to the operations of the Women's Employment Board, the inducements for women to engage in other forms of industry have been made more attractive. I should be astonished if the total of 90,000 had not been reduced by at least another 20,000 since July of this year. Of the remainder, a

considerable proportion would represent one domestic to the household, many of them being elderly persons who have been associated for many years with the family which employs them. In my opinion there would be very little material of value to the war effort remaining in that class. Although it may be true that some persons in the community have unnecessarily, and for their own selfish ends, made use of domestic help, the Minister will find, on examination, that a great majority of the persons engaged in this way are helping large families, or invalid or elderly persons, who would not be able to look after themselves in a satisfactory manner. I assure the Minister that his announcement of policy has created consternation and dismay, not only among those who employ domestic help, but also among the people who are employed in this way and find their lives so violently shaken out of their normal routine. I know that that is happening to a lot of people in war-time, and that it will happen to a great many more, but if the Minister requires more female labour for the war effort it is not right to select one particular class of females and impose conscription on them. By that act he cuts across the principle of fairness as we in this country understand it. Why should a woman whom circumstances have placed in domestic employment be put in a category of her own and subjected to a degree of conscription which women in other walks of life are not called upon to accept? The conscription of a particular class is a process which is new to this country and is certainly based on inequity. Before the Minister makes a definite decision in regard to this matter I ask him to answer the following questions: What number of persons does he hope to secure for war work through the policy of restricting domestic service? What is his estimate of the average age of these persons? How many inspectors does he think will be necessary to police the regulations which will have to be issued? Obviously, unless he is to rely upon the law-abiding sense of the community, there will have to be some investigation of the domestic needs of the families affected, and on that assumption inspectors will be necessary. Are

they to go into Australian homes in order to find out how many hours the housemaid or the nursegirl or other domestic help works each day? If that is the Minister's intention, the people of Australia ought to be told so. Finally, may I suggest to the Minister that his itch to interfere with the lives of the people has reached its zenith, or its nadir—depending upon the way we look at it—in this proposal. He will commit a psychological blunder of the first order if he persists with it.

Mr. BARNARD (Bass) [10.53].—I desire to associate myself with those who have protested against the action of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in banning the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcast from Wesley Church, Melbourne. It is true that if the script of the proposed talk is in the hands of the commission 23 days before the proposed date of the broadcast, the commission may give permission for the broadcast to take place. Of course, that is an impossible condition in these days of rapid transport. A man who might have been in America 23 days before would, perhaps, be a desirable speaker, but unless he sent his script out before him it would be impossible for him to comply with the conditions laid down by the commission. Perhaps I have a personal reason for protesting, because I happen to have been the first person to whom the ban was applied. I spoke in Wesley Church last Sunday week. My script was in the hands of the commission's representatives in Victoria about eight days before the talk was given, but that did not satisfy the commission. It did not matter much to me, because what I had to say was broadcast from station 3DB, and I have had an opportunity to judge how widely these broadcasts are listened to by the people of Australia. I have received many letters from listeners, and others have approached me and told me that they listened to the broadcast. Some of the letters were from Tasmania, which indicates that this is not a purely Victorian issue. The "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons" at Wesley Church have become a feature over a long period of years. I attended the public meeting in Melbourne which was called as a protest against the action of the Australian Broadcasting Commis-

sion in restricting the broadcasts. I wanted to hear what was said, and to judge for myself how much interest was taken in the matter. I reached the Town Hall about 7.55 p.m. and found, to my amazement, that the hall was full. People were then being directed to the choir gallery, and I obtained a place at the back of the stage. Afterwards, I was told that hundreds were turned away. That meeting was organized in a period of about fourteen days, and the attendance showed clearly the great public interest taken in Melbourne in the subject. A collection was taken up and £106 was received from those present, which showed that, not only were the people interested, but also that they were prepared to contribute to the expenses of organizing a protest. I do not subscribe to all the arguments used by speakers at the meeting, but I believe that a protest was justified. The Australian Broadcasting Commission was, in my opinion, badly advised. Its action was clumsy, and the reasons given in letters to the press over the signatures of Mr. Cleary and Mr. Bearup were not convincing. One such letter was as follows:—

The Commission has come to the conclusion that an arrangement such as that for the broadcasting of Pleasant Sunday Afternoon services, involving regular programming over a long period of years, is not only an abdication from its responsibility for selecting its programme material and speakers, but is also calculated, as experience with you has shown, to set up in the mind of the person arranging the programme a vested interest so firmly entrenched that any attempt to interfere with it may expose the Commission to a public charge of breach of faith or interference with the freedom of speech.

If that is the premise on which the commission's argument was based, then why do we have race broadcasts every afternoon that race meetings are held? The Australian Broadcasting Commission broadcasts football matches throughout the season. I have no objection to the broadcasting of races, or football matches, or of any other event, sporting or otherwise, which is of public interest. A national programme must include broadcasts of that kind. However, on Sunday, at least, and at the particular time of the day involved, I do not know of any subject which is of greater interest to listeners than this particular session.

I should say that in popularity it ranks next to broadcasts of races and news. It is useless for the commission to say that it must retain control over this broadcast when it knows that should it cease race broadcasts a public outcry would result. Why, therefore, should not the commission study the desires of those listeners who are interested in this class of broadcast on Sunday? It is not a religious service. To some degree it may have a religious flavour. In any case, if it be welcomed by the public it should be continued. This broadcast is listened to by people throughout Australia. The honorable member for Fawkner (Mr. Holt) has suggested that this is a matter which might be referred to the Broadcasting Committee for inquiry. That is a good idea; if the commission is not prepared to restore the broadcast without such an inquiry I believe that the commission will see the wisdom and fairness of doing so. However, the Broadcasting Committee cannot deal with this matter unless it be referred to it by either the Minister or the commission. If the commission is not prepared to admit that it has made a mistake, and has committed a breach of faith with a large section of the public, whom it has deprived of a service that is useful and educational, some action should be taken by Parliament to force the commission to do justice in this matter. I feel very strongly on the subject. I do not wish to say too much about it at this juncture, because I am hopeful that the commission will do the right thing. If it can be shown that great interest exists in the broadcast, and that it supplies a substantial public demand, the commission should reverse its decision and restore the broadcast. The commission can ensure that the script shall be in the hands of its representative within a reasonable time to permit of its being examined in order to see that it complies with the commission's requirements. I have discussed this subject with representatives of Wesley Church. They have assured me that an arrangement has been operating, and can be continued, whereby the script of the broadcast can be made available to a representative of the commission in that way. However, the contention that the script must be in the hands of the com-

Mr. Barnard.

mission 23 days in advance of the actual broadcast is nonsense. In respect of many broadcasts which take place very frequently, it is impossible for the script to be made available to the commission even three days in advance of the actual broadcast. I join with other honorable members who have protested against the action of the commission. I sincerely trust that wisdom and common sense will prevail in the matter, and that this public service will be restored.

Mr. MENZIES (Kooyong) [11.6].—I associate myself very warmly with the protest which has been made about this matter, and I venture to hope that Ministers, when they look at it, will come to the conclusion that a very great mistake has been made. It is quite absurd for any one to suggest that the broadcasting of the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" session from Wesley Church is the broadcasting of something that is either sectarian or party. It is very well known to all honorable members that people of every political colour have spoken there. Several members of the present Cabinet, as well as members of my own Cabinet, including myself, have spoken at what is, in reality, a very popular public forum on which non-political matters of importance can be discussed by public men. In addition, distinguished men from other countries have contributed to these programmes. As I see the correspondence in respect of this matter, it is unfortunate that the commission should have decided to impose this ban just after some slight controversy had occurred between the commission and Dr. Irving Benson, who presides over Wesley Church in Melbourne.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—It is not only unfortunate, but also significant.

Mr. MENZIES.—It is unfortunate because it creates in the ordinary mind the impression that this ban arises from causes which find their roots in some resentment in the minds of the commission. In the course of a letter which the chairman of the commission wrote on the matter, he offered as his reason for the ban the view that the commission could not permit one denomination, or one church, or one institution, to secure a monopoly of the air. That, I submit,

is a perfectly fatuous answer to the criticism of the commission. The chairman of the commission talks about a vested interest which he thought was being created by Dr. Benson. Nothing more absurd could be imagined. There is no vested interest in Dr. Benson, and no vested interest in Wesley Church. There is only one vested interest, and that is in the listening public of Australia. It is that vested interest to which the commission should direct its attention. For about eight or ten years, many honorable members have been invited, as I have, once a year to be, a speaker at that forum; and wherever I have gone, certainly in Victoria, and to a large degree in Tasmania, I have spoken to a great many people who have said to me, "I have never met you before, but have heard you from Wesley". This is a great national broadcast in south-eastern Australia, and the people who listen to it, and pay their fees, have a vested interest in it. For that to be twisted round and presented as a vested interest represented by some gentleman who presides over Wesley Church is absurd. With great sincerity I urge Ministers to look at this matter, because they will find a very widespread feeling of resentment about what is regarded as an entirely unnecessary and officious act. And I suggest that when they have had a look at it, they should use the influence they possess—and I imagine it is not small—with the Broadcasting Commission to get it back on to sound ground. The national stations for which the people of Australia pay, and in which they have a real interest should not hand over this programme, which has been a well recognized national feature for very many years, to some commercial station. On the face of it the proposal is absurd. No answer has been made in this case by the commission which would satisfy a child and, unless the commission is able to put forward some answer which will satisfy, not only a child, but also a grown-up person, the Government should itself talk to the commission and see that the right thing is done.

Mr. POLLARD (Ballarat) [11.11].—I support the request that consideration be

given to the restoration to the programmes of the Australian Broadcasting Commission of the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" from Wesley Church, Melbourne, from which I and other members of the community have derived a great deal of pleasure over the years. Since I have been a member of this Parliament I have not had one letter of objection or heard one word of objection to the broadcasting of this programme. I disagree with the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies) in one respect. I read with great thoroughness the letters exchanged between the chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (Mr. Cleary) and the Reverend Irving Benson regarding this matter, and I think that on logical reasoning Mr. Cleary won on points. Nevertheless I do not consider that he gave sufficient reason why these broadcasts should cease. I have listened to the right honorable member for Kooyong and the honorable member for Corio (Mr. Dedman) broadcasting in the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" programmes, and I quite conceive that a bigoted member of either political party could legitimately take exception to the views expressed by either of those gentlemen inasmuch as the material each broadcast was subtle propaganda for his political and economic views. I do not think that that can be disputed. But the fact remains that I know of no member of either party or of the listening public at large having raised any such objection. All this trouble has taken place because of what I considered to be a most excellent address by Professor Woodruff, on the liquor question. I concede, however, the right of the people who have vested interests in the liquor trade to object to such a broadcast being made without their being afforded the same facility to broadcast their view. It is unfortunate that the honorable member for Parramatta (Sir Frederick Stewart) should impute motives to the Broadcasting Commission.

Sir FREDERICK STEWART.—I imputed nothing; I definitely alleged it.

Mr. POLLARD.—Well, allegations of that kind prejudice the case of those like myself who realize the propriety of the liquor trade's objection to the Australian

Broadcasting Commission being used to present only one side of the argument. It is most unfortunate that the honorable member should have even imputed that the Australian Broadcasting Commission has a bias towards the liquor trade. I do not know whether it has or not, I hope it has not. Mr. Cleary, Mrs. Ernestine Hill and Professor Medlow, who are members of the commission, are admirable citizens. Is it to be said that they have a leaning towards the vested interests of the liquor trade? I sincerely hope not. I refuse to accept the suggestion that they have. Another unfortunate matter is that the continuation of those broadcasts may have been further prejudiced by the implication in the utterances of no less a person than the ex-Moderator General of the Presbyterian Church, Dr. Button, that some one of high authority on the Broadcasting Commission was actuated by ulterior motives. I say that with emphasis, notwithstanding that I am a member of the Presbyterian church, perhaps not a very good one. That sort of thing prejudices the case of decent people who want to have the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcast restored to the commission's programme, on its merits, but do not in any way impute motives. There is a public demand for these broadcasts which have made for the entertainment and education of the people of Australia for a number of years. It should be possible to devise means whereby a repetition of the unfortunate incident which brought them to an end could be avoided.

Mr. MARWICK (Swan) [11.8].—I direct the attention of the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Scully) to a matter of major importance to Western Australia. I desire to know whether supplies of superphosphate should be carted to the farms while the wheat is being carted to the sidings. Under what conditions is the rationing of superphosphates occurring in Western Australia? Under what conditions will the cropping of wheat be allowed to continue next year? Will it be on the basis of the reduction of 33½ per cent. that applies this year, or will it be on normal licences—on a basis similar to that on which every other wheat-grower

in Australia is operating? This matter needs clarifying at once because the wheat is being carted to the country sidings at present and, as you know Mr. Speaker, it is of paramount importance, in order to conserve petrol, rubber and man-power, that superphosphate should be taken to the farm as back-loading while carting of wheat is in progress. The wheat-growers of Western Australia are in a quandary as to the conditions under which they will be required to crop in the coming year, and I sincerely hope that the Minister for Commerce will take this opportunity to clarify their position. If they are to be subjected to a reduction of 33½ per cent. next year, I remind the Minister that the Western Australian farmers suffered that reduction this year, and therefore lost the beneficial effects of superphosphate on their land. I do not desire to see that condition imposed in the coming year. I know that a certain amount of rationing of superphosphate is taking place, but I do not know on what basis the allocations are arrived at, and I should like the Minister to clear the matter up this evening, if possible.

Mr. LANGTRY (Riverina) [11.21].—It was reported in the press a few days ago that the standard of f.a.q. wheat was fixed at 59 lb. to the bushel, and that wheat weighing 58 lb. was docked 3d. a bushel. That amount of dockage is out of all proportion to the discrepancy. I do not think there should be any dockage at 58 lb., or even 57 lb., because the loss of flour content is so slight as to be impossible to work out. The unfairness of the deduction should be brought immediately before the Wheat Board. It could be started at ½d. or ¾d., and be increased as the weight goes down to 55 lb. or 54 lb., which is well below standard. Another important matter is that the farmer should be allowed to average the whole of his deliveries of wheat so far as the standard is concerned. If he sends in 1,000 bags, of which 500 go 62 or 63 lb. to the bushel, while the standard is fixed at 59 lb. to the bushel, he gets no premium whatever on it. If his other 500 bags go under 59 lb., he is docked. That is unfair, because with 500 bags weighing 61 lb. to the bushel, and another

500 bags weighing 57 lb. to the bushel, the whole of his 1,000 bags averages standard weight. The wheat is mixed up at the silo or in the mill, and if he sends in wheat which averages 59 lb. to the bushel, he is entitled to the standard price for the whole of his delivery.

Another injustice to the wheat-grower in every State is that he has to pay 3d. a ton for weighing on the weighbridge in addition to paying freight to the Railway Department, and in that way is paying for the weighbridge two or three times over every year. No charge is made for weighing a load of wood or chaff, and the wheat-grower is harshly treated in having to pay this extra charge on every ton he puts over the weighbridge. In my town it runs to from £1,000 to £1,200 in a good year. The cost of weighing should be borne by the Commonwealth Government which acquires the wheat, or by the State Government, which owns the railways and receives the freight, and not by the individual farmers. I hope the Minister will take the matter up with the Wheat Board, the Railway Commissioners or the State Ministers for Agriculture, and do his best to have the charge for weighing wheat abolished. The three matters that I have mentioned should be at once attended to, and relief given to the farmer, who, in existing circumstances, is carrying the baby all the time.

Mr. HUTCHINSON (Deakin) [11.25].—I support the honorable member for Flinders (Mr. Ryan) and others who have appealed for the reconsideration of the ban on the Wesley "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts. They have been the means for many years of allowing the public to hear interesting speakers on all sorts of subjects, and it is safe to say that many of the finest speeches made in Australia have gone over to listeners from Wesley Church on Sunday afternoons. I do not believe that any particular denomination should have a complete monopoly of broadcasts of this kind, and I am sure that no one would claim it, because, obviously, any organization or section which had a monopoly of the air every Sunday would obtain certain definite advantages. If requests have been made for broadcasts of equal importance on Sunday afternoons by

other churches, they have every right to be considered by the commission. The popularity of the Wesley Church broadcasts shows that there is room every week for a pleasant Sunday afternoon broadcast of that kind. Whilst I would deny to any one church a monopoly of this service, I have not heard of any request having been made by any other denomination to broadcast addresses of the kind that have come from Wesley Church. I have not heard in the course of years a complaint from any person, no matter what his politics or denomination, about the broadcasting, Sunday after Sunday, of the Wesley Church service. The Australian Broadcasting Commission must definitely safeguard the Australian people from any organization, sect or section which would seek at any time to use the national stations for any form of propaganda aimed at advancing its own ends. I have not sufficient evidence before me to form an opinion regarding the charge that that was attempted by Wesley Church. I have looked at the address which was the cause of all the trouble, but I am not aware of what took place previously. I am, therefore, not going to voice an opinion on something about which I know nothing. Even if it were thought that similar views on the one subject were being broadcast too often from any particular forum, surely it was a matter for negotiation in a gentlemanly way between the commission and the church or organization concerned. Certainly there was no need for so drastic a step as the banning of these broadcasts. The conditions imposed to-day are so onerous as to be tantamount to a complete banning of the broadcasting of Wesley Church "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons". I hope that further consideration will be given to the matter, and that before long we shall once again hear coming over the ether on Sunday afternoons, the entertaining and very enlightening speeches to which we have been accustomed.

I wish to bring to the attention of the Government a matter affecting the Department of the Interior. Land acquired for military or other purposes by the Government is eventually settled for by that department. I receive repeated

complaints about the slowness of the department in settling for lands so acquired. I am told that often delays occur owing to disputes between the Government and the parties concerned, but in other cases, where there is no dispute whatever and the valuation of the land is accepted by the individual interested, payment for the land is deferred for months. In many instances the person whose property has been acquired has been forced to wait months for a settlement and has been compensated by a payment at the rate of only 3 per cent. per annum on the amount outstanding. This causes grave injustices. Properties are often mortgaged and the mortgagee has to pay 5 per cent. or 5½ per cent. on his overdraft. Obviously if he receives only 3 per cent. from the Government he is placed in a most unfair position. I therefore ask that steps be taken to ensure prompt settlements and the payment of a more equitable interest rate on outstanding amounts pending settlements.

Mr. COLES (Henty) [11.32].—I associate myself strongly with the protest made by the honorable member for Flinders (Mr. Ryan) against the banning by the Australian Broadcasting Commission of the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts from Wesley Church, Melbourne. I know of nothing that has happened recently in broadcasting that has caused such widespread dissatisfaction among listeners. I have frequently listened to the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts. I have found them to be undenominational and unsectarian. Subjects of all descriptions have been discussed by the various speakers and, in general, the broadcasts have created great interest over a long period of years. Many thousands of people throughout Australia have devoted their Sunday afternoons to listening to these broadcasts and they strongly resent what they regard as the unjustified discontinuance of them. The decision to ban the broadcasts appears to me to be thoroughly bad. It seems that an official, or several officials, have attempted to bolster up their authority and to exercise their prerogative to decide what shall and what shall

not be put on the air. I do not know what influence the Government can exert in the matter, but I hope that the fullest inquiry will be made to ascertain why the broadcasts have been discontinued and to ensure that they are restored as soon as possible. The broadcasts were of a high educational and entertainment value. Invariably the speakers put their case with cogency and effect. The fact that the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" entertainment is now being broadcast every Sunday afternoon by station 3DB fortifies my view that the Australian Broadcasting Commission made a thoroughly bad decision in banning it. It is unlikely that a commercial station would broadcast the session if it were not of a high value. Surely the people who pay their licence-fees to the Australian Broadcasting Commission are entitled to some consideration. I hope that the Government will review the whole matter and take steps to ensure that listeners are provided with the programmes which they desire.

I bring to the notice of the Minister of Commerce (Mr. Scully) certain factors associated with the discontinuance of the apple and pear acquisition scheme in Victoria to which immediate attention should be given. There are some loose threads that need to be tied. The acquisition scheme has been in operation for about three years, during which period the orchardists have lost contact with the marketing facilities they formerly used. I understand that instructions have been given to the board that growers of apples and pears in Victoria shall be provided with cases for the marketing of this year's crop. If cases are not made available in this way the orchardists will be placed in a very difficult position. I hope, too, that the Minister will give instructions that transport facilities, with appropriate priorities, shall be provided. This is an urgent matter for the fruit will be coming on the market almost at once. I ask, therefore, that immediate attention be given to it.

Mr. PROWSE (Forrest) [11.33].—I support the protest of the honorable member for Flinders (Mr. Ryan) against the banning of the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" broadcasts from Wesley Church, Melbourne. I do not think it can be said

that the morals of any citizen in Australia have been prejudicially affected by these broadcasts. No complaints have been made against them. Some objection may have been taken to recent broadcasts on the liquor question, but these do not justify the banning of the broadcasts. The forum provided at Wesley Church on Sunday afternoons has been used by many distinguished visitors to Australia. The broadcasts are enjoyed by listeners all over the continent. In Western Australia we frequently listen to them. I regard it as effrontery by the officials of the Australian Broadcasting Commission to have banned this broadcast.

I call the attention of the Minister for Commerce (Mr. Scully) to certain unsatisfactory features associated with the shortage of potatoes in Australia and the steps taken to increase the supply. The Government has urged growers to do their best to increase their production so that ample supplies may be available for both the armed forces and the civil population. Potato-growers from Western Australia were assured that contracts would be arranged, but when they tried to buy potato fertilizer they found it was in short supply. This also has caused difficulty. The potato-growers of Western Australia were assured that they would receive a minimum of £8 10s. a ton for grade potatoes at railway sidings. It has now been rumoured that the control of the potato industry is to cease, as the Government now finds the supply ample, and that only those who signed contracts with the Government are to be treated with. Growers in Western Australia without contracts are apparently to be thrown to the wolves, although until now they could not dispose of a potato, or even give one to their own people. They have been required to provide new bags for potatoes that are to be sold, and they have had to pay a high price for the necessary fertilizers. I have received from the Minister an intimation that the Potato Control Board will not cease operations, but that those who have not signed contracts will now be entitled to sell potatoes as they please or give them to their friends if they desire to do so. The Government undertakes that it will not use any surplus to

flush the market and reduce the price below that which the Western Australian growers were assured they would receive. I hope that the Minister will remove the impression that has been gained because many growers who have not entered into contracts were urged by officials in Western Australia that they would certainly receive a minimum price of £8 10s. a ton if they complied with all of the regulations of the board. The board should therefore see that those growers who patriotically stepped into line in an effort to overcome the shortage of potatoes in Western Australia do not suffer by reason of their action.

Mr. WILSON (Wimmera) [11.43].—I draw the attention of the Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) to the efforts being made, with little success, from time to time by persons who have ideas or patents which they think would in some way assist in the war effort. The Army Inventions Directorate seems to have a capacity for rejecting all ideas placed before it. I have noticed recently in the press that, in Germany, the production is contemplated of a machine known as the “scythe of death”—that is a variation of the machine-gun principle employed in the form of an automatic traverse which traverses the fire of the gun horizontally and in various other ways, which would greatly improve the effectiveness of any machine gun or cannon. Recently, to my knowledge, an Australian who is a returned soldier from the last war, attempted to have this principle accepted by the Army Inventions Directorate. He was actuated only by a desire to give something to his country that would be effective in the prosecution of this war and in the defeat of the enemy; but like hundreds of others, he received a cold shoulder, and nothing was heard of his proposal. When a patent or a proposition is placed before the directorate the person who gives it is told that something will be done with it, and that he will be informed later whether it has been accepted. If any information is asked for as to whether the invention is believed to have defects, no information is given as to what those defects may be, on the ground that that course is necessary for security reasons. We are slipping considerably in

this matter. Any invention that has any possibility of success should be given a trial, and we should place at the disposal of those who are industrious enough to spend time and money in preparing models an opportunity to try them out in a workshop. If we got even 5 per cent. of successes, this course would be worth while. I impress on the Minister the necessity for giving some direction to this department to see that a careful scrutiny is given of all proposals submitted, and that some opportunity is afforded to test inventions. I know that there is a bias against new ideas because they may interfere with the production of particular lines already being made, but we must explore every avenue if we are to win the war as quickly as possible.

I add my endorsement to what has been said to-night regarding the broadcasting of pleasant Sunday afternoon addresses at Wesley Church, Melbourne. It is a popular session, and nobody is convinced that the reasons advanced by the Australian Broadcasting Commission for the prohibition of these broadcasts are sound from a public point of view. I hope that some action will be taken quickly to restore these popular broadcasts.

Mr. CALWELL (Melbourne) [11.48].—A big public meeting was held in the Melbourne Town Hall, presided over by the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, to protest against the action of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in cancelling the Sunday afternoon broadcasts of addresses from Wesley Church, Melbourne. Yesterday I introduced a deputation consisting of two Melbourne clergymen to the Postmaster-General (Senator Ashley) on this subject, and he is looking into the matter. The action of the commission in requiring 23 days' notice of the script to be read is unreasonable. Nobody as a regular routine could supply script at such long notice, particularly as many of the speakers are well-known public men who in ordinary times would not be required to submit script at all. They are asked to submit it only because of the possibility that some of the matters mentioned in their addresses might, for military or other reasons, be considered

by the censorship authorities to be undesirable. I believe that the matter is being reconsidered by the commission, and I hope that it will be favorably reconsidered. The commission has not said that these broadcasts are to be entirely prohibited, but it has laid down conditions which are onerous and incapable of fulfilment. There is in Melbourne a very big body of public opinion which favours the continuation of the broadcasts. Many honorable members have spoken from the platform of Wesley Church, and have been listened to by a large audience in Melbourne and its environs. The commission is an independent body, and its independence was confirmed in the amending and consolidating legislation passed by this Parliament early this year. The Minister has no power to direct the commission in relation to its policy. Parliament, in its wisdom, considers that the commission should not be under parliamentary control. The arguments in favour of its independence need not be recapitulated at this stage. Suffice it to say that in European countries in which Ministers control broadcasting instrumentalities, the party of the day has exclusive rights. There are ways in which Ministers can discuss with the commission the advisability of the restoration of this programme. I hope that the commission will see the wisdom of recognizing the strength of the case that has been made out in this House to-night, and the volume of public feeling outside the Parliament.

The other matter to which I wish to refer concerns the censorship. I want to mention several facts concerning recent articles written by Sir Keith Murdoch, who is required by a censorship order of the Victorian publicity censor under regulation 16, sub-regulation 2b, issued under the National Security Act, to submit all his signed matter intended for publication in the *Melbourne Herald*. The censor who issued the instruction was Mr. C. Burns. The submittal order was issued over two months ago. He has failed, or refused, to comply with the press censorship authority by—

(a) Publishing on the 6th October a signed article headed "One Cause: One Army—New

Guinea Provides a Stern Argument". This article was submitted only in part to the Victorian publicity censor. The part not submitted included references to the Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin);

- (b) Publishing on the 10th October, without having submitted it to censorship, a signed article headed: "Fight for the Best—Our Army is Our Supreme National Effort";
- (c) Publishing on the 16th October, again without submission, a signed article headed: "Tell All the News—the Newspapers Do Their Duty".

I do not agree with that. I point out that even when a newspaper publisher or editor is not required by a specific order to submit material he must, under National Security Regulation 16, submit all doubtful matter. Sir Keith Murdoch's articles were certainly of this character, and contained many poisonous sentiments and censorship breaches. Recently, as honorable members may recollect, there was a reshuffle in the Victorian publicity censorship, when Mr. Burns retired.

Mr. MARWICK.—How does the honorable member know that the articles were not submitted in full?

Mr. CALWELL.—From information received—which in the police courts is accepted as evidence.

Mr. MARWICK.—Can the facts be ascertained from the censor himself?

Mr. CALWELL.—My authority is unimpeachable. I have not the slightest doubt that the censor will be able to verify the facts, if the Minister refers the matter to him. A former employee of the Melbourne *Herald* who had been a member of its staff for a period of eight and a half years, received the resultant appointment of Victorian publicity censor. His former employer is now treating him, in his new position, with contempt. I object to that. Honorable members will recall that when Sir Keith Murdoch's articles were discussed in this House some months ago, the Minister for the Army, in reply to a question, said that they were signed and passed by the censor. I assure the honorable gentleman

that that is not so. I have the articles about which I complain, and the statements that I make can be checked. In view of what I have said, this gentleman needs a good deal of watching by the censorship authorities. I am certain that the article published last night, about which I have complained, would not have been passed by any censor had it been submitted to him. It was not merely an expression of opinion; it was a deliberate attempt to stir up strife in this country, to weaken the morale of the nation by dividing it. It was a gratuitous insult to people of certain blood who have played a distinguished part, in common with their fellow citizens, first in laying the foundations of this country's greatness, and, secondly, in helping to build it to its present strength. I regard Murdoch as a very dangerous man at large, and hope that the censor does not permit defiance by him. I trust that the Government will watch him very carefully; because, if he is allowed to defy censorship instructions, there is no telling what great harm he may do. He wants to enter this Parliament in order to dominate it. He is anxious to oppose the right honorable member for Kooyong (Mr. Menzies). He has cast covetous eyes upon the United Australia party blue ribbon seat of Fawkner; and he has ambitions in regard to supplanting the honorable member for Henty (Mr. Coles). The best place for him is outside the councils of this nation. I have noticed that he desires to treble the membership of this Parliament, obviously for the purpose of trebling his chance of entering it. The Minister for the Army will be failing in his duty if he does not do something very definite about the articles which Murdoch is publishing in the press of Australia, throughout its many ramifications. But what is worse, he is cabling these poisonous articles to America and England without the censorship authorities having seen them. He is trying to cause trouble for the Government of this country, and the nation, by telling the people of America things that ought not to be allowed to pass out of Australia. I have described him to-night as a fifth columnist. I consider that he is a megalomaniac, who cannot help himself. His

desire is for notoriety and domination, and he has to be restrained. If present Ministers cannot restrain him, they ought to make way for others who will. If he be not restrained, I have not the slightest doubt that he will do all he can to bring our democratic institutions into disrepute.

Mr. PROWSE.—Does the honorable member know what Sir Keith Murdoch thinks of him?

Mr. CALWELL.—Even if he thinks as badly of me as I do of him, I am confident that public opinion throughout this country is much more likely to support me than they are likely to support him. Any honorable member whom he may be oppose for election to this Parliament will be lucky in his opposition, because it will be one of the easiest victories he is every likely to win. If he wishes to dispute my membership of this Parliament for the blue ribbon seat of Melbourne, I believe that, by the grace of God and the sturdy common sense of at least 51 per cent. of the electors, I shall still be a member of this Parliament for many years to come.

Friday, 11 December, 1942.

Mr. CONELAN (Griffith) [12 midnight].—I wish to bring before the House a matter which is causing great concern in my electorate. I have received an SOS from nine families, in which they state that either the Government or the Army authorities propose to take over their homes. I understand that the buildings will be used by the American Army for a hospital of some kind. Why cannot the American Army acquire land and erect buildings thereon, as the Australian Army does? Three of the nine homes in question are occupied by wives of men in the fighting services, and another by the mother of a soldier. In two other cases persons working in a munitions factory are concerned.

Mr. FORDE.—In what suburb are the homes situated?

Mr. CONELAN.—They are situated in the suburb of Ekibin. The occupants of the homes are probably not supporters of the Labour party, but that does not affect the position so far as I am concerned. I received a telegram on this

subject yesterday, and to-day I received a long letter stating that the Government proposed to take this action under National Security Regulations. The occupants of the homes have been requested to make arrangements to hand over the buildings to the Chief Engineer, Base Section No. 3, United States Army. The Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) will know that it is impossible to obtain other homes in these suburbs at the present time. The compensation proposed to be paid is far less than these people would have to pay for other houses in the same locality, even if they could be obtained, and they are precluded by regulation from building other homes. For some time I have urged that acquisition and compensation committees be set up to deal with the hiring of properties that are being taken over by the military authorities. I have had in mind particularly the many secondary schools which have been taken over without regard to the educational needs of the children affected. In many instances, compensation adjustments have not been made in respect of properties taken over several months ago. It is time that steps were taken to prevent a continuance of these acts. Although we are pleased to have the Americans here, they should be placed on the same basis as the Australian Army in connexion with properties required by them. Instead of turning nine families out of their homes, it would be better for the Government to acquire vacant land and provide temporary accommodation of the kind required by the American authorities. The Allied Works Council is erecting numerous buildings throughout Queensland for the men under its control, and something of the same kind should be done in this instance. When we reflect that in respect of four of the nine homes relatives of men in the fighting services and that in two other instances munitions workers are concerned, it will be seen that the proposed action will seriously affect persons who are rendering valuable service to the community. It is not right that while men are fighting overseas on our behalf their dependants should be turned out of their homes, and inadequate compensation be offered to them. I implore the

Minister to take action which will stop this sort of thing. In my opinion, the occupants of these homes should defy the hirings administration; but should they be turned out, the Government should provide accommodation for them and see that they do not suffer any monetary loss. Most of the families concerned are purchasing their homes, and have bought furniture and furnishings to suit them. If they are forced to rip up wall-to-wall carpets they will suffer monetary loss if they try to fit them to new premises. Should they have to vacate their homes the compensation payable to them should be adequate to meet all losses incurred. If there be no alternative, and these people have to be turned out of their homes, the Government should purchase the buildings outright, and enable their owners to purchase other homes elsewhere, as it is practically impossible to rent other homes in the locality. I ask the Minister to ensure that these people are not victimized.

Mr. SCULLY (Gwydir—Minister for Commerce) [12.7 a.m.].—I shall reply briefly to several matters which have been raised. I am indebted to the honorable member for Swan (Mr. Marwick) for mentioning the subject of superphosphate. I agree with him that it is essential that supplies of this commodity shall be made available so that it can be carted to the farm as back-loading when wheat is being delivered. I shall take the matter up immediately with the Superphosphate Committee with a view to making supplies available.

Mr. MAEWICK.—It is not only a matter of supplies. We also wish to know the basis on which supplies will be made available.

Mr. SCULLY.—There is a definite rationing basis. I thought that I had advised the Government of Western Australia that for 1943-44 the policy followed in 1942-43 will be continued.

Mr. Prowse.—As to quantity?

Mr. SCULLY.—It will be followed as to the 33½ reduction and also in regard to compensation. Owing to the great surplus of wheat that is being accumulated in Western Australia, the Government intends to continue the 33½ per cent. reduction of the area to be sown with wheat.

Mr. MARWICK.—Why not place superphosphate on the same basis in Western Australia as in the other States? Wheat lands in Western Australia are deteriorating.

Mr. SCULLY.—I agree with the honorable member, and I shall take that aspect of the case into consideration at the earliest opportunity. The honorable member for Riverina (Mr. Wilson) raised the subject of f.a.q. standards and dockages. I shall have the matter investigated, and referred immediately to the Australian Wheat Board. I shall also refer to the board the matter of weigh-bridge weights.

The honorable member for Deakin (Mr. Hutchinson) mentioned the resumption of land by the Department of the Interior, and the payments made for it. I shall bring his remarks to the notice of the Minister for the Interior, who will give the matter his prompt attention.

The honorable member for Henty (Mr. Coles) mentioned the acquisition of apples and pears in Victoria. I am indebted to the honorable member for having raised the subject. There must necessarily be some dislocation upon the cessation of the scheme for acquisition, but steps will be taken to ensure that growers receive supplies of cases, and that transport is made available.

The honorable member for Forrest (Mr. Prowse) gave the House some information regarding potatoes which was news to me. It is certainly not the intention of the Government to inflict injustice on any section of the community. If the primary producers have been patriotic enough to meet the wishes of the Government, the Government will see that they are not victimized.

Mr. FORDE (Capricornia—Minister for the Army) [12.15 p.m.].—Honorable members on both sides of the House have pressed for the restoration of broadcasting facilities to the Wesley Church authorities in Melbourne. Ministers have been greatly impressed by the speeches made, and I shall take the matter up with the Postmaster-General (Senator Ashley). As has been pointed out, the Australian Broadcasting Commission has been given, by Parliament, complete control over broadcasting. The action of the

commission was not taken at the instigation of the Government; the commission has exercised the powers given to it by Parliament. There has been friction for some time, but I feel sure that the matter could be smoothed out after consultation between the commission and Dr. Irving Benson, the minister in charge of Wesley Church. I have met this gentleman, and know him to be a very fine Australian citizen. He has provided facilities for public men of all political parties, and to distinguished visitors from other countries, to occupy the public forum in his church on Sunday afternoon. The Government wishes to be just to all sections of the community. Although full power was given to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, it is within the province of the Postmaster-General and other Ministers to discuss matters of this kind with members of the commission, and I hope that, as a result of such discussion, a solution of the difficulty will be found.

The honorable member for Wimmera (Mr. Wilson) mentioned the Army Inventions Directorate, and said that proper encouragement was not given to inventors. I shall take the matter up with the directorate, a body which was set up by me because the previous Inventions Board was not working satisfactorily.

Mr. CALWELL.—How many inventions have been approved by the directorate?

Mr. FORDE.—I cannot say offhand, but I could get the figures. Honorable members will understand that probably 99 per cent. of the inventions offered are found to be of no real value. Nevertheless, it is in the interests of the nation that encouragement should be given to inventors, particularly in war-time. I know, as Minister for the Army, that many helpful ideas regarding military equipment have been offered from time to time by inventors. The Army Inventions Directorate consists of some of the most eminent engineers and scientists in Australia.

Mr. MARWICK.—They are very staid in their outlook.

Mr. FORDE.—It would be difficult to appoint a directorate that would satisfy every body. A man whose idea is rejected usually has a grievance.

Mr. MARWICK.—If a politician gets on the job after an invention has been rejected, the directorate will send an urgent wire to the inventor asking him to send over his invention immediately for examination.

Mr. FORDE.—In some cases, the directorate has borne the expense of bringing not only the invention, but also the inventor, from other States, paying the inventor's fare and expenses, while the inspection is being carried out. Its members are actuated by the highest motives. They are doing a great service to the country.

Mr. MARWICK.—I shall have something more to say on the matter on the motion for the adjournment to-morrow.

Mr. FORDE.—I suggest that the honorable member should discuss the matter with me in my office.

The honorable member for Griffith (Mr. Conelan) raised the matter of houses being taken over at Ekibin Heights, Brisbane, by the American Army authorities for use as hospitals. I shall have inquiries made into that matter. There is a Central Hirings Committee and a Hirings Committee operates in each State. State committees consider all applications from the services for accommodation of various kinds. In some cases, public schools, or buildings of other kinds, are taken over for use by the services. Following Japan's entry into the war, it became necessary immediately to provide additional hospital accommodation far beyond anything previously considered necessary. We do not have time to erect new buildings. Existing buildings had to be taken over; and the inconvenience caused to occupants was unavoidable. The Government, so far as it could do so, discouraged the taking over of public schools, but these buildings, which contained large dormitories, were the only available buildings suitable for base hospitals.

Mr. CALWELL.—Some serious mistakes have been made.

Mr. FORDE.—I do not propose to go into details. I shall not say that no mistakes have been made; but it is advisable to hear both sides of the question before one decides that a mistake has been made.

Mr. CALWELL.—Wesley College and Melbourne Grammar School, Melbourne, should never have been taken over.

Mr. FORDE.—That is the honorable gentleman's opinion. However, at that time, additional accommodation had to be provided without delay. The Japanese were knocking at the door; our Army was expanding threefold, and the Americans were coming here in thousands. Accommodation had to be found for their staffs and equipment.

Mr. MAEWICK.—In those days, people were only too glad to get away to the bush as quickly as possible.

Mr. FORDE.—There were evacuations from all capital cities, particularly from those on the eastern coast, and at that time the occupants of these buildings were glad to hand them over to the military authorities. However, when the position became calmer, and the danger of Japanese invasion became less probable many of these people were desirous of re-occupying the buildings. The Government has always been sympathetic towards these people to whom inconvenience has been caused in that way; and it is the Government's desire to vacate the buildings to them as soon as possible. However, our paramount consideration must be the efficiency of the defences of the country. The Hirings Committee in each State decides which buildings shall be taken over and the compensation or rental to be paid. Should the owners, or occupants, of any building which is taken over feel that they are not being dealt with fairly, they can appeal to the Compensation Board in each State. It is impossible to please every body in this matter, but I believe that machinery has been set up to give equitable treatment to all concerned.

I shall bring the subject of censorship raised by the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell) to the notice of the Prime Minister.

Mr. CALWELL.—About Sir Keith Murdoch?

Mr. FORDE.—At this late hour I do not propose to go into details. The Government desires that the press shall be as free as possible. It does not stand for political censorship. The principle upon which the censorship is conducted has

already been set out by the Prime Minister.

Mr. CALWELL.—Sir Keith Murdoch is obliged by law to submit his articles to the censor. Why should he be given preferential treatment because he is irresponsible?

Mr. FORDE.—I am not conversant with the censorship restrictions.

Mr. CALWELL.—Sir Keith Murdoch is obliged to submit his material to the censor. Will the Minister see that he obeys the censor's instructions?

Mr. FORDE.—The honorable member's remarks will be brought to the notice of the Prime Minister.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 12.27 a.m.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

The following answers to questions were circulated:—

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: IMPORTATION OF MERCHANDISE.

Mr. NAIRN asked the Minister for Transport, upon notice—

1. Whether the Government is aware of the grave shortages in Western Australia of replacement stocks and materials essential for carrying on manufacture in that State?
2. What steps have been taken to prevent the continuing transport west of goods which are or can readily be made available in that State from local sources?
3. Who determine what goods are to be carried by train?
4. At what points of consignment is supervision exercised?
5. Have instructions been given that in allotting priorities regard should be had to public requirements in Western Australia, rather than the value or convenience of the goods as freight?
6. Do the railway authorities co-operate with the Shipping Board?
7. Does any civil authority keep check on commodities brought into Western Australia by or at the direction of the military?
8. What persons, officers or boards constitute the central authority which directs and regulates the importation of merchandise into Western Australia?

Mr. LAWSON.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. I had no knowledge of the grave shortages referred to.
2. Preference is given to essential requirements defence and civil.

3. The order of priority by rail is determined by the Land Transport Board under the National Security (Land Transport) Regulations.

4. At the point of consignment.

5. Priority is determined by the essential nature of the requirements and freight value plays no part in the decision.

6. The Commonwealth Department of Transport co-operates closely with the Shipping Control Board.

7. The Department of the Army (Movement Control) determines the priority for Navy, Army and Air Force requirements.

8. This matter is one for the Minister for War Organization of Industry.

RACE MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER.

Mr. CURTIN.—On the 8th October, 1942, the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell) asked me the following question, *upon notice*:—

On what week-days other than Saturdays and at what places were race meetings held in the month of September in the various States of the Commonwealth?

I am now able to give the following information furnished by State Premiers:—

New South Wales.—No race meetings held in metropolitan area. In country area six horse, two trotting and twelve greyhound racing meetings were held, the majority of which were on a day observed as the usual weekly half holiday in the district. The meetings were as follows:—

Horse racing—six meetings, held at Wellington, Parkes, Cowra (two days), Dunmore and Baldry.

Trotting—two meetings, held at Dunmore and Leeton.

Greyhound racing—twelve meetings, held at Cootamundra (three), Dubbo (two), Murrumburrah (two), Narrandera (one), and Parkes (four).

Victoria.—No such meeting was held.

South Australia.—No such meeting was held.

Queensland.—Friday, 4th September—Bourketown; Friday, 25th September—Camooweal, and Friday, 25th September—Longreach.

Western Australia.—Wednesday, 2nd September—Boulder (race meeting); Wednesday, 9th September—Kalgoorlie (race meeting); Wednesday, 9th September—Kalgoorlie (Trotting meeting); Wednesday, 16th September—Boulder (race meeting); Wednesday, 16th September—Kalgoorlie (trotting meeting); Wednesday, 30th September—Kalgoorlie (race meeting).

With the exception of the last mentioned, which was the normal fortnightly Gold-fields meeting, these meetings formed the Eastern Gold-fields Annual Carnival. All were held on a Wednesday which is the Gold-fields half-holiday in lieu of Saturday.

Tasmania.—No such meeting was held.

PUBLIC SERVICE SALARIES.

Mr. CURTIN.—On the 1st October, 1942, the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell) asked me the following questions, *upon notice*:—

1. How many officers of the Public Service (permanent, temporary, on loan from State public services, or on loan from private employment, respectively) are in receipt of salaries of £400 a year or more?

2. How many of each class of officers are in receipt of annual salaries ranging between (a) £400-£600, (b) £600-£800, (c) £800-£1,000, (d) £1,000-£1,500 and (e) £1,500 and over?

I am now in a position to furnish the following information:—

1.—

| | |
|--|--------|
| Permanent officers | 7,627 |
| Temporary officers | 4,643 |
| On loan from State public services | 821 |
| On loan from private employment | 160 |
| Total | 13,251 |

| — | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | Total. |
|--|--------|-------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Permanent officers | 5,909 | 1,202 | 277 | 205 | 34 | 7,627 |
| Temporary officers | 4,134 | 382 | 75 | 43 | 9 | 4,643 |
| On loan from State services | 652 | 112 | 23 | 26 | 8 | 821 |
| *On loan from private employment | 54 | 30 | 16 | 12 | 3 | 115 |
| Total | 10,749 | 1,726 | 391 | 286 | 54 | 13,206 |

* In addition to the number shown under 2—On loan from private employment—there is a total of 45 officers (32 in Munitions Department and 13 in Supply and Shipping Department) whom it has not been practicable to sectionalise into the various salary groups as their salaries are still being paid by their respective private firms.

FEDERAL AID ROADS AGREEMENT:**EXPENDITURE IN QUEENSLAND.**

Mr. CHIFLEY.—On the 3rd September, the honorable member for Moreton (Mr. Francis) asked the following questions, upon notice:—

1. Since the renewal of the Federal Aid Roads Agreement between the Commonwealth and the several States, what sums have been expended during the financial years 1939-40, 1940-41 and 1941-42 by the State of Queensland under the altered conditions of that agreement for the provision of harbours, havens, shelters, jetties, channeling, beacons, beacon lights, &c.?

2. What was the nature of such works so carried out?

The Premier of Queensland has furnished the following statement in reply:—

FEDERAL AID ROADS AND WORKS AGREEMENT.*Expenditure on "other Works connected with Transport".*

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|---------------|-----------|----------|
| Dredging Wynnum Creek .. | 1,168 | 1 | 2 |
| 1937-38— | | | |
| Dredging Wynnum Creek .. | 1,168 | 1 | 2 |
| 1938-39— | | | |
| Dredging Wynnum Creek .. | 1,872 | 5 | 5 |
| Georgetown aerodrome .. | 168 | 3 | 3 |
| Nanango aerodrome .. | 320 | 12 | 6 |
| Bowen aerodrome .. | 457 | 14 | 0 |
| Maryborough aerodrome .. | 156 | 5 | 5 |
| Townsville aerodrome .. | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Russell Island jetty .. | 422 | 13 | 5 |
| Lamb Island jetty .. | 133 | 2 | 4 |
| Peel Island beacon .. | 346 | 17 | 2 |
| | 5,877 | 13 | 6 |
| 1939-40— | | | |
| St. George aerodrome .. | 939 | 16 | 0 |
| Kingaroy aerodrome .. | 1,095 | 7 | 7 |
| Nanango aerodrome .. | 129 | 7 | 6 |
| Proserpine aerodrome .. | 72 | 9 | 11 |
| Bowen aerodrome .. | 98 | 14 | 1 |
| Bundaberg aerodrome .. | 4,429 | 4 | 3 |
| Mackay aerodrome .. | 8,766 | 12 | 5 |
| Maryborough aerodrome .. | 843 | 14 | 7 |
| Rockhampton aerodrome .. | 3,901 | 1 | 5 |
| Wondai aerodrome .. | 525 | 18 | 6 |
| Townsville aerodrome .. | 500 | 1 | 11 |
| Charleville aerodrome .. | 736 | 7 | 9 |
| Rous channel and navigation lights .. | 304 | 4 | 9 |
| Dredging Wynnum Creek .. | 1,027 | 13 | 1 |
| Road to small arms range at Frenchville .. | 807 | 9 | 6 |
| Facilities for fishermen and motor boats at Gladstone .. | 1,082 | 2 | 1 |
| | 25,260 | 5 | 4 |

1940-41—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|--------------|----------|-----------|
| Quilpie aerodrome .. | 92 | 6 | 9 |
| St. George aerodrome .. | 27 | 6 | 11 |
| Croydon aerodrome .. | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Kingaroy aerodrome (Cr.) .. | 102 | 2 | 4 |
| Proserpine aerodrome .. | 221 | 7 | 2 |
| Wondai aerodrome (Cr.) .. | 34 | 1 | 2 |
| Bundaberg aerodrome .. | 203 | 18 | 9 |
| Mackay aerodrome .. | 3,233 | 7 | 7 |
| Rockhampton aerodrome .. | 1,098 | 18 | 7 |
| Bowen aerodrome (Cr.) .. | 56 | 8 | 1 |
| Charleville aerodrome (Cr.) .. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Road to small arms range, Frenchville (Cr.) .. | 237 | 14 | 4 |
| Facilities for fishermen at Townsville .. | 953 | 5 | 8 |
| Boats for settlers at Cape Tribulation .. | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Facilities for fishermen and motor boats at Gladstone .. | 307 | 16 | 4 |
| | 5,857 | 1 | 10 |

1941-42—

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Quilpie aerodrome .. | 7 | 13 | 3 |
| Mitchell aerodrome .. | 150 | 0 | 0 |
| Forsayth aerodrome .. | 3 | 16 | 10 |
| Repairs to Macleay Island jetty .. | 112 | 10 | 0 |

COAL CHARGES.

Mr. WATKINS asked the Minister for Supply and Shipping, upon notice—

1. Are the managerial charges by Howard Smith against Caledonian Collieries on every ton of coal produced irrespective of cost at the rate of 2s. 6d. per ton? If not, what is the amount of such charges?

2. What was the contract between McIlwraiths and Bellbird Collieries when they first took the Australian Gas Light contract at a loss to the colliery and large profits on freights to McIlwraiths? When this contract was taken was the freight rate at 3s. 6d. per ton where the cost would not be over 9d.?

3. What are the costs of producing coal at the pit top against the freight rates charged by the major steamship companies from Newcastle to Melbourne and Adelaide?

Mr. BEASLEY.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follows:—

1. I have no knowledge as to whether managerial charges are made or not. The selling price of coal produced by Caledonian Collieries Limited and by all other collieries is fixed by the Commonwealth Prices Commissioner, and once that price is fixed the amount paid by colliery companies for managerial or other charges is purely a matter for the shareholders of such companies.

2. The contract referred to was entered into in the year 1935, and is still operative. The contract price is not in excess of the prices

fixed by the Prices Commissioner. When the contract was made freight rates on coal Newcastle-Sydney ranged from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per ton, but I have no knowledge of the actual cost of operating the ships involved.

3. Costs of producing coal at the pit top vary at almost every individual mine, and, as mentioned above, selling prices have been fixed by the Prices Commissioner for each individual mine. The average price of Maitland large coal is about 20s. per ton and Maitland small coal is about 16s. 6d. per ton free on rail in each case. The Shipping Control Board has taken over colliers engaged on the interstate trade, and all freights are paid to that authority. The present rate Newcastle-Melbourne is 14s. 5d. per ton, including cost of discharge, and Newcastle-Adelaide 13s. 2d. per ton, excluding cost of discharge.

MUNITIONS: REPORTS BY OVERSEAS ADVISERS.

Mr. CALWELL asked the Minister for Munitions, *upon notice*—

1. Have any reports been furnished to his department or to the Director-General of Munitions by any British and/or American advisers in regard to machine tools, lay-out of factories, conditions of lighting, labour, and so on?

STATEMENT AS AT 1ST OCTOBER, 1942, SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CITIES AND TOWNS AND SUBURBS OF CAPITAL CITIES WITH 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OR MORE BRANCHES OF BANKS.

Number of Cities and Towns, also Suburbs of Capital Cities with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or more branches of banks (including Commonwealth Bank).

| Having 1 branch | Suburbs .. | 69 | Number of such places in which there is a branch of the Commonwealth Bank. | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----|--|-------|----|-----|
| | | | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 18 |
| | Country Towns .. | 416 | | | | 4 |
| | | | 485 | | | 22 |
| Having 2 branches | Suburbs .. | 49 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 27 |
| | Country Towns .. | 183 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| | | | | | | 38 |
| Having 3 branches | Suburbs .. | 39 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 27 |
| | Country Towns .. | 88 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 26 |
| | | | | | | 53 |
| Having 4 branches | Suburbs .. | 16 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 12 |
| | Country Towns .. | 49 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 31 |
| | | | | | | 43 |
| Having 5 branches | Suburbs .. | 16 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 10 |
| | Country Towns .. | 31 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 25 |
| | | | | | | 35 |
| Having 6 branches | Suburbs .. | 7 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 5 |
| | Country Towns .. | 24 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 18 |
| | | | | | | 23 |
| Having 7 or more | Capital Cities .. | 6 | Capital Cities .. | .. | .. | 6 |
| | Suburbs .. | 9 | Suburbs .. | .. | .. | 8 |
| | Country Towns .. | 30 | Country Towns .. | .. | .. | 30 |
| | | | | | | 44 |
| | | | 45 | | | |
| | | | | 1,032 | | 258 |

TOTAL NUMBER OF BANK HEAD OFFICES AND BRANCHES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Trading banks .. | 2,263 |
| Commonwealth Bank .. | 275 |
| Total .. | <u>2,538</u> |

The above figures refer only to full branches of the trading banks and the Commonwealth Bank and do not include branches of savings banks and State agricultural banks or temporary branches at military camps.

2. If so, will he lay them on the table of the House or the table of the Library?

Mr. MAKIN.—The answers to the honorable gentleman's questions are as follows:—

1. A comprehensive and confidential report on its activities was received by my department from members of the British Ministry of Supply Mission to India, which visited Australia during 1941.

2. Extracts from the report, together with a summary of conclusions, were laid on the table of the House on the 17th September, 1941, and were printed as a parliamentary paper.

TRADING BANKS: COUNTRY BRANCHES.

Mr. CHIFLEY.—On the 18th September, the honorable member for Melbourne (Mr. Calwell) asked the following question, *upon notice*:—

Will he supply the latest information in his possession on the series of questions asked by the honorable member for Melbourne on the 29th October, 1941, concerning the number of towns in Australia with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or more branches of the trading banks?

The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows:—