

in the way of providing work, particularly on the £1 for £1 basis. Shires which have applied for grants under the new conditions must be such wealthy bodies as, for example, the Hampden shire. No shire in Gippsland could afford to go ahead with relief works on the basis of £1 for £1. That is the position. The proof that the municipalities cannot take advantage of the offer of the £1 for £1 is shown by the meagre response to the Government's invitation. It would be interesting to know what happened when the Hogan Government offered £2 or £3 to £1. Then the municipalities were able to make roads for settlers who otherwise would not have had roads. Those bodies also provided a great deal of work. Many men left the city and got work in the country, and they have remained there. I feel sure that the House will object to any Government-controlled body breaking the law, and the Government should not shilly-shally over the matter.

Mr. TUNNECLIFFE.—Is it not up to the country members to take action against the Government?

Mr. HYLAND.—We are setting the ball rolling. If the Government perseveres with its £1 for £1 proposal, I shall vote against it. When a similar matter was before the House, the ex-Premier accepted my amendments which have since done a fair thing to the municipalities and enabled them to find work for men in the country. The country councils are in a difficult position and need help. In my constituency the highest rate is 3s. 3d. It is time that we tried to assist the councils to reduce their rates. The primary producers should not be penalized by being called upon to pay high rates. Very few honorable members realize the serious position of the country councils, nor do they realize the enormous amount of rates owed by the soldier settlers throughout Victoria. The councils have no chance of carrying on unless they can collect their rates. I trust that the Government will take action in regard to the £1 for £1 basis laid down by the Employment Council. A number of councils would be able to take advantage of a liberal offer, but not of a £1 for £1 offer, particularly as they may be called upon to provide material.

Mr. BARRY (Carlton).—I desire to take this opportunity of discussing a number of important matters which are causing concern to many of my constituents. I sympathize with the remarks made by the honorable member for Port Melbourne in his appeal to the Government to do something for the unemployed community in the metropolis. He especially emphasized the need for doing something further in the way of relieving the single men of the State. I refer to this matter because there are a number of unemployed young men in my electorate, and they have been examined by the Sustenance Department during the last fortnight. Yesterday I listened with concern to the Premier, when he intimated that the Government might extend the farm labourers' scheme under which a single man may be loaned out to a farmer at the rate of 10s. a week. I heard that statement with alarm, because the whole plan is wrong and degrading. The time has come when the representatives of the people should declare war on starvation and misery in our midst. If the taxpayer was satisfied that his money was devoted to relieving misery and to assisting young men to maintain their manhood, he would be consoled. There are single men who are receiving nothing. They happen to be living with their parents in their homes.

An HONORABLE MEMBER.—Where else should they be living?

Mr. BARRY.—They should be living in a home, but the question is—should we leave them in the streets to rot like mangy dogs, so to speak? When the Great War was on, no effort was too big to provide the young soldiers with good clothes and food. Those steps were taken in the interests of the country, but we have not been able to secure a pair of boots for the young men of whom I spoke.

The Government has been attempting to find homes for people at a rental of 8s. a week. During the last few weeks I have had a good deal of experience in trying to secure such premises, and I am now able to say that the position is such that the Government must be prepared to pay more, because it is not possible to obtain for 8s. a week dwellings that are fit for habitation. A man, with his wife and children, spent nearly a fortnight in Carlton trying to find a house. A doctor

attended the mother and family in a street and in a right-of-way. The youngsters were suffering from measles. During the night the family found shelter in a motor lorry that was not required until the morning. Surely the time has come when we must recognize that our function is to provide protection to people who have not a home. I appeal to the Government to consider the question of paying an extra amount so that decent shelter can be provided for these people.

A great deal was said in the opening speech on the Address-in-Reply to the effect that there would be no further taxation. When the poll was declared at the by-election in my electorate, the Government candidate was forced to say that it had been impossible for him to be victorious because of the sins of the Government. He was referring to the scheme to tax the children's pleasures, and I agree with the honorable member for Port Melbourne, who said that the trout fishing licence is another form of taxation on an amusement of the working people. It is surprising that the Government has made no effort to tax golf and bowling clubs.

The honorable member for Gippsland South referred to an important matter when he spoke of the scheme of granting the municipalities money on a £1 for £1 basis for relief purposes. He spoke of the Hampden shire. I wish to refer to the *Australian Municipal Journal* of August, which says—

The Shire of Hampden is the wealthiest country shire in Victoria, with a population of 12,500, and a normal revenue of £50,000 and no loan.

It is remarkable to find that the Hampden Shire Council, which in the years 1929, 1930, and 1931 received from the Government an amount of £756 under this particular scheme, has for some time past been effecting economies in connexion with the work of its municipal employees to such an extent that men who have practically been in permanent work for 20 and 30 years have been put off and engaged on relief work by the council. It is wrong that the taxpayers' money should be expended in supporting such action, which is to the detriment of the standard of living of the people who were employed by that municipality.

I had hoped that I should not be called upon to speak in this Chamber so soon after my election, and I did not want to speak at this stage; but I felt that, in view of what I have seen in the last few weeks and what has been happening in my electorate, it was my duty to mention these particular matters in the hope that the Government might do something to overcome the shortage in the provision of shelter for the wives and families of unemployed men, and provide greater facilities for unemployed single men. If my representations encourage the Government to do something along these lines, I shall feel that I am well repaid for my temerity in making a speech in this Chamber before I intended to do so.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Gippsland North*).—I feel that there is a good deal in a statement that was made recently by a visitor to this country, who stated that there ought not to be any unemployment in Victoria. He pointed out that more than one-half of the land in his country was so thickly populated that they were obliged to cultivate the hill country. He said that this country has an enormous number of empty spaces, and he laughed at the idea of a people such as we are having so many unemployed in our midst. The Premier made a statement last night as to what was to be done in connexion with the relief of unemployment. He did not tell the House where the money provided for relief is being expended, and I am sure that honorable members would be very interested to learn where it has gone. I am not sure that the municipalities, on whom the Government is relying mainly to carry out the relief scheme, are too keen to accept the Government's offer. If they are not prepared to accept it, what does the Government intend to do with all the money that is being raised by means of the stamp tax and the unemployment relief income tax? Is it to be placed in the original relief fund, which was so closely nursed by the previous Government for the purpose of distributing sustenance, with which is associated idleness and mental and physical deterioration? That appears to be the danger associated with this scheme, and it is time that the Government and

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