

emphatic protest against the adjournment of the House. I protest against it in the name of the people who sent seventy-nine members here as well as the Premier to represent them. I protest in the name of the Premier's colleagues, because I believe they are being passed over unjustly. I protest in the name of the Government supporters, because I believe they are anxious to carry on the work of the country. I protest in the name of the business people, and in the name of all others who will suffer by the adjournment of Parliament. I say that Parliament should go on.

Mr. McLAREN (Wellington East).—After the genial sample of Irish humour which the honourable member for Wellington South has given you, I think it is only right that you should allow me the privilege of submitting just a few words of Scotch logic. I do not think it will be at all out of place if I offer something in that direction, because from what I have heard to-day and this evening I think there has been too much of dealing with certain words without defining what those words mean. Let me say here that I was very pleased indeed to hear the Premier ask that this matter should be dealt with from other than a party standpoint. I was also pleased to hear the leader of the Opposition say that his party had no intention of dealing with it from the party side. I was pleased with that, because I have read so many illustrations of the wickedness of Labour parties in trying to rule the country's affairs on the basis of caucus government that I thought it was a pleasant thing to find that the Government of New Zealand was not tainted with anything of that kind. But then I remembered that there had been two caucus meetings—one of the Government party and one of the Opposition. Now, I have the honour of being a little party in myself. There is no need to call a caucus meeting of this party, because the party is always there and is perfectly solid on the question that is before us now—the question of whether the business of the country shall be attended to or whether it shall not. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind with regard to that question, because I do not believe there is any doubt in the minds of the mass of the wage-earners in this country whom I particularly represent. I believe that they fully expect this Parliament to go on with the business of the country, in the face of the depressed state of affairs that we find ourselves hampered and burdened with at the present time. I would like to draw honourable members' attention to a quotation read by the Premier to-day—some words of wisdom delivered by Sir Edward Grey. It is the side of the defence question that has been somewhat overlooked since the time of such British statesmen as John Bright and W. E. Gladstone, and it has not been given that attention in our country which its importance requires. The quotation that I have to draw attention to is one of vast importance. It is that statement of Sir Edward Grey's where he says that "European nations to-day are spending one-half of their revenue for the purpose of killing each other." Now, I am not concerned whether I am called a "Little-Englander" or not, because I believe that my nationality is a sufficient guarantee of my patriotism. I do not bother my head about any one who seeks to question my loyalty to the Empire or country; but I want to say here that I know sufficient of the world by this time to understand that there was a certain degree of truth in the blunt utterance of Dr. Johnson when he defined patriotism as "the last refuge of a scoundrel." I do not for a moment suggest that there is any one who has expressed loyalty here in this conference who is not absolutely sincere in the expression of his loyalty; but I do say, and with all due sense of my responsibility in uttering it, that there are forces at work in regard to the conflicts between the nations which are dangerous to the democracy. Now, I wish for a moment to refer to the incident of the Premier quoting a socialist leader in the Old Country, Mr. Robert Blatchford. The right honourable gentleman might have been still fairer if he had pointed out that Mr. Robert Blatchford, the socialist labourite, a member of such party in the Old Country, is not saddled with the same responsibility as such men as Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and those gentlemen take an entirely different view of the situation from Mr. Robert Blatchford. Although I have every respect for Mr. Blatchford, I cannot forget that at the time of the unfortunate South African raid—for I do not think it can be described as anything else—he was most enthusiastic in support of sending troops there to help to paint South Africa—what shall I term the colour?—a pale-black yellow—I think that is just about what it was. Well, there were other leaders in England and these colonies who disagreed with Mr. Blatchford at that time, and who still disagree with him; but I will tell the Premier that there is one question upon which the Labour party of England, Australia, and New Zealand are absolutely united, and it is this: that before the people can adequately defend their countries, and defend the lands in which they live, we must first capture the lands for the people. That is the position. You will find such a writer as Robert Blatchford and other leaders of the English Labour party appealing on this ground: that this economic basis of the defence question should be considered. I am afraid we are also disposed to neglect that side of the question in this country. We neglect it to this extent: that we are failing to fill up the unoccupied lands of this Dominion with people who should be ready to meet the enemy if occasion arose. That is, I submit, where the question of defence comes in, and it has a close relation to the question of whether Parliament should go on with the business or not. I do not set up as being a military expert, or an expert on the question of unemployment, although on the latter question I think I may claim to know as much about the state of the labour-market as most of the members here assembled; and I say when you are going to deal with the question of unemployment there is an absolute necessity that the advice of Aristotle should be followed, which is that you should first define your terms. For instance, as to men who are working on one day of the week, or who are earning on an average 10s. to £1 a week, are they employed or unemployed? In my judgment they are unemployed, and they form part of the unemployed problem which this as well as other countries have to face. I have some knowledge of the distressful conditions which exist at the present time. I know, for instance, that on the Wellington wharves there are between four and five hundred men in excess of what is required. I know also that if you take the building trade you will find that the Building Trades Labourers' Union at this time last