

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Which line is it you are advocating? Is it the Southern line in preference to that from Brookton to Armadale?

Hon. H. STEWART: The Brookton-Armadale line will probably be needed to handle all the production that will take place in the existing wheat belt. Further east towards Forrestania it will be possible to construct lines that will shorten the distance to Albany. Before I conclude my remarks I wish to refer to what took place at the close of the last session when I, because of domestic reasons, was unable to attend the final sitting. When I read the report of what had transpired in connection with the taxation measures that had come before us, I was greatly disappointed. This House had made certain amendments and had adhered to those amendments. Then the matter resulted in a conference, and I was sorry to see that not one member of the Country Party from either House was invited to become one of the managers at the conference. Everything that this House had proposed was sacrificed in order to arrive at a compromise, and it was a bitter disappointment to me to find that the managers of this House got so little after giving everything. I am sorry that the managers from this House at that conference are not now present in the Chamber, but doubtless they will read my remarks. If it had been a matter about which this House had any doubt one would not have felt so keenly about it. What this House proposed was in the best interests of the State, and our proposals were agreed to by a strong majority. The position since the passing of that measure is that whereas before there was an exemption of £250 that exemption has been wiped out. On that question this House stood firm. It was also regarded as just that if taxation was levied in respect of land, the payment made could be deducted from income tax. When the managers consented to that rebate being reduced to 50 per cent.—in place of its being wiped out altogether—they were not adhering to a principle, but simply taking half a loaf. That, in particular, seems to me an amendment which the managers were not justified in agreeing to. I trust that when negotiations of a similar description are again pending, and when what I may term country interests are so much concerned in the results of the conference, some courtesy will be shown, at least in one Chamber if not in both, and that a

representative of the country interests will be amongst the managers.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Kirwan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.2 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1925.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAY RATES.

Geographical Trade.

MR. A. WANSBROUGH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Do the Government intend to review the differential rate system now applying over our State railways on primary products grown within the State for overseas? 2, If so, will each seaport receive its geographical trade?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No differential rate system of any sort is in existence on the Government railways, but if the hon. member refers to the carriage of primary products for overseas to other than the nearest port, the reply is that this question has been under consideration with a view to applying higher freight charges to such traffic than those applying when consigned to the nearest port. 2, Further consideration will be given this matter when the next revision of rates is being dealt with.

Reduction by Land Tax Payments.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Premier: What is the actual amount paid to the Railway Department from revenue received from land tax for the year ended 30th June, 1925?

The PREMIER replied: Nil.

QUESTION—COURT CASES, BRUCE ROCK.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Justice: What number of cases from Bruce Rock were tried before the magistrate at Merredin from the 1st January, 1925, to the 30th June, 1925?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: Four local court cases.

QUESTIONS (2)—WATER SUPPLY.*Narembeen.*

Mr. LATHAM asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Cunningham): In view of the urgent necessity for a water supply at Narembeen, when is it proposed to proceed with the local scheme?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM replied: A scheme which includes provision for a water supply to Narembeen is now under consideration.

Bruce Rock.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Cunningham): On what date is it proposed to start operations on the Bruce Rock town water supply dam?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM replied: It is not proposed to carry out additional work until the residents of Bruce Rock guarantee that the revenue will be sufficient to meet interest, sinking fund charges, and working expenses.

QUESTION—MINING, EXPENDITURE ON BORING.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Mines: What are the total amounts of Government money spent in assisting boring in Kalgoorlie and Wiluna to the 30th June, 1925, respectively?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: At Kalgoorlie three parties were assisted on the basis of £ for £, the total expenditure being £5,486 3s. 1d. At Wiluna one company was assisted on the same basis, the total expenditure being £710 2s. 10d. The above expenditure covered a period from 1st July, 1920, to 30th June, 1925.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the total number of recorded accidents with petrol-propelled vehicles in the metropolis, including Fremantle, Midland Junction, and suburbs, for the year ended 30th June, 1925? 2, What was the total number of injured and killed respectively resulting therefrom?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The following figures relate to accidents caused by vehicles of all classes, figures relating to accidents caused solely by petrol-propelled vehicles not being available at present:—1, Within the Perth Police District, 317. Within the Fremantle Police District, number not available. 2, Within the Perth Police District, 25 killed, 312 injured. Within the Fremantle Police District, 5 killed, 65 injured.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,913,500.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Third Day.**Amendment—No Confidence—defeated.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.42]: Before proceeding to address myself to the question, Mr. Speaker, I should like to know whether it will be permissible for me to traverse the whole of the general grounds covered by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, or whether I shall be confined to the strict reading of the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: For the information of hon. members who are new to this Chamber, as well as in reply to the Premier's request, I may say that I have consulted authorities more particularly in view of a ruling given

from this Chair so long ago as the 4th July, 1912, when Mr. Speaker Troy ruled that an amendment being moved to the Address-in-reply, the rules of debate applied to that amendment just as they did to all amendments, and that all members speaking to the amendment, or after the amendment had been moved, must confine themselves to, and in their speeches be relevant to, the amendment, and not traverse the arguments used during the course of the debate on the Address-in-reply. That ruling was based upon the decisions of speakers given in the House of Commons itself. In Bourinot's "Parliamentary Procedure," on page 150, the statement is made—

A general debate may take place on the Address, but when an amendment is proposed, the discussion can be strictly confined to the subject matter of this amendment.

The chief ruling is that given in 1886 by the then Speaker of the House of Commons, and he also is emphatic. On the point being raised as to whether the whole of the speech on the Address-in-reply could be debated when an amendment had been moved, he said—

I really think I must, for the convenience of the House, state this much. Though I do adhere to the ruling I have given, that after an amendment has been proposed discussion should be relevant to that amendment, I must remind the right hon. gentleman that when the amendment is concluded the address is again open to amendment in the interval between that amendment and possibly a subsequent amendment. But when an amendment is before the House I am only interpreting the rules by saying that the discussion must be generally relevant to the subject matter of the amendment.

And at a later stage the Speaker said—

It is the practice in our Parliamentary procedure that when an hon. member moves an amendment to the address, before he reaches that amendment he may deviate into other matters. To a certain extent he thus places himself in an advantageous position; but when he has moved a specific amendment, according to the rules of the House, that specific amendment becomes the substantive matter before the House.

Hence the Premier will not be in order in going over all the ground touched upon in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition last evening. He must strictly confine himself to the specific amendment that has been moved and is now the question before the House.

The PREMIER: Your ruling Sir, necessitates a slight reconstruction of the order of my remarks, but there will be other oppor-

tunities for me to deal with the many questions of public interest touched upon by the Leader of the Opposition. It is perhaps well that this comparatively unimportant question should be considered entirely apart from the real questions of importance that confront the people of the State at the present time. I do not complain of the action of the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You yourself have done the same thing on several occasions.

The PREMIER: Yes, I will plead guilty to having taken similar action on a few occasions. It is the function of an Opposition to criticise and attack the Government whenever opportunity offers. I have no objection to that. But I take this amendment as the highest compliment that could be paid to the Government; for after our 15 months in office the Opposition find they are unable to obtain grounds on which to base an attack on the Government either with regard to legislation or to general administration, except by resurrecting this trivial little matter. It certainly is a compliment bearing in mind that an Opposition are always keenly alive to the necessity for attacking a Government whenever opportunity offers; and now, after 15 months, the general policy, the work and the administration of the Government have been endorsed by the Opposition, except in regard to this trivial matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think that for a moment.

The PREMIER: Well, endorsed to the extent that they have not felt justified in making an attack on the Government on any other ground.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This session is young.

The PREMIER: Yes, but the Leader of the Opposition is aware that the Address-in-reply is usually the occasion when an attack is launched upon a Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, no, no!

The PREMIER: There can be no question about it. The Opposition are always anxious to attack a Government, and this is the only point upon which they feel justified in making a charge at the present time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, we are only anxious for you to do well.

The PREMIER: I regard the amendment as a time-wasting one. It is utterly trivial. It is in fact evidence of the desperate position in which the Opposition find themselves;

they have to have recourse to a subject of this kind in order to launch an attack on the Government. I do not like to impute motives, but I do believe that all the time this subject occupied the minds of the people during the course of that strike there was underlying it a good deal of political motive.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot accuse me of that.

The PREMIER: The Press of this State by the publication of exaggerated reports and by considerable misrepresentation made political capital out of the dispute. One cannot complain of that, seeing that they have roamed the universe to discredit Labour. One day it is a criticism of Mr. Jock Garden in Sydney, another day a criticism of Mr. Walsh in Melbourne, and yet another day it is an attempt to link up Labour with Moscow and the Soviet. Periodically we have articles bewailing the dreadful condition of the people of Queensland suffering from a Labour Government. Of course the benighted folk in Queensland, although they have continued to re-elect the party to office for the last ten years, do not know what is good for them nearly so well as does the Press of Western Australia. And the Press and the Opposition being bankrupt of grounds for attacking the Government, this question comes somewhat as a godsend, and so the most has been made of it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Very clever, but it will not convince the public.

The PREMIER: The Federal elections are approaching, and something must be done. The wording of the amendment is somewhat peculiar. It charges the Government with having failed to maintain law and order during the recent upheaval. Upheaval! There has been another upheaval in recent times, and that was the world war. I suppose this Perth strike was comparable really to the great world upheaval. A dispute that resulted in the closing of a few tearooms and the cessation of work on the part of a few hundred girls is described as an industrial upheaval. If that is not the language of exaggeration, I do not know what is. Upheaval!

Mr. Lutey: Heave ho!

The PREMIER: One would think the whole State had been distracted, distraught from one end to the other when a dispute involving a few hundred people, mostly girls, is described by the Leader of the Opposition as an upheaval.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It affected thousands of people.

The PREMIER: It affected a good many, but after all not so many were thrown out of work. This great upheaval was amongst several hundred girls who ceased work and paraded the streets.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Over 2,000 men and women.

The PREMIER: No, there were not anything like 2,000. I do not think there were 1,000. There were only about 700 or 800 girls who ceased work and paraded the streets in their holiday attire. And what attracted the Press, or some juvenile member of the Press, most was when he described some of those girls as "These expansively built and expensively attired girls who stood in front of a cafe in Hay-street with arms akimbo." How rude of them! They forgot they were not in the kitchen! This young man, who no doubt has had extensive experience of expensive attire, when he saw those girls dressed in silk frocks and silk stockings—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He would hardly look at the stockings!

The PREMIER: He must draw attention to their build and to their attire! The whole attitude of the Press has been one to incite the public mind against those people, not because of their behaviour during the strike, but because of the fact that they had gone on strike at all. That is what was at the bottom of the whole trouble. I believe the police acted with good, sound judgment throughout the whole proceedings.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You were not here, you know.

The PREMIER: No, but I have read the reports in the Press respecting it, and I have read the whole of the police files, and I say it is a testimony to the discretion, tact and judgment of the police that a strike which lasted more than four weeks went through and was finally settled without one solitary fight or disturbance of any kind taking place.

Mr. Richardson: That is wrong.

The PREMIER: There was not even one fight; no person lost so much as a bit of skin off his nose.

Mr. Richardson: I myself saw three fights.

The PREMIER: The police reports did not say there were any fights, nor did the Press say so. Of course one can see a fight down the street any day in the week. There never has been a dispute with so little dis-

order and so little damage done. I am at a loss to know the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition towards the police. It seems that both he and the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) have got themselves entangled in a maze of inconsistency. The Leader of the Opposition said last night that the police force in this State was equal to any other police force in Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: So it is.

The PREMIER: The Leader of the Opposition said, "We could not have a better force. It is an honourable, capable and courageous body of men who have deservedly enjoyed the confidence of the public." That is a very high testimony to the police force.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And perfectly true, too.

The PREMIER: Then he proceeded to say that the police did not do their duty. He accepted the statement that the Minister for Justice did not give instructions of any kind to the police.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I had to accept his statement.

The PREMIER: I take it he accepted it unreservedly. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) accepted the statement also that no instructions whatsoever were given by the Government to the police. No instructions were given by the Government to the police. That has been stated by Ministers, and the statement has been accepted by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Perth. That being so, why is it this highly capable, honourable and courageous body of men failed to do their duty, as alleged by hon. members?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is for you to explain that.

The PREMIER: According to the hon. member, these men who stand so high in the public estimation have failed to do their duty. Why was it?

Mr. Latham: That is what we are trying to find out.

The PREMIER: Ministers say that no instructions were given to the police, and that the police acted as they do every day in the week. It is not necessary for a Minister to give instructions to the police morning after morning. The police know their duty, and on this occasion they carried it out according to their judgment, discretion and common sense. Yet the Leader of the Opposition, while praising them as the finest

body of men in the Commonwealth—a sentiment endorsed by the member for Perth—followed it up by saying this fine body of men failed to do their duty. Where is the logic or consistency of the argument? The attack has really been launched, not against the Government, but against this fine body of men.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No fear.

The PREMIER: I say it has. I have never read of a more serious charge being levelled against the police force of this or any other State than that made here by the Leader of the Opposition and made at the public meeting by the member for Perth. The statement was that this fine, independent body of men were so supine, so dishonest, so immoral, I might almost say, as to fail to carry out their ordinary, everyday functions, because there was an impression in their minds that their actions would not meet with the approval of the Government of the day. Is that the attitude of a fine body of men? No more serious reflection has been cast upon the police than is embodied in that insinuation. Will anyone say that the preservation of the peace of this State is in the hands of men who are going to act entirely and absolutely according to what they believe, without any instructions whatever, may be acceptable or suitable to the Government of the day? The member for Perth, in making that charge against the present force, claimed that when he was in the police, no such consideration operated. He acted from an entirely different viewpoint. He said, "I was for many years connected with the police force, and whenever there was industrial trouble we did our duty fearlessly, and at the end of the trouble we always had the respect of both sides." How the force has wilted since the hon. member left it!

Mr. Marshall: No, it has been purified.

The PREMIER: The hon. member would have us believe that when he was in the force the police did their duty fearlessly and had the respect of both sides, whereas to-day the whole force, from the Commissioner down to the latest probationer, stand idly by and fail to carry out their duties, not because of instructions received from the Government, but because of some feelings they may have regarding the attitude of the Government. I say that is a base libel on the police force.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are quite mistaken.

The PREMIER: But the hon. member said so. After beginning with the stereotyped phrase about the fine, noble, honourable, courageous body of men, he proceeded to say that they failed to do their duty. His charge was against the Government, not that the Government gave instructions, or were responsible for the police failing to do their duty—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh yes!

The PREMIER: But that the Government did not give them instructions to do their duty.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Surely the Government are at the head of the police.

The PREMIER: "If the Minister says he did not instruct the police," said the hon. member, "I shall believe him, but I say he should have instructed them to do their duty." What necessity was there to give instructions to a body of men who have been given such a certificate of character as that given them by the Leader of the Opposition last evening?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This trouble lasted four weeks.

The PREMIER: And the hon. member only woke up to it three weeks afterwards when he strayed into the Acting Premier's office, and was assured that everything was all right.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not stray into his office.

The PREMIER: This is a serious matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is very serious.

The PREMIER: The hon. member cannot get out of it by merely prefacing his remarks with a eulogy of the police force. He has made a most serious charge against the police.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I can speak the truth about the police or anyone else.

The PREMIER: But what is the truth? The hon. member has made two statements. He characterised the police as a noble and courageous body, and then said they had not done their duty. Which statement is true?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Because of the Government.

The PREMIER: But the hon. member accepted the statement of the Ministers that no instructions were given by the Government. One statement contradicts the other; the hon. member cannot have it both ways. He must stand by one statement or the other. He repeated his statement that the police had

failed to do their duty, which statement constituted a most serious charge against the force. There was no justification for it. The police acted on this occasion as they have always acted, except when they have received instructions from Governments in the past to act differently. They acted on this occasion as they would always act if they were free to exercise their own discretion.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is not so.

The PREMIER: On occasions in the past they have adopted a different attitude, because they were instructed by Governments to do so. On this occasion the police functioned in a proper way. It is not their function to take sides in industrial disputes. In the past they have been used in industrial disputes on the side of employers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I deny that.

The PREMIER: I am not accusing the hon. member.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: By inference you are.

The PREMIER: Other people have been in office.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You mean when you were previously in office?

The PREMIER: I mean since 1917 and while the party with which the hon. member is associated was in office. The police acted properly on this occasion; they acted with reason and discretion as they will always act, and I refuse to believe the charge levelled by the hon. member that the police force from Commissioner down are a weak-kneed, jellyfish body of men.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I said nothing of the sort.

The PREMIER: Why did this body of men fail to do their duty?

Mr. George: That is what we want to know.

The PREMIER: No instructions were given to them. They acted according to their discretion and judgment, and they kept law and order reasonably well, too. We know very well that a certain amount of trouble is inseparable from industrial disputes, but I venture to say there have not been many industrial disputes in this country so entirely free of anything of a serious nature as was this trouble which lasted for four weeks.

Mr. George: Do your Government approve of the obstruction of the streets and of people being insulted?

The Minister for Works: We shall remind you presently of a little that you did.

The PREMIER: The member for Perth said in his time the police always had the respect of both sides; they did not consider which party was in power; they always did their duty. Evidently the stiffening has gone out of the force since he left it.

Mr. Marshall: It has been purified since he left it.

The PREMIER: I do not know why he should claim to have acted fearlessly in any matter he was called upon to deal with, regardless of what Government were in office. He said he did his duty fearlessly and did not consider the opinions of the Government of the day. Why does he think the whole force has altered since he left? What has come over it?

The Minister for Agriculture: He has left.

The PREMIER: All these men now fail to do their duty, according to the hon. member; they stood idly by with folded arms, he would have us believe, while this great upheaval was taking place. Why? The hon. member says, too, that he accepts the statement that no instructions were given to the police. Yet the police suddenly became paralysed, according to him.

Mr. Mann: That was apparent.

The PREMIER: I am not able to understand the principle enunciated in this statement by the hon. member—"If a man has 20 or 25 years' service to his credit and has a family to keep, he does not want to be shifted to Kimberley or somewhere else in the back blocks for making a nuisance of himself." So, apparently, it has been the practice in the past to shift a man to the back blocks when he did his duty. The hon. member said it was the obvious duty of the police to take certain action, but that they would be shifted to Kimberley or to the back blocks if they did it. The inference is that constables who did their duty were shifted to the back blocks.

Mr. Heron: Was he ever in the back blocks?

The PREMIER: Neither he nor the Leader of the Opposition suggests that the Minister issued instructions to the police, so why this paralysis that came over the police? Let them explain it. They do not suggest that instructions were given, and yet this fine body of men suddenly became inert. What is the explanation? I say seriously it is the most damaging charge I have ever known to have been levelled against the

Police Force. Members will not get round it by merely putting forward a few puff statements with regard to the police. I say the police acted with discretion throughout, and that the state of things depicted in the Press from day to day was a wild exaggeration of the facts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You were not here.

The PREMIER: I have read every line published in regard to it. I have also read 164 pages of the reports of police officers, as appearing on the police file. Every constable detailed for duty in connection with the strike had to put in a daily written report to the Department, and I have read every one of these from beginning to end. I will read a few extracts from the reports of these officers. I assure the House I could quote dozens of these if necessary, but they are all similar to those that I will quote. One sergeant writes—

On the 5th May there was no damage to property done. Everything was quite in order with the exception of a crowd having congregated in the street and around Albany Bell's shops.

Another constable writes—

On no occasion did we witness any damage done to property, and we have received no complaint of any damage done or any stealing from shops, or any violence on the part of any of the employees.

Another sergeant says—

I inquired what the trouble was, and was informed that a number of the waitresses and a few men had gone into the shop. I remained in the vicinity for a time and did not notice any disorderly conduct. I did not enter the building, but no complaint was made to me by the proprietor regarding their conduct. I went to the Esplanade Hotel where I found constables on duty and everything was quiet. The crowd soon cleared, and I instructed the constables on duty to keep the crowds moving on the footpath. In no instance did I see or hear any disorderly conduct nor was there any damage to property.

All these reports cover different days and different establishments, and are made by different officers. Another officer says—

On arrival I dispersed the crowd with the assistance of a couple of constables.

Another constable writes—

All was quite in order. During the afternoon I kept the strikers under observation, nor did I see any damage done to property.

Another sergeant writes—

One hundred strikers congregated at the shop between 11 and 12 and all was quiet and orderly. At the Crystal Cafe I found a number of strikers. I remained on duty until 1.15 when the sergeant relieved me for lunch. All had been quiet and orderly while I was on duty. After 2 p.m. the crowds dispersed. After that I was informed

that a crowd of strikers had congregated at the Arcadia tearooms. I found a large crowd there and remained on duty until 4.50 p.m. All had been quiet and orderly while I was there.

Mr. Sampson: It was evidently all imagination.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can, if he likes, doubt the reports of this fine, honourable and courageous body of men. I am prepared to let any member read the reports privately. These reports were not selected. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) may see the file. I assure the House that these reports are typical of every report out of the 160 that appear on the three files. They are made by inspectors, sergeants and other officers of the police to their superiors.

Mr. Sampson: There is wonderful unanimity about them.

The Minister for Lands: They are honourable men.

The PREMIER: There is an insinuation. The police know now what is behind it all. The hon. member says there is wonderful unanimity, in the face of the certificate of character given to these men by his own leader. Is it to be inferred that there was collusion between these officers in the writing of reports? The interjection is worthy of the hon. member. He insinuates that these men, who are charged with the responsibility of preserving peace, and who have been so highly eulogised, are apparently capable of collusion and of writing false reports to their superiors. No other inference can be drawn from the interjection.

Mr. George: And the Press must have totally misrepresented the affair?

The PREMIER: Did they ever misrepresent the hon. member—for instance, the "Sunday Times"? Since the hon. member has gone out of office he seems to have acquired a wonderful respect and regard for the Press.

Mr. George: Have I? You will know more about that before the session is over.

The PREMIER: He would rather take the statements of imaginative youths on the Press, who were impressed by the expansive build of the girls, than accept the reports of matured and experienced officers of the Police Department.

Mr. George: No. I was referring to the respectable Press, not the gutter Press.

The PREMIER: That is a cheap kind of thing. Another sergeant says—

No disorderly conduct was indulged in, anything further than some crowding around this place. No damage was done to property.

Another sergeant says—

Everything was quite in order, and there was no obstruction to traffic.

Another constable says—

There was no disorderly conduct while I was at the Maypole.

Another sergeant says—

There was no disorderly conduct. The strikers and others complied with the various requests made by the police.

The sergeant says—

All passed off quietly and orderly.

Another sergeant, who is a particularly capable officer, says—

We had no difficulty in keeping the footpath clear. There was no obstruction to traffic and no unseemly conduct.

Mr. George: I saw Hay-street absolutely blocked.

The PREMIER: This officer is talking about the lack of unseemly conduct or obstruction to traffic.

Mr. Latham: What about abusive language?

The PREMIER: You can hear that every day in the week in Barrack-street.

Mr. Latham: If I used it this afternoon in the street I would be locked up.

The PREMIER: Would the hon. member have the police grabbing people in times of an industrial dispute, and putting them in the lock-up because of offensive remarks and abusive language? That is the kind of thing that leads to riots and disorder, and in the past has led to the loss of men's lives. When there is an industrial dispute, some members would like the police to strike people with their batons.

Mr. George: No.

The PREMIER: They would have the police not so much to keep order, but to intimidate the strikers, and perhaps punish them for having taken part in the strike.

Mr. George: Surely the police would keep the streets open for traffic.

The PREMIER: I have seen streets blocked through people watching a punch and Judy show. If the hon. member was there we should have a real Aunt Sally, and the street would soon become blocked.

Mr. George: It would be the biggest sensation out.

The PREMIER: Another sergeant writes: Another officer says—

During the time I was at the Cafe I saw nothing any reasonable person could take exception to.

The strikers were kept off the footpath, and there was no interference with pedestrian traffic, and everything was orderly. A large number of the public remained in the vicinity until the departure of the strikers about 2 p.m.

Another officer says—

No person was allowed to stand on the footpath and with the exception of the crowd being in the street everything was orderly.

There was another report by an officer who holds a responsible position, and who would have been the senior of the member for Perth if that gentleman had still been in the force. The hon. member will recognise that this officer must hold a high responsible position. He writes to the Commissioner as follows:—

Comment has been made of the inaction of the police in connection with this matter: the police, however, in my opinion acted wisely and with discretion in refraining from unduly interfering with the so-called strikers. There were several instances in which the police (had they rigidly enforced their powers) could have been more drastic but their object right throughout was to prevent trouble, and with this aim in view and the fact that there was no attempt to riot, nor could it be said that there was any unlawful assembly, the police contented themselves with seeing that there was no breach of the peace committed and that the traffic regulations were complied with. Those of the strikers who were inclined to disregard law and order were promptly checked by the police, their names and addresses taken and given to the parties offended. Had the police gone to extremes and arrested those persons, it would have incited the crowd and probably brought on more serious trouble and thus given the public the opportunity of accusing the police of being the instigators. There were troublesome parties on both sides, and although the public were inconvenienced to a certain extent, I am sure the more reasonable thinking class will agree that the action of the police is to be applauded.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What is the date of that report?

The PREMIER: The 13th May. The file contains reports of that description from end to end. Are members prepared to take the reports published in the newspapers rather than the statements written by the officers of the Police Department? The whole thing is absurd. There can be no question about the facts. I do not contend there was no cause for complaint. The police say that the footpaths were kept clear throughout for the use of the public, and that a number of people congregated in the street in front of the establishments concerned. It is questionable whether the police are justified in interfering unless there is serious cause for interference.

Above all, experience tells us that it is undesirable for the police to take action that might lead to a riot or a serious breach of the peace. So long as matters are proceeding in what may be described as a fairly reasonable way, the police do the right thing in not taking the action members would have them take if they had their way.

Mr. George: Even when Hay-street was blocked at the Crystal Cafe and one could not get through?

Mr. Lutey: That will happen any day.

The PREMIER: While this upheaval, which lasted for four weeks, was proceeding, not one person was injured. I looked up the casualty list at the hospital, and found that not one person was taken there. The services of a doctor were not required, and there was scarcely a fight of any sort. It is most remarkable that an upheaval could take place in the heart of the city, and continue for four weeks, and that at the end no one should lose even the skin off his nose. And yet the state of things was such that members would have the people believe great lawlessness occurred in the city, that the city was given over to a mob which took charge of it. All the facts refute that contention.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you say that these people were allowed to carry on their business?

The PREMIER: There were the usual happenings, of course, and picketing was indulged in. Picketing has been a regular practice in regard to union strikes for as long as I remember. There was picketing in connection with the strike which occurred when the hon. member was in office. Even the hon. member's office was picketed during the public service strike, and he had great difficulty in getting out and acting as paymaster. That was the occasion when he sallied forth with his paymaster's bags and mixed his accounts.

Mr. George: On a point of order. I do not think the hon. member has any warrant for saying that I mixed my accounts. I ask that the words be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member desires that the words "mixed his accounts" be withdrawn.

The PREMIER: I will withdraw, but I know we had a special item on the Estimates to correct the amount the hon. member was short in his cash.

Mr. George: I ask that that statement be withdrawn. It is absolutely false!

The PREMIER: If I had time at my disposal I would look up the Estimates, because I know there was an item to rectify the position. Of course, it was an honest error on the part of the hon. member and I recognise that those were strenuous days when he had a difficult task.

Mr. George: Neither you nor all your crew could stop me going out if I made up my mind to go!

The PREMIER: Nothing could possibly stop the hon. member! He did excellent work.

Mr. George: I saw that my men got their pay, and that is more than you would do in the circumstances.

The PREMIER: I was not in a position to take up that part.

Mr. George: And you would not have done it if you had been.

The PREMIER: Of course, I know that I could not have done what the hon. member did. I know, too, that no man on earth could come up to the perfect state of the hon. member in the conduct of his business.

Mr. George: My men always got their pay.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's record of administration in his department for a number of years past was perfection itself.

Mr. George: I do not claim that, but at any rate it was honest.

The PREMIER: There is not much merit in being honest; the average man is that. But the hon. member was perfect.

Mr. Pantou: Anyhow the leader of that strike did pretty well, too.

The PREMIER: The whole thing is a storm in a tea kettle. Then the Mayor, we find, called his meeting. In times of industrial trouble some people think they must be surrounded by a crowd of policemen. Thus it was that the Mayor wrote to the Commissioner of Police asking that a strong force of the police should be present at the meeting, but inside and outside the hall. He was doubtful about the protection of hon. members who wished to speak at the meeting that night and because of that he wanted a few policemen inside the hall.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I will tell you about that afterwards.

The PREMIER: In his discretion, the Commissioner of Police decided that it was not necessary for any police to be inside the

hall and there were none. Yet the meeting passed off in an orderly manner without any disturbance whatever. Had a body of police been inside the hall as requested by the Mayor, the Press would have said next day that there was an unruly mob present and but for the presence of a big body of policemen, a disturbance would have taken place. As it was, no disturbance took place, although one member speaking at the meeting said that the state of affairs was leading straight to the disruption of the British Empire. Although all this lawlessness had been going on, the Mayor's meeting did not take place until three weeks after the strike had commenced. The meeting was held on the 22nd May. Here was all this lawlessness, and yet no move made for three weeks! On the day subsequent to the meeting the Leader of the Opposition called upon the Minister for Lands and he told the House that the Minister had assured him that the police were doing their duty. At the time the hon. member said that the public would welcome the intimation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: After the experience they had had, the public would welcome such an assurance, too.

The PREMIER: We have had experience of police intervention in strikes. It is not sufficient to say that the police should act in times of industrial trouble as they would act in normal circumstances. Does the Leader of the Opposition say that because a number of people collect in St. George's Terrace, the police have power to prosecute them. There is no comparison between the action the police may take in dealing with men obtaining their livelihood in an unlawful manner, many of whom were known to the officers to be undesirables and criminals, and the action suggested by the hon. member. Because the police have exercised in extreme cases the powers they possessed, is no reason why they should act likewise in times of industrial dispute. Hon. members know from experience that undue influence by the police in industrial matters leads not to peace, but to trouble. That has been our experience over and over again. It might easily happen, did the police act as the hon. member would have them act, that we would have a repetition of what took place at Fremantle. Men might go down armed with bayonets and there might be a serious conflict between the police and a section of the

people, resulting in the loss of life. Such an instance happened on one occasion, and have hon. members gained nothing from that experience? Do they seek to repeat what occurred on that occasion? That is one instance within our own knowledge and memory in which action was taken by the police in an industrial trouble, the officers acting under instructions of Ministers.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You exercised police control at Fremantle during the seamen's strike.

The PREMIER: It is not a matter relating to the powers the police have, but rather does it concern their judgment and discretion in exercising those powers.

The Minister for Works: Police were on duty during this strike too.

The PREMIER: On every such occasion they are on duty.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But the police kept the pickets off the wharf at Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: The police never kept the pickets away.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There is quite a difference of opinion on that point.

The PREMIER: What took place on this occasion away from the ordinary routine was such as is inseparable from any industrial dispute. No reasonable person, however, could take exception to what happened on that occasion and I prefer to take the opinion of responsible police officers, such as I have quoted, than to take more or less irresponsible statements that appeared in the Press from time to time. The amendment represents so much waste of time. It has been brought forward quite legitimately for political purposes.

Mr. George: Not at all.

Mr. Latham: It was not done for political purposes.

The PREMIER: It has been worked up and pumped up by the Press for weeks and weeks. Therefore it was thought advisable not to allow the occasion to pass without making use of it by referring to this question. This will not mislead the public into believing that anything of a serious nature took place during the strike. The Leader of the Opposition read last night a statement by Mr. Paxton of the Esplanade hotel.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And also by the Minister too.

The PREMIER: The report of the police officer referring to the incident on the same day was as follows:—

The Esplanade Hotel manager was excited without material cause as, with the exception of a number who forced their way into the back yard, nothing to which exception could be taken arose. The Esplanade Hotel was opening its doors to-day and they did not anticipate anything else from pickets unless Mr. Paxton excites them.

Mr. Paxton was excited because a few people forced themselves into the back-yard. He said that he saw 200 or 300 people approaching the hotel and he closed the doors because they would have entered the hotel. Thus Mr. Paxton was able to divine the thoughts of these people.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They would not allow people to enter or leave the hotel.

The PREMIER: Anyhow, Mr. Paxton knew exactly what was in their minds. He shut the hotel from inside, and the place was not, as would appear, locked up by those who were on strike. I am sure the House will reject the amendment. I scarcely think members will agree to it, but will prefer to get on with the real business of the country.

MR. MANN (Perth) [5.40]: If I were as capable as the Premier in hiding the true picture, I would be able to place the facts before the House far more satisfactorily than I shall be able to do. From the beginning to the end of his speech the Premier covered the structure with veneer. He hid the real issue and painted a picture of events that did not exist. In reading the reports from the police it will have been noticed that each report set out that there was no assault or disorder. On the other hand not one report stated no other offences had been committed. Is it necessary to have assaults and disorderly scenes before there are infringements of the laws of the State? The reports do not say there were no such infringements of the law but merely that no one had been assaulted and there had been no disorderly scenes.

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Mr. George: Then there were disorderly scenes?

Mr. MANN: The Premier passed very cleverly over all the vital points raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Panton: There were none.

Mr. MANN: With the skill born of his long political experience, the Premier was able to paint a picture that did not deal with the more material aspects of the question. For more than four weeks the business people of Perth were unable to carry on their operations.

The Premier: Because there was a strike.

Mr. MANN: Not because there was a strike or because strikers were on their premises either. In the instances I will quote to the House people were endeavouring to carry on their business without the aid of outside labour. They were trying to carry on as best they could with the efforts of themselves and their families alone. For some reason the strikers were not fighting the ordinary battle to prevent the employment of labour, but were endeavouring to prevent people from being supplied with meals. It did not affect their position at all. Although the proprietors of tea rooms and restaurants were merely carrying on with their families, the strikers decided that they should not be allowed to do so and resorted to extreme measures to prevent them from proceeding. Is the Premier satisfied that the action of strikers in large numbers rushing into business places and upsetting and smashing utensils was orderly, and was not such that the police should be called upon to interfere? I hardly think he will be of that opinion.

The Premier: Not one complaint was made by those people to the police.

Mr. MANN: I will give you the names of the people who reported to me.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why to you?

Mr. MANN: Members can interject as much as they like, but I shall make my point.

The Premier: Not one solitary report was received by the police.

Mr. MANN: The police were present and took no action. The people did go to the Chief of Police.

The Premier: They did not.

Mr. MANN: Let me quote Section 43 of the Police Act, which says—

Any officer or constable of the police force without any warrant other than this Act at any hour of the day or night, may apprehend any person whom he may find drunk or disorderly or using profane indecent or obscene language or who shall use any threatening abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent or calculated to provoke a breach of the peace.

Section 44 reads—

Any officer or constable may enter at any hour of the day or night into any house licensed for the sale of fermented and spirituous liquors or any licensed boarding, eating, or lodging-house, and without any warrant other than this Act apprehend any person whom he may find drunk or behaving himself in an indecent or disorderly manner or using any such language as aforesaid or words or behaviour calculated to provoke a breach of the peace.

The Premier: Why did not this fine, honourable body of men take action?

Mr. MANN: Subsection 41 of Section 550 of the Criminal Code reads—

Any person who, with a view to compel any other person to abstain from doing or to do, any act which such other person has a legal right to do or abstain from doing, wrongfully and without legal authority is guilty of an offence.

The Premier: That section has never been put into operation in this State.

The Minister for Lands: Do you remember that you were going to bring along a deputation to me to make complaints, and that you called it off because you found there were no complaints to make?

The Premier: Do you suggest that the police did not take action?

Mr. MANN: Let me read what Mr. Taylor says. He is a reputable citizen who has been in business in the city for some time.

The Premier: He asked for police protection and got it, and then carried on his business.

Mr. MANN: This is what he says—

On 1st May, the day the strike of tearoom and hotel employees commenced, at about 12.30 p.m., 10 or 40 girls entered my refreshment rooms in a noisy and disorderly manner. A police sergeant entered with them. I enquired what they wanted. They said, "The scabs you have working here." One of the girls climbed on the table and commenced to use abusing and insulting language towards my daughter, who was present. I requested the police sergeant to take her name and address, saying that if the police would not I would prosecute her for disorderly conduct. The sergeant smiled, but did not comply, whereupon the girl said, "Oh, he won't do anything, he's looking after us." The sergeant did not interfere. On Wednesday, 6th May, the strikers arrived at my shop about noon. I telephoned the police and asked for protection. I was told they would send an officer or two. Three constables and one sergeant arrived quickly. A police inspector came shortly afterwards and remained in the vicinity of the shop. The three constables and the sergeant took up positions at the door of my shop. There were 150 to 200 strikers present. The strikers stood in a solid mass in the doorway and did their best to prevent any would-be customers from entering the shop. The police made no attempt to move or prevent the strikers from blocking the entrance to my shop, but they assiduously moved on any of the public who stood to

see what was happening. When I perceived this I telephoned the police station and requested to be "put on" to the inspector in charge. After waiting a short time, an officer spoke and said he was the inspector in charge. I told him what was happening at the door of my shop and pointed out that there were ample police present outside my shop to deal with the situation. I asked him if he could have the police then outside my shop instructed to clear the doorway. He replied, "The police have had instructions and are carrying them out." I then suggested that I should call the police sergeant to the telephone and that the officer should instruct him to clear the doorway. The reply was, "That officer has had his instructions, and is carrying them out." It was then apparent to me that police protection was not forthcoming, that so far as the strike was concerned the police were not functioning. Matters at the entrance to my shop in St. George's terrace then got worse. Well known citizens asserted their right to enter, and in groups of six or more fought their way through the mob of strikers. The strikers were then reinforced by a number of male strikers, who, with the girl strikers, entered the shop and filled it. Citizens still insisted on entering and parties, one led by Mr. Teesdale, M.L.A., continued to fight their way into the shop. The strikers, failing to prevent customers entering, then closed the door from the inside. I opened it, but they again closed it and prevented me from opening it. During the time these things were happening the three constables and the sergeant stood at the shop door, and other police were in the vicinity. They made no attempt to prevent or restrain the strikers, but continually remonstrated with citizens who entered or attempted to enter the shop. Perceiving that the strikers had been allowed by the police to take possession of my premises and to close the door, I told the secretary and the organiser of the employees' union that I should not attempt to open my shop again that day and requested them to take the strikers out. About 40 were in my shop. They said that they would all stay in the shop until I signed the agreement. This I refused to do. They remained in the shop fully 1½ hours, although I frequently requested them to leave, undertaking not to open again that day. They repeated they would not leave until I signed their agreement. During this time the police were at the front of the shop and could see through the window what was taking place inside. At this time and for four days previously I had not employed labour. I was working the business solely with the help of my two daughters and son.

Will the Premier suggest that there was nothing wrong there?

The Premier: Why did he not complain to the police?

Mr. MANN: Apparently he went as far as he could, approaching one officer and then another.

The Minister for Lands: And you believe his statement before the statement of the police?

Mr. MANN: I see no reason why Mr. Taylor should make an incorrect statement.

The Premier: Do you think the police have fallen from their high estate?

Mr. MANN: I form no opinion in that respect. I am taking the position as it existed at that time and say that the police did not act up to what in my opinion was their duty.

The Minister for Works: We will give you directly the position that you left.

The Premier: The police functioned too energetically in the opposite direction at times when you were with them.

Mr. George: That does not affect the present situation.

Mr. MANN: When I was there the Premier is aware of everything I did, and he is not able to find fault with the manner in which I did my duty.

The Premier: No, except the midnight arrest.

Mr. MANN: We shall deal with that later on. There is another glaring instance of the failure of the police to do their duty, and that was in connection with the disturbances that took place outside the Crystal Cafe. That cafe is conducted by Mr. Rees, a well-known resident of the State, a man who has been here for 30 years. He is well known and respected and has been at the Crystal Cafe for a couple of years. On Friday, 1st May, his staff left the premises to attend a stop-work meeting and did not return. He proceeded to attempt to carry on business with the assistance of his family and then received word that a crowd was going to raid his premises. He reported the matter to a constable and asked what he should do. The advice he got was, "The best thing you can do is to close up your premises." The proprietor did not close up, and with the aid of his two sons stood at the door and awaited the arrival of the crowd. They duly arrived and there was an exchange of blows. The crowd then stood back and one said, "Will you permit two of our number to go through your premises to see whether you have anyone employed?" Mr. Rees agreed to this, and the two who went through came out again satisfied. On the 4th May the cafe was again raided and after that it was raided regularly twice a day.

The Minister for Justice: Raided?

The Premier: That is the police term, and might be misunderstood.

Mr. MANN: I will give the facts, and the Premier can form his own conclusion as to whether I am using the right expression. A crowd of about 20 or 30 strikers, and sometimes more, assembled outside the cafe each day and the first procedure was to paste on

the windows signs after this style: "Menu—soup a la cockroach; entries, curried maggots; joint, baked flies; sweets, roast fleas." All this time the police were standing by.

The Premier: Was it the duty of the police to stop that?

Mr. MANN: Was not an action of that kind likely to cause a breach of the peace?

The Premier: It was only amusing.

Mr. MANN: I should like to see what would happen if somebody pasted a similar notice on the door of the Premier's house.

The Minister for Lands: They stuck worse notices than that on my house once, and it was the employers that did it, too.

Mr. MANN: That was what went on day after day. In addition, pickets placed themselves in the doorway of the cafe and anyone that attempted to go in was called a seab, and even stronger terms were used. On one occasion when Mr. Rees, sen., went to tear the notices off the window, he was assaulted; and when he turned round to attack his assailant, the police interfered. I know Mr. Rees very well, and there are members opposite who know him as well as I do, and are aware that he is not a man likely to make such a statement if it were not true. But, quite apart from Mr. Rees, this kind of thing was being done under the eyes of the public every day. Crowds used to assemble every noon to see the event carried out. Was not that an extreme act of intimidation, to go to this man's place of business twice a day in order to try to stop—

The Premier: You say the police should have interfered?

Mr. MANN: Yes.

The Premier: Then they cannot be such a fine, honourable body of men as you have said.

Mr. MANN: I do not know.

The Premier: You have made a serious reflection upon the police, you know, not upon the Government.

Mr. MANN: I am not telling the House something that is not known to the world. The whole of Perth knows that this went on. The conduct of the police in connection with the strike was the topic of conversation among all sections of the people during the currency of the strike. The Minister for Police knows that.

The Minister for Justice: I do not know it.

Mr. MANN: It was commented upon in the streets and in railway trains.

Ministerial Members: Oh!

Mr. MANN: It was apparent to everyone that the police were not doing their duty as they had previously done it. The police were not functioning.

Mr. Hughes: Why did not they do their duty?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member can probably tell me why.

The Minister for Lands: I saw two policemen in front of the Crystal Cafe every day, keeping the footpath clear and keeping the door clear.

Mr. Davy: Masterly inactivity!

Mr. MANN: Did the Minister inquire of the police why they did not do their duty?

The Minister for Lands: I inquired of the police if anything was wrong, and I learnt there was nothing wrong.

Mr. MANN: The story of Mr. Evans, of the Cabin Tearooms, is that on the Friday his employees left in order to attend a stop-work meeting and did not return. On the Saturday he endeavoured to carry on his business with the aid of his family and his counter staff; and the business was conducted during the day, while a large crowd of strikers were up against the back and front doors. Customers had to fight their way through to get into the tearooms. In the evening Mr. Evans decided to close the tearooms, because the pressure had got so strong and there was so much disorder. This was towards eight o'clock. When he did close the tearooms, there were still a number of customers in them. Immediately he closed, there was a rush at the backdoor; the door was burst open, and the manageress, Miss Stewart, was assaulted and knocked unconscious on the floor.

Ministerial Members: Oh!

Mr. MANN: It is all very well for the Minister to say, "Oh," but I tell him that it is correct.

The Premier: We do not believe a word of it.

Mr. MANN: The result was that Miss Stewart was confined to her room, and afterwards was taken to St. George's Hospital in the Terrace, where she was attended to by Dr. Barker for some time. This was owing to the assault made on her when the door was burst in. Will the Premier say that that is an ordinary, everyday occurrence?

The Premier: I do not believe that it occurred.

Mr. MANN: The Premier can adopt that attitude if he likes.

The Premier: This is the first we have heard of it.

Mr. MANN: I am giving the facts as I have received them.

The Minister for Justice: When did you receive them?

Mr. MANN: Both Mr. Evans and Miss Stewart are prepared to give this evidence on oath if necessary.

Mr. Panton: You have a bad case.

Mr. MANN: When Mr. Evans communicated with the police, he was told they were doing all they could. He says he went to the police station and saw a senior officer, who shrugged his shoulders and said, "I cannot do any more than I am doing." What is the suggestion?

The Premier: That there is something seriously wrong with this, according to your statement, honourable body of men. That is your argument.

Mr. MANN: I am just giving the facts as I find them. I am not adding to or taking from them.

The Premier: You are stating things as you have been told them, not as you have found them. It is just *ex parte*.

Mr. MANN: It might be said that all such statements are *ex parte*. When a person makes a charge, that may be called *ex parte* until the other side has been heard. However, the statements have been made.

The Premier: It is a strange thing that as regards this woman who is said to have been injured no complaint was made to the police. In fact, no complaint was made to the police about any of these happenings. Even the vigilant Press did not hear of them.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Evans tells me that he went to the police station and pointed out the desperate condition of things, and that the officer whom he saw shrugged his shoulders and said, "Well, I am sorry, but I cannot do anything more."

The Premier: Your informant can easily say that now. Why did he not write a complaint to the Commissioner of Police? His proper course was to write a complaint to the Commissioner.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No. People do not do those things.

The Premier: Of course it was his proper course.

Mr. MANN: It is no defence to a charge of stealing to accuse another man of forgery. If Mr. Evans failed to do something that the Premier thinks he should have done, that is no excuse for the assault.

The Premier: But the fact that he did not do it gives us ground for doubting his statement.

Mr. MANN: It can be easily verified. St. George's Hospital is in the Terrace, and it can be ascertained whether Miss Stewart was there.

The Premier: She might have been there because a mouse frightened her.

Mr. Chesson: Her having been there does not prove anything.

Mr. MANN: I do not expect to convince the hon. member.

Mr. Chesson: My word will be taken before yours any time, old chap. I know you pretty well by repute.

Mr. MANN: These are not the only cases. There is the case of Mr. Bannon, of the King Edward Hostel.

The Premier: He was excited, too.

Mr. MANN: Was not there good ground for his being excited? Forty or fifty persons were rushing into his premises. This instance again shows the trouble which might have occurred owing to the police not intervening. When those men were rushing into Mr. Bannon's premises, he armed himself with a revolver. Whether that was right or wrong I am not going to say, but it had the effect of stopping the rush.

Mr. Hughes: Why do you not say whether it was lawful or not?

Mr. MANN: The circumstances may have justified his taking that action.

Mr. Hughes: Then you approve of it?

Mr. MANN: The point is that the fact of the police not preventing the rush on his premises caused him to go to something like extremes. Does the Premier say this was an ordinary, everyday occurrence, and that no action should have been taken by the police?

The Premier: If you are making a charge against the police, I will give a Royal Commission of inquiry. Make a charge and we will have a Royal Commission.

Mr. MANN: I am giving the facts.

Mr. Marshall: You are not giving the facts; you are making statements.

Mr. MANN: I do not know whether the men in question were strikers or not. On

such occasions hoodlums get into the crowd, and join in, and make trouble that the strikers would not make. The fact of there being a strike is no reason why the police should not have stopped the hoodlums, if there were hoodlums. Again, there is the case of Mrs. Knight, of the Celtic Cafe. She was conducting the place with her daughter, and there were no employees on the premises. The secretary and the organiser of the union went to see her, and were told that Mrs. Knight and her daughter were carrying on the business by themselves. The secretary and the organiser suggested that they should sign the agreement, which they would not do. Mrs. Knight then put up a notice on the door that the premises were closed until further notice. A couple of hours later the notice was torn down and the doors were burst open by a rough crowd, who entered the premises and pushed both the mother and daughter about. The police were telephoned for, but in the meantime some members of the Celtic Club went down and quietened things and got the crowd away.

The Premier: They did better work than the police, then?

Mr. MANN: Apparently they were quicker on the scene. It is to their credit that they stopped the crowd from pushing the mother and daughter about.

The Premier: It is easy to say they were being pushed about.

Mr. MANN: The lady says so herself. I trust the Premier will not believe that all these people would make these charges unless there was something in them. These people have not conspired together.

The Premier: I admit that things took place which should not have taken place.

Mr. Hughes: You are not bad at making a case.

Mr. MANN: The point is that the Premier painted such a peaceful picture. He smoothly drew the brush across the face of the structure and obliterated everything. He said that these were casual, everyday occurrences, that the police had no right to interfere, and that they did their duty. I ask the Premier whether, if he had known of these occurrences, he would still have said that the police did their duty?

The Premier: I say that an act of indiscretion on the part of the police might have created greater trouble.

Mr. MANN: On the Premier's statement now, strikers, and the hoodlums who follow them, have a right to annoy and molest tradespeople and damage their business premises, and the police must not interfere lest more strikers will go in.

The Premier: Twenty-five shillings' worth of damage was done in the whole of the four weeks.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Raphael, of the Metropolitan Coffee Palace, states that on Saturday the 2nd May, his wife and his daughter were serving meals in the dining room when a crowd rushed in and took the meals from the customers and threw them on the floor. He further states that the crowd then went into the kitchen, followed by a sergeant and a constable of police. He asked the police officers to remove the crowd and put them out, and the police replied that it was his job. He put them out by throwing hot fat and water over them. Is that right? Might not that have led to serious trouble? Would it not have been preferable if the police had got the crowd off the premises? The crowd were unlawfully on the premises.

The Premier: It is not the duty of the police to put people who are unlawfully on premises off the premises if they are not committing a breach of the peace. It is the business of the man who owns the premises to put them off if they are not committing a breach of the peace.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How can one man stand against five hundred?

The Minister for Lands: Would you stick up for a man who threw hot fat and hot water on people? What sense is there in it?

Mr. MANN: Let my statements be refuted if they are not correct.

Mr. Hughes: You have not proved them. You have not even got them in writing.

Mr. MANN: I have given a statement of the facts as they occurred during the strike.

Mr. Marshall: Did you see them?

Mr. MANN: If those statements are correct—and I have no reason whatever to doubt their truthfulness—it is apparent that the police did not do their duty. The question then arises, why did not the police do their duty? Mr. Speaker, I remember during the period when you were Attorney General in a previous Labour Government, there was some trouble at Collie and I was

sent down there. Extra police were asked for, and were sent.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MANN: Before tea I was pointing out that during the administration of previous governments, including the previous Labour Government, there was never any instance of the police failing to do their duty. I remember several industrial troubles during that time. I remember one at Collie, where extra police were asked for, and provided. I remember also a case being tried there by two local justices; and the Crown Law Department, of which you, Sir, were the head, decided that justice had not been done, and so the offenders were re-charged and subsequently fined. The Premier, this afternoon, said it was well that the police did not always carry all the laws into effect during industrial troubles.

The Minister for Justice. Say "any troubles."

Mr. MANN: Probably that was the view held by the Ministers who were here at the time, and by some means that view became known to the police. At all events, the police took the view that it was not wise that all the laws should be put into execution during that industrial trouble.

The Minister for Justice: It never is wise.

Mr. MANN: I realise discretion must be exercised at times; but there is a limit to discretion. If it is an isolated offence, probably the police would be wise in overlooking it; but when the offence is publicly repeated day after day for weeks, is it wise that the police should refrain from taking action?

The Premier: The matter is in their own discretion.

Mr. MANN: Then on that occasion their discretion was ill-advised, for they used too much discretion, inasmuch as they allowed the position to get out of hand.

The Premier: Move for a Royal Commission.

Mr. MANN: That is in the Premier's own hands.

The Premier: But you are making a complaint about the police. Move for an inquiry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The complaint is not about the police, but about the Government, by whom the police are controlled.

The Premier: Are they? Now we know why the police interfered so much on the bosses' side on previous occasions.

Mr. MANN: I am placing before the House definite actions that occurred day by day for weeks. I am giving the facts.

The Premier: Not facts, but ex-parte statements.

Mr. MANN: All charges are necessarily ex-parte. Probably there is not a member of the House who did not during that time see offences committed and the police overlooking those offences, which they knew to be wrong. People who were no party to the dispute were suffering indignities and insults.

Mr. Sleeman: Just as they had to suffer during previous strikes.

Mr. MANN: People who had been accustomed to go to certain restaurants for their meals were called scabs for continuing to do the same thing. Yet no action was taken. True, in one instance a man took action himself, and called as witness a policeman who had heard the expression complained of. In that case the offender was convicted and fined. But people do not desire to mix themselves up in these cases. When such offences are allowed to continue, people become incensed and are likely to retaliate by assault. That, of course, is more likely to lead to riot than if the police took up the matter and prosecuted the offenders.

The Minister for Justice: But the position was getting better every day.

Mr. MANN: Only during the last week did it get better, and it was said that that was due to the Minister for Works, who used his influence with the Disputes Committee and the strikers to stop the picketing.

The Minister for Works: I never approached them on the subject.

Mr. MANN: Well, you are credited with it. However, when the Minister for Works returned, the trouble began to ease down, and I think the Minister will confess that he interested himself in bringing about a settlement.

The Minister for Works: That is very different.

Mr. MANN: Up to that time the position was quite out of hand. The Premier has read a lot of police reports to-night. All those reports go to show that there were large crowds, but no assaults.

The Premier: It is admitted that a number of people were congregated before the shops and hotels.

Mr. MANN: If a lot of people were congregated to prevent others from going into

restaurants, surely the police should have intervened.

The Premier: The police say the foot-paths were kept clear throughout.

Mr. MANN: Day after day I saw the pickets linked arm in arm, four abreast, walking four yards past the door, and four yards in the other direction; and you had to push past them to get into or out of the restaurant. The public were kept off to allow the pickets to carry on their work. No one will suggest that those business people whose names I have mentioned to-night conspired to make those statements if they are not true.

Mr. Marshall: We know that they conspired to close other shops.

Mr. MANN: If the law permits of aggrieved persons plastering the windows of business men with obnoxious posters, why should not two or three business men, when an additional firm opens in opposition to them, go and plaster that firm's windows in like manner?

The Minister for Works: They are doing that now.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then why don't you take action?

The Premier: Because the aggrieved firm can prosecute them.

Mr. MANN: It is the duty of the police to prosecute in such a case.

The Premier: If a man interferes with my property I can prosecute him.

Mr. MANN: But Section 59 of the Police Act provides a penalty of £2 for such offences as were committed during the strike. The Premier admits that the Police Act was broken day after day.

The Premier: You saw it broken every day while you were in the department, yet you did not take action against the men on Hunter's corner.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot prove that.

Mr. MANN: It is no defence to one charge to lay another. I have put before the House a number of infringements of the law as they have been put to me.

The Premier: They are not very serious.

Mr. MANN: But it is only by good fortune that they did not have serious results. Members on the Government side will agree that it is not well that any section of the public should be allowed to get out of hand; because if one section is allowed to do as they like, there is bound to be retaliation by another section.

The Premier: That is what that fellow had in mind when he sought to disrupt the British Empire.

Mr. MANN: I hope I shall not have occasion to again bring before the House such a condition of affairs as obtained during the strike.

The Premier: The girls have promised to behave better in future.

Mr. MANN: This was not confined to girls. There were dozens of men in it; men who, probably, were not connected with the strike at all. Always on such occasions the rough element is only too ready to get into it, as was seen in Melbourne during the police strike. That is what happened when a number of persons broke into the Celtic Cafe, and committed an assault, yet the police did not take the necessary action. Having put the facts to the House, I hope we shall never have any similar scenes in future.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [7.45]: One cannot help approaching this question with a certain amount of diffidence. We have heard the statements of the Leader of the Opposition, the reply of the Premier and the remarks of the member for Perth (Mr. Mann). One wonders, however, what we shall accomplish by the debate, seeing that the Government have a solid majority, while we on this side of the House are in a minority.

The Premier: You mean the united party.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are not very united.

The Premier: This will show that we are more united than are you.

Mr. THOMSON: It is gratifying to have the statement of the Premier that no definite instructions were given to the police. That must be accepted, because no one is able to prove to the contrary.

Mr. Lutey: Oh, you flatterer!

Mr. Panton: That is a back-hander right enough.

Mr. THOMSON: The Premier quoted the reports of the police, and his statements based on the departmental records show that the police did their duty. Whether they did or not is a matter of opinion. It is a great pity that the police as a body should feel that they are liable to victimisation by any political party. There is a general feeling in the country that the police recently have been somewhat lax in the discharge of their duty. During the seamen's strike at Fremantle

when valuable ships were throwing ashore their lines to be tied up, men were permitted to cast them off, thus endangering the ships and the lives of the people on board.

The Minister for Works: We quickly stopped that.

Mr. THOMSON: So far as I can judge the police for a time were not functioning as the people expected them to do.

The Premier: At Fremantle they did. As soon as we were made aware of that, it was prevented.

Mr. THOMSON: God help the workers and the people generally if we lose confidence in the police force! When we are in need of protection we are justified in looking to the police to provide it. For a time there was a certain amount of lawlessness at Fremantle. Those in authority permitted these things to occur for a time.

Mr. Sleeman: Did you see them?

Mr. THOMSON: You know those things did occur.

Mr. Sleeman: I do not.

Mr. THOMSON: No one in this House knows better than does the member for Fremantle.

Mr. Sleeman: You are talking through your neck.

Mr. THOMSON: Well, where in the name of Heaven should I talk through? Those things did occur.

Mr. Sleeman: The "West Australian" said they occurred.

Mr. THOMSON: And the hon. member knows they did occur. Why talk nonsense? Let us deal with facts.

Mr. Sleeman: Well, state facts.

Mr. THOMSON: I am stating facts. Those things did occur. Women and children desirous of embarking for overseas were for a period not permitted to embark, and were compelled to sit in the hot sun. Women and children on the wharf were crying.

The Premier: That was not because of police action, but because the men would not man the boat, and no Government could make them man the boat. It is not attributable to an act of police protection.

Mr. THOMSON: As I understand the position, until Inspector Mitchell went down there with a certain number of police, those women and children were not able to board the steamer.

Mr. Sleeman: The trouble is you do not understand it.

Mr. THOMSON: A feeling is abroad that the police did not function properly during the Fremantle trouble.

The Premier: A feeling fostered by the Press for political reasons.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no desire to deal with that phase of the matter.

The Premier: But you are dealing with Press statements.

Mr. George: Then why not prosecute the Press for misrepresentation?

The Premier: Why don't you prosecute the "Sunday Times" for what it has said about you?

Mr. George: I should like to do more than prosecute it.

Mr. THOMSON: The general impression throughout the State is that the police did not function properly during the recent strike. The Premier has said that no instructions were given to the police and I accept his statement.

The Premier: I say it is a fact, and I do not care who accepts it and who does not. Some seem to be accepting it with reservations.

Mr. Richardson: Don't get cross about it!

Mr. THOMSON: The Leader of the Opposition was justified in bringing the matter before the House.

Mr. Sleeman: It makes people in the country believe it.

Mr. THOMSON: It will be gratifying to many people to learn that no instructions were given by the Government, because the general opinion is that the police were not performing their duties.

The Premier: The whole object of the propaganda was to lead people to believe that.

Mr. THOMSON: No section of the community, whether strikers or not, should be permitted to interfere with a man earning his livelihood, and so long as I am able I shall oppose anything in the nature of intimidation. We are suffering to-day from a process of intimidation. The Premier said the police were wise in not taking action. I do not expect the police to take sides; that is not their function.

The Premier: I said I believed they acted with good judgment and discretion.

Mr. THOMSON: That is a matter of opinion.

The Premier: Of course it is.

Mr. THOMSON: People following their avocations in a lawful way in a free country should be immune from interference.

When this matter has been sufficiently ventilated, I hope the Leader of the Opposition will withdraw his amendment, because he will have accomplished his aim. One must regret the feeling of lack of confidence in the police. If any man enters my home or interferes with my wife or children, I should be able to summon the police with confidence that they will afford me protection. That is what they are for. I congratulate the A.L.P. Congress on having turned down the resolution of the Seamen's Union.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not seem to like the Seamen's Union. What is wrong with it?

The Premier: Mr. Walsh is a nice chap.

Mr. THOMSON: I am glad the Premier has mentioned him. It is said that comparisons are odious, but let me make a comparison. Walsh came to Western Australia and was the means of creating an industrial upheaval at Fremantle.

Mr. Marshall: Walsh is not in the amendment before the House.

Mr. Sleeman: Walsh has been the means of greatly improving the conditions of the seamen.

Mr. THOMSON: Walsh, in the eyes of the Commonwealth, committed a breach of the law and he was arrested, but some remarkable influence must have been at work because, when he said he would return to Melbourne to answer the charge, he was permitted to do so. Another man connected with a big venture, De Garis, had what I consider was a mental lapse and left the State in which he was living.

The Premier: Mental lapse! That is a good one.

Mr. THOMSON: He got as far as New Zealand and was arrested. De Garis made exactly the same offer as did Walsh. He said, "If you will permit me, I will go back and face the charge." He was, however, detained until a detective had been sent from Sydney to take him back in custody. One cannot help asking oneself the question why one man should have been treated in one way—

Mr. Sleeman: They could trust Walsh and not the other man.

The Premier: Walsh was an honourable man. He gave his word he would go back.

Mr. Sleeman: Walsh's word is his bond.

Mr. THOMSON: Members seem extraordinarily contented about the matter.

Mr. Sleeman: I do not believe everything he says.

Mr. THOMSON: We cannot help wondering why this man, who is a stormy petrel, and who is followed by industrial unrest wherever he goes, should be treated differently from the other man who is just as honourable and who, for all his mistakes, has done more for the Commonwealth than the former who has only created trouble. Why are such influences at work?

The Premier: I wonder what influence is at work with Mr. Bruce and Dr. Page. Walsh seems to do what he likes with them. We had better send a wire to Dr. Page.

Mr. THOMSON: There is a general impression in Western Australia that because a Labour Government is in power the police were perhaps a little more lenient than they would otherwise have been.

The Minister for Justice: There was no necessity for anything else.

Mr. THOMSON: The Minister himself somewhat added to that impression. He gave definite instructions that certain commodities were not to be carried on the railways. Ministers are governing the State by virtue of the oath they took that they would do justice to all men, but I am of opinion that the Minister for Justice signally failed in that direction when he issued the instructions I speak of. He can refute that statement if he likes.

The Minister for Justice: I do refute it.

Mr. THOMSON: He did so on statements made by certain members of the disputes committee.

The Minister for Justice: No.

Mr. THOMSON: One of the railway men was a member of the disputes committee.

Mr. Panton: He is not.

Mr. THOMSON: Mr. Kenneally is a member of the officers' association. Unfortunately that action of the Minister contributed to the general impression that the Government are rather favouring those who were out on strike in preference to the other side. When Ministers are in office they should hold the scales of justice in the balance towards every section of the community. Not much good can be achieved by the amendment, for the numbers are already up. The Government will do much good if they remove the feeling I refer to that they were somewhat lax, or that there was some power which caused the police to be lax, to a certain extent, in the execution of their duties.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Wilcock—Geraldton) [8.5]: There seems to be an insinuation, if not a direct statement, that the police received certain instructions as to the manner in which they should carry out their duties during the industrial trouble in Perth. As it happened, the strike commenced on a Friday. On the preceding evening I went to Geraldton to attend the May Day celebrations. Most of the alleged disorder that we hear about occurred before I knew anything of the strike. It would, therefore, have been impossible for me to give any instructions in the matter. I did not return from Geraldton until the following Wednesday morning. Any instructions I could have given would have had to be sent either by wire or by telepathy, because I did not know of the strike until I saw the paper in Geraldton on Saturday night. The allegation with regard to myself is, therefore, preposterous. Upon my return to Perth I read the papers and the rather startling way in which things were dishd up. It seemed from the papers that things were not going too well so far as the police were concerned. I immediately communicated with the Police Department in order to ascertain the position. The Commissioner was away on holiday. I do not know whether it was a coincidence or a conspiracy that both the Minister and the Commissioner should have foreseen the strike and got away to avoid trouble.

Mr. Taylor: And with the Premier away, too.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: I, therefore, got into touch with the officer in charge and asked how the law was being maintained. I received an assurance that everything was satisfactory from the point of view of the police, that law and order were being maintained, that slight disorders had occurred, but the police had the matter well in hand, and that no serious disorder had in fact arisen. In connection with industrial disputes generally people get excited, and do things they would not otherwise do. The police were satisfied that everything was being done that could be done. Naturally I accepted the assurance that this was so. When the paper came out the next morning with further "scare" headlines I saw it would not be well for me to bury my head in the sand like an ostrich, and refrain from taking

steps to make myself personally acquainted with what was going on. On that day, therefore, and many other days on which scenes of disorder were reported, I had a look at what was going on. If anyone can say deliberately that riots, riotous scenes and brawls were frequent, that disorder was apparent and lawlessness prevailed, he has no sense of perspective.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: When did you go round the streets?

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: I did not go every day, but I went on many occasions, whenever I had the opportunity of doing so. I was satisfied that the police were carrying out their duties as they should do.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You were away from the Esplanade affair.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: Yes.

Mr. George: They took advantage of your absence.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: I was assured that while I was away the police considered that the law was being maintained, and that everything was being carried out in a comparatively satisfactory manner. In industrial disputes there is always a certain amount of disorder. Those who have read industrial history know what has taken place in the past on such occasions.

The Premier: We know what has taken place in this Chamber sometimes.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: Members have been put out of the Chamber.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not always when they deserved it, either.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: The only thing that seems to be greatly concerning the Opposition is that the people who were on strike were allowed to do picketing.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not say a word about picketing.

Mr. George: They obstructed the free passage of the streets.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: Not to any great extent.

Mr. George: They did.

The **MINISTER FOR JUSTICE**: I walked along the street on many occasions without trouble.

Mr. Thomson: You would not expect them to deal with you.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I did not go round and give personal instructions to the police. I do not suppose I am known to half the members of the police force. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) seemed to think that the picketing was the most important phase of the trouble.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Pickets must behave themselves.

Mr. George: The traffic in the streets was stopped.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Traffic is often stopped by many people. When the Leader of the Opposition got back from England there was a procession which stopped the traffic.

Mr. George: And in the case of the Premier, too.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is not to say there is any disorder. The traffic was stopped when the Y.A.L. boys returned.

Mr. George: That was a different thing. You could get your tucker then, but not during the strike.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It may be said that in my anxiety to assist the motor bus people to make a demonstration I connived with them to create disorder, and bung up the traffic by allowing the procession which occurred recently.

Mr. George: They have given you the lead to deal with the traffic.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Almost every week something occurs to block the traffic, but so long as law and order prevail and and there is no lawlessness, or anything done to harm anyone, is there any objection to such a demonstration?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will you resign if we prove there was lawlessness?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I admit that in connection with industrial disputes there will always be slight disorder, but only to a degree.

Mr. Pantou: And not confined to one side.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. The picketing system has been established as a right for a hundred years.

Mr. George: Not as a right.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Mr. George: No, but it has been passively allowed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It has been established as a right. The hon. member may shake his head, but the fact remains it has been established since the anti-

combination laws were repealed in England so many scores of years ago.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But the pickets have had to behave themselves.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: As they did in this case.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, they did not.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: When the Commissioner of Police read the papers in Busselton or Augusta he thought it his duty to return to Perth. In his mind was created a picture of disorder and lawlessness in the city. As the responsible head of the department he thought he should come back to see about it. That was the effect of the propaganda upon his mind.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Propaganda is a good word.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. No other word can adequately describe the position. Immediately the Commissioner returned to Perth he consulted his officers about the strike position. I saw him, too, and asked him what was happening regarding the police. He perused the reports and I, too, had seen them. After he had looked through them, the Commissioner, as the responsible officer in charge of the police force, stated that he considered every step necessary was being taken in the interests of law and order. I did not tell him to do anything else. No instructions of any kind were given to him. I do not know whether it is suggested that the mind of the Commissioner of Police is so warped because a Labour Government are in power that he would connive with us in doing what he did not think should be done.

Mr. George: That is not suggested; nothing of the sort.

The Premier: You have been making serious charges against him.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, we have not.

The Premier: Yes, you have.

Mr. George: We know the Commissioner too well to suggest that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If Mr. Connell is so well known, and his character is held in such high esteem by members of the Opposition, why cannot they accept his assurance, even if they will not accept the assurances of Ministers?

The Premier: On the contrary they are making serious charges against him and the police generally.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, against the Government.

The Premier: You can't get out of it that way.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we can.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are charging you with this. We do not charge the police here. You are in control.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Commissioner of Police has never done anything to suggest that he has no proper understanding and he did not give evidence of that in this instance. There is no necessity to give that officer instructions. After he had had experience of what was going on for a day or two, he was satisfied that everything was being carried on in a proper manner. The Premier referred to the application for police protection at a public meeting.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The police have been at other meetings.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In view of all the circumstances, the Commissioner of Police thought that the Government might like to be consulted when he received the application. He told me that he had received it, but did not think it was necessary to provide the police. He told me that if the Government thought the police should be made available against his advice and wishes, he was prepared to make them available. I was not going to set up my opinions against the Commissioner's recommendation, and told him that whatever he considered to be his duty and to be best in view of all the circumstances, he was to proceed to do it. The whole matter was left to him and, as he did not think it was necessary to supply a posse of police for the public meeting, he did not do so. Had the posse been provided, it might have affected the psychology of the crowd at the meeting and led to disturbances.

Mr. George: Then you discussed the whole affair with the Commissioner of Police?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I have told the House that, owing to the circumstances surrounding the application, he brought the matter under my notice. I saw him about various matters and every time I consulted him he told me there was no necessity to take any other action. I asked the Commissioner what different action could be taken if another Government were in power, and he said that we might get a

crowd of mounted policemen to gallop through the crowd.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He did not say anything of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He did.

The Premier: He knows how you treated them in the past.

Mr. Corboy: He knew you had field ambulances out and all the rest of it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I had nothing of the sort.

Mr. Corboy: Yes, you did.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not.

Mr. Marshall: And barbed wire entanglements.

Mr. Richardson: They frightened the crowd off.

Mr. Corboy: We were not looking for bloodshed, even if you were.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You were out to destroy buildings.

Mr. Corboy: No, we were not.

Mr. Richardson: Why come in crowds, then?

Mr. Corboy: They were not looking for bloodshed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: They came in crowds, yet nothing happened! Nothing of particular interest or lawlessness to any extent occurred.

The Premier: Twenty-five shillings' worth of damage was done during the whole month.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What had that to do with it?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Here were scenes of greater disorder, and yet there was no damage done.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I suppose £20,000 worth of trade was lost by these people.

The Premier: That is the trouble!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And £40,000 was lost by the workers.

Mr. Corboy: And you wanted police protection for them to secure their profits.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Premier: That is your trouble. They went on strike!

Mr. Corboy: You are concerned about the loss of profit, not the destruction of property.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You don't care a jot about the workers.

Mr. Corboy: You care about the profits.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You don't care if the workers starve.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A nice crowd you are!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It appears to me that there was a great deal of politics about the whole matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Politics had nothing to do with it.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Some letters that appeared in the Press have been quoted. I have a letter that appeared, and I think it gives an indication of what all this meant. I do not know whether members would describe this letter as political propaganda or not.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: By whom is it signed?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: By some person who was afraid to put his own name to it.

The Premier: By "Law and Order"?

Mr. Corboy: No, "Mother of Seven."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The letter was signed "Pro Patria." I suppose it was somebody in the newspaper office. At any rate he said in his letter—

While there is much to complain about in this wretched business, the public, who are suffering, are solely to blame. They returned a Labour Government at a time when some respect for law and order was being shown and the country was gradually getting out of the toils of a legacy left by a previous Labour Government. As one who tried hard to keep the Nationalist Government in power, I haven't much sympathy with those who now bewail the absolute indifference of the Labour Government for their welfare, but it is perhaps useful to point out to them that they will shortly have another opportunity to restore themselves to a sane place—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That man is an optimist.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He continued—

—by emphatically rejecting those men who, representing as they do the extreme wing in Labour politics, will come before them for seats in the Federal Parliament. Some of these men know something about disputes conferences; they know exactly the difference between right and wrong, sincerity and fear, and they should be made to realise that although the public act foolishly sometimes, at other times they are very sane.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is a very good letter.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, from a political standpoint.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It contains common sense.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The writer is honest in his views; he seeks to make use of the trouble to suit the political views he holds and which he desires to advance.

Mr. George: We don't mean to suggest that the strike was the aftermath of our rejection at the elections.

The Premier: Oh, that was only one of the State's minor calamities.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Perhaps the fact that the elections in New South Wales were in progress at the time, and that telegrams were being sent from Western Australia to that State, had something to do with it. It was part of the propaganda that was going on.

The Premier: And, even then, Fuller lost!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Perhaps it was used to convey the impression on the other side that if the Labour Party were returned to power, law and order would not prevail.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You brought Charlton and others over here—

Mr. Corboy: And they proved very effective.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You lost everywhere they went.

The Premier: With five Labour Governments in Australia, you are being driven to despair.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And they are dealing with matters so badly that the people will soon throw them out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Here is another sample of this propaganda. The Sydney "Bulletin" has a contributor in Western Australia and during the time the New South Wales elections were in progress that contributor wrote as follows, under the heading of "More Labour 'government'":—

Nowadays, when a Red strike occurs in Perth or the neighbourhood, the chicken-hearted Labour Government advocates in favour of the Trades Hall Disputes Committee. It implored that body's aid when Walsh's ruffians were molesting overseas passengers during the seamen's strike. So when a large section of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union struck in defiance of an arbitration award and adopted what are called "militant tactics" the Government crawled into its hole and the Disputes Committee took charge of the city. There was boisterous hilarity among the committee and its friends when Davies, the new Labour-appointed President of the Arbitration Court, ordered the strikers to observe the terms of their agreement; and by way of showing Davies what a small circumstance he is in

the eyes of the new unionism, the Perth barmaids, who get £5 a week, were called out, also the police stood by while gangs of men and women pushed their way into restaurants and assaulted those who were working, exploded smoke bombs on the premises and forcibly prevented the entrance of hungry citizens.

The Minister for Lands: We know where the bomb came from; it came from the employers.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In view of the election in New South Wales, and in order to discredit the Labour Party and all it had to do with, this sort of propaganda was carried on and the people were led to believe that, as the result of the suspension of law and order here, bombs and everything else were used.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We cannot help what was said in New South Wales.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But that is why this publicity work was carried on; it was useful in connection with the New South Wales election. The real facts regarding the bomb, as disclosed in the police report, were that it was dropped from the balcony by someone inside the building, and that the people outside, whose discomfiture the bomb was to secure, picked it up and threw it into the doorway. Yet the impression is sought to be created that bombs were used.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How is it that you are so well informed on that point, and know so little about other points?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: These details appeared in the police reports and I perused them in order to ascertain what was going on. I do not wish to discuss the question of the public meeting to any extent.

Mr. Latham: It was a very orderly meeting.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: And that just shows how some people must have been extremely bad judges when they asked that a strong posse of police should be provided both inside and outside the building.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I thought you said the Mayor asked for the police.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He made the application but I suppose someone else must have put the matter before him. Perhaps the statements that appeared in the newspapers may have lead the Mayor to think that the position was more serious than it was. For that reason he may have thought it advisable to have police present.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And you would not let them go.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I did not stop the policemen going. The Commissioner merely told me he had the application and what action he was going to take. He let me know about it. I had no right to tell him what to do, nor was there any necessity for me to find fault with his judgment; he was in the best position to know what action he should take.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The police have been wanted at public meetings.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But they were not wanted on that occasion. We did have Councillor Hartrey making his speech in regard to picketing and trespassing. He took rather a distorted view of the situation, for he said the police were paralysed. If the police were paralysed and impotent and did not carry out their duties, then it would seem that the money we spend on police protection is money wasted.

Mr. Mann: Can you suggest why Councillor Hartrey should have said it if it were not warranted?

Mr. Marshall: He talks more rot than ever Percy Brunton did.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The silly statements made at the meeting met with the laughter and ridicule they deserved. I do not want to say much about the speech of the member for Perth (Mr. Mann), but having read his remarks I consider that he grossly libelled the police. He seemed to imply that they were a set of crawlers or smoochers who were prepared to make any statement they thought would meet with the approval of the Government, believing that if they did not do so they would be transferred to Kimberley.

The Premier: He has said he would do the same if he were there.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He presented a somewhat humiliating spectacle.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He made a jolly good speech, anyhow.

Mr. Corboy: You are judging it by your own standard.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There was in the hall a plain clothes policeman who gave a similar report to that appearing in the "West Australian."

Mr. Mann: Then the "West" was right that time.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But you were wrong in the statements you made.

Mr. George: Why not address yourself to the responsibility of the Government rather than to that of the police?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If we have a responsible body of police looking after law and order, they ought not to be interfered with by the Government. The insinuations made by the member for Perth could only come from a politically biased and prejudiced mind. Then we have the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy).

Mr. Latham: He, too, made a good speech.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The impression I gained on reading the report of his speech was that the whole meeting must have been politically biased; for in his first half dozen words he declared that he felt it his duty to dissociate himself from any political bias. The political atmosphere of the newspaper reports was so heavy that it even got on the Deputy Premier's mind, and in consequence he deemed it his duty to personally interview the Commissioner of Police.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was after I saw him.

The Minister for Lands: No, it was before.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Deputy Premier went into the whole matter with the Commissioner of Police and received the same assurance that I had, namely, that the Commissioner considered the action taken at the time was all that was necessary. If we look at this thing calmly and dispassionately we must admit that everything was carried out satisfactorily. Nothing startling occurred; there was no damage to property, no assaults, no ruffianism, nothing that reasonable men could take exception to in a time of excitement. I read all the police reports that came through—about 160 pages of them—and they all showed that there was no disorder and no necessity for further action. Yet if the opinion expressed to-night by Opposition members is warranted, the police must be all liars, and there must have been a conspiracy amongst them to agree in what they said. Personally I would prefer to take the report of the police—some of them sergeants with 20 years of service—than to take that of a person who had never seen any industrial trouble and never been present at any serious disorder. Some of the police knew only too well what it meant if anybody

were to indulge in a foolish action that would create a riot. With the Leader of the Opposition I agree that our police are a fine body of men, and I say that on this occasion they demonstrated their tact and discretion. Something has been said about intimidation, and the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) read the law on the subject. But many of the sections of the Criminal Code are not carried out in full, are there merely to be used should necessity arise. Successive Governments have never attempted to put into operation that section of the Code referred to by the member for Perth. Yet it is said that because in that respect we followed precedent we showed favour to one section of the community as against another. The Leader of the Opposition said that something had occurred at Northam. The Press paragraph purporting to have come from me was the result of a scrappy telephonic conversation with a reporter.

Mr. George: It is very injudicious to talk to them over the telephone.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I know it now. I have had my experience in that regard. Never again! The published statement was not correct; it was not even a reasonable interpretation of my remarks. Even on the following day when I handed a typed statement to the Press putting the position properly, it was altered to convey a different impression before it appeared in print.

Mr. Taylor: In other words it misrepresented you.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Mr. Thomson: Did you or did you not give instructions that the freight should not be accepted?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am not under cross-examination. If the Minister was assured by people in a position to know that if certain commodities were accepted by the railways, they would not reach their destination, the obvious course was to notify the consignors.

Mr. Thomson: Who said it would not reach its destination?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: People who knew the industrial conditions.

Mr. George: Is that another form of job control?

Mr. Latham: It is purely job control.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: When the member for Murray-Wellington was Commissioner of Railways there were occa-

sions when, owing to washaways and other circumstances, he could not guarantee that freight offered to the railways would reach its destination, and so it was refused.

Mr. George: That is an entirely different matter. One is a washaway and the other a washout.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There was good reason to believe that the beer would not reach its destination, because beer was being held up at Fremantle through industrial action. If a consignor had persisted in sending his goods and an official refusing to handle it, had been suspended or sacked, industrial trouble would have been created throughout the railway service, and those in control would have been held guilty of culpable negligence for creating strife over a few bottles of beer.

Mr. George: That means the railway service told you they would not carry the beer. Is that it?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. The secretaries of the railway organisations told me.

Mr. George: That is job control, is it not?

The Premier: They refused to run the railways when you were there, and tied them up for weeks.

Mr. George: I am simply saying this is job control.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Government, of which the member for Murray-Wellington was a member, were warned that unless certain things happened, the railways would be stopped and chaos would result. The Minister took no notice and a stoppage occurred, and the Minister was blamed for indiscretion and lack of tact.

Mr. George: Who was that?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Mr. Scaddan. This sort of thing is not confined to Western Australia.

Mr. George: You cannot see where that it going to lead you.

The Minister for Lands: We kept the railways running and carried the wheat to the ports. That was more important than a few bottles of beer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The South Australian Government found themselves in a somewhat similar position a couple of weeks back and took similar action. Here is a wire that appeared in the "West Australian" on the 24th July—

Owing to the coastal trading steamer "Wandana" having been declared black, the South Australian railways department has

ceased its method of conveying passengers and goods from the "Wandana" at Port Adelaide to Adelaide, a distance of six miles, owing to fear of trouble with the railwaymen's union.

In England the industrial people have no doubt as to what would occur in similar circumstances there. Here is an opinion cabled from England on the 26th July and published in the "West Australian" on the 28th July—

Mr. C. T. Cramp (General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen) in a speech at Woodford (Northamptonshire) said that if the men who refused to move the coal in the event of the mines stopping were suspended or dismissed, the whole of the railwaymen would be embroiled.

That is what would have occurred here. I do not think the people would have a very high opinion of a Government who allowed the railway service to become embroiled in an industrial dispute over the carriage of a few bottles of beer.

Mr. George: It is not the beer, but the action taken. It is job control and nothing else.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The action was that of a prudent man who desired to keep the country from industrial chaos.

Mr. George: No doubt your intentions were sincere.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: And discretion was shown, too.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Honest but expedient!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the beer had been carried and industrial trouble had ensued, we might justifiably have been accused of a gross error of judgment and criminal disregard of the country's interests.

Mr. George: You accept your responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes; it was the wise thing to do in the circumstances. It should not be necessary to give an assurance that the Government will maintain law and order. It may be well to mention that during the course of the dispute, names were taken by the police on many occasions. It might be asked why prosecutions did not follow. At the settlement it was agreed that all acts that had occurred during the strike would be overlooked, that amicable relations would be resumed, and that there should be no victimisation. There was no necessity to proceed with the prose-

cutions and no prosecutions took place. Looking back on the events I have no regrets and no misgivings.

Mr. Thomson: Do you realise that the strike was a ghastly blunder?

Mr. Marshall: It was not as big a blunder as you are.

Mr. Mann: What an intelligent interjection!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Government had nothing to do with the strike. Surely it is not desired to lay the blame for the strike on the Government. I could not have taken any action other than that which was taken. If industrial trouble occurs in future, as I suppose it will, and there is no greater lawlessness or cause for complaint than existed during the recent dispute, the State will have cause to consider itself extremely fortunate.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [8.55]: I was pleased to hear the Premier remark that the function of the Opposition was to criticise, and that when the Opposition ceased to criticise, it ceased to justify its existence or to earn the somewhat meagre allowance paid by a not very grateful country. It appears to me that the Opposition may be regarded as the ladder up which the discontented feelings of some sections of the community might mount to the exalted heights occupied by Ministers. Again, it may be described as the spade that digs the head of the ostrich out of the sand, the ostrich being the Government. Surely if the Opposition perform that function, the Government should be very grateful to them.

The Premier: I expressed my gratitude.

Mr. DAVY: Surely there can be no more dangerous position for the Government than to hear only the voice of the sycophant, the one-eyed supporter, who extends a congratulatory hand and says, "Well done brother, everything in the garden is lovely."

The Minister for Lands: It is surprising how the one-eyed supporters are increasing in number.

Mr. DAVY: A bad thing is frequently contagious. One germ quickly becomes many germs. We, I hope, are the antidote that will stop the increase of the germs. I assure the Premier and his Ministers that there is a voice, other than that of the one-eyed supporter, speaking in tones of discontent and irritation and fear of the future, and those tones are honestly merited by certain things that happened during the recent in-

dustrial trouble. I shall not use the term "upheaval"; I do not think the Leader of the Opposition purposely chose the word. It was a nice little tit-bit for the Premier to seize on, but no more.

The Premier: Surely you are not going back on your Leader?

Mr. DAVY: No. Whether those tones of complaint are justified or not, so long as they continue to murmur, they are a menace to the Government, and the Government should know of it. We are entitled to-night to show that they are justified. The attitude of the Premier was such—if I may say so without being disrespectful—as to throw contempt upon the whole thing, to treat it rather as a storm in a teacup, to suggest that the statements produced by hitherto reputable citizens were a pack of lies, and that the statements in the Press were, to put it mildly, gross exaggerations.

The Premier: And I believe they were.

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps so, but this is not a suitable place in which to test the truth or otherwise of the facts. We are not properly constituted nor have we the time to hear evidence, sift it, and come to a conclusion on the facts.

The Minister for Works: The speech of the Leader of the Opposition was founded on these newspaper reports.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And they are true, too.

Mr. DAVY: When we are faced with the necessity of ascertaining the truth concerning a matter, we appoint a select committee or a Royal Commission. The result of their deliberations is perhaps not always entirely satisfactory to any member of the House, and certainly never to all. If we are to go into the question as to whether the Press is lying or these citizens who have hitherto been regarded as reputable are lying—

The Premier: Or the police.

Mr. DAVY:—we should have a properly constituted inquiry. It may be said that the police evidence is negative. They say they did not see anything happen. Other people say these things did happen. It would be consistent that the statements of the citizens should be true, and those the Premier has read from the police should also be intended to be true.

The Premier: The police did not say they did not see these things. They say definitely that nothing took place.

Mr. DAVY: If the Premier is satisfied that there is an irreconcilable divergence of

opinion between the police and the persons mentioned by the member for Perth, an inquiry ought to be held.

The Minister for Works: He did not produce any statements.

Mr. DAVY: I have seen them. They are printed and signed statements. One statement was that of W. H. Taylor. He sent it to me and I read it and handed it to the hon. member. Mr. Taylor says he is prepared to place on affidavit the facts set forth in the document, or to give sworn testimony to that effect. Is he telling an untruth?

Mr. Panton: How would you get on in the police court if these three policemen swore otherwise?

Mr. DAVY: There is sometimes too great a tendency to accept the statements of the police as against the other evidence.

Mr. Panton: I do not agree with that.

The Premier: That is why the member for Perth was so successful.

Mr. DAVY: Some members may have found that the skilled witness, the policeman, has his tale accepted. I do not say his evidence is deliberately untrue, but there is often honest divergence of opinion amongst witnesses as to what happened. Often the testimony of the experts, the police, carries greater weight than it merits. Be that as it may, Mr. Taylor has put in a signed statement, and is willing to give it on oath. Every statement the member for Perth has put forward is signed by these people. If the Premier is convinced that the two sets of statements are irreconcilable, he should find out who is speaking the truth.

Mr. George: Both may be telling the truth.

Mr. DAVY: For the purposes of this argument it is not necessary to rely upon any facts that are in dispute. One can make out a case that the Government have failed during this industrial dispute to maintain law and order as it should have been maintained. There are facts which cannot be in dispute, facts which I can vouch for personally during the days of the strike, because, with others, I witnessed many of the happenings. No doubt other members of Parliament who were in town did the same. Outside two cafés in the centre of the town during a certain part of every day in the early stages of the strike there were dense crowds of people.

The Minister for Lands: You will find that at every drapery sale in Perth.

Mr. DAVY: I have not seen anything like the crowds I am talking about standing continuously outside any place in Perth. The police were present and were endeavouring when I passed, which was frequently, to keep clear a narrow part of the pavement for the passage of pedestrians. Their efforts were not altogether successful. Being a man of peace, and not one who is "looking for a bit" I found it much easier to walk round the crowd and step into the road. That is what I did every day I passed. I preferred to do that rather than to penetrate the crowd on the footpath.

The Minister for Justice: Then there could not have been much of a crowd in the street.

Mr. DAVY: The crowd was on the footpath, and the opening through it was so narrow that one could not pass without being jostled. No one can suggest that these people were not committing a breach of the traffic regulations in that they were obstructing the free passage of pedestrians. Almost every week one finds persons charged in the Police Court with obstructing the traffic. As a rule the police are very active in enforcing these regulations and others under the Traffic Act. I know from personal experience of a man who was arrested in Barrack-street, shut up in the lock-up and prosecuted and fined. His offence was that he walked on the right hand side of the footpath instead of the left hand side.

The Minister for Justice: Will you give me his name?

Mr. DAVY: I will do so afterwards. The Minister was not in office at the time.

The Minister for Lands: That was at the time when persons were instructed to keep to the left instead of to the right.

Mr. DAVY: It was about a month after that. This shows that the police are active in enforcing these regulations. Almost weekly people are prosecuted for obstructing the traffic. As a rule they are prosecuted for an offence that is alleged to have been committed on a Saturday afternoon. At the time there is an almost negligible amount of traffic in St. George's-terrace, and no ordinary person could say that any traffic was being obstructed. The police suspect that the men are there for the purpose of carrying on footpath bookmaking. They are unable to prove the bookmaking, and prosecute them for obstructing the traffic although they are not doing so.

Mr. Clydesdale: There are not too many of them.

Mr. DAVY: They are suspected of carrying on an illegal act which the police cannot prove. On the other hand, we have seen these mobs of people standing on the footpath, which is an offence against the Traffic Act. Certain men in the crowd carried aloft on poles placards containing most insulting remarks. Others in the crowd made a practice of posting on the windows, doors and outside walls of the two restaurants, insulting placards. People in the crowd were frequently heard in loud and distinct tones, which must have reached the ears of the police, hurling foul epithets at people who were going in and out of the restaurants. Who the people were that did this I do not know. They may have included the redoubtable Miss Shelley or the late lamented ex-comrade Ryece.

Mr. Sleeman: I thought you didn't want to mention names. You were most particular about not doing so just now.

Mr. DAVY: The Minister asked me for the name of a private person, who does not hold any public position whatever.

Mr. Sleeman: I suppose he is a squatter.

Mr. DAVY: No. He is a private person, and I do not want his name in the paper to advertise the fact that he was prosecuted. Again, these people may have been members of the Employers' Federation. It does not matter who they were. They were doing things that no one can say were legal. Whereas the police prosecute alleged book-makers for obstructing the traffic when they are not doing so, they fail to prosecute people who have in fact obstructed the traffic and have committed an offence that can be proved. The position is an anomalous one. Either the police have got it into their heads that there are two sets of laws in Western Australia, a set to apply to ordinary persons living ordinary lives, and another to apply to persons who are engaged in industrial disputes, or there is some other reason for it.

The Minister for Works: That is just what has happened in the past.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. DAVY: If it has happened in the past it is as wrong to-day as it ever will be. I have no political past.

The Premier: You have no past.

Mr. DAVY: I may not have a political future, but while I have a political present I propose to criticise any action that I think is wrong in this Government, even if they have taken their cue from another Govern-

ment of possibly a different political complexion. It will always and forever be wrong that there should be any other code of laws than that which is written in our statutes, and which it is the duty of every citizen in the country at his peril to know and obey.

The Minister for Lands: Try it on to-day, and see what a row there will be in Perth!

Mr. DAVY: Well, let us have a row.

Mr. Withers: I thought you were a man of peace.

Mr. DAVY: I am a man of peace, but there is a certain point—

The Minister for Lands: What would the Argonauts do?

Mr. DAVY: I do not know what they would do, but as long as I have anything to do with them they will never do or plan anything involving a breach of the law.

The Minister for Lands: If one sticks strictly to the letter of the law, there are some people always breaking the law, every day in the week.

Mr. DAVY: I should like to have an instance. It is all very well to talk in that loose way. Now I will give a case which is not disputable, the case of Mr. Bannon. Mr. Bannon is said to have drawn, and is admitted to have drawn, a revolver from his pocket when a mob of people were approaching him. Why have not the police arrested this man who drew a revolver from his pocket and flourished it and threatened the lives of his fellow creatures? Is it because he was justified, because he was honestly and reasonably in fear that his property or his life, or the lives of his wife and children, were in danger? Or is it because we are become like the Americans are said to be, a nation of gunmen, a people who go about with firearms and produce them in moments of excitement and let them off with impunity? No. The reason is that the police have got it into their heads—how I do not know, and I am under no obligation to theorise—that there is this dual system of laws in Western Australia. I say with conviction that it is the duty of this and every Government to disillusion the police as to that. There is one other matter I wish to deal with, a matter which has not yet really been mentioned. That is, in my opinion, another failure on the part of the Government to preserve law and order. No doubt I will again get the same answer, "Your crowd did it, or did not do it," and

I will give the same reply, that I do not care what my crowd did in the past, before I became one of them. The Minister for Works last year, in what I may term and what I honestly believe to be an eloquent and impassioned speech in this Chamber, affirmed his approval of the principle of industrial arbitration. He quoted at length from the work of that great authority on arbitration, Mr. Justice Higgins, the work called "A New Province of Law and Order." The Minister also brought in a Bill to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1912, the Act which lays down the principle of arbitration. In that amending Bill the Minister made no suggestion that Section 104 of the Act should be amended. One must conclude, then, that he is of the same opinion to-day as the Labour Government which introduced the Act, namely that Section 104 is a good and proper section to be on the statute-book. That section, as we all know, provides that strikes and lockouts are forbidden, and equally the instigation of strikes and lockouts, and makes it an offence for any person to take part in a strike or lockout, or instigate a strike or lockout.

Mr. Panton: The only time that section was put into operation was by a Labour Government.

Mr. DAVY: It is difficult for me to imagine how anybody framing an Industrial Arbitration Act could have failed to include that Section 104. Industrial arbitration was devised for the sole purpose of abolishing that barbarous method of settling industrial disputes, the strike. Industrial arbitration was intended to be, not ancillary to the strike method, but an alternative; and of course the draftsman who drafted the measure saw clearly that if one was going to have industrial arbitration, one must at least wipe out strikes. The Industrial Arbitration Act was an honest attempt to take a step forward from the claw and tooth method of deciding things—the method of the strike—towards the "sweet reason" method. Therefore we find this provision making strikes an offence. If one is going to allow strikes by law, then the whole of the work of the Arbitration Court and its expensive paraphernalia are nothing but a senseless waste of public money. How could it be otherwise? Yet we had this strike extending over a period of four weeks, and the Labour Government, who placed on the statute-

book this Act and have since approved again the section forbidding strikes, have not lifted one finger to punish the people who committed the offence of striking during the currency of an industrial agreement. And, worse than that, the present Government have not lifted one finger to preserve the dignity and authority of the President of the Arbitration Court, a President who was selected and appointed by themselves. I do not for one moment suggest that it was not a proper appointment; I think it was. If I did not think so, I would not mention the appointment here. That President, who at least is the present Government's selection, has been permitted to have his dignity and authority flouted. Early in the strike, on the initiative of the registrar of the Arbitration Court, he issued an injunction forbidding the strikers to carry on stop-work meetings, and ordering them back to work. They laughed. Their laughter was loudly to be heard throughout Western Australia. What has occurred since? If hearsay evidence is correct, the strikers were applauded in their laughter, encouraged in it, in public orations made by prominent members of the Labour movement. The Government have not at any time suggested that they intend to take any action under Section 104 of the Act. So long as we have our statute-book clogged with laws forbidding acts and have Executives which do not take one of two courses—either wipe those laws off our statute-book or else put them into force—so long shall we fall short of being what we pride ourselves on being, a truly civilised community. Any Government that does not enforce the law fails to carry out the primal function of government, the function for which government originally came into existence, and the real reason why the people should pay taxes to the support of the Government. I submit that this failure alone on their part is one which merits the carrying of this amendment to the Address-in-reply.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [9.25]: I think it can be taken for granted, and I think it is generally admitted by those who have had any experience at all that the administrators of the law have to be very careful in a time of industrial dispute, and that the utmost discretion must be used at such periods; that the whole atmosphere sur-

rounding a case must be carefully borne in mind, and that every avenue must be explored before the law is put into force to its utmost extent. I do not think that any man with experience in handling industrial disputes will say what has been said by some members opposite, that because a law is on the statute-book it must be enforced up to the hilt every time an industrial dispute occurs.

Mr. Mann: That was not suggested.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will show the hon. member where he suggested it, where he made that definite declaration. Anyone experienced in industrial matters knows how delicate such a situation is, and how delicate the handling of the whole case has to be, since a mistake on either side may lead to the most serious trouble. I say candidly, I am surprised by the speech of the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) to-night. That speech stands for nothing but the wholesale condemnation of the police force of this country. The hon. member made charges against the members of the police force. Not only that, but at a public meeting he first of all accused the police force of being afraid to do their duty lest they should offend the political susceptibilities of the Government, and in the next breath he declared that if he were in the police force he would act just as the police are doing to-day. That is as good as admitting that he himself, when a member of the force, had not the courage to stand up and do his duty. It is equivalent to admitting that his actions, while he was in the force, were dictated by the political views of the Ministry of the time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A Labour Government was in power for five years.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is a grave charge to lay against the police force of this country. The whole speech of the hon. member has that colouring. He states that the reports which the Premier read out as coming from police officers did not say that the law was not broken—as much as to argue that if the law in any degree was broken, action should have been taken.

Mr. Mann: I used the phrase “repeatedly broken.”

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I took down the hon. member's words, “The report did not say that the law was not broken.” I wrote those words down as the hon. member uttered them. What would he

have said had we taken action against the licensed victuallers for closing their hotels? The law provides that hotels must be kept open. They cannot be closed. They were closed for weeks, no attempt being made to keep them open and cater for the public. What would the hon. member have said if the Government had invoked the law against the licensed victuallers and said, “You have got to keep open?”

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course they could not keep open.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; but the member for Perth throughout his speech argued that the law to its very letter should be enforced. He quoted the most extreme section of the Code and asked why we had not lived up to that. That section has never yet been enforced, no matter what Government has been in power. The member for Perth asked why we did not enforce that section against the workers, but he did not ask why we did not put the other section into operation against the licensed victuallers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How the deuce could they keep open?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I say, as I said at the commencement, that in all these matters discretion must be used. It is useless to argue that the law in all its phases must be rigidly enforced. One has to view the situation from the aspect of whether in the interests of peace it is advisable to enforce the law up to its hilt, whether it will tend to the peace of the community to do that, or whether to take the whole letter of the law and enforce it as it stands is not going to create a greater difficulty and a greater problem than those one is faced with at the moment. No man takes the law as it stands and says he will enforce it no matter what situation he may be faced with. He must have regard to the problem confronting him. He would say, “If I am forced to law now, how will it affect me in my position regarding the problem I am attempting to solve?” The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) knows full well that had the Government attempted to enforce the section he quoted, there probably would have been some cause for the Leader of the Opposition applying the word “upheaval” to this trouble, whereas as things turned out there was nothing of the sort.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course there was.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Most of us on the Government side of the House have had more experience in handling such matters.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: From one side only.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We know the temper of people engaged in such troubles and I claim there has been no other strike in the history of this State that entered so much into the social life of the community and affected the public so generally that was concluded with so little disturbance and trouble.

Mr. Mann: You were away.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was not. I was in the country for a day or two, but I was not out of reach. We have had no evidence, but the only more or less direct statement as to anything that occurred was made by the member for Perth who repeated what somebody told him. He asked if it was suggested for a moment that the employers had conspired together to make false statements or to do damage to other people. I say emphatically and clearly that these employers are conspiring to-day to do others damage.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course! What blackguards these employers are in your opinion!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: During the trouble some of them went to other employers who were carrying on their businesses and offered to pay the whole of the rent and substantial sums of money in addition if they would close their premises. There is an employer who signed the agreement and carried on his business. Now he finds, however, that the other employers have combined together and bought his lease over his head. Thus, he cannot continue with his lawful occupation.

Mr. Corboy: And he cannot get any other business premises.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so. Members talk about the strikers having no regard for the rights of citizens. Yet that is what is happening now. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) said that there was an impression throughout the country that the police are lacking in their duty. I agree with that; but surely it is not difficult to find a reason for such a view getting abroad. The whole history of this dispute is one of political propaganda on the part of the daily Press of this State.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not at all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was unscrupulous misrepresentation of the position by the daily Press. They scattered that information broadcast throughout Western Australia, giving those people, who live in the backblocks and have no opportunity of ascertaining the facts but have to rely on the newspapers for their information, the impression that the police were not doing their duty. The statements broadcast contained no spark of truth.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Every word is true.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that people who had no means of obtaining information other than through the Press, think that something is wrong?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is not like the "Worker" during election time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We cannot tell the people the facts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, you can, through the "Worker."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: All we have been able to do has been to get on soap boxes at street corners and tell the people, with the limited means at our disposal, what has happened. However, we have always tried on misrepresentation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you have a paper of your own.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And I hope that at no distant date we shall have a morning paper of our own, through which we shall be able to give the people true facts. By means of misrepresentation the daily Press attempted to fan the passions of the people and prejudice public opinion against the Government. It was merely political propaganda.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Rubbish!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The whole speech of the Leader of the Opposition was nothing but the reading of extracts from the "West Australian." There was not a scintilla of a case presented. He merely stood there reading those extracts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They were written by Ministers themselves. They denied their own words time and again.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If we find a gentleman, once the Premier of the State and now occupying the responsible position of Leader of the Opposition, basing his case on such evidence, how can we expect the people outback to form any different opinion? The Leader of the

Opposition had no argument of his own to advance and not a scintilla of evidence.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you deny your own written statements signed by yourself? Are you ashamed of them?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am telling the House what was done. Members on the Opposition side of the House as well as on the Government side must have noticed how uncomfortable the Leader of the Opposition appeared to be when reading his little part in this debate. I do not think his heart was in it for a moment. He has been pushed into it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I can assure you that that is quite untrue. You write the statements and then deny them. You are like a pack of cards.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I believe the Leader of the Opposition let the cat out of the bag in an interjection he made a little while ago. His whole complaint is not regarding the inaction of the police, but it arises from the fact that there was a strike.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not at all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It arose because the strike caused inconvenience to the public.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, because of the lawlessness that went on.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member's grievance is that the police were not used to break the strike and force the workers back to their employment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have not an atom of fairness in you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is what the hon. member would desire.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You sent the strikers back to work on worse terms than they were offered.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If there was any truth in the Press reports or in the case put up by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann), why was not the information taken to the responsible Minister? Why did not some member of the Opposition, particularly the member for Perth who represents the district affected, lodge the complaint with the Government?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Minister himself knew of it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not one of those members concerned approached the Minister during the whole trouble. Surely if there was one man with whom such complaints should have been lodged, it was the Minister for Justice.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The point is, did you maintain law and order?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You did not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What has been the outcome of all this trouble and argument since the amendment was moved yesterday? We find that 25s. worth of damage was done during the strike. I have been told that not even a cup and saucer was broken during the whole period. Yet we are told that such lawlessness and disorder prevailed that a vote of censure on the Government is warranted. What would the members of the Opposition have done had they been in the Government's position?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We would have preserved law and order.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then the next question one would ask is, how would you have done it?

Ministerial Member: Pulled out the machine guns!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We would have allowed the police to do their duty.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In that event would the hon. member ask the Government to act as Ministers did when he was a member of the Government?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Now, you tell the truth.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I intend doing so. If we can judge what Opposition members would have done in this strike, I take it we can do so only on the basis of their past actions. I find that one of the first troubles members opposite were concerned with when in office led them, in order to enforce law and order, to send requisitions around the Government departments asking civil servants whether they would join the army of National volunteers to take the place of other workers. Do hon. members opposite suggest that the Government should have adopted that course?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: When was that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At the time of the Fremantle trouble.

Mr. George: Which one?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Does the Leader of the Opposition suggest that we should have sent around a requisition to the lady clerks and typists asking them if they were willing to go out as barmaids, waitresses and so on? Were we to ask the clerks if they were willing to become pantrymen, waiters and cooks? That was what we should

have done if we had followed example when a previous Government asked men to go to the Fremantle wharves to take the place of the lumpers there. I should have thought that all those connected with that particular trouble would have had sufficient experience of the interference of the police in industrial disputes to have prompted them never to sanction it again except in extreme circumstances. An incident like that should have brought the danger of such a procedure home to them. At Fremantle there are three lonely little children and a lonely woman deprived of the head of the household. The home is destroyed, and a valuable life has been lost through the use of police in an industrial disturbance. I should have thought that the Fremantle wharf incident would have been sufficient for the lot of you!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: For you; you led them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not only did members opposite, when in office, bring discredit upon the country, and lost the then Premier his position, but they humiliated and discredited the whole police force.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nonsense.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You destroyed the morale of the force. Is it to be suggested that we should have adopted a similar attitude in this instance?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you to be allowed to do just as you like?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have been entirely disappointed at the attitude adopted by the Opposition during this discussion, because I should have thought that they would have learnt from experience.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You caused the trouble.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What happened at the Esplanade Hotel in Perth? I have here a picture of it, an illustration taken from the "Western Mail." They erected barbed wire entanglements, established a hospital tent with full equipment, including nurses, and provided armed men with bayonets to surround the hotel. Did they expect us to follow that example, an example that made them a laughing-stock throughout the country? Did they want us to surround all the tearooms and restaurants with barbed wire entanglements, set up a fully equipped field hospital, and have out armed men ready to shoot down those poor waitresses fighting for better conditions? Is that what they ex-

pected of us? Now I come to a later case, in which the Leader of the Opposition himself, then Premier, took an active part, and in which also the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) was associated. I refer to the miners' trouble in Kalgoorlie. Talk about law and order! The hon. member illegally armed irresponsible men against the law of the country. Had one of them fatally injured anybody he would have been charged with murder. Yet the hon. member brought this about, and entirely against the direction of Parliament. He sent up to those men guns consigned as machinery, and he allowed those men to raid public and private property and climb on the locomotives in the loco. sheds and present revolvers at the heads of the drivers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we did not.

Mr. Corboy: You did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If that is doubted I can give the name of the driver. The unions took up the case and wrote to the hon. member, asking him to prosecute. I have seen the correspondence so recently as this afternoon. Those men climbed on to the locomotive, presented a revolver at the head of the driver, and demanded that he blow the whistle. When he refused to do so those men stood around while one of their number blew the whistle. What action did my friend take then? Did he prosecute? For four months the unions bombarded him with requests to do something in the matter. All that happened was that the Commissioner of Railways wrote back and warned this man that if it occurred again he would be prosecuted. Several men were waited upon by detectives in Kalgoorlie and advised to get out of the district, to leave their homes. Two railwaymen accepted that advice, and lost their jobs in the service for doing so. Another railwayman who declined to take the advice was seized in the street by two men and put on the train. "Here's your ticket," they said, "we are travelling down with you." He asked for time in which to see his family, but they said "No, you are coming with us." However, the train crew, aware of what was going on, refused to take out the train. Talk about law and order!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I don't believe a word you are saying.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You were Premier at the time. There was such a reign of terror throughout Kalgoorlie

that no respectable citizen was safe outside his own home. The men you armed were young boys not more than 18 years of age. But they were not all young boys. You armed one man who afterwards set fire to his house with his wife and children asleep in it. That is the class of man you armed to go out and shoot down the miners. Talk about law and order!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It was soldiers who were armed.

The Premier: Not all of them were soldiers.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: A business man in Kalgoorlie was waited upon by a few of those people and told that unless he painted his business premises another colour within 24 hours they would burn down those premises. And when he went to the police for advice they said they could not tell him what to do. The hon. member ought to talk about law and order!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I preserved law and order.

Mr. Corboy: No, you tried to start anarchy.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: During recent years it has become the general practice to use the police on behalf of the bosses in order to beat the unions. The great disappointment in this recent dispute was that the police were allowed their own discretion, were not interfered with by the Government.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is not a word of truth in it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They were not directed by the Government. They acted with discretion and got through the trouble without any of the lawlessness, the chaos, and the arming of men that occurred when members opposite were in power.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: While I was Premier there was never a strike, but you came to me to settle it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We got through this dispute with very little trouble.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You took no trouble at all; you ran away from it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The whole disappointment is that we got through this dispute with so little trouble, without any serious bother at all. In every industrial trouble things happen that ought not to occur. But as one who handled the negotiations to bring about a settlement,

I can say that as soon as the recent dispute was over there was no bitterness, no ill-feeling, left between the parties. The trouble was entirely buried and would have remained there had it not been resurrected for political purposes. I point to that in contradistinction to the feelings still remaining in Kalgoorlie, where the parties are yet divided in two hostile camps, each filled with the distrust and suspicion set up by the hon. member when Premier. I hope that so long as this Government remain in office it will never be said that we have used the police force to take sides in an industrial dispute.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No previous Government ever did so.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I repeat that as soon as this last little trouble was settled amicable relations between the parties were restored and work proceeded with goodwill between the employers and the employees. It is a thousand pities that the trouble should have been dug up again for political purposes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is the statement of a coward.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I withdraw, but the Minister had no right to make such a statement.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am entitled to say what I honestly believe to be true.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: So am I.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: There can be no question that right through this trouble the Press have indulged in propaganda for party political purposes. The Leader of the Opposition, when moving his amendment, did nothing but read extracts from the Press. He did say that the Hotel Esplanade was surrounded by an unruly mob, and that the boarders could not get out; adding that one fellow got down the verandah post. What difference did it make whether he came through the door or down the verandah post, since the crowd were still there? All these little piffing statements have been put up and propaganda carried on to inflame public opinion against the Government. I hope that when the time comes for us to lay down the seal of office it will never be said of us that we have such a record as that I have shown to be the record of the previous Government. Since taking office we have had two strikes,

without any great damage or wrong being done in either of them. One was more difficult than the other, but we have got through both with but little inconvenience to the general public, and we have settled them without any serious trouble at all. The policy followed by the Government during those two disputes, I hope, will be followed so long as we remain in office.

MR. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [10.0]: I express regret that the Minister for Works should so far have lost control of himself as to miss the point at issue in the amendment. It is not a question of political propaganda at all. The reason that actuated the Leader of the Opposition in bringing forward the amendment was that the people of all political shades in the State desire to know where they stand. This particular trouble has provided an occasion for attempting to find out where we are. The thanks of the community are due to the Minister for his part in settling the dispute. He laid stress upon the inconvenience of those people who were out on strike, but he had no words for those whose livelihood and business was interfered with. He had no words of regret to utter to the tens of thousands of people who were obliged to scratch for their meals instead of going to the restaurants in the ordinary course.

The Minister for Lands: They only did what we all did—carried their meals.

MR. GEORGE: The point I am concerned about is, where are we heading? I do not wish to accuse or to be a party to an accusation of the police not doing their duty. It was the Government who did not do their duty. The members of the Government, by their oaths and position, have undertaken to see that apart from any question of politics or religion people may carry on their ordinary avocations without let or hindrance. The action of the strikers interfered with a large portion of the population in Perth and Fremantle.

The Minister for Lands: Not at Fremantle.

MR. GEORGE: The only right and justification for the existence of a Government is to see that even-handed justice is dealt out, and that every man, irrespective of religious or political beliefs, may carry on his trade provided he does not interfere with other people. What happened in this instance? I know it was impossible day after day to get further along Hay-street than

Cathedral-avenue with vehicles, or even on foot.

The Minister for Lands: How did the trams get through?

The Premier: They must have gone around!

MR. GEORGE: People could not freely pass along the footpaths of Hay-street as they had a right to do. They were stopped by people crowding the street: there ears were insulted by language that was filthy. There is no question about that.

MR. SLEEMAN: Did you hear the language?

MR. GEORGE: Yes.

MR. SLEEMAN: What was it?

MR. GEORGE: If the hon. member is so curious, I will write it out for him, but I will recommend him to burn the paper afterwards, if it does not first burn itself. The question is, where are we heading? I am as strong as are the other side against employing the police to favour one side or the other, but I do say that the province of the police is to see that the King's highways are kept free for traffic by people going on their lawful intentions.

The Minister for Lands: I was there every day and saw nothing of the sort.

MR. GEORGE: I was there on a number of days and I assure the Minister that the obstruction in Hay-street continued day after day.

The Premier: That was a football crowd.

MR. GEORGE: Nothing of the sort. Business was interfered with. Where are we heading? This is the serious aspect of the affair. We read in the Press recently that a deputation was to wait upon the Premier to ask him to remit the balance of the sentence being served by a man named Callanan for robbery under arms at Kalgoorlie. Have we reached a stage when any man may do as he likes and get off scot free? Is the Premier to receive deputations and sanction requests of that kind? When the deputation was projected, I think the Premier should have indignantly refused to interfere as the man had been sentenced by a judge for having broken the law.

The Minister for Agriculture: What has that to do with the amendment?

MR. GEORGE: Peaceable people were interfered with and tens of thousands were inconvenienced through the action of the strikers. I do not say a word against picketing, but to call it picketing when 200 or 400 people congregate before a place like the

Crystal Cafe, is rubbish, and no one knows that better than does the Minister for Works. There is another point that occasions me much concern. The Minister for Railways admitted frankly that he had received an intimation from railway organisations that if beer was accepted for carriage on the railways, it would not reach its destination, because there was a strike in connection with beer. Possibly it might not have reached its destination. When I was Commissioner of Railways consignments were sometimes broached, and these lots might have been broached. But the Minister told us plainly that when he was informed of this, he gave instructions that the beer should not be carried.

The Minister for Lands: Quite right, too.

Mr. GEORGE: If that is not job control, I do not know the meaning of the term.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not know what it is.

Mr. GEORGE: If the railways are under that control, they are being governed, not by the Minister or the Commissioner, but by the men who are dictating what shall be done. So long as we have that defined, I am satisfied. If that position is accepted by the Minister for Railways and by the Premier—

The Premier: What would you do about it?

Mr. GEORGE: That is another matter. It has been admitted that the railway men told the Minister he must not do a certain thing.

The Premier: When you were there, they told you they would not run the railways and they hung them up for several weeks.

Mr. GEORGE: That is not correct and did not happen. Twenty years ago I may have been an innocent sort of man, but the Premier knows what I am to-day. I am not willing for it to go forward that the Leader of the Opposition has moved the amendment as a matter of political propaganda. Members of the Opposition are quite prepared to give, as they should give, to the Government of the day all possible support when the actions of the Government are in the best interests of the State, but we would be unworthy of our position either as members of the Opposition or as individual members if we were not prepared, in a case of great emergency, to bring before the House, the Government, and the country our opinions that the proper principles of Government were being cast on one side.

The Premier: You have saved the British Empire.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.8]: It is my duty to express the strongest disapproval within my power in respect to the recent very discreditable happenings in this city.

Mr. Marshall: Name one of them.

Mr. SAMPSON: The essence of administration is surely order and good government. The people cannot live their lives in comfort unless order is maintained. It has been suggested that the police acted as they considered they should do to maintain order during the period of industrial unrest.

The Minister for Lands: And they acted rightly.

Mr. SAMPSON: So far from acting rightly, they showed great lack of action, and the good name of Perth and Fremantle suffered seriously.

The Premier: Fremantle was not in it. You know nothing about it.

Mr. SAMPSON: There was trouble at Fremantle as well.

The Premier: Was Fremantle included in the upheaval?

The Minister for Lands: There was nothing at Fremantle.

Mr. SAMPSON: Will the Minister for Lands say that in no instance at Fremantle was a restaurant-keeper given the option to sign up or shut up his business?

The Minister for Lands: They shut up, and there was no noise or crowd.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is an indication of lack of order and good government.

The Minister for Lands: And the bosses got some of those who opened and paid them to close.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is admitted that the trouble occurred at Fremantle as well as in Perth, but if Perth alone had been affected, the injury done is such as will have a lasting effect. The police are faced with enormous difficulties. Their work calls for the exercise of tact and judgment, but in the opinion of a vast majority of the people, their action during the recent trouble with the restaurants was a marvel of diplomacy. I know of my own knowledge, because I made it my business to have a meal in one of these shops.

Mr. Sleeman: Did you go in with Teesdale?

Mr. SAMPSON: No, I went to the Crystal Cafe.

The Premier: What was wrong with the Palace that day?

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not usually go to the Palace. The Crystal Cafe served a good meal for 1s. 3d. and that fact caused me to question some of the statements one hears about the cost of living. It was difficult to force a way in, and one had to submit to the unpleasantness of opprobrious remarks from the people surrounding the cafe.

Mr. Sleeman: How many men were there at that time?

Mr. Chesson: You did not have to force your way in. I myself saw you go in. You simply walked in.

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member cannot deny that the crowd indulged in counting out and made remarks about scabs. The intention of the police to maintain order may have been good, but the result was farcical and the fair name and fame of Perth suffered greatly.

The Premier: Not only of Perth, but of the British Empire.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the remarks made during the discussion will have the effect of removing the impression that the police, to express it in the vernacular, were leg-roped during that trouble.

Mr. Lambert: You are paying a poor tribute to the police force.

Mr. SAMPSON: Let me quote a few words from a newspaper—

Whatever may have been the issue in question between the employers and the employees, the discomfort and annoyance caused to inoffensive citizens by the arbitrary tactics of the strikers are, in the opinion of a majority of the law-abiding people of this State, absolutely unjustifiable. I doubt whether such a state of affairs would be allowed in any other part of the Commonwealth. That is an extract from a letter which appeared in one of the daily newspapers.

The Premier: How could the writer of that letter speak for a majority of the people of this State.

Mr. SAMPSON: Every well wisher of the State experienced feelings of deep shame in consequence of the lawlessness and hoodliganism that prevailed in Perth during that period.

The Premier: Did they write to "The Farmer" newspaper about it?

Mr. SAMPSON: Some of the readers of "The Farmer" newspaper no doubt suffered.

The Premier: There are only three of them.

Mr. SAMPSON: The difficulty was as regards securing accommodation. The lodging-houses and hotels had to advertise that they

could not take in people. That, however, does not really apply in this matter. The position before us is the consideration of the lawlessness that prevailed at the time of the dispute, and the lack of energy on the part of the police to see that order was maintained. Many premises were closed during that period. Had the proprietors been allowed to continue with the assistance of their families, they might have remained open. I hardly think there is any industry which calls for greater effort on the part of those concerned, or which is more difficult to conduct, than that appertaining to small restaurants. Many of these establishments are conducted by widows, and none of them is conducted by people who have much money. It is not a business that returns much profit. The inaction of the police was very much to be regretted in that it permitted these people to be molested. I do not desire to cast a silent vote on this matter, but to say how very disappointed I was at the inaction of the police. I hope such a state of affairs will never again prevail in the city.

MR. LATHAM (York) [10.17]: The Premier remarked that this was an unimportant question. If we view it dispassionately we must regard it as a very serious one.

The Premier: I said it was comparatively unimportant.

Mr. LATHAM: I did not hear that word.

The Premier: I used it.

Mr. LATHAM: It is a serious matter. It is not only a question of tenroom employees or employers; it is a question whether one section of the community is to be allowed to break the laws of the country. If this is to be permitted every section will rise up in arms to defend itself, and that is where the trouble will start. If Ministers had moved freely about the streets they would have heard the utterances of people who said they would be prepared to get together to defend their property.

The Minister for Lands: And they would soon be in a back street if anything happened.

Mr. LATHAM: Where there is smoke there is generally fire. That is what the ordinary citizen dreaded.

Mr. Lambert: A lot of fellows go where only the smoke is.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister for Works referred to what took place in Kalgoorlie

and other places. Apart from the threats that were used, nothing of a serious nature took place there. If the Government sent people up there at the time, it was not for the purpose of shooting down our citizens, as the Minister suggested, but to prevent any unlawful proceedings taking place.

Mr. Lutey: A Federal election was looming up.

Mr. LATHAM: I am not concerned about that, but about the welfare of the State. When I walked down Hay-street or St. George's-terrace and heard the utterances referred to, I felt that men were justified in causing a breach of the peace. The police were appointed to carry out the laws of the country and to do so fearlessly.

Mr. Lutey: And they did it.

Mr. LATHAM: It is not a question of what actually took place, but what might take place in the future unless these troubles are checked.

The Minister for Lands: You have been reading the "West Australian."

Mr. LATHAM: I am referring to things I actually saw. Nothing will cause a riot more quickly than if the people are allowed to have complete freedom.

The Premier: That is so. You must always keep them in chains.

Mr. LATHAM: Not at all, but the limbs of the law must be close by. The Premier knows what occurred in Melbourne when the police went on strike.

The Premier: That was a different thing.

Mr. LATHAM: No. It shows how easily the public get out of control.

The Premier: Of course, if there are no police.

Mr. LATHAM: If the police find it not convenient to see things, or do not carry out their job as they ought to, people will soon get out of hand.

The Premier: They did their job very well.

Mr. LATHAM: I would not dare, within the hearing of police, to say the things I heard in the street during the dispute.

The Premier: Probably they know you.

Mr. LATHAM: The Opposition have at all events voiced their protest against the inaction of the Government. If people were not obeying the law, it was the duty of Ministers to call upon the Commissioner of Police to have things put right. I feel I am perfectly justified in adding my quota to the protest against the recent happenings. We hope that nothing of the kind

will ever again be perpetrated in Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [10.23]: I had not intended to speak to this amendment, because the Premier dealt so ably and completely with the matter. Seeing, however, that he was out of the State at the time, and that my name has frequently been mentioned, it is advisable I should say something. I wish to compliment the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) upon his consideration for the best interests of the Government. According to his view this amendment was not moved for the purpose of condemning the action of the police, but for the purpose of acquainting members of the Ministry with the fact that something was done of which they were not previously notified by the police: and that it is therefore in the interests of the Government that the amendment has been launched. The hon. member will have a hard task if he tries to compel people to carry out the law. He may be a lawyer and well acquainted with Acts of Parliament, but it is quite a different matter to begin compelling people to carry out the letter of the law. Probably every member of this Chamber does not strictly carry out the letter of the law on any day.

Mr. Davy: That is questionable.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is almost impossible to carry out to the letter every Act that is laid down for the guidance of the people. If every member of the Ministry were endowed with the same ability as the member for West Perth, they could not compel the people to carry out to the letter every law in the land.

Mr. Davy: Have you broken the law to-day?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I may have done so on many occasions, and I fancy I may have done so to-day.

Mr. Davy: In what way?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I may have walked up Hay-street on the wrong side. We are told in heroic terms that it is the duty of the Government to see that the laws laid down for the guidance of the people are enforced in their entirety. I should like to see the hon. member try to enforce them.

Mr. Davy: Enforced equally.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would not be long before he found himself at the

bottom of the Swan. Let him try to put down the pernicious sweeps that exist.

Mr. Davy: Would that get me to the bottom of the Swan?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would bring such a howl about his ears that he would probably go to the centre of Australia for a while. That, however, is only one small thing. The Leader of the Opposition says that every word he read last night was true. In my belief the police reported correctly the occurrences that came under their notice when on duty each day. I do not believe some of the statements read by the member for Perth. In the case of one gentleman concerned I had the pleasure, when in court, of imposing a fine of £5, because I did not believe his statement. I was not the only member on the bench at the time, for there were other justices as well as the resident magistrate present. We cannot accept as gospel everything we are told. Every week I have statements, half of which are not true, placed before me. A great deal of my time is taken up in replying to members of Parliament upon incorrect statements that have been made to them. Are we to swallow every statement that has been made about an occurrence that took place some time ago? Very often people cannot correctly remember all that occurred six months ago. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) said that an attempt had been made to misrepresent the point at issue. He went on to point out that the strike interfered with the ordinary avocations of our people. Did he ever know a strike that did not have that effect? Did not the Public Service strike interfere with the avocations of the people? If only half a dozen people go on strike, that is sure to interfere with the ordinary avocations of others. I do not believe in strikes at all; I think they are useless; but when a strike does take place, it is the duty of those in authority to try to terminate it as early as possible, in the interests of the people as a whole. Further, it is their duty to use that tact which is necessary to avoid the spreading of the strike or the causing of disorder. And such was the action taken by the Government on this occasion. The Government believed that the well-being of the people of the State was safe in the hands of the police of the State. I myself could not use the language used by the Leader of the Opposition as to the

high estimation in which the police are held by the people.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I meant every word I said.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That being so, we were justified in placing full confidence in our police to carry out their duty as it should be carried out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you have control of them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But the Government have.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not want control of the police force. There is a Commissioner of Police who controls it. What is the position? As Acting Premier I was waited on by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann), who said that he wanted to bring a deputation to me on the following day. I asked, "What about?" He said, "The troubles that are taking place in the city of Perth." I said, "You know very well there is no possibility of trouble taking place when the public houses are shut. You ought to know that better than any man in Perth. What is wrong?" He replied, "Oh, something at the Esplanade." I said, "Is there something wrong with that man again? Anyhow, I cannot tell you now exactly when I can meet you to-morrow, but I will see you to-morrow and tell you what time I can meet the deputation." Of course I first of all sent for the head of the police, to find out what was the position. The Commissioner was away. But when the members of the proposed deputation found that I was getting information from the police as to what was taking place, they cried the deputation off.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But they wrote you a letter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I forget now whether they did or not. Anyhow, the deputation did not come.

Mr. Davy: They might have sensed that you were unsympathetic.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The executive of the Justices' Association—half a dozen Jews—had a meeting. They thought they should put their noses into the business.

Mr. Sampson: I understand the association has 600 members.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The executive cannot speak for that number.

Mr. Sampson: But is it right to say "six Jews"?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are only half a dozen on the executive, and it was only the executive that did this. Just fancy any man forming a biased opinion on a subject involving the possibility of a person being brought before him for trial, and eventually being incarcerated, not as the result of the evidence, but as the result of an opinion prematurely formed. I was very sorry indeed that I did not know the names of that executive. Had I known them, I would have asked for the resignations of those gentlemen.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you not a member of the association?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, I have more sense. I do not think such an association is necessary. The law for justices of the peace is laid down in the Justices Act, and there is no benefit to be derived from the association.

Mr. Sampson: But some organisation is good.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Last night I asked the Leader of the Opposition to read the letter I sent to the association.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I read all the letters I had. I am sorry I did not read that one. I am sure it was a good one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This letter was published on the 15th May—

In acknowledging your letter of the 13th inst., I desire to state that I believe the police officers are carrying out their duties in an unbiassed manner and without prejudice, doing what in their opinion is right in preventing a breach of the peace, and placing all parties on an equality. I should have thought that gentlemen holding the honourable position of justices of the peace would have adopted a similar attitude, especially as in the event of any breach of the peace they may be called upon to adjudicate on the same.

My second letter the Opposition Leader read last night. Here were men sitting in council and forming an opinion, a biased opinion, against persons whom they might have to try, with the possibility of those persons being incarcerated. Such men are not fit to hold the commission of justice of the peace. I do not care who they are or what they are; they are not suitable for such a position.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think that language is altogether too strong.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Those are my views, and I am quite justified in expressing them.

Mr. Latham: Those justices did not take sides in their letters to you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They did.

Mr. Latham: They only said the law was not being carried out.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I said it was not their duty, but the duty of the police, to see whether the law had been observed. A little later my friends had a meeting. They saw those justices.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Look here, you stick to facts.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am doing so. I picked up the paper and I saw that the united party had held a meeting and discussed the strike which was taking place in Perth.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Amongst other things, yes.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the party said he did not care to make any comments until he had had an opportunity of discussing the matter with me.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Was not that decent of me?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was all right. Before seeing the Leader of the Opposition, I sent for the Commissioner of Police, the man who is in charge of the police force of this State, the man who is responsible for its administration, the man who has to see that the laws of this country are observed. I thought it advisable to take notice of the official statement given by the officer in charge of the police force. I found from the reports he had received, and from what he had seen himself, that there had never been observed such good order as was the case during the time of the strike. I found also that a crowd used to assemble opposite the Crystal Cafe. I saw the crowd there myself every day in the week. I have perhaps as good eyesight as some other people, and I wish to tell the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) that I never saw the footpath blocked. I have always seen more than two feet of right-of-way there, as mentioned by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy). I saw the position almost every day between one o'clock and a quarter past one. Two policemen were always there keeping the footpath clear. Consequently there was nothing to hinder or congest the traffic. What was the real position? A few young fellows used to gather together from the

Government offices and other offices at lunch time. They congregated on the opposite side of the street to the Crystal Cafe, and a few of them were on the same side of the street as the cafe. Sometimes half a dozen girls would be there, going up and down. Most of the time there were only half a dozen, though at the commencement there were more. There was a good deal of banter from the other side of the street. Everybody seemed in a good humour and to be enjoying themselves.

Mr. Sampson: It was often very insulting humour.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some of the insults came from people not concerned in the strike.

Mr. Richardson: That is when action should have been taken.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am talking about the general public. They stood there for an hour or an hour and a half and were doing no harm. I have seen equally big crowds in the streets of Perth every day, yet no one has been run in by the police.

Mr. Richardson: Do you see those people insulting individuals?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, some may use bad language. I saw a man arrested in Fremantle on one occasion, and went to the court on his behalf. He was charged with having used bad language, but I did not hear him.

Mr. Taylor: Then you could not have heard anything during this trouble.

Mr. Davy: Nor any of the insults.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did not go close enough to hear any insulting remarks.

Mr. Latham: Perhaps you did not go close enough to see what was happening.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I went there to see what was happening every day before I caught the tram to Parliament House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Did you see the fight there?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Commissioner of Police drew my attention to the people who congregated in Hay-street near the Crystal Cafe during the lunch hour, and said, "If you give me instructions I will shift them, but I do not advise it."

Mr. Taylor: That shows he was afraid to act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not at all. There was merely some banter, a few people on the kerb, but nothing to take ex-

ception to. Law and order were maintained, but if any action had been taken such as we have heard of regarding the mounted police, law and order would have been broken. When the Leader of the Opposition saw me about the matter, I told him that if he had been accustomed to giving instructions to the police, I was not going to do it. He got a bit annoyed at that and told me that he did not give instructions to the police. I told him also that the Commissioner of Police was in charge of the position, that law and order were being maintained and that the police would continue to carry out their duties.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I assured you that law and order were not being maintained.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At any rate the hon. member's statement in the newspaper immediately afterwards showed that he was satisfied.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You said that law and order would be maintained.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) got away from the issue considerably when he referred to the deputation that was to wait upon the Premier. What had that to do with the question? Dozens of deputations wait upon a Premier, but that does not say that he will agree to the request of every deputation coming to him. The Government, I can assure hon. members, will see that law and order are maintained in the way we consider law and order should be maintained.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is great!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not care what persons say or what they do, if I think they are saying and doing right I shall not interfere with them. Let there be no mistake about that. I will not interfere because someone else considers people are doing or saying wrong things. If I am assured by the officer controlling the position that there is no necessity for interference I will not agree to any interference. I was convinced apart from the statement by the Leader of the Opposition, and more especially because of the public meetings and other statements made to me, that this was purely a political question.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: So far as I am concerned it is not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not say that, but it was made a political question

in an endeavour to show the people that the Government were not carrying out their duty by not providing sufficient police for the protection of the public.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you refer to my amendment?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, to the whole question. On one occasion I was walking along the footpath to a mayoral reception, and two people were on the footpath. Someone came to the door and threw a bucket of water out. At the mayoral reception one of the councillors got up and said how shocking it was that people were interfered with in the course of their business and that water had to be thrown over some individual. I did not have an opportunity to speak so as to tell the councillor what I thought of him. When I got outside I found that the throwing of the bucket of water had attracted the attention of the people and I found a couple of policemen standing there on duty. There was nothing for constables to go there for, but this is the sort of thing we have to put up with in connection with disputes of this description. We have been told stink bombs were thrown. One bomb was thrown amongst people on the other side of the street opposite the Crystal Cafe, and by them was thrown across to the people on the other side.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How do you know?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know where the stink bomb came from, and I know the man who gave instructions how to make it. I know a little about it. Those who made the stink bombs and those who threw them are not connected with the Labour Party at all.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No one said they were.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yet so much was made of it that the people in the East were told that bombs were thrown in Perth. Is it to be wondered at that the people in the Eastern States have such a poor idea of the people in Perth and of Western Australia generally, if they are told that the Government will not maintain law and order, and that all these things are allowed to happen. With all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition, who is a Western Australian born, I am not sure that he has more respect for the people of Perth than have I.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why did you not correct the statements in the "West Australian" if they were wrong?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If I were to correct all the mis-statements in the "West Australian" I would have nothing else to do. I never take any opportunity to correct inaccurate statements made by newspaper men because they always have the last say. More over I give them statements and they cut out half of them or cut them out altogether or attribute them to someone else. I do not regret anything done by the Government at the time of the disturbance. It is not the duty of the Government to instruct the police to take sides in an industrial trouble. The duty of the police is clear. They have to work with tact and judgment, and no irresponsible person can say whether or not the work has been well done. The police did their work well, and we ought to have nothing but praise for the way in which they got through a difficult time, seeing to it that no property was destroyed and no person injured. At the conclusion of the trouble everybody was satisfied that the best had been done. I have not yet heard anybody but members of Parliament condemn the attitude of the police during that strike.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [10.53]: The Premier in his reply put up two attitudes at once. In the first place he suggested there was nothing to worry about, and in the second place his suggestion was that if there was anything wrong it was the police, not the Government, who were responsible for it. I have always understood that it is usually agreed that Governments should be held responsible for their departments. In addition to all else the Premier said, we have his admission that during industrial trouble the law should be slightly relaxed.

The Premier: I did not say that.

Mr. NORTH: That is my interpretation of the Premier's words.

The Premier: I did not say anything that would bear that interpretation.

Mr. NORTH: The Premier appeared to me to show that all would be well advised to see that the law was not too strictly carried out during a time of industrial strife. If that is the way the Government feel, how easy would it have been for them to have admitted this slight lapse, and contended that it was their only mistake in 15 months of office. However, it seems they want to

try to show to the public that they have been right in this and in all other things.

The Minister for Lands: The Premier did not say we had made no mistakes.

The Premier: No, what I said was that the Opposition could not find anything else on which to base a no-confidence motion.

Mr. NORTH: Of course all parties will agree that if stronger action had been taken by the police, if the laws had been carried out with severity, there might have been more trouble than actually occurred. However, the Premier might fittingly have added to his remarks the intimation that he proposed to bring down an amendment to the Traffic Act exempting strikers and pickets from the law declaring that no person shall stand or loiter on a footpath to the obstruction of traffic on that footpath. Had he done that, we should have known that in future strikers and pickets were to be entitled to special privileges as against ordinary citizens.

The Premier: I am prepared to amend the law in that direction.

Mr. NORTH: In that case, of course, the question would be solved.

The Premier: Of course, it would only apply when girls were on strike.

Mr. NORTH: I do not mind admitting that the strike served one useful purpose. It served to remind me and others that it is not a good thing to eat very much during the day, that it is far better to have a cup of coffee in the office.

Mr. Lambert: But a man's wife sometimes objects to his typiste making coffee for him.

Mr. NORTH: The Premier said he thought this question of law and order was a trivial one. It is, in one sense. I admit that if there had been in evidence strong platoons and barbed wire entanglements, as suggested by the Minister for Works, if there had been an attempt to put in the heavy gun, there might have been more trouble than actually occurred. Still, the laws are there and should be administered. The fact that this strike should have occurred so soon after the coming into office of a Labour Government was not a very good thing for that Government. However, it seems to me that this matter has been largely covered up. I am sure that if the Premier had been on this side of the House in this attack we should all have had occasion to feel sorry for the Government. As I remarked before, it

would have been better if the Government had admitted this slight lapse and stuck out that they had made no other mistake in 15 months of office.

MR. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [11.0]: The Speech contains references to many important subjects. It necessarily has much of the padding usually associated with addresses of this description, but it particularly refers to many of the problems that confront Western Australia to-day. Let me briefly refer to them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot do that.

Mr. LAMBERT: Shall I be in order, Mr. Speaker, in referring to statements in the Governor's Speech with a view to drawing an analogy between them and the amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself strictly to the limits of the amendment. After the amendment has been disposed of, he will be able, if he so desires, to speak on the Address-in-reply generally.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is nothing left to be said on the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is my opinion.

MR. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [11.2]: To a great extent I agree with the Minister for Lands that it is an impossibility to carry out the strict letter of the law. Perhaps I would not have spoken but for one or two admissions that have been made by members on the Government side. I do not believe in advocating absolute police control. I believe the police force is maintained in our midst as a restraining influence against illegal acts. If the police fail to exert that influence, members of Parliament and citizens have a right to air their grievances. There cannot be any dispute at all regarding the case presented by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann). It does not consist of hearsay or of statements prepared by other people. Ministers and their supporters must know that during the strike things were not as they should have been. What was the reason for that? It was due to the police not taking sufficient action at the time. The arguments between the two sides of the House to-night have reminded me of two small boys quarrelling, one of whom says, "You're one," while the other retorts, "You're another." It is very difficult to determine what

is at the back of one's mind. We say that law and order was not maintained by the police, while members on the Government side claim that it was, so we shall not arrive at any definite decision on that. When the vote is taken, it will be merely a question of numbers. Thus we are not getting much further forward for all the discussion, though it has been the means of eliciting a number of direct negatives. I believe the Minister for Justice when he says he gave no instructions to the police. That is one of the faults I have to find. The happenings during the strike were made known at the time through the newspapers. The Mayor of Perth was called upon to take action and he presented the case. The Leader of the Opposition presented the case, and surely in view of all that information, Ministers should have thought it worth while to take some action. Yet they took no action whatever; that fact has been demonstrated during the discussion here. They simply relied upon the official reports that reached them. They did not make any due investigations through the police force. If the police are to be controlled entirely by the Commissioner of Police, it will mean that Parliament has no control over the police. The police force is controlled by the Minister for the time being, but if he takes as gospel all that they choose to report to him, the police will have control in their own hands.

The Premier: The Minister consulted frequently with the Commissioner.

Mr. RICHARDSON: But the Minister told us he took as being absolutely correct everything that the Commissioner reported to him.

The Premier: What should he do, make personal investigations?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am not relying for my information upon newspaper reports or anything of that kind. I was about town a good deal during the period of the strike. I saw attacks made at three different restaurants, where doors were broken in and the crowd rushed into the premises. If those attacks were not a breach of the law, I should like to know what was.

The Premier: Where were the doors broken?

Mr. RICHARDSON: And on each occasion police were standing outside the premises.

The Premier: No doors were broken in.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I saw them broken in at three different places.

The Premier: Which places?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am not going to be side-tracked in that way. Police were standing by when the doors were broken in. I said to one policeman in St George's-terrace, "Why don't you take action?" He shrugged his shoulders and said, "You will pardon me, but I do not want to be sent to the country."

The Premier: He did the same as the man in the office; they all seemed to shrug their shoulders.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I said to the policeman, "I do not think you need have any fear of that, because I have sufficient faith in members of the Government to believe that they would not take any action of that kind, even if they were in sympathy with the strikers." I wish to show that the law was broken in the city during the strike, and that no action whatever was taken by the police. The Leader of the Opposition was fully justified in bringing the whole of the facts before the public through Parliament, and up to date there has been no reply to the case he has presented. The Premier was absent in England when the strike was on. That he was not in Perth is plainly shown by his speech, because he had no facts at all as his disposal. As the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) said, he simply treated it in a flippant way.

The Premier: It did not deserve any other kind of treatment.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Premier treated it in that way because he knew nothing about it.

The Premier: I know as much about it as does anyone here.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Premier could not possibly know as much; he was absent from the State at the time. Had he been an eye-witness of the scenes in Perth, he would have put up a very different argument to the House to-night. The Premier and the Minister for Works both made reference to the honorary justices having had the audacity to make what I consider was a very respectful appeal directing attention to the situation in Perth.

The Premier: A very improper thing for justices to do.

Mr. RICHARDSON: They made a respectful appeal.

The Premier: On your argument the judges might have done the same thing.

Mr. RICHARDSON: What is going to happen to those justices?

The Premier: They will get the sack if I can find out who they were.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Because they differ from the Premier in politics, they are to have their commissions cancelled.

The Premier: They may be Labour men for all I know.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Minister for Lands said straight out that the justices' action was a political move, which signified that they belonged to a different party from his, and that he would have been glad to receive their resignations. The Premier went further and said he was considering the matter, and that if he could discover who they were, out they would go.

Mr. Sleeman: So they should.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If this is the action that is to be taken by the Government in regard to all people who differ from them, there is something to be said so far as the action of the police over the recent strike is concerned. That is the whole position. Not only were the police apparently afraid, but other people will also become afraid. Justices of the Peace will not have the courage to join the association in the future, because if they do they will be marked men. It is a mischievous and wrong thing for any Government to act in this way. We must have different political parties. There is the whole position in a nutshell. Evidently there is a reign of fear over some of the officers of the police force.

The Premier: Nonsense!

Mr. RICHARDSON: It is a fact, and it cannot be denied.

The Premier: That is rubbish.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It has been well exemplified by the Premier and the Minister for Lands to-night.

The Premier: It has not. It is all rubbish.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We know that these justices differ from him politically, and out they must go.

The Premier: You are earning your place in the United Party.

Mr. Sleeman: You mean it has been the custom.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Minister for Works in a very impassioned speech wandered somewhat from the amendment.

Mr. Wilson: No fear.

Mr. RICHARDSON: He dealt with past methods and past strikes.

Mr. Panton: He made you sit up and take notice.

Mr. RICHARDSON: He drew a vivid picture of the sufferings endured by men, women and children. He also referred to that poor peace-loving fellow who was killed at Fremantle. That particularly unfortunate man—I say this in all sympathy—was the attacker in that case.

Mr. Panton: How do you know?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I happen to know. These are things that are not mentioned by the Minister. He also drew a vivid picture of the happenings in Kalgoorlie, but he omitted to mention the Swan brothers, who were brutally assaulted prior to those happenings. These things are all forgotten. One can always draw a vivid picture of an occurrence by dealing only with one side of the question. At times it is not wise to mention only the one side. The catering strike, however, is now over. We who were in the city taking a note of things, but not especially looking for them, believe that in many instances disgraceful scenes occurred, and yet no action was taken. The Government were called upon to do something to maintain law and order. It was only by a stroke of luck, and as a result of the good temper of the people who were being assaulted and maligned, that no serious results accrued.

The Premier: No one was assaulted. I prefer to believe the reports of the police, who say that no one was assaulted, rather than any statement you may make.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I was molested when going into a business establishment in Perth, by a man who said he was a picket.

The Premier: Assaulted?

Mr. RICHARDSON: No, molested.

The Premier: I am not talking about molestation.

Mr. RICHARDSON: This man advised me not to go into the building, and I was given to understand that if I did I would probably be hurt. I looked at him and saw that he was about a 10-stone man. I told him I weighed 13 stone and was in good form, and that I intended to go into the building. As it happens, I was not molested, but had the position been different, what would have happened? And yet the Premier says no one in Perth was molested.

The Premier: No, I said that no one was assaulted.

Mr. RICHARDSON: It was rather due to the good fortune of my being bigger than the other fellow that I managed to escape. I saw a man assaulted in Perth, no matter what the Premier may say. He knows nothing about it.

The Premier: I know what the police have said.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I cannot help thinking that Ministers, who controlled affairs in the absence of the Premier, must have known of this.

The Minister for Lands: It is incorrect to say that persons were assaulted.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If they do not know of it, they are the only men in Perth in ignorance of the subject. They must have been somewhere in a hollow log. No one could move about the streets without seeing it.

The Minister for Lands: Someone may have been in a back lane looking for it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I do not know anything about back lanes.

The Premier: If these assaults were going on to the knowledge of members of this House, it was their duty to mention them to the Minister for Justice, but no one did so.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Leader of the Opposition went to the Acting Premier, as representing us. It has been said during the debate that this was all a political move.

The Premier: That was three weeks after they started.

Mr. RICHARDSON: So that it might not be imagined there was any political move on the part of the United Party in this matter, they refrained from doing anything until the last moment, when law and order were being cast aside, and the trouble was becoming so serious that we were compelled to take action. The Leader of the Opposition took action in a thoroughly constitutional manner. He went to the Acting Premier and set out the case. The Acting Premier, as the Minister for Justice has said, simply remarked that the police were satisfied everything was all right. Could we do anything further? There was the block; immediately we went to the Ministry, they said everything was all right. As a result of this, there was no political propaganda from the United Party, or any other party that I know of. This party was not responsible for anything that appeared in the newspapers. It is wrong for the Premier or Ministers, or members opposite, to accuse anyone on this side of the House, from the Leader of the Opposition downwards, of trying to obtain any political

propaganda out of the strike. They purposely refrained from taking any action that might be regarded in that light because the Premier was away in the Old Country. I regret that his own people have not treated him in the same way as the Opposition did during his absence. I am pleased to be able to support the amendment. It was moved with the object of showing that the Government did not carry out their duties in this connection. They simply shelved the responsibility, and claim that the police were entirely to blame. We do not say that.

The Minister for Lands: I say they kept order; I do not say they are to blame.

Mr. RICHARDSON: There is a difference of opinion on the matter. It is like two boys, one of whom said, "You say I am one, and I say you are another." I am not condemning the police, but I am condemning the Government because they did not see that the police carried out their duty.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	25
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	10
				—

AYES.

Mr. Barnard	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Davy	Mr. North
Mr. Denton	Mr. Sampson
Mr. George	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)

PAIR.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Teesdale	Mr. Munslie

Amendment thus negatived.

On motion by Mr. Sleeman, debate adjourned.

House adjourned 11.25 p.m.