

discover this for 10 years. He now discovers that he can retire civil servants. Apparently he worked free from political influence for all these years.

The Premier: So as to fill the temporary offices with your friends.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Whom you did not give the arbitration award but gave 10s. instead of 12s. 6d.

The Premier: What did you do?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We pursued the course laid down in the Act.

The Premier: So did we.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Public Service Commissioner recommended the appointment of Dr. Cumpston as Commissioner of Public Health. I protected an officer in the service—Dr. Hope, the senior medical man; and the Government of the day refused to give effect to the Public Service Commissioner's recommendation. The Act provides that if Cabinet does not accept the Public Service Commissioner's recommendation, he is to review it. The Commissioner may then send forward another recommendation, and this may go on interminably.

The Minister for Works: Did it?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No; it did not. Parliament was sitting at the time, and a discussion took place here on the subject, and both Ministerial and Opposition members upheld the action of Cabinet.

The Minister for Works: Did they?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Mr. Jull then wrote me a minute to the effect that he was satisfied it was the desire of Parliament that the senior officer should be appointed; and he there and then, of his own initiative, submitted a recommendation for the appointment of Dr. Hope.

The Minister for Mines: What about political influence instructing the Public Service Commissioner then?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister mistakes the position entirely. I had not finished. The Act provides that if the Government does not accept the Public Service Commissioner's recommendation, then the Commissioner shall report the matter to Parliament, which thereupon shall decide the question. However,

before the Commissioner had an opportunity to adopt that course, Parliament discussed the subject. Thus he had not time to submit his original recommendation to Parliament; and, of his own initiative, he then sent to the Government a recommendation for the appointment of Dr. Hope. I regret having to say, however, that the Act is not being administered as it was intended to be, for the protection of the public service, for the purpose of keeping the public service free from political influence. Political control is being introduced at every possible opportunity.

The Premier: We have retired hundreds of public servants during the last three years, while you were a member of another place; but they were not members of the Weld Club, and so you never raised your voice in their behalf.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: They might have been—

The Premier: With you, it all depends on who the public servant is.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The public servants retired might have been over the age of 66 years. I certainly did raise my voice against the retirement, the wrongful retirement, of the late Commissioner of Police. In that gentleman the Government retired a good officer who was well worth his money, with the result that he is now drawing his pension in enforced idleness. I desire again to express to the House my regret that the Premier has not seen fit to adopt a different course in regard to this debate. Had he done so, my task would have been much easier, since I should have had an opportunity of going through the matter I intended to use and compressing it into a few concise remarks. As it is, not having had the requisite notice, I have been obliged to enlarge on my subjects to a greater extent and explain them in fuller detail than I should, with proper notice, have found necessary.

The Premier: I am sorry, too; because you might have come forward with some arguments.

Mr. SMITH (North Perth) [11.45]: In view of the lateness of the hour, I do not intend to detain the House long.

I shall take the cue given by the Governor's Speech, and be very brief in my remarks. In fact, had it not been for certain observations made by the Premier this evening, I should not have addressed the House until to-morrow. In view, however, of the attitude which the Premier has adopted to-night, in making certain accusations against a company with which I am connected, I feel that I cannot allow the debate to close without my making a certain explanation. At the opening I wish to express my surprise at learning, from remarks made by the mover of the Address-in-reply, the degree of concern that the *Sunday Times* occasions to members of this House. Almost the very first observations of the mover were directed to the *Sunday Times*. Indeed, I am highly pleased to learn that the member for Geraldton (Mr. Heitmann) is such a consistent reader of that newspaper; and I hope he may long continue so.

Mr. Heitmann: I have not read a copy for years.

Mr. SMITH: I trust the hon. member may long continue a reader of the paper. On the very next sitting day the *Sunday Times* was again the subject of reference here. This evening we had the Premier hurling charges across the Table at myself in regard to some imaginary grievance he, as Treasurer, has against the company owning the *Sunday Times*. As I have said, but for those charges of the Premier I should not have addressed the House to-night; and I ask for the indulgence of hon. members in consideration of the fact that I am taken somewhat at a disadvantage by the Premier. From the hon. gentleman's remarks it would be inferred that the *Sunday Times* proprietary has been guilty of failure to shoulder its lawful share of taxation, of evading the payment of taxes legitimately due to the State. Now, I wish to tell the Premier emphatically that what he has alleged is absolutely untrue.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will say "incorrect."

The Premier: Oh, it doesn't matter.

Mr. SMITH: Absolutely incorrect, Sir.

The Premier: That's all right.

Mr. Allen: A distinction without a difference.

Mr. SMITH: The statements made by the Premier in this connection were absolutely incorrect. The little bird that gave him the information he did possess, failed to give him full information. I had hoped that after hearing the Premier's charges I might have an opportunity of going to my office to find out exactly what the *Sunday Times* proprietary did pay under the Dividend Duties Act; but when I learned that the debate was to be forced to a close to-night I realised that such an opportunity would not be afforded me.

The Premier: I can tell you, exactly.

Mr. SMITH: The Premier is again wrong. Although I have not the exact figures at hand, I will say this: the *Sunday Times* paid under the Dividend Duties Act more than was paid by all the members on the opposite side of the Chamber put together.

The Premier: Well, we have not received any dividends. A man does not pay dividend duty unless he gets dividends.

Mr. SMITH: I repeat that under the Dividend Duties Act the *Sunday Times* proprietary has paid more money than all the moneys paid under that Act by the whole of the members on the opposite side of the House.

Mr. Allen: That is a definite statement.

The Premier: Entirely incorrect, all the same.

Mr. SMITH: The Premier can ask the Commissioner of Taxation whether that is not so.

The Premier: Will you allow me to give the figures to the House?

Mr. SMITH: Let the Premier ask the Commissioner, and then he can tell the House.

The Premier: For last year?

Mr. SMITH: This year's figures for last year.

The Premier: I am talking about last year's.



Mr. SMITH: This year's payment in respect of last year's duty. As the Treasurer knows, last year's duty is not payable until this year.

The Premier: That is right. What did you pay in dividend duty in 1913?

Mr. SMITH: I cannot state the amount offhand, but we paid what we were entitled to pay.

The Premier: When does your company distribute its dividend?

Mr. SMITH: If we did not pay what we should have paid, why did not the Treasurer prosecute the *Sunday Times*? It would have been his duty, as Treasurer of this country, to prosecute the *Sunday Times* if that newspaper did not pay what it ought to have paid.

The Premier: I have never asserted that. I assert that you have not paid because the law does not make you pay.

Mr. SMITH: There are many things that the law does not compel the Premier to do that he has not done. Why therefore should he ask the *Sunday Times* or the *West Australian* to do those things?

The Premier: I did not ask them.

Mr. SMITH: The Premier has been slinging off at them.

The Premier: They sling off at me sometimes.

Mr. SMITH: I expect there is good reason for it.

The Premier: I am prepared to admit that sometimes.

Mr. SMITH: The Premier wound up his castigation of the *Sunday Times* with a threatening gesture and said that he was going to introduce an amendment to the Dividend Duties Act that would make them sweat. I would like to tell the Premier that next year, on account of certain circumstances, chiefly the mismanagement of the finances of the country, not only the profits of the *Sunday Times*, but of many other companies operating in this State, will be so reduced that the increased duties will not in any way return to the Premier the sum he expects to get.

The Premier: Don't you worry about that.

Mr. SMITH: I think I have made it quite clear that the *Sunday Times* has done all that was expected of it and has done its share.

The Premier: I will admit that; I never said anything else.

Mr. Mitchell: You inferred it.

The Premier: I never inferred it either.

Mr. SMITH: The member for Geraldton (Mr. Heitmann) referred to the Electoral Act, and I can agree with what he said that the administration of it is capable of a great deal of improvement. I am not going to labour the question, I am just going to mention briefly my own experience when contesting the North Perth seat. I had occasion to send circulars to 8,000 odd electors whose names were on the roll, and to my surprise over 2,000 of them were returned by the postal authorities marked "Left the district." What better proof can there be of the deplorable state of the electoral rolls of North Perth? If that is a fair sample of the condition of the other rolls, then all I can say is that it is time we amended the Electoral Act and introduced a system which will have the effect of preventing a recurrence of such a state of things. Unless we have clean rolls we cannot possibly have clean Government, and I suggest to the Premier that he should lose no time in appointing a commission to investigate the administration of the Electoral Act. I am certain that the outcome would be pure rolls and there would no longer be the references to the stuffing of the rolls we hear at every election. . . .

Mr. Heitmann: Was your roll stuffed?

Hon. J. Mitchell: Yours was.

Mr. Heitmann: I would like to say what I think of you, and don't you make any mistake about it. . . .

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SMITH: It seems to me that the most important matter before this House is the growing deficit. The war has really affected us very little; the deficit has been present for the past three years and has been growing at an extraordinary rate. I would like to draw the attention of the House



to the fact that the Government have made no suggestion as to the manner in which it is proposed it should be reduced. There is no reference in the Governor's Speech to the method it is intended to adopt to stop this drift. The Premier has asked for suggestions from this side of the House. I am going to give him a little advice and I hope he will accept it. I would suggest that while the country is labouring under this dreadful deficit he should reduce the salaries of Ministers. He might even go further and reduce the salaries of every hon. member in the House. (Opposition Members: Hear, hear.) I for one would be quite prepared to agree to any reduction the Premier might agree to make.

Mr. Heitmann: I would forego my person salary if you agreed to forego your income.

Mr. SMITH: It might be news to the hon. member to learn that the only man who was reduced in the *Sunday Times* office on account of the war was myself. We have heard a lot of compliments bandied across the Chamber this evening, and I was sorry to hear what could scarcely be called a compliment, but which perhaps was intended as such—the reference by the Premier to the Leader of the Opposition as a German. I do not know what reason the Premier had for making that accusation. Whoever knows Mr. Wilson is aware that he is British, as he said himself, from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. Let us contrast Mr. Wilson's actions with those of the Premier. Why did the Premier go to that German firm, the Continental Tyre Company, and buy up all their German tyres? The Premier laughs. Perhaps he will say he did not know it was a German firm.

The Premier: Did you know it was?

Mr. SMITH: I admit freely I did not know they were Germans. But supposing they were not a German company at all why should he corner all the rubber tyres, while at the same time we find him prosecuting people for buying up wheat and flour with the

same object that the Premier had in view.

The Premier: You cannot eat tyres.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You could eat anything.

The Premier: What a digestion I must have.

Mr. SMITH: There are many other things I should like to refer to, and one or two flashed across my mind after having listened to the debate on the Address-in-reply yesterday and to-day. The member for Kalgoorlie referred to the action of the miners on the goldfields in subscribing to the Patriotic Fund and he pointed out that they had done this because the Government had not been able to carry through their proposed war tax. The miners on the goldfields are to be complimented for the way they are subscribing to these funds, and I should like to remind the member for Kalgoorlie that when he made those remarks he had evidently forgotten that in subscribing to the funds the miners knew exactly where the money is going to. If compelled to pay the emergency tax they would not have known where it was going, and could only have surmised that it was to bolster up the deficit caused by experiments undertaken by the Government. Remarks have been made in regard to unionism. I am strongly in favour of unionism. I employ unionists in all departments of my business, and will always continue to do so; but when it comes to the question of State employment I think the State should not insist on a man being a unionist. All men contribute to the taxes of the country, and the Government have no right to say that State employment must be given to unionists alone. In our private businesses we do as we like, and although I always employ unionists, I am not prepared to say that the State should force unionism down the throat of any man. Reference has been made to the learned professions as being safeguarded by certain rules and restrictions. But the matter is entirely different. Before one can enter the legal profession, for instance, the Attorney General knows very well that



one has to pass certain examinations practically guaranteeing a desirable standard of efficiency. The Attorney General is himself a shining example of what it is possible for a man of his age to accomplish in this State. He deserves all credit for what he has done, but it shows also that the legal profession is not the close corporation that hon. members on that side would have us to believe. If the partisans of unionism on that side will undertake that before any person can enter a union he must give some guarantee of efficiency, I am with them heart and soul, and will support preference to unionists; but I think we should have some guarantee that every unionist is proficient in his trade. We have heard of foreign labour on the mines, but it must be remembered that it would not be possible for such labour to be so employed if the miners' unions did not admit foreigners. As for the tyranny of unions, here is a letter addressed from the Secretary of the Perth Plumbers' Industrial Union of Workers, a Mr. D. Cameron.

Mr. Heitmann: We agree with you on the subject of that letter.

Mr. SMITH: This letter is addressed to a man who has seen better days and who is now on his uppers. I will read the letter and leave it to the House to say whether it constitutes an act of tyranny.

Mr. Heitmann: As proprietor of the *Sunday Times* you should not criticise any act of tyranny.

Mr. SMITH: Are you speaking on behalf of the *Geraldton Express*? Here is the letter—

Dear Sir, I notice by the employment register at the Drill Hall, Perth, that you have represented yourself as a plumber and a unionist. As you are not a member of either the Perth or the Fremantle plumbers' unions, I will be glad if you will let me know to what union you belong, otherwise I must communicate with the authorities.

That is brotherly love. The letter continues—

You are doubtless aware that preference to unionists is a condition of

labour with the Commonwealth Government, so if you explain this matter it may be to your advantage. (Signed) D. Cameron, Secretary.

Mr. Allen: Is this man a qualified plumber?

Mr. SMITH: Yes.

Mr. Allen: I will give him some work if he is.

Mr. Munsie: The secretary of the unemployed is making a boast that he is being paid for writing up the humorous side of the question.

Mr. Allen: Then he ought to write you up.

Mr. SMITH: The Premier referred to the railways as not paying, and he said something about the land not being utilised. I would remind the Premier that the responsibility for the decrease in land settlement lies at the door of the ex-Minister for Lands. I will not labour the fact because it is known throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia and no one knows it better than the Premier. Before concluding I would like to refer to the question of finding work for the great number of unemployed in Perth. I have sunk a considerable amount of money in land. I am of opinion that agriculture is the backbone of this country and that it will be to the advantage of the State to settle its agricultural districts and get the land cleared and put under crop. Still, I say give me a good old mining boom to drag the country out of a hole. I do not ask for a boom in which wild cats are rampant, but one in which there is legitimate mining. If the Government provided more money for prospecting and opening up our mineral resources, they would be doing a great deal to relieve the unemployed and bring prosperity to the State. Those who were on the gold-fields in the early days—and I pride myself that I was there 20 years ago together with some other members of this House—should cast their memories back to that time when leases were being taken up and development and prospecting were being done and they will remember how leases were abandoned when companies found they could

not get five ounces to the ton. To-day a return of 15 dwts. would pay well and many leases which have produced a considerable amount of gold in small parcels, if reopened to-day would pay handsomely. The Mines Department have all that information in their pigeon holes and I suggest the Minister should make it available to those who would be inclined to put money into the industry.

Mr. Heitmann: We have heard details of old abandoned shows for 15 years.

Mr. SMITH: And if the hon. member had read the *Sunday Times* as carefully as he leads us to believe he has he would know that many of the once abandoned shows are now producing handsome returns and employing a large number of men.

Mr. Heitmann: Where are they?

Mr. SMITH: There are several. The Light of Asia is one.

The Minister for Mines: It was never abandoned; it changed hands.

Mr. SMITH: The Minister will agree that there are many leases which if re-opened would pay handsomely. I hope the Estimates will provide a considerable increase in the mining vote. Every effort should be made to publish particulars of these abandoned leases and of the crushings obtained in the early days. The Minister should not forget that there has arisen a new generation unacquainted with the work done on many of these leases and if the information were made public any number of parties would take up these leases and I am satisfied a big percentage of them would pay well. I would go further and allow such parties to take up leases without any payment, say, for 12 months.

Mr. Foley: They can do it now.

Mr. SMITH: Yes, but they do not know which leases.

Mr. Foley: Any lease in the State can be taken up now.

Mr. SMITH: The hon. member may know it, but those who are willing to go out are not aware of it.

Mr. Foley: All the miners who are any good know it.

Mr. SMITH: I would favour the granting to such men of free railway fares to the fields. It would not cost the country anything to carry them to the goldfields because the usual trains would be sufficient.

The Premier: I cannot stand all this.

Mr. SMITH: A little enterprise and energy thrown into the development of the mining industry would result in the absorption of many of the unemployed. I said in my opening remarks that I intended to be brief and in order to keep faith with hon. members I will reserve any further remarks until the Estimates are under discussion.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

House adjourned at 12.18 a.m.  
(Thursday).

## Legislative Council,

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

### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: The balance sheet and profit and loss account of the State Steamship service for the year ending 30th June, 1913-14.