

per ton. This means that lines constructed now will cost £160 a mile more than they would have cost two years ago, owing to the big advance in the price of rails. [Mr. Bolton : Will the price be maintained?] We took the opportunity last December of securing 250 miles of rails at a cheaper cost than we should have to pay were we compelled to get them now. The rails we secured were for the Ravensthorpe, Coolgardie-Norseman, Greenhills-Quairading, and Donnybrook-Upper Preston Lines.

Mr. Taylor : Owing to the additional price of rails you will have to postpone the construction of some of the new lines.

The PREMIER : If it is found that some of the sums voted are not sufficient to provide the rails for the lines, it will be necessary for us to re-appropriate money from a sum of £100,000 voted for additional railway lines. In conclusion I would say that I appreciate the concluding remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. I have always found him an honourable opponent, and, notwithstanding the fact that we severely criticise one another on occasions in the House, I have always been in the position to realise that we are able to meet as friends outside the Chamber. We do not expect support where he does not agree with us in principle; but I can only hope that at the conclusion of this session we shall not be worse friends than we were at the conclusion of the last.

Mr. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Pilbarra) : The Premier concluded by saying that he did not expect from this (Opposition) side of the House support on measures with which we could not agree; and I assure him it is well not to expect it, for I feel certain he will not get it. And there are several proposals in his programme with which this side will disagree. Like the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male) I will refer first to the Nor'-West. That member says the present Ministry will go down to posterity as the Never-Never Ministry, as the Ministry for the Nor'-West; and the Minister for Mines has told us that after

a man has been in the Nor'-West for three years he is "ratty."

The Minister for Mines : How long were you there ?

Mr. UNDERWOOD : For a considerable time, long enough to learn that some people are ratty before they go there. The matter of greatest interest to the Nor'-West is the proposal to build the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway. With the other speakers I must congratulate the Government on something, and I congratulate them on having at least seen what most other people saw years ago—the absolute necessity for this railway. Recently we have heard much talk about the Nor'-West and its resources, in fact, the resources of that part of the State have been consistently brought before the public during the last few weeks, and therefore it is perhaps unnecessary for me to speak at length regarding the railway. I am confident that it is thoroughly warranted from a financial point of view. The country to be opened up is certainly of great extent. It contains an undoubted mineral belt, and will possibly prove one of the best resources of the State. We have there, in addition to the country traversed by the Minister in his recent trip, a great area extending practically from Nullagine to Peak Hill, and an area of great width reaching west almost to Onslow. Several geologists have visited and reported on the district, and each of their reports has justified the railway project. In this connection I wish to mention the statement reported to have been made at Menzies by the Minister for Mines. If the report is correct the Minister said, "Even Mr. Underwood had held out an alternative hope that this railway would be built by private enterprise; but the Moore Government would not allow private enterprise to do it." I wish to say, if Mr. Gregory made this statement it was absolutely incorrect, because I never held out any alternative hope at all regarding the construction of that railway by private enterprise. I have been a strenuous opponent of its construction by private enterprise, ever since the proposition was made.

The Minister for Mines: Where does that statement appear?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In the *Morning Herald*, the day after I saw you at Leonora. Another Government proposal for the North-West is the Roebourne tram, a work that is thoroughly justified. If members could visit Cossack to see the difficulties surrounding the residents of that port, there would be no hesitation in voting the money. As has been explained, the present port of Roebourne is Cossack, or rather Cossack Creek. It is impossible to get into or out of the port with even a small sailing boat, except at high tide; and all goods brought in have to be lightered from out in the offing, though there is within a few miles a splendid work known as the Point Sampson Jetty, built by a recent Government at a cost of over £20,000 and lying absolutely useless because it is not connected; because there is no road extending from the jetty inland. A tram connecting that jetty with Roebourne would certainly be of great assistance to the district, and would help to people what is likely to be a great copper-producing country. I fully agree with the erection of light-houses on that coast. This matter should have been attended to a long time ago. The natural difficulties of the coast are considerable. Most members have heard of its high tides and strong currents, also that it is famed for what are called willy-willies or cyclones. Again, mariners who know it well tell us that it is studded with uncharted rocks. Under those conditions the cost of carriage on that coast is perhaps unduly high, though those conditions are not the cause of the high cost of carriage, as I intend to show later. To the members for York (Mr. Monger), Swan (Mr. Gull), and Perth (Mr. H. Brown) and others who frequently refer to the great wrongs done to this State, and the large sums of money that Sir John Forrest as Federal Treasurer has filched from this State for the benefit of South Australia and Victoria, I should like to point out that these lighthouses are likely soon to be taken by the Federal Government, which will then have to assume the loan indebted-

ness for the works, and to defray the expense of upkeep. We shall then have a chance of getting back some of the money that has been filched from us by the Federal Treasurer. I commend that view of the case to those members, who I am sorry are not here to benefit by my remarks. As an Australian and a West Australian, I say I consider the work is thoroughly justified. I look upon that North as the vulnerable point of Australia; and it is the duty of all Australians to endeavour to populate the North. The best protection we can have when the enemy comes is the presence of white men to defend the country; and to induce those white men to people the North we must give them every possible facility. From a national point of view the work is thoroughly justified. It is justified from the point of view of those parochial gentlemen who hold that the Eastern States are always robbing us. One thing must be regarded as the complement of any developmental policy in that part of the country. I refer to a better steamship service. The member for Kimberley said nothing of that, but I trust it will be mentioned by other members. I have again gone thoroughly into that question, and another member of the House has collected some very rare figures bearing on the subject. We find in the North that the shipping companies are combined—not to put too fine a point on it—to deliberately rob Western Australia. We find that those black-labour boats trading to Singapore do everything possible to take trade from Western Australia through Singapore. They employ black labour to begin with. The whole of the supplies come from Singapore; the companies so arrange their freights that the wool is dumped at Singapore instead of at Fremantle. On the other hand, we find that they diminish their freight charges as they get farther south from Singapore on the down trip. For instance, we find that they charge a higher freight to Broome than to Port Hedland, and a still lower freight to Cossack, reducing the charge till they get to Geraldton. By this means they are able to undercut the freights from England to Fremantle.

The figures will no doubt be given to the House, absolutely proving the statements I make. As to the Pilbarra railway, many gentlemen have told me that they were not too sanguine in support of it because, when the country is opened up, the Eastern States will possibly be able to ship a lot of stuff direct to Pilbarra. But if those gentlemen who are anxious to prevent the Eastern States from getting a little trade were to pay more attention to our black neighbours in the North, those gentlemen would in my opinion be far better Australians. I have heard various proposals for remedying the great evil of extortionate freights and charges and the evil of forcing through Singapore trade which justly belongs to Western Australia. Many suggestions have been made to me for subsidising private enterprise. I am beginning to conclude that private enterprise consists in the enterprise of certain private gentlemen who get their fingers into the public pocket. I can assure the House that I am loth to support any more private enterprise schemes. In my opinion the easiest and best method of totally defeating the black-labour people and securing to the State the trade that should belong to it is to provide a State steamship service to our Nor'-West ports. This of course is socialistic, and on that ground the member for Kimberley cannot perhaps support it. At the same time, that member will support the construction of a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. And I would like to say it does appear to me it is just as easy to carry the people's goods up the coast, and also the people themselves, as it is to carry them inland after they get to the coast. I think it is the duty of the Government to introduce some Government steamers on that coast. I am convinced that before we can have the full benefit of a developmental policy in that part of the State we require this Government service. In regard to the freezing works at Wyndham, I should like to say I believe it is the duty of the Government to assist and foster, as far as possible, every industry in the State, whether pastoral, mining, manufactur-

ing, agricultural, or any other industry, and I believe that freezing works in various parts of the north of the State would certainly give an impetus to stock raising in the State. But what I have heard of these proposals so far—the Premier gave us a little more light into it this afternoon—is that it has been a subsidy to the meat ring, and seeing it is a subsidy to that ring, I can assure the Government they will receive strong opposition from the Opposition side of the House. I have made some inquiries into the working of that meat ring, and I find it deliberately—well, robbing the consumer and the producer of stock. We are not far behind in things that America has produced in the way of rings. We find that the small stock owner, and there are small men there, are at the mercy of the meat ring. This ring almost absolutely compels the small man to sell to them. We find this meat ring monopolises the whole of the cattle trade from Kimberley, and the small man who is endeavouring to send his cattle down has to pay Connor, Doherty, and others running the ring, a royalty for the privilege of sending cattle in their boats. We know what they are doing to us by the price we have to pay for meat down here. The Government are farther strengthening the hands of the ring by giving them a subsidy of £40,000. The member for Kimberley says they have not asked for it. We know who waited on the Minister and asked for this grant. We know that Frank Connor, member of another place, headed the deputation. We do not know a great deal, but we are often likely to guess right at times, and if we see a prominent member of the meat ring heading a deputation which asks for a subsidy on the meat works, it is only reasonable to conclude he is in it. Leaving the meat ring we will come to the rabbits. I agree with the member for Kimberley in this regard, that the Government should immediately construct the fence to prevent the rabbits getting into Kimberley. In speaking during last session I opposed loan money being expended on the rabbit-proof fence, and stated that the rabbits were held inside of it,

and the member for Gascoyne took me to task somewhat, but almost before the ink was dry on that speech in *Hansard* my statement was fully endorsed by the head inspector of the department. He stated that the rabbits were inside and that it was impossible to get them out again. I say this with regard to the Minister for Agriculture, because we have heard of his wonderful doings, and that he does a lot of work.

Mr. Hudson: He started in a motor car to my electorate the other day but did not get there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In that instance he got there, as in other instances, after the horse was stolen. My experience of many things on the part of the Minister for Agriculture is that he locks the stable door after the horse is stolen, the same as he has done with regard to the rabbit-proof fence. I trust this policy will not be adopted in regard to the rabbit-proof fence to keep the rabbits out of Kimberley. If the fence is not commenced in the near future it will be better to let it go altogether. On the other hand I say that Kimberley is a splendid pastoral country, and it will be invaluable to Western Australia in the future. We must also bear in mind that this country is not alienated, it belongs to the State, and I feel that by protecting the country from this pest, and it is undoubtedly the greatest pest Western Australia ever had, we shall be doing something at least for posterity. I feel sure the Kimberleys will prove to be a source of considerable wealth to the whole of the Commonwealth. I trust the Government will not follow the same line of policy in regard to this fence as they have in regard to the other fences. However, in regard to this matter I can endorse the remarks made by the member for Kimberley, that the present fence has driven the rabbits in there. They would not have been there for many years to come if the rabbit fence had not been constructed, but now the fence is constructed they come up against it and run off, and unless some check is made in the near future Kimberley will be overrun with rabbits just the same as every other part of Western Australia will be. There is another matter in regard to dingoes. I

would just point out that the dingo is a considerable pest. I think some of my friends on the other side will agree with me in this matter, and if it is possible to check or entirely eradicate the pest, we should do so. I think that the pastoralist is certainly not very hard pushed. He is a man on the average who is doing fairly well; perhaps he is doing better than those in other industries in the State. He is able to pay something towards the cost of destroying the dogs, and I think I can say he is prepared to do so. The year before last—I have not the figures for the year just closed—nearly £2,000 was spent in the destruction of dingoes. I think that work could have been done more effectually with a little management. I consider that legislation should be introduced and a tax imposed for this purpose, and then all the pastoralists would at once be compelled to pay something towards the destruction of dogs. The man farthest out has to kill the dogs and the man near the coast has the best of it in other respects and in regard to dogs also.

Mr. Hudson: Outside the Government pay 5s., inside they pay 10s.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In regard to this matter those rearing sheep are put to greater expense in this matter than those raising cattle; in fact the man raising cattle allows the dogs to accumulate on his run, but the man next to him, who is trying to rear sheep, has to go to the expense of killing the dogs. The Government could fairly introduce legislation whereby a tax could be imposed, and the amount raised thereby subsidised. In this way all hands would be compelled to take their share in the destruction of dogs. I have a letter from a person up north regarding this matter, and he says:—

“I may state for your information that I wrote to all the gentlemen who represent northern and north-west constituents, as well as to the Premier, and received very sympathetic replies from all of them, with the promise to bring the matter before the House at an early date.”

I looked through *Hansard* and found the only member who mentioned this in the

House was the member for Magnet, who asked the question, whether the Government intended to introduce legislation on the matter, and the Premier replied "yes." This seems so characteristic of the present Administration, sympathetic messages and promises, but if they would only kill dogs instead of killing time, as the member for Mount Magnet says, perhaps the State would be in a better condition. We have heard "trying it on the dog," but the pastoralists in the North-West have tried the Premier's promises on the dogs and found promises ineffective. In regard to the stock tax, of which we have heard so much, I join with the Premier in congratulating Mr. Canning on the success of his trip, and not only on the success of his trip, but on his undertaking the trip at all. I feel sure it will be of great benefit to Western Australia that the stock route has been discovered. At the same time I asked the Premier the question, if he intended to allow tick cattle to come down that track, but the Premier did not answer. In my opinion there will have to be great care exercised as to what cattle are allowed to come down that track. If tick cattle are allowed to come down the tick will spread through various districts. I am mentioning this matter early for fear that the Agricultural Department will get in after the tick has spread again. The member for Kimberley made some remarks regarding the necessity for introducing legislation to prevent the illicit buying of pearls in Broome. That has given me an opportunity of saying a few words on what I have heard of Broome. I think before we do anything for Broome we should examine what advantage Broome is to us. I am certain that Broome at the present time is no use to Western Australia financially; it is derogatory physically and morally. We find that practically the whole of their supplies come from Singapore and other Asiatic ports, that their workmen are all Asiatics, and that almost everything required comes from Asia, while the pearls go away to Asia. Then there is the great boast by the member for Kimberley that the North-West is supplying half the pearls of the world. I think

it is a great pity that Western Australia is not getting a better advantage out of half the world's supply of pearls. I am pleased the Premiers' Conference has not power to settle things, and I am glad there is a Federal Parliament, and that the State Premiers cannot do all they desire. The Premier told us that he was doing something very great when he tried to get a motion passed before this Premiers' Conference that the number of the aliens in the pearling industry should not be decreased. I certainly think the Federal Parliament will shortly have something very different to say. I contend that white men can get these pearls; and if they cannot, then it is far better to leave the pearls lying at the bottom of the ocean. [*Mr. Male*: They will not do it.] Broome is the greatest sink of iniquity outside of Asia. [*Mr. Male*: Have you been there?] We heard the Premier ask how many Asiatics there were. So far as I can judge there are about 2,000 to 3,000 Asiatics at Broome, and about 300 white people; and it is positively known that illicit pearl dealing is rampant, and that there are few who are not dealing in these pearls. There is a strong suspicion that a good deal of opium smoking goes on amongst these Asiatics. [*Mr. Bath*: And worse than that.] We know of many worse things than that. I maintain that if Broome is really to keep going it should be kept going with white men; and if it cannot be kept going with white men it should be closed down entirely, and these Asiatics sent back to their own country. There are many people well versed in the affairs of Broome who contend that a massacre there is quite probable in the near future. I have stated previously that it should be the policy of every true Australian to endeavour to populate that North-West country with white men so that we will have men there to defend us when the enemy, who is sure to come, will put in an appearance. In the event of an enemy coming to Broome what will happen? The member for Kimberley tells us that these gentlemen are on the books as "British seamen." Well these "British seamen" of Broome will simply

turn round and cut every white throat, sack the town, and clear out with their masters' luggers. I would like to say a few words in regard to the statement made as to the ability of white men to work in that country. I have heard many men who have never been in the North-West—I am speaking now of the old North-West—state that white men cannot work there, and I have read it too. I can say as a man who has been there and has lived in it for eight years, who has pursued every kind of occupation, in the sun and in the mines, that white men can easily do it, and that the proposition that white men cannot work there has absolutely no foundation in fact. We have heard considerable talk about the difficulties of the North-West. We have heard our friends of the Parliamentary Party who visited that part of the country complaining about the great difficulties of their trip; and the Minister for Mines, I believe, considered that it was no picnic. The recent trip of the Parliamentary Party was no picnic; but at the same time it would take an enormous stretch of imagination to make it an arduous task. I do not wish to boast, but I carried my swag about 600 miles in that country between December and February; and my track was not blazed with broken bottles. [Mr. Horan: No more was the Parliamentary Party's, as you well know.] With regard to the statement that white men cannot be employed in the North, I wish to give it emphatic denial as a man who has worked there. Now we come to a matter a little nearer home, and that is tick camels. We heard a little about these camels last year. The member for Murchison asked one or two questions with regard to them. We found that there was a great deal of publicity given to this camel question, and almost everybody interested knew exactly the day on which the camels were to land at Port Hedland, that is everybody I presume except the Agricultural Department. These 500 odd camels arrived at Port Hedland, and after a couple of them had been landed the police stopped the landing because the beasts were covered with tick; but the magistrate there overrode

the decision of the police and ordered them to go on landing the camels. Then the people of Port Hedland of course wired to Perth regarding the matter, and the Premier telegraphed back stating that the camels were not to be landed until the stock inspector arrived. This is the first point to which I wish to draw attention. The telegram left here on Thursday morning, and special arrangements were made for it to go along the wires. In the ordinary course of events the telegram should have arrived at Port Hedland at dinner time that day. I do not say when it arrived, but it came to light at Port Hedland at dinner time on Friday, immediately after the last camel had been landed. Whether the telegram got to Port Hedland previously or not I cannot say, but I know that special arrangements were made in Perth to send that telegram there immediately. We all know that if one wants to land a dog at Fremantle, even from Victoria, the stock inspector must be there, and that the dog has to be quarantined for a considerable time and inspected; but the Agricultural Department, with the really best Minister of the lot, timed the stock inspector to arrive at Port Hedland about five days after the camels had landed, and he had to drive 50 miles over the bush before he arrived at the last of the camels. They were spread right over the bush before the inspector got to them, and then the Government came with the excuse, with the poor subterfuge, that it was only private enterprise and that a few people who had camels there were complaining and that there was nothing in it. I maintain that the statement was an insult to the people of Port Hedland, and I beg to hand it back on their behalf. The inspector came up there and he assured the people that the ticks were all dead; yet we find that these ticks have got into all the other camels, and we have assertions made that they are in at least one horse. I say that the Agricultural Department was culpably negligent in that matter. Whether the tick was dangerous or not it does not matter; we do not allow a snake to bite us and find out afterwards whether it is poisonous.

When the tick were seen on the camels, the camels should not have been landed, and the magistrate who overrode the police should certainly get his cheque at the earliest possible time. [*Mr. Scaddan*: Hear, hear. And a few others.] The excuse they have about these things is that tick will not get on to any other animal, that the camel is the host of this tick, and that all round there is really no danger. This is what they tell us after the camels have got over a great cattle and sheep-producing district. In regard to this host theory, I would like to say that we all know that the kangaroo tick will live on a dog, and also on a human being; and I think it will be found yet, unfortunately, that the camel is not the only host of that tick introduced through the neglect of this great Agricultural Department into the largest stock-producing district of the State. In conclusion I would like to say that there is still farther trouble in regard to this matter. With these camels there were 48 Afghan drivers who were allowed by the Commonwealth Government to land. I would point out to the members for Swan, York, and Perth that the Federal Government took the precaution of sending an officer to Port Hedland before the steamer arrived, while the State Government sent their inspector after the camels had spread over the district. The much abused Federal Government, which is robbing this State and doing a lot of other things, at least tried to protect us and gave their officer at Port Hedland every assistance in the matter, while the State Government let the camels spread all over the place. These Afghans had to return to India, and only a few weeks or so ago the police were prepared to put them on board, but the Afghans refused to go, and the magistrate again ordered the police to desist and not to touch the Afghans. [*Member*: Who is the magistrate?] *Dr. Burton*. The whole thing is a little stronger than the ordinary camel train. There is just one other matter of administration in the North-West to which I would like to call attention—as it is a paltry matter I must apologise for introducing here—it is in

reference to a commonage applied for at Old Shaw. At Old Shaw there are many prospectors, and they want a commonage to run their horses on. I made application in the matter on the 4th of October of last year. It was put through the offices here, the Mines Department and the Lands Department, at a fairly rapid rate, and was referred on to the Warden of the Pilbarra Goldfield for a report. I have been to the department on dozens of occasions since then, and the only information I can get in regard to the matter is that they are still waiting for that report. This is a matter that should certainly have been attended to in a very few days. If the Warden at Marble Bar were in any way competent or desirous to do his duty he would have had a report within a week. [*Mr. Taylor*: How long has he been there?] About ten years. A doctor acting as Warden for a large goldfield like Pilbarra is altogether out of place. Quite apart from his capacity he cannot perform his duties owing to his medical work. The Minister for Mines deliberately promised *Mr. J. K. Weir* that he would remedy this matter and would appoint a mining engineer to act as Warden for that place. That promise was made in November last, yet when the Minister visited Marble Bar he endorsed farther the appointment of an officer for 12 months under the present unsatisfactory system.

The Minister for Mines: What authority have you for saying that I promised *Mr. Weir* that an engineer would be appointed Warden?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: My own ears. Just a word or two as to a medical man acting as a magistrate, and I will say at the outset that I think he is the most unsuitable man it is possible to appoint. A medical man gives a life's study to the science of medicine, and if he does well in that surely he does well indeed. No man has yet been able to master that science fully, and one who gives his whole life to the study of it cannot devote his time to other matters. Again his very occupation renders him hardened and callous to a great extent to human nature. He must lose a great deal of

the milk of human kindness owing to his position and his work, and the possession of this quality is absolutely necessary in a good judge. My experience tells me that medical men are absolutely the worst men to appoint to the positions of magistrates. In regard to a speech made by the Minister for Mines in the Mechanics' Institute, Perth, recently, I have a word or two to say. I do not mind his joke as to the "rattiness" of my constituents and myself, but I do protest against that portion of his speech in which he refers to an application for a well at Bernes flat. In referring to this matter he said that the application was to put the well alongside the hotel. That is a good joke but it is absolutely incorrect. The well was applied for before the hotel was built, and the Minister will find that the first objection to the well was that it was alongside Macdonald's store. I do not come to Parliament to advocate the sinking of a shallow well, but I hold that the proposition to sink this one was just and fair. I protest against the Minister making the false statement he did.

The Minister for Mines: I think that the hon. member should withdraw that statement.

Mr. Taylor: The statement was made at a public meeting.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member must withdraw that remark. Exception has been taken to the words "false statement" which are considered to be offensive, and the hon. member must, according to parliamentary procedure, withdraw the remark.

Mr. Taylor: If a member of Parliament or a Minister makes a statement on the public platform and an hon. member in this House says that was a false statement, can objection be taken to the remark, and is it right to call upon him to withdraw?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows full well that any word which is considered by any member to be offensive must be withdrawn.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I apologise to you, sir, for having gone out of bounds, and plead ignorance. I would say that it is absolutely incorrect for the Min-

ister to make the statement he did. I resent the Minister's remarks as to that well, and I take them as a reflection on me as also on my constituents. As to the general policy of the Government, the first item that attracts me is the proposition of the Minister for Mines that we should practically do away with the labour conditions on the mines. I do not feel at all worried regarding this, as I am sure from what I saw of the present Administration last session, that they will back down when they find opposition arising to their proposal. I am confident that the whole of the mining districts of this State are totally opposed to the Minister on this point. I contend that, if the present fairly liberal laws relating to mining are not carried out and the work is not done on the properties, the owners should stand aside and let someone else work the mines. A Minister for Mines who attempts to introduce legislation which will give a man power to occupy land for years without doing any work on it, will not retain his position very long. We are told that, under the present system, there is no security of tenure, that the mining companies have to work the ground and fulfil stringent labour conditions, and that exemption is hard to get. Now there are a number of mines in the North-West which have been lying idle for a very long time. There is for instance the Lalla Rookh which has been idle for three years; another mine has not been worked for four years and a third has been practically always idle. At Bamboo Creek one mine has been on tribute for about eight or nine years, and when the owner is unable to fix up favourable tribute he gets exemption. The proposed new law practically means that any big company will be able to get exemption for ever. I contend that in the past the mines have had too much exemption and that there has not been sufficient stringency shown even in the administration of the existing laws. My idea is that the only reason for the Cabinet bringing in the new Bill is because they reckon they will be going out of office soon and will get this measure through before the

new Government—who will administer the existing Act properly—take office. Another statement has been made that good mines will always be worked whether there are labour conditions or not. At Whim Creek there is the finest copper mine in Western Australia. It is a freehold and for the last five years and until a few months ago it has been idle. We all knew that copper was there but we could do nothing. This instance fully answers the statement that where there is good value in a property it does not require labour conditions. The ground to which I referred should have been worked for at least five years instead of only for a few months. The member for Subiaco reckons that there is very little difference between the policy of this side of the House and that of the Government. In the case of the mining industry alone there is a great difference, for while they want no labour conditions we require them to be even more stringent than they are. This position reminds me of a story of a man who made application for a job and who would have got it only for one word; the man to whom he applied for the job said "No" instead of "Yes." The Government desire to give more exemption and this side of the House desires to give less. As a prospector and a man who has been through this country and has owned a small mine, I consider that it would be the worst thing that could be done in the interests of Western Australia to lessen the labour conditions. It has not been the security of tenure that has prevented me from working ground, but the fact that someone else has held it and has failed to work it. [*The Minister for Mines* : You did not show much for the lease while you held it.] When I finished with the claim I went to the Registrar and handed in the forfeiture so that I would not appear to hold ground after having finished working it. The cry that this exemption will assist the prospector is most incorrect. I am sure that the whole of the prospectors, the poor man, the leaseholders and the miners working claims are entirely opposed

to the proposals of the Government in this direction. With regard to the Arbitration Act it has been forced upon me, ever since the late award in the timber industry, that this Act has practically failed. Of course the member for Perth finds great jubilation in that, but I do not, for it is a matter of great seriousness to Western Australia. Bloating capitalists like the member for Perth of course will say that the workers are now completely beaten owing to the failure of this Act, but I can assure him he is entirely wrong. [*Mr. Brown* : I said no such thing.] I was only supposing that you thought it. The causes of the failure of this Act are many. In fact, it was only experimental legislation and its most sanguine supporters always had some doubt as to its practicability. I am sure it could have done better had it received what is absolutely essential for its success—sympathetic administration; and that is what it did not get. I can only say that the pin-prick policy pursued by the registrar, I suppose under the instruction of the Law Department, had much to do with making a number of workers dissatisfied with the Act. Again, to be successful it is necessary to have as President of the Court a Judge who can take his mind out of the rut of legal technicalities, and get down occasionally to sound common sense. This is of course a big contract, because a Judge has been trained to law all his life as a doctor has been trained to physic, and it is undoubtedly hard for a Judge to get away from the rules of evidence and legal formalities. If the Judge could realize that he was to settle the dispute and not to depend so much upon the law of evidence, if he could recognise that he has to work in the interest of the State, he might possibly succeed. But so far in Western Australia we have not had that sort of Judge. However, the Speech contains a proposal for the amendment of the Arbitration Act. If the Government are in earnest, I will certainly give them my heartiest support. I do not agree with the member for Perth (*Mr. H. Brown*) that the best method of settling disputes is by strikes and lockouts. In fact I hold the

opinion that our friends the enemy professed to hold some considerable time ago, that such industrial wars are not in the interests of the State; and holding that opinion, I deem it my duty to devise some means of settling such disputes without resorting to force, and force will certainly be resorted to if the Act is not amended. Those who are complaining so loudly of the failure of the Act twit the Labour party with the fact that it was our Act. So it was; and admitting that it has failed, they must not forget that we can go back to strikes and lockouts as well as they; and if they are looking for fight, we will give it them. In other words, fighting is now forced upon us, and if we cannot avoid it, well "lay on Macduff." As to the timber industry I do not wish to speak at great length, but it is apparent to everybody that we have in Western Australia the only jarrah forest in the world, and as fine a belt of timber as there is anywhere. It is also patent to all who consider the position that Australia, and Western Australia particularly, will in the near future be short of timber; and yet we are now denuding that splendid forest for what? The State is receiving practically nothing in the shape of rent; the railway charges have been cut down again and again to suit the Combine; the men employed in the industry have immense difficulty in securing a living wage for doing the work; and then we have the representative of the Combine informing us that the Combine is losing money, and we have a Judge of the Arbitration Court who believes him. In my opinion it is absolutely necessary that the timber Combine should be wiped out of the affairs of this State. The leader of the Opposition has pointed out the great difficulties which the United States are having with combines, and it behoves this State to stamp them out before they get so strong a hold as they have acquired in that country. We know what combines can do. I have just said that a Judge believed a representative of the Timber Combine. Well, from what I have seen of combines, I must say that I do not put falsehood past them. We have seen what combines have done in

South Africa; we have seen what was done there by the owners of the Transvaal mines with their bought Press which lied for years to bring about the war; and the people who owned those mines own the Timber Combine. They are the same shareholders, or practically the same; therefore we know what we have to expect when dealing with a combine of that sort. We have seen that they will go to any imaginable length, so that in South Africa they could even mullock up their stopes with dead Chinamen. We have seen how they treated women and children in the concentration camps, the number of men killed in the war, the money it has cost in England; we have seen their lying to bring about the war, we have seen their army contracts afterwards, and we find that all this was undertaken simply for the sake of an extra sixpenny dividend; and from the experience we have had of Teesdale Smith we see that he would do the same in Western Australia if the men of this country would allow him. And the Government would assist him. We have had his historic evidence that the Combine did not employ women and children. Exactly so. Those men who ran the country in South Africa did not employ women and children. They slowly killed them with starvation and pestilence, in the concentration camps, and Teesdale Smith would do the same with the women and children of Australia if we would allow him. His statement that he did not employ women and children proves that clearly. A man who could make such a cowardly, cold-blooded statement as that would do it. I contend that it is the duty of Western Australia to wipe that Combine out of the affairs of this State. Speaking some time ago on this matter, the Premier said he would like to close the thing down, but he did not know how to do it. He would really like to keep the timber. I have said before and will say again that when the timber industry is in so serious a condition a man who is too tired to try is too tired to be Premier of this State. It is quite possible to cut sufficient timber at a reasonable price to supply the wants of Western Australia, and to leave the

rest to stand there till this State requires it, or till other parts of the world are prepared to pay us an adequate price for such splendid material; and this can be done by getting rid of the present Combine and introducing State mills into that timber country.

The Treasurer: And sacking three thousand men.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The three thousand men would pull through. We will look after them. Another feature of the timber industry is the area of good agricultural land locked up by this Combine. Those who go through that country will find that, where it is cut out, some of the best land in the State is gripped by the Combine, who defy the people of the State to go on it. It is right down near the railway and port; but the Government are building spur lines away back across sand patches while the Combine lock up good land near the railways and port.

Mr. Gordon: Name one spot.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Jarrahdale.

Mr. Gordon: You are talking absolute rot.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The member for Canning is a judge of rot—dry rot. I have just a few remarks to make about the great Premiers' Conference. I have thought this matter out and have come to the conclusion that the conference was the aggregation of nonentities who arrogated to themselves the powers delegated to the Federal authorities. We have it in the Speech, after saying what the conference consisted of, without turning a hair—

“ My Ministers regret that no settlement which can be deemed satisfactory to this State was arrived at.”

How could they expect it? Who had the right to give any power to settle anything? Had the Premier of New South Wales, that great handyman, the man of no ability except “handy,” who was anti-social until the electors knocked the stuffing out of his hay-bag? The Premier comes back and tells us that no settlement was arrived at, and never turned a hair. The more we consider that conference of Premiers the more we should

be convinced of its utter uselessness. What power had these Premiers to do anything in connection with Federal matters? The Premier has told us that they were trying to agree as to the taking over of the loans. What have they to do with the matter? The Federal electors decided that long ago. The West Australian electors by electing Pearce and others decided that we were going to hand over debts to the Commonwealth. I would like to ask who gave the Premiers power to settle these matters? We appointed men to the Federal Parliament to settle these matters, and I am glad to say I have every trust in the Federal members settling the matters to the advantage of Western Australia. I would just like to mention the member for Perth's request that the Government at an early date would introduce a Bill for a referendum to enable this State to secede from Federation. If the Government have no business ready they might bring such a Bill down to fill in time. I would like to mention to the members for York and Perth that a referendum has no possible chance of being carried in the affirmative, and if carried in the affirmative it would have no possible effect. I was going to say a word or two about finances, but really it is not worth while seeing that the Government fairly admit they have made a serious mess of the finances. The Speech hopes that the finances will be placed on a satisfactory basis during this session, which implies that they are on a very unsatisfactory basis at the present time. I am pleased that the Government have the honesty to recognise the mess they have got the finances into, and I trust the Government will get out of the mess. There are other things I should like to mention, and one is that we have been informed by the *West Australian*—this was after the Treasurer had made a speech—that the Treasurer being imbued with sound business principles his words were to be considered and taken as very weighty remarks. I like this platitude about business principles and I would like to consider it for a moment or two. What are business principles? Is it the successful business man, the man who

does most for himself? If that is the standard we judge sound business principles by in Perth, the *West Australian* is right. Another matter that is rather more serious, and it was a matter that was brought up in the House last session, is with regard to the goldfields water supply. From information received I am positive that supply is being polluted. I am no alarmist and I say that up to the present no harm has been done; but unless measures are adopted in the future that scheme which is one of the finest in the world, with about the purest supply of water in Australia, will be silted up by the filth carried from the immediate surrounding country. This is absolute fact. Although the matter was discussed in the House last session, on a motion by the member for the Swan, nothing has been done in the matter. During the summer stock and pigs are running across the gullies close to the reservoir, and if the by-laws were enforced, which they are not, they would not prevent it. The refuse from the stock, as everyone knows who has been anywhere in the back country, would be quickly washed into the reservoir with the first rains. That is a position any member can grasp. At the present time the reservoir is being silted up by the filth from the stock depastured immediately on the banks of the reservoir. For a year or two it will show no effect on analysis, but unless this trouble is prevented it will pollute the water, so that one of the finest water schemes in the world will be polluted through the lack of energy on the part of the Government of the State. There are Mr. Jacoby's vineyards close to the reservoir, and Mr. Jacoby uses some thousands of gallons of water to wash out his wine casks, and he also uses plenty of caustic soda, all of which goes into the dam. The Government thought to get over the difficulty by introducing by-laws, but these by-laws are not enforced. When the matter was brought before the House last year by the member for Swan, the Minister for Works said the Government could not take action in the matter because of a few land owners attempting to force a

sale on the Government at an extortionate price. On that I supported the Government; but I find that the Government are not enforcing the by-laws. They are afraid to do so. The residents say they are quite prepared to go to the Supreme Court to test their right to be there or not. If the Government do not test this matter by enforcing the by-laws they will allow the reservoir to silt up. This is a serious matter and deserves the earnest consideration of the Government. There is another matter worthy of a few remarks; I refer to the Agent General's office. I am satisfied it is time to abolish this refuge of derelict politicians. I have long been considering whether Western Australia received its value for the money spent in connection with the Agent General, and I have recently come to the conclusion that the office is a total waste of money. In fact it is worse than that. We have men in England supposed to be representing Australia, and they are by no means representative Australians. As I have said it is a refuge for derelict politicians, and instead of advertising the State I think they are doing considerably otherwise. The supporters of the system say that the Agent Generals advertise the State. I have seen some of their methods. There was a great banquet given the other day, with a splendid menu which was sent out to Australia, and there were many guests there, probably showing what fine politicians they were. [Mr. Collier: And an expensive cablegram was sent.] When we talk of advertising, it is advertising we want; but judging by their self-advertising, the present Government are the most competent I have struck. I never came across more Bill Adamases in my life. We have the Premier posing as the man who settles timber disputes, the Minister for Works as the man who built the dock, and the Minister for Mines as the man who found Pilbarra. [Mr. Taylor: And the Attorney General found Queensland, and the Treasurer Japan.] If the Government devoted some of their undoubted ability to advertising the State they might perhaps do sufficient to enable us to abolish the

Agent General's office. There are one or two advertisements, however, I desire to mention; one is the fact that the timber industry in the State offers 7s. 3d. a day; another is the statement allowed to go forward that the timber industry cannot employ women and children. Another advertisement I protest against is one the Premier gave us when he, as Premier, sent a begging letter to Carnegie. [Member: How did it get on?] As it deserved; there was no reply. It is very rarely I am ashamed of our country, but I did feel ashamed when I saw our Premier's name under a begging letter to Carnegie. I trust the Premier will refrain from doing that in the future. It was a request for a donation for the Goldfields' Fresh Air Fund. It was not merely an application to a foreign country for assistance to give our children fresh air, but it was an admission that our country had a lot of foul air in it. Australia has the finest, healthiest, and most rarified air in the world; and I would advise, with all due respect to that society on the fields, that they should alter the name; because if there is any place where fresh air can be got it is inland on this continent. In regard to advertising, as a rule it is only the spiffs and shoddies that require advertising; the all-wool advertises itself. In my opinion Western Australia is all-wool, and if we were half-efficiently governed it would speak for itself in no uncertain language.

On motion by *Mr. Stone*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.25 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 10th July, 1907.

	PAGE
Committees of the Session appointed	84
Motions: Drainage and Sewerage of Perth	84
Retrenchment of Government Officers...	85
Debate: Address-in-Reply, third day	85

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the *Colonial Secretary*: Report of Education Department for 1906.

COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION.

On motions by the *Colonial Secretary* sessional committees were appointed as follow:—

Printing Committee: The President, Hon. G. Randell, and the mover.

Library Committee: The President, Hon. W. Kingsmill, and Hon. J. W. Hackett.

Standing Orders Committee: The President, Hon. M. L. Moss, the Chairman of Committees, the Hon. G. Randell, and the mover.

House Committee: The President, Hon. R. F. Sholl, Hon. R. D. McKenzie, Hon. C. Sommers, and the mover.

MOTION—DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE OF PERTH.

On motion by the *Hon. M. L. Moss*, ordered that a return be laid on the table of the House, showing—1, The amount actually expended in Perth for works in connection with deep drainage and sewerage since the present Government took office. 2, What contracts have been let in connection with the same works, showing the amounts thereof during the same period. 3, Similar information with reference to expenditure and contracts as mentioned in (1) and (2) in connection with the same works at Fremantle. 4, What works are intended to be undertaken at Perth and Fremantle respectively, during the year ending 30th June, 1908.