

Mr. HAWKE: That is a very weak contention to put forward.

Mr. Latham: But it is the question.

Mr. HAWKE: The authorities who will consider this Case will not take that into consideration.

Mr. Latham: Won't they?

Mr. HAWKE: They will not do so, because they will not know whether it is true or untrue; they will take the particulars as set out in the Case. If they find that our progress regarding the establishment of manufacturing industries has been slow and that the slowness of that progress has been more than counter-balanced by the remarkable speed with which we have developed our primary industries, they will logically form the conclusion that we have concentrated upon fostering the latter form of production. In arriving at that conclusion, they will be quite correct. There are a hundred and one features of the Case of a similar description that require attention, and so it seems to me there is need, if the Case is to be made more effective still, for further careful consideration to be given to it, particularly with the object of greatly reducing its present bulkiness. I am prepared to do everything possible to see that the decision of the people is implemented, if it be humanly possible. There need be no surprise on the part of anyone that the present Government—a Labour Government—should have taken the steps deemed necessary to give effect to the decision of the people, so emphatically recorded a year ago.

On the motion by Hon. W. D. Johnson, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [6.15]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Thursday, the 26th April.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 26th April, 1934.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—FRUIT INDUSTRY.

Fly Pest.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he aware that fruit fly has made its appearance in hitherto clean South-West areas in a most alarming manner during the past few months, needing drastic action? 2, In view of this fact will he, at the earliest opportunity, consider the repeal of the legislation passed last year in regard to second-hand fruit cases being used for any purposes?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, I am aware that fruit fly has made its appearance in some South-West districts which have been free of this pest for some years. 2, The seriousness of this pest is recognised and any action considered advisable will be taken that will assist in controlling the pest.

Grant to Exporters.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What action has his department taken in regard to the Federal grant to exporters of fruit for last season? 2, On what basis is the distribution of this grant to be made? 3, If the basis has been arrived at by the department will it be made available immediately, as many growers are in a necessitous position?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, The matter was brought up at the conference of Ministers of Agriculture, when it was unanimously decided to approach the Commonwealth asking that a "necessitous" fruitgrower be defined as follows:—"A fruit grower who, in regard to any export shipment of apples or pears during the season 1933, failed to obtain for the fruit off the

tree when ready for packing, a net return of 2s. per bushel." The Premier has also communicated with the Prime Minister to this effect. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, We have not yet been informed of the decision of the Commonwealth Government.

QUESTIONS (2)—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

Minister's Instructions.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Lands: In view of his recent visit to the Group Settlement areas, and his assurance that triers would be assisted, will he amend his instructions on the cow basis and deal generously with cases on their merits, in order to give encouragement to progressive settlers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Triers are being assisted generously as far as funds will permit.

Abandoned Groups, Expenditure.

Mr. BROCKMAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, On whom will the cost of the present expenditure on abandoned groups fall? 2, Is it proposed to add this cost to the original, or to the present, debt on these holdings? 3, Is he aware of the enormous expense that is being incurred in dealing with this undeveloped green-timbered country? 4, Will he visit the Margaret River district, with the view to noting the methods now being adopted, and take steps to rectify same if proved unpracticable?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, This has yet to be determined. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, No. 4, Not immediately, but inquiry will be made.

QUESTION—BUTTER-FAT PRICES.

Mr. BROCKMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture: Following the appointment by him of a committee to deal with the question of the stabilisation of butter-fat prices, can he inform the House when producers are likely to obtain any benefits from the proposed action, as it is most important that the benefits, if any, should commence before the end of the financial year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: The Board has been appointed, with the definite

object of improving the position of the producers. We are not in a position to forecast, but I am hopeful that it will not be long before beneficial results will accrue.

QUESTION—WIRE NETTING CHARGES.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Lands: As an annual contribution of 2 per cent. is made to a sinking fund and 5 per cent. interest is charged for wire and wire-netting supplied under the Wire and Wire Netting Act, No. 35 of 1926, and as the moneys for this purpose are obtained by loan from the Commonwealth Government, will he make application through the usual channels to the Commonwealth Government for a reduction of interest and a postponement of the contribution to the sinking fund until a payable price is obtained for farmers' produce, particularly wheat?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Representations have already been made by the State Government in regard to a reduction of interest. The Commonwealth have not yet replied.

QUESTION—PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINIC.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Health: 1, As a promise was given by a previous Government that the equipment would remain intact at the Psychological Clinic until sufficient revenue was available for the re-opening, will he advise whether it has been found necessary to vary that promise? 2, If so, what has become of the electrical equipment?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, It has not been found necessary. 2, The whole of the equipment is available for use when needed.

BILL—SECESSION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 24th April.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [4.35]: The only major disagreement I have with the Bill is in respect of the small size of the proposed delegation; other than that, I am whole-heartedly supporting the Bill. I wish to join with the Premier and the Leader

of the Opposition in applauding the achievement of the special committee that were entrusted with the task of drawing up the Case for Secession. That committee found themselves involved in something like six months of the most intensive application and investigations. However, I think they have their reward in that they must know that the people of the State are indebted to them for a duty well and faithfully performed. We do not know exactly what the future may disclose to the contrary, but so far as we can judge to-day it would seem as if nothing of any great value has been omitted from the Case, which, in the hands of the right men and the right number of men, should pave the way to victory for our cause in London. The secession movement in this State divides itself quite naturally into four phases: the referendum, the Case, the presentation and, of course, the sequel. Whether that sequel embodies the beginning of a new era of prosperity for this State as a self-governing State, or whether on the other hand it will mean just patching up the ruins of what was a constituent part of the Commonwealth, no man knows; no man knows, despite the pretended confidence with which we are facing this big issue. It is worth noting that in no one of those four phases, save only the last, does this House play or is it likely to play anything like a leading part. The secession position as we find it to-day has not been expressly engineered by any political party, but is just the natural and spontaneous expression of the will of the people of the State. Therein lies at once the strength of and the justification for the secession movement. It is too late in the day to dispute or in any way vary the terms upon which we seek to secede. I hope, therefore, despite the lead given in last Tuesday's debate, that the House will content itself for the balance of the debate with discussing the question of presentation, and that alone. After all, the question of presentation is the kernel of the debate, or rather Clause 6 of the Bill might be termed the kernel of the debate, indeed might almost be said to be the Bill itself. Nothing else compares with it in importance. Nevertheless, I would not now be discussing this phase of the Bill were it not that last Tuesday's debate made it apparent that such fight as there will be on the Bill will centre on the question of the delegation. In its selection of the delegation this House

shoulders a very great responsibility; I do not think anyone is likely to dispute that. The personnel and the number of the delegation are likely to develop into the pivot point upon which this Case will sway, either to defeat or victory, and if we in this House make any big error in regard to the delegation we shall have done the State grave disservice by not only losing the ground already won, but by endangering and perhaps losing altogether the cause for which we are fighting. Manifestly this is not one of the occasions when we should parsimoniously or grudgingly count the financial cost. With such a Case, the cost is not a major consideration. We should be foolish indeed if at a time like this and with a Case of such magnitude, we should spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar. The Bill says we have to send three men to London, making four with Sir Hal Colebatch. The House will agree that it is wise to add the qualifications of a man like Sir Hal Colebatch to the resources of the delegation. But in so far as concerns the balance of the delegation, that is to say, the three men to be appointed by this House, there can be little doubt that the question will give rise to quite a few disputes. I do not care who the three men to be appointed from this State may be; they certainly will not carry my confidence. Not, naturally, that I can have anything derogatory to say about the qualifications of men of whom as yet I know probably nothing, but I say the job is altogether too big and too many-sided for three men.

Mr. Tonkin: Too many cooks, you know!

Mr. DONEY: Even that does not always apply. Six good men are stronger than three good men, and I say on that ground alone at least six men should go.

Mr. Sampson: In a multitude of counsellors!

Mr. DONEY: That certainly is more applicable than the aphorism suggested by the member for North-East Fremantle. Which member of this Chamber has sufficient prevision to know the nature and extent of the work which the presentation of the Case will be likely to give rise to?

Mr. Wilson: Where are you to get them?

Mr. DONEY: Out of the 400,000 odd we have in this State surely we can get six men capable of putting the best face possible on the Case! We have to provide not only for the obstacles that can be seen and known, but also for many difficulties and

dangers which are perhaps only just possibilities, but which nevertheless need to be provided against. Before passing that point I should like to say that our men, when in London, will almost certainly find themselves under the need for pitting their wits against some of the best brains in Britain, and all the time they are there they will need to be at the top of their form. Our men, unless their numbers be enlarged, will wilt under the strain; I feel no doubt on that point, that they will wilt under the strain and will let the State down. That is the fear I have, and I believe that fear is solidly grounded. We persist in referring to the activities in London as the "presentation," and I imagine that we conjure up a picture of four, good, solid, frock-coated Western Australians passing on our prayers to His Majesty and to the Houses of Parliament, those four men afterwards stepping to one side, their job done. I consider that that will be only the window-dressing side of the business; the actual business will have nothing or very little to do with that. There almost certainly will be a certain amount of introductory ceremonial, but the most serious position will be reached when the presentation develops into a fight, probably a long drawn-out fight, between our poor little delegation on the one hand and the full strength of a very determined Federal Government on the other hand, plus, I suppose, an array of constitutional lawyers who, at the behest of the House of Commons Committee on Petitions, will hold an inquest upon every claim and every disability set out in the Case. I ask members to consider on what particular aspect the House of Commons Committee is likely to concentrate. We cannot tell. Perhaps it will be the governmental side, perhaps the agricultural, pastoral, commercial or industrial; but we know sufficient to realise that all those activities should be definitely represented on the delegation in order that its members may be able to supply answers and advice, not only to the members of the delegation but also to an army of inquisitors from Federal and from Imperial sources. I imagine that members are not likely to overlook the fact that the House of Commons Committee on Petitions is a judicial body, possessing all the strong powers of a Royal Commission, and we know from recent experience just what those powers are, and that our small dele-

gation may need to stand the strain of that sort of inquisition for three, four, five or six months. Suppose the delegation comprised six, eight or ten members. After all, what boots that? We are attacking a very strong position. The enemy is strongly entrenched in it; it has strongholds all over the City of London, and I maintain that when we attack a position of the kind, unless we attack in force, we may as well leave the whole job alone and keep our representatives here in Western Australia. This certainly is not going to be the walk-over that some people pretend it will be. I submit that the size of the delegation is linked up with another important feature. It has been freely stated—and I think this is a phase that will be stressed by the Federal defence—that this Western Australian talk of secession is a mere stunt, a mere lever in order to enable us to lift from the Federal authorities a larger disabilities grant. Whether the secession movement is or is not having that effect is a matter of mere temporary consequence. The point we have to consider is that, if we do send the very small delegation outlined in the Bill, it will certainly lend colour to the allegation that there is nothing whatever deep-seated or sincere about the secession movement. "Why," the Federalists will urge, "if the people of Western Australia are prepared to send only three men on an errand of this kind, surely they do not deserve or desire to succeed. There is no real intention on their part to succeed." We certainly shall lay ourselves open to that interpretation if we send a delegation of the small size proposed in the Bill. To my mind it is a distinct misfortune that our standing orders do not permit of private members moving to amend the clause or subclause to which I am referring. I take it that no private member may move in the direction of increasing the size of the delegation on the score that it is not competent for any member so to move as to increase the burden on the Treasury. Therefore I can do no more than to plead with the Premier to eradicate what I consider is the principal weakness of the Bill. I am glad that the Premier is in his place and listening to my remarks, for I am hopeful that he will take serious notice of my submissions. Members should also note that it is not competent for this House to discuss the Case as a Case, for the ample reason; that the Case has not been made the sub-

ject of a schedule or portion of a schedule to the Bill. It will, nevertheless, be competent, I take it, for the House to discuss such portions of the Case as are specifically mentioned in the body of the Bill. I was sorry that the member for Guildford-Midland was not in his seat at the commencement of to-day's debate. I had particularly wished to hear what he had to say, and I am sorry that he has not given me an opportunity to know his line of attack on the Bill. The House certainly listened with more than usual interest to the contributions to the debate by members on the Government cross-benches two nights ago. The two members who then spoke—the member for Perth (Mr. Needham) and the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke)—commenced by assuring the House that they would do all in their power to see that the Case was properly presented, because they were keen that the will of the people in this matter should prevail. What did that mean? Subsequent portions of the speeches of both those members indicated very plainly that it meant less than nothing. They had no good that I could gather to say about the Bill. On the contrary they found ample reasons why the Case would not succeed, ought not succeed, could not succeed. As a matter of fact they considered that there should be no Case at all, and if my memory serves me aright, I think they indicated that 138,000 of the 209,000 people who voted—in other words, the voters in 44 electorates out of the 50—had been led astray.

Mr. Needham: You had better have another think.

Mr. DONEY: The member for Northam went so far as to assert, in reply to an interjection from this side of the House, that a far better method would have been to submit the question to a referendum of the whole of the people of Australia. I do not know whether the hon. member thought that, by adopting his method, we would have had the slightest chance of success. The hon. member seems to hold the opinion that the mouse would have a far better chance of getting a square deal by referring the question to the cat. I am sure that no other member of this House holds that opinion. I recall that the member for Perth said we would not be in the position in which we find ourselves to-day had we done certain things that were not done. So far as I can recall, the hon. member carried that argument no further.

Mr. Needham: Yes, I did.

Mr. DONEY: I do not recall it.

Mr. Needham: Quote me correctly if you intend to quote me at all.

Mr. DONEY: Naturally I agree with any man who says that, if we had done something else, the position to-day would not be what it is. Still, I should like to know what the hon. member had in mind. I do not think he himself knows, and in any event may I say that to give advice of that kind is of no use to us at this time of day. The member for Perth also said—and again I am open to correction if my memory has not served me aright—

Mr. Needham: You have not been correct so far.

Mr. DONEY: Then probably one of the hon. member's friends, in speaking later to the Bill, will put me right. I have no desire to misquote him. The member for Perth based another argument on an assertion with which I agree, namely, that the foundations of the Commonwealth were well and faithfully laid. No one will dispute that statement. In giving utterance to it, the hon. member spoke quite truly. But what I want to know is the hon. member's opinion of the superstructure reared on those foundations. What has the hon. member to say of that? I will leave that as another question for the hon. member's friends to answer later in the debate. I agree with the member for Perth that a unity of nations for their common weal and for equality of progress is a truly glorious conception, but I assert that a later generation has prostituted the intentions of those great idealists and builders, and therein lies our complaint and thereon is based our Case. The foundations of the Commonwealth Constitution, without doubt, typified honesty, dignity, partnership, in the best sense of the word, and, of course, fair play, but I point out that the superstructure reared on those foundations is jerry-built indeed. Nothing like the fair play that we were promised has been extended to us by the partnership. The basis of the whole dispute to-day is that fair play and equality are lacking in the treatment extended by the Federal Government to the people of this State. The member for Northam, in a very interesting speech on Tuesday, outlined several non-existent difficulties. He explained how the Imperial authorities would deal with the Case—a secret which has been denied to other

members of the Chamber. After that explanation he talked of bayonets and blood, and visualised a campaign on the part of secessionists, who, through the non-success of their secession movement, would turn their attention to seceding from the Empire.

Mr. Sleeman: And he quoted Senator Lynch.

Mr. DONEY: He quoted what that very intense loyalist, Senator Lynch, is supposed to have said at Coomberdale, or some other place, namely, that if we did not succeed in our plea in London, he would desire to shoulder arms against the Empire, or words to that effect.

Mr. Sleeman: He would be well in the background if that took place.

Mr. DONEY: He would not be the only one. Others would also be in the background.

Mr. Sleeman: We are not upholding that doctrine.

Mr. DONEY: I see. I thought the hon. member was in favour of the views expressed by his friend. All those who are acquainted with Senator Lynch know that it is his happy custom to use a number of flowery metaphors, but no one among his friends believes literally everything he says. Surely the member for Northam cannot know the hon. senator, and surely too he did wrong to bring up all these preposterous impossibilities, and I, too, may be equally wrong in referring to them. I would, however, pay the hon. member the compliment of observing that I believe he is too wise to be led astray by his own advice on a matter of this kind, and too wise to be swayed by his own pretended fears. I believe the hon. member to be a very able gentleman, but on this occasion I say he has applied his ability without discretion.

Mr. Moloney: You will have to give him a lesson in discretion.

Mr. DONEY: We had it from the member for Perth and the member for Northam that they promised to give all the help in their power in the presentation of the Case. The member for Perth would give that help by allowing the Case to look after itself, and the member for Northam would help it along by sending just one man to present it. It is very plain that their help in this matter consists in rendering it impossible for it to succeed. Here we are pleading for justice in the Imperial Court, against most determined opposition. It is possibly the biggest case that this State will be engaged in for all time, but all—advocates, witnesses, everybody—that these two hon. members would

spare to this country in its distress is one man. I hope it is plain to the House how anxious they are to do all they can for the presentation of the Case in order that the will of the people may prevail. We now know the line of attack to be followed by those gentlemen. They first of all promise help, and then carry on in the most obstructive and unfriendly manner imaginable. If that is their line of attack, it is a very mean kind of attack to adopt. I understand that in the Commonwealth Constitution, and in the Statute of Westminster, there is nothing to preclude either of the Houses of the British Parliament from granting separation or withholding separation, nor is there anything to force them to adopt either course. That is where persuasion is needed, and where a big and powerful delegation would be seen to real advantage. It is thought that it is competent for the House of Commons to grant the separation without referring the Case to the Federal authorities. I dare say that is so, but everyone knows that course will certainly not be followed. We shall find the Federal authorities being called upon by the Committee on Petitions to state the contrary side of the Case. Another point was attempted by the members who spoke from the cross benches. There seems to be amongst them the vain assumption that His Majesty and the two Houses of the British Parliament will treat our delegation with disdain, and send them back to Western Australia with their tails between their legs. I think the hon. members must have misinterpreted the position. I shall not be misunderstood if I explain that during the Great War this little State won for itself a warm place in the heart of the Old Country by reason of the record number of soldiers, in proportion to the population, it was able to put into the field, and because of the intense loyalty and sacrifice of the huge majority of those who were left behind. By reason of that fact alone the Old Country will be inclined to give our delegation all the respect and favour that is desired. Western Australia need not fear the nature of its reception. I would draw the attention of the House to the pleasant fate accorded to the delegation of Burmese to the Imperial authorities in their attempt to secede from the Indian Empire. Their case was not nearly so strong as ours, but, as a result of the representations made, the two Houses of the British Parliament were prepared to grant them a new Constitution

and allow them two Houses of Parliament of their own. This is a matter which the member for Northam went to so much bother about on Tuesday evening. The delegation was given two Houses of Parliament and a franchise more or less similar to our own. It was treated with every friendship and respect. True, these two privileges were accorded, provided that, upon the return of the delegation to Burmah, a favourable result was secured by referendum on the questions involved. It has no bearing upon the kindly attitude of the Old Country that the referendum happened to be in favour of the retention of the existing political relationship with India. I agree with speakers who have asserted that it is a drawback that the intentions of the law in respect to the question under review are so obscure. I imagine this is one of the occasions when we here may be excused if we join with the man in the street in deploring the complexity of the laws which govern us. At least we have the right to expect that our laws will enable us to know precisely where we stand. Unfortunately, that is exactly what they fail to do. We have based them upon the moral standards set up in the Bible. I frequently find myself wishing that we had at the same time adopted the simplicity and the directness of biblical phraseology. Sentimentally I am not a secessionist. I am not a secessionist for the sake of secession, for the mere pleasure of seceding, but I am one because there seems to be no other way of securing that fair play to which the people of this State are entitled, and without which our people, particularly those who work upon the land, will find themselves committed to a future of uncertainty as a vassal State.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [5.12]: It is due to us to pay a tribute to those who prominently brought before the people of the State the very special disadvantages under which Western Australia has suffered under Federation. One should possibly bracket with them those who were appointed to prepare and state the Case for Western Australia. The committee in question traversed a great deal of ground in outlining the economic and social life not only of this State but of the Commonwealth during the last three decades. Although the report is weighty and could probably be condensed, it has in no sense lost its value

by reason of those factors. Some people believe that Federation is still on its trial. That is not so. It has endured for 33 or 34 years. It can safely be said, however, that Federation to-day is standing with one foot in the grave. Irrespective of commercial and economic interests in the Eastern States, there has been no more loyal part of the Commonwealth than Western Australia. The people of the State undoubtedly and admittedly have made remarkable sacrifices, and have shown a remarkable national outlook by the vote they gave in favour of Federation. They knew that theirs was a young, undeveloped State with few or no industries of any moment. They knew that the established secondary industries of the Eastern States were likely to overshadow industries existing here. Notwithstanding those facts, notwithstanding the disadvantages from the economic aspect and from the aspect of Western Australia's isolation from the remainder of this continent, they still, in the consciousness of a new national spirit, voted for Federation. What have been the results from the consummation of Federation in 1901 until 1934? I shall deal with a few figures, and then with one or two minor matters, as I see them, connected with the implementation of the vote taken at the recent referendum, a vote which I think most of the people of this country agree should be given effect to and implemented. The Commonwealth of Australia from 1901 to 1933 has collected from Customs and Excise a grand total of not less than £694,326,000. First on the statutory per capita basis, and since then by ways of doles, the Commonwealth Governments have returned to the States over the same period of years the following amounts—

	£
New South Wales	27,605,000
Victoria	19,814,000
Queensland	8,894,000
South Australia	6,147,000
Western Australia	8,727,000
Tasmania	2,601,000

These figures make a total of £73,792,000. As regards the allocation, I wish to remind hon. members that under the original Constitution Act there was special provision for the return of certain moneys. However, £73,792,000 represents the total amount returned to the States from the Commonwealth collection of £694,326,000 obtained from

Customs and Excise alone. Let me point out that Western Australia is saddled with the greater portion of the development work of this continent. We have to provide for land development and mining development, with consequent losses to our railway system; and we have to provide funds for educational facilities and so forth. If there are any people who contend that this in itself does not constitute a shocking and damnable indictment of the policy of the Commonwealth, I do not understand their viewpoint. Our quarrel with the Commonwealth is not social or religious or irrational, but purely economic. Irrespective of secondary and primary industries in Western Australia, the Commonwealth have held aloof and shown themselves indifferent to any rational development of the western portion of this great continent. That fact is clearly demonstrated by the figures of our trading with the Eastern States. From 1901 to 1931 Western Australia purchased from the Eastern States to the value of £167,091,000, whilst during the same period the Eastern States purchased from Western Australia to a total value of only £53,499,000. That is the one-way traffic which the people of the Eastern States expect us to accept as a reasonable basis of Federation. It has never been a basis of Federation, but a basis of indiscriminate exploitation by Eastern States manufacturers, who from the day Federation was consummated used the corridors of the Commonwealth Parliament to lobby and log roll so as not only to increase the burden upon primary production here but also to extinguish Western Australian secondary industries. That is where, largely, the political crime has been committed upon Western Australia. The Eastern States have not paid regard, as they should have done, to the peculiar position Western Australia finds itself in under Federation. They have been blind and deaf to that aspect. Just recently they have suggested that as an offset against our desire again to become a free State and to preserve something of our sovereign rights, a constitutional conference should be called to consider our disabilities. But our disabilities are not only constitutional. They are economic as well. That is the fundamental basis of our dissatisfaction to-day. In Western Australia boys and girls to the number of 2,000 annually are leaving the primary and secondary schools with no outlook in life whatever. Absolutely all the possibilities and avenues of our secondary

industries are usurped by flooding and increasing imports from the Eastern States. And, while that process goes on, there is also the fact that our avenues of primary production are being closed by the increasing costs imposed on primary producers here, those increases being caused by the fiscal policy of the Commonwealth. From the year 1924 to the year 1932 the Commonwealth has taken, by way of import duty on machinery and other things necessary for our instrumentalities in the way of electricity supply, railway communication and so forth, no less a sum than £223,000 from loan moneys raised by this State. There, too, the Commonwealth has clipped an amount from the resources of Western Australia. The cost of the machinery and implements and other things necessary to the functioning of government and industry here is thereby increased by 50 per cent. That is a damning indictment against those who sit in Canberra to-day. Recently we had the Federal Disabilities Commission inquiring here. The chairman of that Commission, I noticed, was greatly concerned about the large amount of money that had been spent in developing the bushlands of Western Australia. Let it be borne in mind that only three decades ago the whole of Western Australia's wheat production could have been loaded into one small craft. Yet the chairman in question, while cross-examining two or three of our responsible officers, took exception to the amount spent on opening up the bush lands of this State. Let me for a few moments draw attention to the money spent by the Commonwealth Government in a comparatively short period of 30 years. First there is the profit they have received from the Commonwealth Bank. It will be remembered as one of the most scandalous things in Australian history that Western Australia was forced, by circumstances prevailing at the time, to permit its savings banks to be absorbed by the Commonwealth Savings Bank. The Commonwealth took from us the only bank we possessed, the only bank available to us for the purpose of giving an impetus to rural production. Legitimately the Commonwealth should have come to our assistance just as they went to the assistance of the Associated Banks during the crisis, and as they would go to the

assistance of those banks again if there was another crisis. The Commonwealth knew that the money invested in our State savings bank was automatically transferred to the Agricultural Bank for the purpose of assisting land development. The position was in no sense analogous to the closing of the State Savings Bank of New South Wales. The Commonwealth put its claws upon our State Savings Bank, and forced the position so as to obtain control of the institution. The profits of the Commonwealth Bank to the end of June, 1933, amounted to £10,741,000, and there was also the profit from note issue, amounting to £22,060,000. For the same period the profit from Australian coinage amounted to £4,216,000. Now let me take the position of Western Australia. Those who had some early association with the endeavour of the Australian people to bring about a federated Australia will remember that one of the most forcible claims for Federation was the need for unified defence. Yet to-day, out of our total coast line of 11,310 miles, there is no less than 4,350 miles left defenceless. What has the Commonwealth done to carry out its national obligation to defend this western portion of the continent? True, there are a few guns mounted on a hill in Albany, and a few guns mounted at Fremantle.

Mr. Cross: They are quite out of date.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes; and the Federal Government have spent no money whatever to carry out the earlier intentions of the framers of the Federal Constitution. Yet we find that to the 30th June, 1933, no less a sum than £9,576,000 has been spent at Canberra alone. I yield to no man in the desire to see the erection of a capital city that will for all time glorify the aspirations, and I may perhaps add the vanity, of the Australian people. Nevertheless, it is beyond my understanding how such a vast sum could have been expended on a Federal capital while virtually the whole of the coastline of Western Australia has been left defenceless. It is a thing beyond my understanding. It is a great pity that someone did not tell Mr. Eggleston, who was chairman of the Disabilities Commission, something about those figures. Take the record of the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory, which must inevitably be regarded as an integral

portion of north Australia. The problem there is difficult now and in the future will possibly loom greater than ever. In fact, it may be regarded as one of the greatest to be faced. Because of the Territory's isolation and distance from the seat of government, it is the most vulnerable portion of Australia. The total expenditure by the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory from the 31st December, 1910, to the 30th June, 1933, was £2,482,000 from revenue, and £1,184,000 from loan funds, or a total of £3,667,000. What have the Commonwealth Government achieved for that expenditure? We had the admission in this morning's "West Australian" by Mr. Holloway, a visiting member of the House of Representatives, that the Federal Government had achieved nothing whatever. It is a matter of common knowledge that nothing has been accomplished in the Territory, nor is there ever likely to be anything accomplished there so long as we have the centralised form of government from Canberra, a form of government that they are endeavouring, by insidious methods, to continue to foist on the people of Western Australia. When the Commonwealth Government took over the Territory from South Australia in 1911, they took over the State's indebtedness amounting to £3,913,000. Of course, that expenditure was by the State Government, and we cannot hold the Commonwealth blameable for it. They took over the interest on loans, discounts and flotation charges amounting to £2,110,000, and the South Australian Government handed over the unexpended balance of loan funds, amounting to £175,000, or a total of £5,954,000. From that have to be deducted receipts from the Territory amounting to £2,022,000, leaving a gross loss since 1911 of £3,931,000. That is the loss incurred by the Federal Government on the administration of that comparatively small portion of Australia, where there is no sign of progress made and no possible hope of it, nor is there any sign of fixed policy in any one direction. That is an indictment we can level against the Federal Government. Let us consider their attitude towards Western Australia in regard to the establishment of secondary industries. During the war, when enormous sums of money were rashly expended in all directions in an effort to feed and clothe our troops, did the Federal Government ever make inquiries in Western Australia regard-

ing the advisability of establishing woollen mills here? There were numerous woollen mills in the Eastern States but despite that, the Federal Government went to Geelong and established woollen mills there, and those mills were subsequently sold. They did not inquire whether it was necessary to erect two or three woollen mills in Western Australia, and it remained for the patriotism of our own wool growers, the Pastoralists' Association and others, to assist in the establishment of the single woollen mill we have in Western Australia. What did the Federal Government do in other directions? To the 30th June, 1933, exclusive of the sugar bonus and the wheat bounty, they spent in bonuses no less than £6,022,000. Fancy giving the big steel manufacturers, and those who manufactured galvanised iron and wire netting, the wine producers and a dozen and one other others engaged in various industries, fabulous amounts by way of bonuses in order to further develop their respective industries! On the other hand, they gave little or nothing to those concerned with industries in Western Australia. The total amount paid by the Commonwealth in sugar bonuses since the inception of that system is £3,899,000. It is safe to say that that industry could not have existed without the bonus. The capital involved has been watered down time and again. The industry was also established in the islands in order to absorb the money at the disposal of the sugar people, so that there would be no possibility of an inquiry being made by the Commonwealth authorities into the profits made by the industry.

Mr. Sampson: It has almost become their right to have the bonus now.

Mr. LAMBERT: I cannot hear what the hon. member says.

Mr. SPEAKER: Anyway, he is out of order!

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know of anything the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) could say that would help me. It is true that the Federal Government provided a small amount, about which they made a great noise, when they made available the gold bounty to assist the production of gold in Western Australia. The fact remains that against the amount I have quoted, representing £6,022,000, we have only to analyse the figures to ascertain that of that magnificent amount £160,315 only was provided by the

Federal authorities to encourage the gold-mining industry in Western Australia. We have a twofold complaint against the Commonwealth. Their duplication of departments has contributed very much to the financial instability of both States and Commonwealth. The Federal Government spent £8,008,000 on the trans-Australian railway, and created a separate department to control that one length of line. On the other hand, that railway could easily have been built with the mutual co-operation of the Western Australian and South Australian Governments, and, after construction, the line could have been controlled by them, thus obviating the necessity to create a Railway Department to administer one stretch of railway between the West and the East. The Federal authorities claim that that railway has been of advantage to us. As a matter of fact, it has been of great advantage to the secondary industries of the Eastern States. Commodities from the East, including beer, fish and fruit, have been brought into Western Australia by way of the trans line, at favoured rates granted by the Commonwealth Government to assist Eastern States interests. The Federal authorities have boasted about the subsidies paid to air services in Western Australia. It must be remembered that those payments are taken from the Civil Aviation Vote. To the 30th June, 1933, they certainly did pay £296,282 as a bonus in connection with the North-West air service. If they had spent three times that amount in that isolated part of Australia in order to serve the people who reside there and thus made some attempt to assist in opening up and developing the back country, the sum would have been infinitesimal compared with that spent in the Northern Territory, for which nothing was achieved and nothing can be shown. They also provided £168,918 as a subsidy for the East-West air service, in which direction they subsidised aeroplanes to fly in competition with their own railway. Perhaps it was justified from their point of view in that it facilitated the movements of the businessmen, merchants and magnates of the Eastern States who, for 30 years, had been engaged in exploiting Western Australia with their goods. To-day we stand in relatively the same position that we were in when we stumped the country crying out aloud our desire that Australia should be made self-reliant and self-contained, manufacturing our own requirements for ourselves. We

felt that with the consummation of Federation we would share in that task and that we ourselves would be self-contained. After Federation has been in operation for 30 years, we now find that the Eastern States are self-contained and Western Australia impoverished. Then, when the Federal authorities sent a Royal Commission to inquire into our disabilities, members of that body had the impudence to suggest that because we had spent so much money on the development of our land, in constructing railways and providing water supplies, we had been extravagant. On our part, we can ask where that £600,000,000 went to, which they received from Customs and Excise revenue since the inauguration of Federation. True, we had some return in the per capita payments, but that was provided for in the Constitution, and it was impossible for any Federal Parliament to evade that responsibility. The per capita payment was a statutory obligation under the Constitution. The total amount of Customs and Excise collections in Western Australia to 30th June, 1933, was £32,765,635 under the heading of Customs revenue, and £11,931,449 from Excise, making a total collection under the two headings of £44,697,084. When we consider those amounts we are forced to the conclusion that there must be some very radical rearrangement of our economic position within the Federation, otherwise it will die like a lot of other well-conceived national aspirations have ended. Special Commonwealth grants to Western Australia to the 30th June, 1933, totalled £5,455,905. Even allowing for the Federal responsibility regarding invalid and soldiers' pensions, and the financial burden of carrying on the postal and telegraphic services, there is still close on £40,000,000 to be accounted for as the difference between what has been received from the State and what has been returned to it. These matters should be emphasised, quite apart from the Case formulated by the special committee appointed by Parliament. The members of that body carried out a monumental work and the result of their labours will be useful for reference until such time as we can get a clear-cut re-adjustment of the relationship between the Commonwealth and the State. The Federal authorities should be reminded that out of Western Australia's total indebtedness of £85,000,000 the construction of railways,

tramways and electric power stations accounted for £26,000,000, while harbour and river undertakings represented over £6,000,000; the construction of roads and bridges, over £2,000,000; the provision of water supplies and sewerage, £10,800,000; the development of goldfields and mineral resources, £2,500,000; and the development of agriculture, £29,000,000. Despite that, we found the Chairman of the Commonwealth Disabilities Commission questioning the expenditure undertaken by our handful of people in Western Australia to open up and develop the country for the people of Australia and of the Empire as a whole.

Mr. Latham: And they were very glad to have it when they asked us to produce a record crop of wheat.

Mr. LAMBERT: Of course they were. The figures I have quoted are indeed striking. If we are going to remain an integral part of the Commonwealth, if we are to continue to believe as we believed in theory, with our youthful knowledge of a new-born nationhood, in one people, one flag, and one destiny, it is nearly time the Commonwealth realised that the most hostile, uncompromising and insistent opposition will be shown to them inside this House and out of it and by every possible agency, unless they are prepared to remedy some of the economic ills under which we are suffering. Have they dealt with the defence of the coastline of this part of Australia? Have they dealt with such big questions as national insurance? We are faced with a world wide crisis. All other countries have grappled with this great problem. We, however, compel our people to accept the dole. The natural corollary would be to institute the more elevating scheme of national insurance, so that those participating in it would know that they were in equal partnership with every other unit in the community. I only hope, as a result of the Case put forward, that we may get some remedy for our ills. I repeat that we have to commend the people who have carried on this agitation, and while in theory I am not a secessionist and never was, I believe that the Australian people will have quite enough to do in the years to come to fight hand-in-hand and side-by-side, instead of being disunited. But it is our duty, however painful it may be, to carry on the fight. Those who framed the Case for Secession did it in a most comprehensive way which must earn the everlasting thanks of the people of Western Australia.

Finally, I hope that whatever may be the result of the delegation which will ultimately go to London, I hope it will be emphasised that we are determined, so long as we remain a partner in the Commonwealth, to fight for the economic and social interests of the people of Western Australia.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.50]: I desire to express appreciation of the work done by the committee in framing the Case for Secession. That work reflects the highest credit upon all concerned. As I understand the position it is not a matter at this juncture of expressing reasons why this House should agree with the Case: the only question before the House is the method of its presentation to the Imperial Parliament. The fact that the Secession Committee carried out its work in an honorary capacity is an indication of the widespread belief that if Western Australia is to prosper she must get out of the federation. Unquestionably the position is that each year, no matter what we export, we are getting deeper and deeper into debt. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) made the position quite clear, and I can only hope that the result will be that Western Australia will become free to control its own destiny. In moving the second reading of the Bill the Premier is reported to have said—

Whether permission for a delegation to appear before the British Parliament be granted or not, the Case will still have to be examined by the Committee on Petitions. It is important to remember that this Committee on Petitions has all the powers of a Royal Commission. It can summon witnesses and take evidence on oath. The Case for Secession will not necessarily be accepted by that committee as evidence. All official reports, tables, and authorities referred to in the Case will have to be made available as evidence. These are being collected and prepared for despatch to England. It is anticipated that the Petitions Committee in London will make a most exhaustive examination of the Case before reporting to each House. It is essential therefore that the Case be supported by someone capable, not only of ensuring its proper presentation to Parliament, but of also explaining it to the committee, and transacting all business arising out of the inquiry which that body will institute. As the deliberations of the committee will probably be protracted, whoever is entrusted with this work may have to remain in England until it is completed.

From these remarks it seems clear that the delegation should include (a) The three Parliamentary leaders: (b) Two members of

the Secession Committee whose names immediately suggest themselves, and (c) the Agent General, Sir Hal Colebatch. The inclusion of the three Parliamentary leaders would impress the authorities with the importance of the issue, and should ensure the petitions being heard at the Bar of the House of Commons. There are those who claim that the cost of sending a big delegation would be excessive. That is quite an unjustifiable statement. If we do not include in the delegation the leaders of the movement it will be open to those who oppose secession to say that we are not very keen. As far as the costs are concerned I believe that the people of the State would subscribe the money over and over again. There is no need for a big sum. We know what the leaders of the movement would do. The Case as prepared by the Secession Committee is an indication that we have men who are willing to work laboriously for many months in an honorary capacity. Therefore, if there are men who are capable of doing work of that nature without fee or reward, unquestionably they would carry on the work to completion without expense. But that is not asked for. In my opinion, there should be a representative of the Government, a representative of the Country Party, and a representative of the National Party. Every one would have confidence that such a delegation would put up the Case in such a way that it would be unanswerable. Definite progress would be made. The efforts of the committee have been along a line of thoughtfulness, and there has been for ever borne in mind the importance of maintaining the integrity of the Empire and of putting forward the full reasons why we should once more resume our former status as a self-governing colony. Naturally we cannot expect all the Parliamentary leaders to remain in London indefinitely. That could well be left to the two members of the Secession committee, and in my opinion, there is no one more qualified to carry on the work to its conclusion by explaining and substantiating before the Committee on Petitions the Case which they themselves have prepared. The Bill as it stands at present provides for four delegates, including Sir Hal Colebatch. If, therefore, that delegation includes the three Parliamentary leaders, it cannot include the two members of the Secession Committee. On the other hand, if the delegation is to include the two members of the Secession Committee—and that appears to be the popular

forecast at the moment—it cannot then include the three Parliamentary leaders. In either case, therefore, the delegation would not be as strong as it should be. When the Bill reaches the committee stage I hope that the number of delegates will be increased from four to six. That will overcome the present difficulty, and will ensure the departure of the most able and representative delegation. The expense may be a little more, but in a matter of such vital importance to the State, the question of expense hardly enters into it, particularly as secession means a gain claimed to amount to £2,000,000 a year to this State. Hon. members will recall that not long since the manager of the Government Electricity Department was despatched to London for the purpose of purchasing one or more pieces of electrical machinery. I am not criticising the action of the Government. It was probably well justified. But if the purchase of such machinery warrants two visits to London by the manager of the department, surely a delegation of six is little enough to handle the hundred and one problems arising from a question of such vital importance as the release of this State from the federation. Six would be few enough. Personally, I should be inclined to support an increase of even that number, since the stake at issue is so important. The delegates will have 101 problems to answer, for all manner of difficulties will be put in their way. We want these men to go because we believe that if they do go our justification for secession will be put more clearly before the authorities than it otherwise could be. Relief from Federation for Western Australia is of vital importance, and I hope there will be no cheese-paring in this, for we cannot afford to send other than the best men available, and the men sent should be representative of the various parties concerned and of the committee who prepared the Case. On Tuesday last the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) expressed the opinion that Parliament was taking the wrong course in approaching the Imperial authorities, and he was at pains to explain that the Imperial authorities could not act as arbitrators in this matter, but it would be Mr. Lyons and his Government who would have the power to say whether Western Australia could secede. It was a most unfortunate circumstance for the hon. member that

almost while he was giving utterance to those views the Prime Minister himself made a declaration which leaves no room for doubt that the method being pursued by this Government is the proper method. Mr. Lyons announced that the Federal Ministry were taking action to prepare a Case in answer to our Case for Secession, and that he expected the Case so prepared by the Commonwealth Government would be submitted by that Government to the Imperial Parliament or the petitions committee of the Imperial Parliament. This clearly shows that the Prime Minister and his Government have resigned themselves to the indisputable fact that the Imperial authorities have full constitutional power to deal with Western Australia's desire for secession, and that the Commonwealth will appear merely in the role of defendant to the just claims of Western Australia before the Imperial Parliament. The Commonwealth will be, not the judge, but the defendant. In view of this there is all the more reason why a most representative and able delegation should proceed to London to handle Western Australia's Case for Secession. As a citizen of the State, and as one who appreciates the very grave responsibility which the presentation of the Case for Secession will throw upon those concerned, I say we shall be acting in the best interests of Western Australia and of the Empire if we proceed on lines calculated to be successful. Those lines, as I have endeavoured to make clear, postulate the representation being in the hands of not less than six representative men. But, as we know, whatever method the Government might have decided to adopt in order to give effect to the will of the people, there would have been objections, for it is a habit with some people that whatever is done is wrong, and some other method would have been right. Up to the present no one who has objected has been able to bring forward any argument which would prove the justice of his objection. It would be a good thing if those who object, and also those in support, would express their views frankly. Personally, I am prepared to stand or fall by my candour in respect to the importance of having this Case put up properly. I appreciate the manner in which the Government have endeavoured to carry out the mandate given by the people. The Government have given serious consideration to it, but there is a lack of consideration on the part of certain

speakers, whose names I need not mention. They talk about the mandate of the people, yet they object to a thorough representation of the Case in London. To send only three delegates would be false economy, for the presentation of the Case is of first importance. To-day we are facing a future which is better than we have had for a long time past, and there is no justification whatever for saying that we shall get nowhere in the submission of the Case to the Imperial Parliament. I am sure that those concerned will listen to the carefully collated arguments brought forward, and since those arguments will have been submitted in all propriety, the Imperial authorities will say the Case for Western Australia calls for all consideration, and that the method adopted by the committee was sound. I hope the results will be all that we wish, that it will be possible to bring about a change in the outlook of Western Australia. The Commonwealth is distinctly out of step with Western Australia. We are separated by too many geographical miles, and too many other difficulties ever to be brought close together. I appreciate the action of the Government in bringing down the Bill. I hope it will be successful in every way, and I trust that the delegates to go to London will be not fewer than six in number.

MR. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [6.8]: The introduction of the Bill marks the fourth most important step in the history of Western Australia. The first of those steps was the foundation of the colony in 1829; the second was the granting of Responsible Government in 1890; the third was the entering into Federation at the beginning of this century; and the fourth, the one under consideration, marks the steps taken under the Bill to revert to Dominion status. I should like to commend the Government on the action they have taken in placing the Bill before Parliament to implement the desires of the people as expressed at the referendum, an opportunity which was provided by the previous Government at the time of the last general election, when the people in no uncertain terms expressed their decision to secede from Federation. In keeping with the referendum, the present Government have conceived it their duty to place the Bill before Parliament in order that the work so far done should be carried to a logical conclusion. The Government deserve commendation and the support of this side

of the House for their action in that regard. A popular demand was made on the late Government, a demand extending over the length and breadth of the State, that the people should be given opportunity to express their views on the advisability of remaining in the Commonwealth, or, alternatively, of seceding. Having been given that opportunity, the people decided by a large majority that the best interests of Western Australia would be served by seceding. Following on that, Parliament set up a committee representative of the people to define the reasons that had given rise to the wishes of the people, for it follows that the wishes of the people have to be carried out. A committee was appointed by Parliament to prepare the Case for Secession, and to define, for the information of the Imperial Government, the reasons why we desired to take so important a step. The committee have carried out their work in a way that reflects very great credit on them. There can be no shadow of doubt that had that Case which we now have before us been before the people of Western Australia prior to the holding of the referendum, the majority in favour of secession would have been ever so much greater than it actually was, for the Case would have been sufficient to convince a great many more people of the advisability of seceding.

The Minister for Lands: The people were already educated; they had their education from propagandists that went around.

Mr. FERGUSON: Very little propaganda work was undertaken at or before the referendum.

The Minister for Lands: I listened to some extraordinary promises of what would happen in Western Australia if secession were carried.

Mr. FERGUSON: The vote was taken at the time of a general election, and other considerations overshadowed the secession issue. If proof of that were wanted, it was supplied by the turning out of the Government then in office and the elevation of the Opposition to the Treasury benches, notwithstanding that a large majority of the party so returned to power were opposed to secession. The question of secession or no secession was not stressed to any great extent during the election campaign. It is

no wonder the people of Western Australia should want to get out of the Federal bond, for right through the piece, ever since the inauguration of the Commonwealth, the benefits of Federation have lain almost wholly with the Eastern side of Australia, not with Western Australia. As a matter of fact, the fiscal policy of Australia, which has been largely decided by the Eastern States, has invariably been in the interests of secondary industries in those Eastern States. Western Australia being mainly a primary-producing State, it naturally followed that she had to bear a considerable part of the cost of sheltering the secondary industries of the Eastern States. The primary industries of Australia had to bear that cost, and since Western Australian industries are almost exclusively primary, this State had to bear the greatest share of the burden. So, while all sections of the community in Western Australia desire to secede, the primary producers desire secession to a much greater extent than do the other sections of the community.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. FERGUSON: I was referring to the fiscal policy of Australia and its adverse effect on the primary producers of Australia, more particularly the primary producers of Western Australia. While the primary producers of the Eastern States have felt the effects of that policy to an extent, they have received some of the advantages of the policy of protection because a home market has been provided for a proportion of their production, whereas the opposite has been the experience in Western Australia. As a result of that policy, the primary industries of this State have been impoverished. Had the policy been modified to the extent of about 50 per cent., those engaged in rural industries would probably have been able to carry on at a profit. The figures quoted by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) had not much bearing on the Bill, but they provided an excellent reason why Western Australia should seek to secede from the Commonwealth. The same policy that has made Australia look foolish in the eyes of the world and has been responsible for Australia losing some of the best customers for her primary products has had a disastrous effect on us in Western

Australia. As an instance, let me recall that a leading member of the Federal Ministry is at present heading a delegation to one of our overseas customers for primary products, a trip involving a cost of probably thousands of pounds, in an attempt to placate just one of our customers. What will be the result of the mission we do not know, but I can imagine the people who are being approached laughing in their sleeves at Australia's attitude. One of the most important parts of the Bill is that relating to the appointment of the delegation to go to the Old Country and present the Case prepared by the special committee. I stress the view that it would be wise in the interests of the State to send a reasonable delegation. The Bill provides for a delegation of three to act with the Agent General. I hope the Leader of the House will see the wisdom of enlarging the number. It might be wise to constitute the delegation of the leaders of the three political parties in this House, and to add one or two of those gentlemen who were prominent on the special committee, attaching them to the delegation possibly in the role of advisers. There is no doubt that the Petitions Committee of the House of Commons will require a vast amount of information before presenting their report to the Imperial Parliament, and although the report of the special committee is a wonderful document containing an immense amount of information, quite a lot of other information may be sought by the House of Commons Committee, and unless we have a strong delegation able to present all the information required, the reception to be tendered to our representatives may not be as satisfactory as we could wish. Exception has been taken to the form of approach to the Imperial Parliament. I am prepared to support the Premier in the attitude the Government have adopted and the method of approach they propose. On the one hand we have the views of private members as to the method that should be adopted; on the other hand the Government are acting on the advice of their legal authorities, and I am prepared to accept the advice of the legal authorities rather than the opinion of private members. The member for Perth (Mr. Needham) said he would support the Bill, but really he would cripple the effort necessary to give effect to the voice of the people in that he would send no delegation at all. He would pack the petitions in an envelope

and post them to the Imperial authorities and let them take pot luck. Western Australia does not want to offer an insult to the mother of Parliaments or to the Imperial Government by doing anything of that kind. Only by appointing a reasonable delegation fortified with all the facts can we render articulate the voice of the people. The member for Perth also suggested the possibility of the Loan Council's refusing to provide the money. That was an absurd suggestion. Surely the State Treasurer has money in hand, but even if he had not, I venture to say the Loan Council would not say one word if a few thousand pounds were spent on sending a delegation to the Old Country. The expense will not be great, and it is only fair to the people of Western Australia to take such measures as are necessary to ensure the Case being properly represented to the Home authorities. The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) criticised the report of the special committee and stated that not 50 per cent. of the Case was relevant to the question of secession. I have read the report, voluminous though it is, and I consider that every word is relevant. I found it so interesting that I have read it more than once, and in my opinion it will be read by the committee of the House of Commons, whose duty it will be to report to the Parliament after having met the delegation from Western Australia and given the matter serious consideration. I express the hope that the Bill will be passed by a majority in this House, as well as in another place, and that the time will not be long before the petitions are presented to the Home authorities.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [7.38]: I became keenly interested in this matter a month or so ago when I noticed by Press propaganda that something exceptional and extraordinary was to be attempted. Learning, just after the special committee had prepared the Case, that a Bill was contemplated and knowing that a Bill was not essential to success, I took pains to ascertain on what authority or on what precedent the Government were acting in presenting a Bill to Parliament. It is now freely admitted that the Parliamentary methods in Western Australia are not limited by authority or precedent. According to the Bill, we are capable of creating a precedent and of blazing a new constitutional track.

That has been admitted by the Premier and supported by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Premier: I did not admit that.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I judged from the Premier's remarks that he was acting on the advice of the Crown Law Department, but he has not told us of any authority or precedent upon which the department have based their opinion. The Leader of the Opposition freely admitted that the Bill was not based on precedent or authority.

Mr. Latham: There was none on which to base it.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: He admitted that a precedent was being created, showing to the world that the Western Australian Parliament did not rely on what had been done previously. Since I spoke in opposition to the introduction of the Bill, I have read its clauses, and I am firmly convinced that my anticipations have been fully realised.

The Premier: A wonderful prophet!

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, and I shall quote some more prophecies before I sit down. I anticipated by a matter of hours what would happen if this House gave permission for the introduction of the Bill. I simply expressed my view, and ridicule has never prevented me from expressing my view. I might be right or wrong, but at least I have the courage of my convictions, and when I hold convictions, I regard it as my duty, as a representative of the people, to place them on record. The Bill is an extraordinary production. Its provisions contain and repeat the utmost detail, reliable and unreliable.

The Premier: The hon. member expressed that opinion before he saw the Bill.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I am simply explaining to the Premier that the opinions I expressed anticipating a Bill of this kind have been more than realised.

The Premier: Wonderful foresight!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: May be it was.

The Premier: No hint from anyone else?

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know that it is a crime to display foresight. One is justified in anticipating when considering matters of such national importance.

The Premier: Of course you discussed the Bill with a gentleman from another place.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: That is quite untrue.

The Premier: It is absolutely true.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: I demand a withdrawal of that statement.

The Premier: I will not withdraw.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I demand a withdrawal. The Premier says I discussed the Bill before it was introduced with a representative of another place. That is distinctly and absolutely untrue, and I want a withdrawal.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has for a withdrawal. I trust that the Premier will observe the standing orders by withdrawing.

The Premier: Yes, I will. As no explanation is allowed, I do know that the hon. member did discuss the Bill with a member from another House.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I refuse to accept that. It is distinctly and absolutely untrue. I never discussed it in any shape or form with any member of another place. I knew nothing of its provisions before I spoke about or saw the Bill.

The Premier: Then I withdraw unconditionally.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I thank the Premier. We want to be men above everything else. The loyalty and devotion expressed in the Bill are ultra-patriotic, and the legal verbiage must have taxed the resourcefulness of even the Crown Solicitor and Mr. H. K. Watson.

Mr. Latham: I do not suppose the latter had anything to do with it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is resourceful, anyhow, and the wording is worth reading. I have read it over and over again. It is wonderful what words can do, and, provided one has the educational knowledge that was possessed by those who prepared the Bill, it is wonderful what can be produced.

Mr. Ferguson: We are getting evidence of that now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Bill is an extraordinary production. We have this historical piece of legislation that will record for all time that Messrs. Dudley, Lindsay, Reid, Scaddan, Walker, and H. K. Watson were active in this matter. Not satisfied with saying this once and recording it in the measure that is to be presented to His Majesty the King, and is to go before the House of Commons and the House of Lords, not satisfied with mentioning these names in the Preamble, the framers of this measure also bring the names in within the Bill itself, the names of the men who were called upon to do some work on this question of severance.

Mr. Latham: That is only reciting a fact.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Not content, I say, with recording the names once, the Bill repeats them in all three times.

The Premier: That is a powerful argument against the Bill!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not arguing that it has any bearing on the question, but am merely drawing attention to the extraordinary draftsmanship of such an important matter as this is claimed to be by those who are sponsoring the Bill. The achievements of this distinguished committee of citizens are also emphasised in what is called "The Case for Secession." This marathon Case is a tribute to the productive capacity of the committee. In order that its importance may be fully appreciated, we find that in the eight clauses of the Bill the term "Case for Secession" is repeated ten times. Draftsmanship of that kind needs no further comment. Why put all these names into the Bill? Why repeat over and over again the words "Case for Secession"? Why not put in the names of the original committee? Why not include the names of the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke), the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers), and the name of the Premier himself? They all played their part. The Premier was a member of the first committee which took the first action after the referendum. Why does his name not appear in this historical production? It is distinctly unfair that it does not appear. If we are to have these other names placed before His Majesty and before the British Houses of Parliament, why not include the lot?

The Premier: Why not yours?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I did not play any part.

The Premier: You did. You supported the preliminary measure.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

The Premier: Yes, you did.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: These are the names of persons selected for special duties. If I had known the names were going to His Majesty in the address, that a petition was to be prepared, and that a delegation was to be appointed to present the petition and the address, I believe I would have canvassed to get a position on the committee.

Mr. Stubbs: You are too late now.

The Premier: That is too thin.

Mr. Latham: Perhaps the opposition will send you.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If we take from the Bill the roll of honour, and "Case for Secession," there is not a great deal left. It provides for an address, for a petition to the British Houses of Parliament, and for a delegation. I have already emphasised that an address is all that is required. That is quite sufficient. So soon as we go beyond the address, we begin discounting the Case for severance. We discount the percentage vote that was recorded when the matter was submitted to the people, and discount the majority of those who voted in favour of secession.

The Premier: Not at all.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have no hesitation in declaring that an address, following established constitutional courses, with a recital from the original Bill up to and including the comprehensive resolutions of both Houses of this Parliament, would accomplish more than this legislative splash. We could, in a dignified way and in an impressive way, present exactly the views of the people, expressed in no uncertain terms, indicating their feelings towards the administration of the affairs of Western Australia by the Commonwealth authorities. But it is proposed to go beyond an address. I tried to make it clear the other night that an address to His Majesty is the course which has always been adopted by all Parliaments which wanted to have any action of this kind taken. We have no precedent for what we are doing. Let us see exactly where we will land, if we land anywhere, under the proposals contained in the Bill. It is proposed to petition the British Parliament. Are we to assume that in petitioning the House of Commons and the House of Lords we are going to get the unanimous approval of those two Chambers? The petition must first be presented by a member of the House of Commons. We therefore single out a member of that House to present our petition. When we single out one member we create interest and suggest an investigation by all the other members. Is it expected that we are going to get the unanimous endorsement of the House after the petition is presented?

Mr. Latham: That would not be necessary.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Are there no friends of the National Parliament in the House of Commons? When the petition from this Parliament is presented, is it not reasonable to assume that another petition

will immediately be invited? Suppose another petition is not presented. Is it not reasonable to assume there will be many members in the House of Commons or the House of Lords who will have some knowledge of the affairs of Australia, and will be sufficiently interested to raise their voices concerning the point of view of the National Parliament of Australia, from which we propose to sever our connection?

The Premier: The hon. member speaks of a unanimous decision. Is that required in the House of Commons or the House of Lords?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Certainly not.

The Premier: That is the way you are arguing.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad the Premier subscribes to the point I am trying to make.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is going to be a difference of opinion. The Premier does not expect unanimity. He must admit that immediately we present our petition we shall be inviting a division of opinion and a debate. Are we to assume there will be no counter-petition? There is nothing to prevent other petitions from being presented.

Mr. Latham: It does not matter if they are: the Case will still be investigated.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: From the very fact that we are petitioning the House of Commons and the House of Lords we definitely compel the Federal Government to take official notice of our doing so.

The Premier: That is well known.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: And we shall compel them to see that their point of view, that of the other parts of Australia, is presented at the same time and in the same circumstances as our petition from Western Australia.

The Premier: A very good argument against the will of the people, and against secession.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not dealing with secession.

The Premier: Of course you are not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am dealing with the Bill through which we propose to present this matter to the British Parliament. Is it seriously considered that the British Parliament will hear only one side of the question?

Mr. Latham: No.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Can it be believed that our delegation will constitute the only propagandists in London?

Mr. Stubbs: Who suggested that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: According to the interjections, we are inviting other delegates to go to London. What we are going to have is not an intelligent consideration by the House of Commons or the House of Lords, but a ding-dong Press wrangle between various delegates from various parts of Australia, a most undignified event; and we are deliberately issuing an invitation for that to be done by our proposal to send a delegation to London.

Mr. Lambert: We have a mandate to do this.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is contended that our delegation is not only going to London but is going before the Bar of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. I have been in Parliament a long while. Although I have had experience of people being desirous of appearing before the Bar of the House, I have never yet seen them at the Bar of the House. Parliaments are very careful not to allow outsiders to address them in that way, unless the matter is of extraordinary importance. In all my 30 years experience of Parliament I have never known it to occur anywhere in Australia. I question whether it has occurred many times in the case of either the House of Commons or the House of Lords. And yet we are seriously contending that 430,000 people, a section of the British dominions, shall send a delegation from their Parliament to the British Parliament, and that the members of the delegation will get before the Bar of the House of Commons. Surely hon. members are not prepared to accept a contention of that kind. The provisions of the Bill, as regards the proposed petition and the proposed delegation, will not impress either the people of Great Britain or the members of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. The measure will invite adverse criticism, and, what is worse from my point of view, definitely invite ridicule. We all know that ridicule is the most disastrous reply to a proposal of this nature. The Bill is going to murder all possibility of calm and deliberate consideration, and the expression of opinion by the people of Western Australia will be lost sight of in those circumstances.

If we do send, as we should, an address to His Majesty the King by resolution of both Houses of this Parliament, the address will go to His Majesty and by him will be passed on to his Government. The Government would then analyse the matter submitted, and would make a recommendation to the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The British Government would accept that responsibility, as they always have accepted the responsibility where they considered that a sufficiently good case was made as the result of an address to His Majesty. In those circumstances the British Government have always submitted to both Houses of Parliament a recommendation, and have outlined the course which should be taken by those two Houses in regard to the subject matter of the address. This Bill conveys distrust. The measure seeks to take the course of a direct appeal to the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

The Premier: And His Majesty.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We are not prepared to send an address to His Majesty and, through him, to his Government, and then to trust the Government with the matter upon which our people have voiced their opinion. We propose to take the course of sending an address that will reach the Government, while we are not prepared to trust that Government. We want to make a direct appeal ourselves. We do not want the British Government to present a case for the consideration of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. We propose to do it ourselves, and in our own way.

The Premier: Who said that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I say it.

The Premier: Well, you know a lot about constitutional government if you think the King is going to decide the question. You are a hundred years behind the times.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am merely stating what the Bill contains. It is true that the Bill proposes to present the address. If we are going to limit our application to the form of an address to the Imperial Government, we do not need the Bill at all. The Bill is introduced to cover the petition and the application. Immediately we introduce the petition, we say to the British Government, "We are not prepared to trust you as every other part of the British Empire that has had to appeal has trusted you. We are going to adopt our own course, and are

going to make our appeal by petition, irrespective of what you think or what you propose to do." The Bill is a definite and distinct insult to the British Government.

The Premier: Oh!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Not only that, but we have already suggested that a delegation should be sent from here and that the delegation should get before the Bar of the House of Commons. It is not sufficient to tell the British Government that we are not prepared to trust them to direct the British Parliament: we go further and say that we will send our own orators to influence the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The form of petition is not insult enough. By the petition we shall insult the British Government, and by the delegation we shall be reflecting upon the capacity of the members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The whole thing is Gilbertian. It is so absurd that nothing but ridicule can be expected to result from it. If I were not concerned for the good name of Western Australia and for the prestige of the Parliament of Western Australia, I would not worry about this. However, my desire is to have the opinion so definitely expressed by the people presented in a dignified and an impressive way.

Mr. Latham: You will get that. You need not worry about that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member can differ from me if he wishes: but I am trying, in my way, to explain where the Bill is going to land us. Time will prove who is right. Now, the petition, the delegation, and the process of magnifying the Case for Secession which is to be authenticated by the Bill, will invite, as I have already emphasised, the Federal Parliament to take official action. Immediately they do so, the British Parliament will appreciate that we have gone about this matter in a wrong way. Thus it is quite possible that the whole question will be referred back to us for reconsideration as regards the mode of presentation. I do not want that to happen.

The Premier: No!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am concerned for the prestige of the Parliament of which I am a member, and I feel that we should be able to do our work in such a way as not to invite a rebuff of that kind. A good case can be overstated and overdone; and this good Case of the people of Western Australia, let me once more emphasise, is being

murdered by the Bill as drafted. What about the minority appeal? Are the British Parliament not going to consider the minority opinion? We present an address to His Majesty. We present all the other things I have already outlined, to the two Houses of the British Parliament. In all those documents we say that there has been a majority vote for certain reasons, and that a minority vote was also recorded. Should not we present to the British Parliament the opinions of the minority also? Can it be assumed that the great Parliament of the Empire will consider only the one point of view, even though the minority is small? Must we not expect that the British Parliament will require and expect the Parliament of Western Australia to present the Case in such a way as to submit not only the views of the majority but also the reasons for the minority vote which was cast? I have no hesitation in saying that if we want to do the fair thing, we must include with the Case for Secession the opinions of others who hold different views.

The Premier: I would have no objection to the hon. member presenting a petition to me in favour of the minority, if he cares to take up that attitude. I would consider it, and send it forward. But the hon. member cannot sit on the fence and vote with both the majority and the minority.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Premier has no right to assume either that I voted with the minority or that I voted with the majority. All I am doing is to try—

The Premier: You cannot deceive anybody.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: —to direct this Parliament into a course by which we shall express the opinions of the minority as well as those of the majority.

The Premier: Prepare a petition for the minority, and I will see what I can do. You cannot run with both the minority and the majority.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If I have convinced the Premier that something more should be done, I ask him, between now and the Committee stage, to make provision in the Bill for the presentation of the point of view of the minority.

The Premier: Will the hon. member organise the petition of the minority, and will he

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier must keep order.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is not my responsibility. It is not my object.

The Premier: It is your argument.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is the job of the Government. If I have convinced the Premier that he has not done all that might be done, and that the minority opinion should go forward for the information of those who will decide the question, then I have accomplished something. But it is no use asking me to do what the Premier suggests. I cannot do it.

The Premier: I have not had any request from the hon. member to do it. If the hon. member will make a request to me to present the minority case, I will consider it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not one of the minority or of the majority at the moment.

The Premier: Of course you are.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

Hon. N. Keenan: You are on both sides?

The Premier: You are running with the hares and hunting with the hounds.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is no part of my duty to say what point of view I hold; I am dealing with the Bill.

The Premier: Will the hon. member undertake to place before me a request to submit the case for the minority?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am doing that.

The Premier: Very well, I will consider that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I submit that request now. I suggest that Parliament will not fulfil its complete obligation and command respect if it fails to present to the British Parliament all the facts with regard to the referendum. We should take action to see that expression is given to the voice of the people.

Hon. N. Keenan: Do you mean expression or effect?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I want effect given to the voice of the people if it can be done, and I want their wishes to be expressed in such a way that we may so impress the Imperial Parliament that they will give effect to what the people desire. I am not opposed to the voice of the people being recognised, and effect being given to their wishes. I quite appreciate that a referendum is an important measure to be resorted to for the purpose of giving the people an opportunity directly to express

their views. Therefore, I want the expression of their views to go forward, and it can be done in a dignified and impressive way. I want the most to be made of the opportunity. I do not want the Case submitted in such a manner that it will be brought into ridicule and contempt. That is what we are doing by means of the Bill. I know it will be said that the Government and the Labour Party promised that they would give effect to the will of the people, and on that flimsy pretext, the Government propose to go to the extent of discounting the whole of the people's expressed views by attempting to do what I have already outlined.

Hon. N. Keenan: Do you call that a "flimsy pretext"?

The Premier: Do you call a party decision a "flimsy pretext"?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The whole thing can be done so simply. Upon the Government, rest the obligation and responsibility to recognise the result of the vote and to send an expression of the people's views to the Home authorities. I subscribed to that, and I subscribe to it now to the fullest extent. It is such a simple thing to do. We can do it in a comprehensive way by means of an address, and so fulfil all our obligations in that direction. An address is the people's appeal. The petition and delegation are political. On the other hand, I do not want that position to be used as a justification for an extraordinary production of the description now before the House. There is just another point of view. The Bill involves the Labour Party on a question upon which it was definitely decided they would accept no responsibility and take no part. The Bill departs completely from that decision. The Labour Party accepted the responsibility to recognise the vote, but we never committed ourselves, directly or indirectly, to attempt to do anything such as is indicated in the Bill.

Mr. Latham: You said you would give effect to the will of the people.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, by the adoption of the usual practice—

Mr. Latham: You said nothing of the sort.

The Premier: You would not have been game to say that during the last election.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: —by means of a resolution of the Joint Houses of Parliament in the form of an address to His Majesty.

The Premier: We did not say that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is the constitutional course adopted by other Parliaments or other peoples who desired to make representations to the Home Government.

The Premier: That is your talk.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I defy contradiction on that.

The Premier: Do you?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: When the Government, on my behalf and on behalf of the Labour movement generally, promised to give effect to the expression of the people's views, I and the rest of the Labour Party expected and thought that the Government would proceed in the usual decent way, following established constitutional methods.

The Premier: That is the squibbiest thing ever uttered in this House.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We have gone beyond that. As soon as ever the Government started with these petitions, the responsibility for the petitions became that of the Government. They introduced the Bill and submitted the proposal for the petitions. The petitions can only go to the House of Commons and the House of Lords at the request of the Labour Government of Western Australia. The Government have adopted that course.

The Premier: This is worthy of you!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Government have accepted the obligation but they are not carrying out the undertaking that they gave. We are asked to go beyond that, and we are attempting to do more. I would not mind one bit the attempt to do more if I considered we would do more good. On the other hand, in our attempt to do more, not only are we asked to go beyond what the Labour movement anticipated, but we are discounting the vote that we should try to present in the most convincing manner.

The Premier: I deny that absolutely.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Bill must be carried now. The Government introduced the Bill; it is their Bill, for which the Government must accept responsibility; they cannot do otherwise. It is no good telling me that this is an open question and that every member is free to vote as he likes. It does not matter how I vote, or how the rank and file of the Labour Party vote. The Government are assured of a majority because we know the Bill will appeal unanimously to members of the Opposition. If members of the Cabinet stick to their Bill, as

they will, they, plus the Opposition, can have effect given to the measure. In those circumstances, what is the good of telling me that members have freedom of action, seeing that the Bill has already been launched and we must realise that we have no power to secure any drastic amendments that we may regard as necessary.

The Premier: You have absolute freedom.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: What is the good of that?

The Premier: The Government would not carry on for one day if a majority of the votes in this House were cast against us. We will not carry on with the support of the Opposition.

Mr. Sleeman: You will not carry the Bill without them.

The Premier: You can go too.

Mr. Sleeman: And so can you. I will not be dictated to by you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier and the member for Fremantle will keep order.

The Premier: I can talk about you.

Mr. Sleeman: And I can talk about you, too.

The Premier: The Government will not carry on for one moment.

Mr. Sleeman: You will not carry this Bill with our vote.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must ask both the Premier and the member for Fremantle to keep order. I ask both hon. members to recognise the Standing Orders.

Mr. Sleeman: Sending a delegation to London and letting people starve!

The Premier: That is good propaganda but rubbish and paltry.

Mr. Sleeman: The same to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Fremantle—

Mr. Sleeman: I will not take that sort of stuff from him.

The Premier: You won't "take it from him"?

Mr. Sleeman: I will not take it from you.

The Premier: Won't you?

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps the best thing I can do is to suspend both members and they can have it out outside.

Mr. Sleeman: That will do me.

The Premier: And it will do me, too.

Mr. SPEAKER: I trust that the member for Fremantle will give the member for Guildford-Midland an opportunity to continue his remarks.

Mr. Sleeman: Yes, but—

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Guildford-Midland will resume his seat. The Premier should set a better example to this House. The member for Fremantle should keep order. I ask members to keep order and allow the member for Guildford-Midland to continue his speech. I trust members will follow the usual custom and show respect to the Chair. I think at least we should endeavour to keep order in this House.

Mr. Sleeman: I rise to apologise to the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: No apology is necessary. I only want the Standing Orders carried out.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was trying to explain that while it is true the rank and file of the party are free to do whatever they wish regarding the Bill, they will not be able to alter it in any shape or form. If it were otherwise, could I speak as I am doing this evening? I am not one of those who have been disloyal to the Labour movement or to Labour directions. I have had too much experience to be guilty of practices of that description. I want it to be understood that in adopting the course suggested by the Government we shall not serve the interests of Labour or of the people who voted at the referendum. We shall discount the Labour Party because the Government introduced and fathered the Bill. We shall discount the case that might otherwise be made. In those circumstances, what is the use of talking about amendments? The only thing that we could amend would possibly be the deletion of the names, or some reference in the Case for secession. The moment we endeavoured by way of amendment to alter the proposed petition to the House of Commons and the House of Lords respectively, we would find ourselves in a minority, and we would find that the provision sought to be altered was regarded as vital to the Bill as drafted. In the circumstances, we cannot expect that freedom be granted to us to delete provisions regarding the delegation or the powers proposed to be vested in the delegation, nor yet regarding the expense associated with the delegation. Regardless of what we may do in that connection, Labour has to realise that the maj-

ority is available for the Bill quite apart from rank and file of the Labour Party. If we attempted to alter anything in the Case, I would mention the reference to the "sea of sand"—a most discreditable reference to a part of Western Australia. There is no sea of sand at all; there are patches of sand, as there are patches of bad land in all countries. The supposed "sea of sand" is pastoral country that carries many thousands of cattle and sheep.

Mr. Withers: They damn the country they want to preserve.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Suppose we delete the reference to the sea of sand, what good will that do, seeing that the Case has already gone forth? It has been printed and the document is at present on its way to London, if it has not already reached there.

The Premier: No copy has started for London yet.

Mr. Latham: Unless private members have sent their copies.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad to have the Premier's assurance, but I have it on the very best authority—the Premier may not know this—that many copies have already gone to London. I would like the Premier to investigate that point.

The Premier: You seem to have a good deal of inside information—and intriguing information.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No; there is not any question of intrigue at all.

Mr. Latham: Perhaps they were copies of the special edition of the "West Australian."

The Premier: Those copies may have gone forward.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so. The Case was published and distributed and has been sent out by people residing in this State. It was available for all the world to know.

The Premier: Of course.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Then what is the use of endeavouring to amend the Bill? It is too late to do that. The Case has been authenticated without any approval or direction of Parliament and without consideration by Parliament. What is the use, therefore, of talking of freedom of action and freedom of voting?

The Premier: Does the hon. member know the difference between "authenticated" and "approved"?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I will admit that the word "approved" can be used where one cannot perhaps use the word "authenticated." If Parliament authenticates the Case, it approves of it.

The Premier: Not a bit of it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Well, I will not argue that, because it does not matter to me. The fact is that the Case has gone forth before Parliament considered it, the Case as referred to ten times in the Bill.

The Premier: I hope the hon. member is not suggesting that the Government have approved of it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I regret to say the Government must accept that responsibility.

The Premier: That is ridiculous.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is where the Premier and I differ, because I am definitely of opinion, and the British Parliament will be definitely of opinion, that the Case is endorsed by the Government of Western Australia: they have accepted the Case and they refer to the Case in the Bill presented to Parliament, and so whatever the Premier may say, they are saddled with the responsibility for the Case for Secession.

The Premier: Nothing could be more mean than to try to identify the Government with the Case.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am doing it for the protection and in the interests of the party with which I am associated. I do not like making speeches of this kind; it is of no pleasure to be doing a job of this nature.

The Premier: No, it is distasteful.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is so. I prefer to be constructive. It is not my practice to be destructive, but if I feel that something extraordinary is being attempted, something that hits the party with which I am associated, I feel it my responsibility to enter my protest. The secession vote was taken and the people expressed their view. I have no objection at all to the view so expressed, and I desire that that view should be conveyed to the Imperial authorities. We have previously had experience of matters of this kind. We cannot get away from the fact that we in Western Australia voluntarily entered into the difficulties

under which we are now groaning. It is of no use blaming the national Parliament. We have to blame ourselves. Some years ago I tried to convince the Premier that a wrong was being done, and I prophesied that it would prove to be a wrong. In a big matter of this kind it is as well to look back and see whether we, as the people of Western Australia, did not make a move to bring all this trouble upon ourselves, and ask whether it was possible for us to have avoided it. The Premier in 1928 introduced the Financial Agreement Bill to ratify an agreement presented by the Bruce-Page Government to the State Premiers for submission to the State Parliaments and the people of Australia. I do not like saying "I told you so," but it is worth recording that I was the only Labour representative that opposed that Financial Agreement and the only one that voted against the Bill. Just as I am differing with the Premier to-night, so I differed from him on that occasion. Unfortunately for Western Australia I was right and the Premier was wrong.

The Premier: Has it proved so?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Let me read what I said on that occasion.

The Premier: I like a man who quotes his own speeches. It is most interesting. I certainly admire your modesty.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If members will look at page 127 of "Hansard" of the 19th June, 1928, they will find that I said this—

The immediate result is going to be of great benefit to Western Australia, but we have to bear in mind that the Commonwealth may not continue to be as sympathetic as the Agreement would indicate they are at the outset. It is the ultimate effect of the Agreement that I fear. It is impossible to argue against the immediate future. It is the ultimate effect we have to think of and come to a conclusion about. It is hard to know what the Commonwealth Government will do.

Then I go on to say this—

Here, again, I want to ask members if they are clear as to what the attitude of the Loan Council will be to Western Australia once that body is in permanent control. It is useless for members to say we have had voluntary control for the last five or six years, for that is quite different from what will obtain if provision is made for the control of loan operations under the terms of the Constitution in such a way that we shall not be able to get out of it. We shall have to go to the Commonwealth on every occasion. In those circumstances no one can definitely state what view

the Commonwealth will take regarding the future requirements of Western Australia. It is significant that the States are not called upon to submit their loan requirements; they are called upon to submit their loan programmes.

The Premier: That means their loan requirements.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But their requirements in detail.

The Premier: No. Loan programme and loan requirements are identical.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, in the total amount.

The Premier: "Loan programme" does not mean the details of the loan requirements.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Well, that is how I read it.

The Premier: That merely means the total amount.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Premier may be right, but the Agreement does not say so. I venture to differ from him. If it was set out that loan requirements of the State had to be submitted, then it would be an indication that they would have to submit a lump sum.

The Premier: That is all.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But it does not say so.

The Premier: Well, that is what it means.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Well, we can differ on that point. When the Agreement refers to the loan programme, I take that to mean that the State will have to give details as to how the money is to be spent. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) pointed out that the Prime Minister had been careful to say that the Loan Estimates of the States would not be interfered with by the Commonwealth. Of course! The distribution of loan funds is the duty of the State, but once we accept the Financial Agreement and become a party to it, as I read the documents, we shall have to submit our programme.

The Premier: You will observe that the Agreement does not say, "loan programme of each State"; it says, "the loan programme of the States." That means for the whole of the States, and therefore means the total amount. I am sure about that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I read that portion of the Agreement once or twice, and I gathered the impression I have indicated. As to whether I am right or wrong, time will prove. I accept the Premier's assurance that my reading of it is incorrect. It goes to show, however, that if my reading be correct the Premier must realise the danger, because he will have to submit his programme to the Commonwealth, and they will have the right—

The Premier: To question any of the items? That would never do!

I will leave the House to determine whether I was a reliable prophet as to the effects the Financial Agreement would have on Western Australia.

The Premier: Will the hon. member explain the point in his quotation? I still would approve to-morrow of the Financial Agreement.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The quotation was simply to point out that the Premier led us into difficulties when he extended the powers of the Commonwealth.

The Premier: It was not the power of the Commonwealth, but the power of the Loan Council, which consists of the six States of the Commonwealth. It was not the Commonwealth at all.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Now let me read a portion of my speech which bears directly on the point the Premier has raised. It reads as follows:—

I claim that this Agreement will mean a definite extension of Federal control. It has been said that that is not so, but the fact that we are being compelled to give them an opportunity to review the loan raisings authorised by the States is an extension of Federal power.

The Premier: I repeat that the Loan Council consists of the six States. Be fair!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not mind that a bit. I was referring to the Loan Council. I do not care how the Loan Council is constituted, but the creation of the Loan Council by our agreeing to submit ourselves to the direction of the Loan Council meant that we immediately extended the powers of others, and consequently limited our own.

The Premier: The hon. member said we were extending the powers of the Commonwealth. Now, when he is challenged he finds it is not the Commonwealth, that it is the Loan Council, which consists of the six States.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If it will please the Premier to have me admit that the Loan Council is not the Commonwealth, but only a body representing the Commonwealth and the States, I am prepared to admit it.

The Premier: It is not that you are pleasing me. Surely you know the facts.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am stating the facts and, I hope, giving pleasure to the Premier also.

The Premier: You are not doing that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Whatever the body or its powers, the fact remains that to review the loan raisings authorised by a State is an extension of Federal power. That has actually happened.

The Premier: It has not.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: In another passage I stated—

It may be limited, but nevertheless it is an extension, and as has already been pointed out by other speakers, from the very early history of Federation, the whole of the activities of all parties in the Commonwealth has been towards the extension of Federal control.

I could quote further from my speech on that occasion, but I have no intention to do more than to point out that at that period I counselled care before accepting the Financial Agreement. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) has complained, and rightly so, that we have no power. We cannot even build an extension to the Power House without going, cap-in-hand, to the Loan Council, and we have been denied means for doing work within the State. They have the power to deny us because we endorsed the Financial Agreement of 1928. The Premier endorsed that agreement and the people, by an overwhelming majority, voted for it, not only in Western Australia but throughout the Commonwealth, and the Western Australian voters on that occasion have brought on us all the difficulties that six years later influenced them to vote for secession.

The Premier: Nonsense!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I could have read a statement that, in my opinion, the advantages of the Financial Agreement would expire and we would begin to get into difficulties six years after 1928. To the best of my ability I pointed out how we were likely to be advantaged for five or six years, and I appreciated that we would then find ourselves on a lee shore and the States would begin to suffer. Six years after having made that speech we have arrived at a stage when our people are so dissatisfied and so agrieved at the administration of the Commonwealth that they are trying to undo, in the most drastic form possible, that which we deliberately voted ourselves into in 1928. I regret exceedingly the position in which Labour finds itself over this matter. The Labour movement has been a big movement dealing with big questions in a big way. Everything worth while in Australia has been accomplished by the Labour Party. It was the Labour Party that conceived the idea of establishing the Commonwealth Bank. True, the institution is hamstrung and its services have been limited through political action, but the bank is there and will be

there for all time, a monument to a wonderful achievement by a big party. It was an achievement that brought applause and commendation from all the nations of the British Empire. Everybody has praised the foresight of the big party responsible for that act. To-night, however, we find that great party degenerated to the extent of piloting through Parliament a Bill of this kind. I regret what is being done. It is not worthy of the Labour Party. It is not up to the standard set by the Labour movement of old. To-day it would appear that the division in our own ranks is not only strengthening the opposing side but is weakening us, until it is causing us to do things that I, for one, regret. I know the people of this State as well as does any member of the House. I have had a longer association with the Labour movement than has any man inside or outside this House. The Labour movement does not approve of legislation of this kind. It recognises the voice of the people and strives to give expression to it, but will not use an expression of the will of the people in such a way as to discount a great movement. Up to the introduction of this Bill the movement had never degenerated to such an extent as to render itself liable to incur the ridicule of the House of Commons or to create doubt as to whether it could be trusted by the people of Western Australia to present to the Imperial authorities the people's ambitions, desires, hopes and aspirations in such a way as would reflect credit on the movement and not lay it open to ridicule, as this Bill will do.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned 8.52 p.m.