

will have to submit to a reduction equivalent to what we are asked to surrender. Eggs that brought 1s. 6d. a dozen at this time last year are now bringing only 5½d. to 6d. per dozen wholesale. At the Harvey show yesterday, I was told by some potato growers that they had wonderful crops, some as heavy at ten tons to the acre, but that it would probably be cheaper to let the potatoes remain in the ground than to dig them out. At the Midland Junction sales yesterday, good wethers in the wool were 11s. 3d. apiece. Surely to goodness, in agreeing to a reduction of 10 per cent., we are only falling into line with the primary producers!

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are not even doing that.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: At any rate, it is an acknowledgment that the cost of living has been reduced equal to the percentage we are asked to forego. I was in the House when Parliamentary allowances were increased by £200 a year. The reason given for increasing them was the high cost of living. By the same token we should now reduce our allowances. I admit that members like Mr. Williams, who have to live on their Parliamentary allowances and who have to yield up portion to meet the demands of constituents who indulge in leg-pulling, are at a disadvantage.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Leg-pulling by whom, their lady constituents?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: As we granted ourselves increased allowances on the score of the higher cost of living, we should submit to a reduction now that the cost of living is declining. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. W. H. Kitson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 23rd October, 1930.

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

QUESTION—MINING, PROSPECTORS' SUSTENANCE.

Hon. M. F. TROY asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is he aware that a large number of prospectors have applied to the Mines Department for sustenance to carry on prospecting operations, and that the Central Mining Board are unable to deal with the applications owing to lack of funds? 2, When will the necessary funds be provided?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. 2, I hope to make a definite announcement in a few days.

QUESTION—STATE FERRY SERVICE.

Mr. WELLS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Have the Government imported the engines for use in a new South Perth ferry boat, and what was their landed cost? 2, Have tenders been called for the construction of a new ferry boat? 3, If not, when do the Government intend to call tenders for its construction? 4, What amount has been paid by the Government during the last 12 months for the hire of boats in the maintenance of the Mends Street-Barrack Street service?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. Approximate cost £4,800. 2, No. 3, Owing to heavy cost of construction it is not proposed to call tenders for the time being. 4, £267 15s. for the year ended 30th June, 1930.

BILL—SALARIES TAX.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 16th October.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.35]: The Notice Paper contains a substantial number of taxing Bills that unfortunately, because of things being as they are, will have outstanding results. In times of prosperity taxation is usually low; revenue is buoyant, and in many directions there is not the same need for heavy taxation. This occurs at a period, too, when the people would be best able to bear heavier taxation. In a time like the present, when trade is depressed, and things generally are fairly bad, it is an occasion when increased taxation has to be levied, and yet it is unfortunately an occasion when the public are not in a position to meet increased taxation owing to the depressed circumstances. In recent months within the Commonwealth there have been great increases in taxation. Federal taxes have been piled up because of the financial difficulties the Commonwealth Parliament have to face, until we scarcely know where we are with the increases that are going on. Then there are our own taxes, which at present are substantial. Certainly they are not as high as in many of the other States, but until the recent increases in some of them ours were about on a level with many of the sister States. Not the least of the burdens of taxation is that which is levied by the local governing bodies. I am beginning to find that out. A man is taxed on where he lives in the city with water rates and other charges. In the country he has to pay local rates and other taxes also, until I am afraid people in the country are being taxed out of existence, or to such an extent that it must have a very detrimental effect upon employment. As we all know, the amount of taxation that the people have to pay has a very solid contributing effect upon the difficulties of unemployment. When money is taken from the citizens for the purpose of government, it means that those people have less money to spend. There will therefore be less employment. Whether we like it or not, the financial position of the State is such that there must be very severe economies in expenditure and some form of increased taxation. That is because we have

undertaken to balance the ledger for this year. Here, I can only repeat what I said earlier in the session, that the great trouble we are faced with is that we have to balance the ledger, not only in this, but in all the other States, in one year. To have to do this in so short a period forces taxation in many directions, which would not otherwise be necessary if the balancing of the ledger were spread over a longer term. In balancing the ledger this year, we have to go to half a million better than we did last year, or a little more because of the deficit, and we have also to make provision for an additional substantial amount for added interest.

The Premier: And exchange.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Exchange is a new item in our Estimates. Altogether it is a very heavy burden to have to face in one year. There may be, and will be differences of opinion as to what forms taxation should take.

The Premier: We shall always be wrong. Ask your own colleagues.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is one of the most difficult tasks to frame taxation Bills, because there will always be the assertion that the other fellow should pay. I know the difficulties attached to the position. The first thing to bear in mind with respect to this Bill is that it taxes all Government employees. The impression is abroad that the tax relates only to those who come under the Public Service Act, the salaried officials of the Public Service. That is not so. It taxes all who are in Government employment, whether they are in receipt of salaries or wages. It taxes those in semi-Government departments, which include not only those in the direct Public Service, but those engaged in the public utilities, trading concerns, and all those activities set out in the second schedule of the Bill. That ought to be made clear in the mind of the public.

The Premier: If they are taxable. Certain exemptions are provided.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The effect of all this should be made clear. The Bill applies to all who are in Government employment and to those who will be taxable. There is an exemption of £252 for married people, or those who have persons dependent upon them. The arguments that were advanced on Tuesday with regard to the reduction

in the allowances to members of Parliament, apply as well in this case. The Bill singles out for taxation one section of the people whose income consists of wages or salaries, and does not touch the large number of people who are in receipt of salaries or wages outside the Government service.

The Premier: Most of them have had their salaries cut down already.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has freely been stated in the Press. As a matter of fact I should think that the reduction in wages or salaries, of those in commercial houses or private employment, must be very limited at present.

The Premier: It is tremendous.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The great majority of those in employment are working under awards of the Arbitration Court, and the court has not yet made any reduction. If the salaries of those in private employment have been reduced, it can only be in those cases where the persons concerned are not working under industrial Arbitration Court awards.

The Premier: We can exempt anyone who is reduced by reclassification, or by an award of the court.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Anyone whose income is reduced because of part-time employment or rationing.

The Premier: Or a reduction in wages.

Hon. P. COLLIER: To the extent that such a man suffers a reduction, there is provision to cover him in the Bill.

The Premier: The reclassification is due, you know.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Let me take the case of those in private employment. say in banks, insurance companies and commercial houses. There are tens of thousands of women and men in private employment who may be drawing salaries or wages equivalent to those set out in this Bill. They will be entirely free from this form of taxation. It is limited only to those in Government employment and a considerable number of those in private employment have just as much security and continuity of work as have those in the Public Service. To all intents and purposes, those employed in commercial houses and other places of business in the city are permanent employees, and yet they will not be affected by the Bill at all. Those in Government employment are singled out as we, our unfortunate selves, were singled out under the Bill we discussed

on Tuesday. I will give the House some instances to indicate how the Bill will affect Government employees. Take the person who is in receipt of an annual salary of £204. Under the Bill he will pay £7 16s.

The Premier: That applies to single persons.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, that is what will be paid by those people to whom the Bill will apply. It is clear that it does not apply to married persons or those with dependants who receive a salary less than £252. On the other hand, single persons will have to pay that amount. In addition, that individual will have to pay income tax amounting to £2 9s. 4d. Hon. members will see how much in excess is the impost under the Bill compared with what will have to be paid as income tax. The person in receipt of £300 a year will pay £14 6s. per annum under the Bill and £4 5s. as income tax. It must be made clear that the impost under the Bill is not in lieu of income tax. The latter tax will have to be paid in addition. The person in receipt of a salary of £360 per annum will have to pay £22 15s. under the Bill, and £5 14s. 7d. on account of income tax. So the rates progress until we find that the person in receipt of £600 per annum will have to pay a salaries tax of £44 17s. and £13 15s. as income tax. A large number of people in private employment who are in receipt of salaries equivalent to those I have mentioned will pay income tax only, and nothing at all under the Bill. There is a great distinction, therefore, between the treatment received by persons in the Government Service and that accorded those engaged by private employers. If a special tax on salaries is justified, surely one section ought not to be singled out in that respect. Yet that is the position with regard to this tax. Persons in private employment will be immune. It is true that a large number of people have had their incomes greatly reduced. The farmers have been mentioned and the same applies to business people and traders of all descriptions. Many of them, of course, have no income at all that can be reduced. I am not unmindful of the fact that some people engaged in trade or business are worse off to-day than those who are in receipt of wages and salaries, because their whole income has disappeared in one direction or another. I do not know what the position is regarding some of the professions.

The Attorney General: Some have nothing coming to them at all—architects, for instance.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know how those engaged in the legal and medical professions are situated.

The Attorney General: I am told that the doctors are having a rather rough spin.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And I am told that the legal work has not decreased.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Recently the undertakers put some of their men on half time!

Hon. P. COLLIER: That means that most of the doctors are working overtime in order to achieve results to the detriment of the undertakers.

The Attorney General: And of the lawyers too, because they do not get probate fees.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not propose to labour the question, because I have said all I have to say already on the Bill we dealt with on Tuesday. What I said then applies to the Bill now before us. The Bill clearly singles out one section and leaves untouched another section in receipt of similar wages and salaries. To that extent the measure runs counter to all accepted principles of equity with regard to taxation.

MR. MCCALLUM (South Fremantle) [4.51]: Although the impost to be levied under the Bill is termed a tax, the Bill is really one to reduce wages and salaries. In its essence the Bill is submitted in obedience to the instructions received from the Employers' Federation that wages must come down.

The Premier: It is not.

Mr. MCCALLUM: The Bill is a deliberate attempt to undermine the Arbitration Court; it sets aside the Arbitration Court; it defies the fixed basic wage; by a subterfuge it sets out to reduce the wages of everyone employed in the Government Service. It is the most pernicious Bill yet introduced in this Parliament, and it emanates from a man who, at the time of the elections, when it was freely stated that if elected his first action would be to reduce wages, replied that there was no truth in the allegation, and that such statements represented pure political propaganda. Despite the Premier's denial, here, in his first session, he has brought down a Bill to reduce the wages of even the charwomen, the widows who are employed part-time, sweeping out our schools and other Government build-

ings, on a wage of from 27s. to 29s. per week. He is attempting to reduce wages even down to that standard. Deny it as he may, and did when the point was put to him during the course of the Address-in-reply debate, that is the fact. He denied the suggestion at the elections, and he has denied it since. His supporters denied it during the election campaign. The member for Perth (Mr. H. W. Mann), during his campaign, said—

It had been said that Sir James Mitchell, if returned to office, would reduce wages and interfere with the 44-hour week. Sir James would do nothing unconstitutional and would not attempt to interfere with the awards made by the Arbitration Court.

In the first Bill dealing with the matter, the Premier seeks to interfere with them. What will the member for Perth do in the face of this measure? Does it not seek to reduce wages that the Arbitration Court has fixed? Does it not undermine the basic wage that the court fixed as the limit upon which men or women should be called upon to exist? This is what the campaign director for the Nationalist Party said on the same point—

It is such an obviously shallow piece of election propaganda, without any foundation in fact, that it is beneath the contempt of the Nationalist Party.

But here it is. Here is the Bill to reduce the wages of everyone, not only in Government employment but those engaged in semi-Government departments as well. Why is not the Premier as honest and candid with the people as the Premier of Queensland was? Differ as we may from the opinions of that gentleman, he was candid enough and honest enough to tell the people of Queensland, when he was challenged, that he admitted his action was repudiation, that he was defying the Arbitration Court, and forcing a reduction in the rates fixed in the court's awards, and setting up reduced wages. Instead of adopting that attitude, the Premier of Western Australia has introduced taxation, despite his earlier denials of his intention to reduce wages. At this stage I desire to offer an emphatic protest against the manner in which this and the other four taxing Bills have been placed before members. It was a habit of the present Premier, when he sat on the Opposition side of the House, to interject in an insulting way when Ministers had notes to refer to. He said they were reading their speeches. The Premier

stood up in this Chamber with a sheaf of typewritten notes, and did not even read them. He introduced four intricate Bills, dealing with taxation—Bills of a description never before introduced to the Parliament of this State—and from the time he moved the second reading of the first Bill until the fifth Order of the Day had been reached, he occupied only 17 minutes in placing the measures before us. No word of explanation was given to us. He poured the Bills out like a barrel load of bricks, and tipped them out for hon. members to dissect. There was no word of explanation as to how the Bills would operate, and in regard to one particular Bill he simply read the schedule. The Premier's action was an insult to the Chamber and to the people of Western Australia. That is what his action amounted to, particularly when he was charged with the task of giving members information as to how the Bills would operate and what was to be done. Are we to assume that the Premier did not understand the Bills, and therefore did not give us the necessary information? Has any other Minister ever before introduced four taxation measures and spent three or four minutes on each? The Bill before us now has 12 clauses.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! With all due respect to the hon. member, he is not referring to the Bill before the House.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am referring to the Bill before us. The Premier took four whole minutes in speaking to this Bill. He did not give us any explanation of it in any particular whatever. The Bill before us definitely wipes out the Arbitration Court and establishes Parliament as the wage-fixing authority. The Bill defies the Arbitration Court and sets aside the basic wage. When dealing with the Bill that affected the allowances paid to members of Parliament, I said that the measure would be taken as an instruction to the Arbitration Court that wages had to come down. The Bill embodies the Government's defiance of the Arbitration Court. We are asked to say to the Arbitration Court, "No matter what wages you may fix, Parliament will decree that the amounts specified in the Bill will be taken from the workers, not only in the Government Service but in the semi-Government departments as well." It is clear repudiation; it means wiping out the Arbi-

tration Court altogether. From what we can hear, the Government have in mind, and are actually now considering, the introduction of a special Bill to suspend the basic wage provisions of the Arbitration Act. Why are the Government not honest enough to deal with the whole thing candidly and let the people know where they stand? Instead of that, under a camouflage they bring down a taxation measure, the real objective of which is to reduce the wages of all who are employed in the Government service. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the Bill does not affect the salaried staff only. It applies to everyone; it ropes in everyone.

Mr. Munsie: Even nurses in the Children's Hospital.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, and that is not a Government institution. The Premier has roped in everyone he can, except the employees of the private firms. He is not touching those, because I suppose he would find difficulty in that direction if he attempted it. But for all Government employees, the wages and salary men, and even the part-time cleaners of schools; from the navvy on the railway to the lumpers on the wharf, casual men everywhere, their wages are to be taxed to an extent altogether outrageous as compared with the income taxation imposed on people outside the Government service. But of course I have not any doubt as to what is in the mind of the Premier, which is that he is setting an example to others, is saying to the employers, "Here is what we have done; you should follow suit." That is his policy of forcing down wages and lowering the standard of living, getting out of all who cannot protect themselves as much money as he can extract from them. We knew at the time of the elections what would happen if he were to get into power, but he denied it, and said it was mere political propaganda. Yet when he introduces the Bill he has not the courage to say, "This is in defiance of what I said at the elections." He has not the honesty, as the Premier of Queensland has, to say, "I know I am repudiating the Arbitration Court and the law. I know I am going to undermine all that. If it is said that the lowest the worker can live upon is £4 5s. per week, I say he has got to live on something less. I have the majority behind me, and I am

going to do it." Why cannot the Premier be candid about it? He gave only four minutes to the moving of the second reading of a 12-clause Bill. He vouchsafed not a word of explanation. No one outside the House knows what is in the Bill from the report of the Premier's speech. Not one section of the community understands what the force of this Bill would be if it became law. I am going to submit a few comparisons to show what it will mean if it becomes law. But let me first of all remind the Premier that not as far back as the elections, which were held a few months ago, but more recently, only a few weeks ago, when a deputation asked him to live up to his election promises by finding money to provide work, he said, "This community is altogether too highly taxed now, and I am not going to be a party to further taxation." That was only a few weeks ago. That money was required to find work for the unemployed. But the Premier's troubles about living up to his electioneering promises! He said, "No, I will have nothing to do with the imposition of further taxation." Now he has brought down this measure, not to find work and give employment, but to bring in money to balance his ledger and make up some of the inflated items in his Budget, items which he knows in his heart he has no chance of getting.

The Premier: What do you know about inflation?

Mr. McCALLUM: We will show you how your figures are inflated and have no chance in the world of being realised. In the short space of a few weeks ago the Premier said he would not have anything to do with increased taxation, and now we have from him this list of new taxation Bills. I want to point out that a man on wages, or on fixed salary, particularly in the Government service, is the man that can least afford to be singled out for special taxation of this kind. He is the man who, when things are booming and money is being made outside the service, and the cost of living is going up, is bound to suffer. Take the war period: It was the man on wages or on fixed salary who did not get any increase whatever in his income. He had no opportunity to go out and make big war profits. Even the wool grower and the wheat grower, who are hard up to-day, got big prices then and made big money. But the salaried men

and the wages men in the Government service had no opportunity to make big money. Yet now they are singled out for special taxation. Even our tribunals are defied in order that the Premier may get at those men who, during an inflated period, were unable to go out and make profits and augment their income, and engage in profiteering as some other sections of the community did. According to the Public Service Commissioner's report, from 1909 to 1919 the average salary of public servants actually dropped by £1, or from £229 to £228, while during the same period the cost of living rose by 46 per cent. And these are the people who are now being singled out for special taxation. And we are told—we were told again in the leading article in this morning's newspaper—that these men are in a better position than those outside. Their average salary during the period to which I have referred dropped by £1, while the cost of living went up by 46 per cent. And the 1925 classification placed the basic wage for an officer in the Public Service at £204 per annum, or £3 18s. 6d. per week, which is 7s. 6d. below the basic wage outside. This Bill is going to tax the public servant further. No single man outside the Government service can work for less than £4 6s. per week. The law will not allow it. But the rate fixed for the clerical staff in the Public Service is £3 18s. 6d. And not content with forcing him to work for so much less than the same man would get outside, the Government propose specially to tax him. So where is the contention that these men are better off than men outside, and entitled to have a special tax imposed upon them? The unfairness about it is this: this range will include practically every tradesman employed in the Government service, harbour works, public works or railways. They will all be on about £300 per annum. According to the tax set out in this Bill, those people will have to pay 5s. 6d. per week, or at the rate of 1s. in the pound. Men on £288 will have to pay the rate of 1s. in the pound on their incomes. Under our Income Tax Act, before a man has to pay 1s. in the pound he must be receiving £1,500 per annum. Under this Bill all the mechanics, all the tradesmen in the Government service are to be taxed at the same rate as a man outside, receiving £1,500 per annum, pays in income tax. Is that equitable? Is not that singling

out the Government employees for a special impost? Where, now, is the contention that because they are in the Public Service they are better off than if they were outside? If this Bill becomes law, a mechanic working in the Midland Junction Workshops will have to pay £14 6s. per annum more in taxation than will the mechanic working for a private firm, or working for the Midland Railway Company just across the line. A lumper working on the Fremantle Wharf for the Fremantle Harbour Trust will have to pay this tax, while a lumper beside him working for the shipping companies will be free from the tax. Down in the timber districts all the workers in the State Sawmills will have to pay the tax, but the men working in any of Millar's mills will be free from it. A man working for the Main Roads Board out on the roads will have to pay the tax, while another man employed by a road contractor will not have to pay it. That is equity and justice! That is what this law proposes, namely, to single out a section of the community for this special impost. According to the Public Service Commissioner's report, the average rate paid to public servants is £331 per annum. A man on that salary will have to pay £19 10s. per annum tax under this Bill, or an amount equal to the income tax paid by an outside man receiving £700 per annum. He is taxed at the same rate as a man receiving £2,000 per annum. That is what this Bill means. The average rate paid by public servants under this special tax will be equal to the income tax rate of a man drawing £2,000 per annum. What kind of justice and equity is there in this? And with the wages man it is even more unfair. I cannot find words to express my view of the iniquity of the measure. We have never known such a Bill to be suggested to any Parliament. And it ropes in all the semi-Government departments. Take the Fire Brigades Board: The Government find only a quarter of the money for that board. Take the hospitals: This will tax the wages of the nurses, the housemaids, everybody employed in the hospitals, although three-fourths of the money for those institutions is found outside the Government. The Premier is roping them all in to impose this special taxation on them.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Which clause brings in the nurses of the hospitals?

Mr. McCALLUM: Let me give a few other comparisons to show the iniquity of the Bill. Take the single man employed on £204 per annum. If he is employed outside the Government service he will pay £2 6s. 1d. in income tax, but if he is employed by the Government he will now be required to pay £10 2s. under this Bill. A man on £300 outside the Government service will pay in income tax £4 5s., but if he is in the Government service he will be required to pay £18 11s. A man on £360 outside the Government service will pay in income tax £5 14s., but if he is in the service of the Government he will now be required to pay £28 9s. A man on £400 in the Government service will be required to pay £33 1s., whereas the man outside will have only £7 to pay in income tax. A man on £500 outside the Government service will pay £10, as against the £47 to be taken from the man in the Government service. And again, a man on £600 outside the Government service will pay £13 15s. as against the £58 to be demanded from the man on £600 in the Government service. There is the iniquity of the whole proposition. The principle is so unfair, so inequitable, that it is outrageous. Every law of taxation with which I am acquainted, when imposing a tax on one's income takes into account the whole of that income, whereas this law is singling out a special income or special wage upon which to impose a special tax. The worst feature of all is the undermining of the Court of Arbitration, and the defiance of the decision of the court regarding the minimum wage upon which men and women shall live. This is a deliberate attack on the Arbitration Court; it is deliberate repudiation of the awards and agreements made under the arbitration law, and though it is camouflaged by the name of a tax, in essence it is a scheme to reduce wages. It is another instance of the long list of similar acts by the Government of repudiating their promises during the short period they have been in office. The Government are the last ones who should accuse anybody of repudiation. They themselves have repudiated so much that they should be accustomed to the word and acquainted with its full meaning.

The Premier: You need to be careful.

Mr. McCALLUM: They are cutting down wages, although the Premier in the early part of the session ridiculed a suggestion to that effect and said it was purely poli-

tical propaganda, and was backed by his supporters and by his organisation. It was on a par with the Premier's cry about finding work for all. When it was asked how he would find money to provide work, he would not hear of additional taxation; he said the community were already too heavily taxed. Yet within a few weeks he comes down to Parliament with this long list of taxation legislation, sits smugly in his seat, and refuses to give any information on it. He occupied three minutes in introducing a 12-clause Bill for which there was no precedent, and his speech contained nothing to inform the community of their liability under the measure. Is there any employee who could gather from the speech of the Premier just how the measure would affect him? Could any of the 10,000 wages men employed by the Government glean from the Premier's speech what the measure would mean? Is Parliament to be called upon to pass a law imposing heavy financial burdens on the people without their being advised of its effect?

Mr. Munsie: Very few members knew what it meant.

Mr. McCALLUM: How could we know? The Premier did not tell us.

The Premier: The member for Hannans had better stick to his bookmakers.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier threw the Bill at members without any explanation, and did not give the public an opportunity to understand its purport. I hope the Government will realise, from the comparisons I have made, that the Bill is altogether inequitable. The Government are not content with this measure; they have two barrels to their gun. They are approaching the Arbitration Court asking for an increase of hours and the abolition of district allowances. If this Bill becomes law and the Government gain the decision in the Arbitration Court, it will mean that a tradesman at Kalgoorlie receiving £360 per annum, plus £45 district allowance, will suffer a reduction of £22 15s. plus the district allowance, a total of £77 15s. per annum.

Mr. Marshall: He would not have known that if you had not told him.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier did not explain the effect of the measure, and the man in Kalgoorlie is entitled to know it be-

fore Parliament passes the Bill and before the taxation is imposed. It should not be left for members of the Opposition to dissect the Bill and explain its details. When the present Premier was Leader of the Opposition he complained if every detail of a Bill was not explained, and we made a special point to explain everything fully. But the Premier introduces four taxation Bills in less than 17 minutes, and this one occupied three minutes. What a great performance! I have given comparisons explaining how Government employees will be affected as compared with private employees. A man in private employ will not have to pay this tax. Does the member for Katanning realise that this measure will apply to the ganger on the track just as much as to the Under Secretary for Law? He could not learn that from the Premier's speech, but I am telling him now. A carpenter working for the Railway Department will be affected, but not a carpenter working for a private contractor.

Mr. Piesse: You will admit that very substantial reductions have been made by private employers.

Mr. McCALLUM: There have been no reductions. The Arbitration Court fixes the wages, and private employers cannot reduce them. This measure is framed in defiance of the Arbitration Court. What is the use of the hon. member talking like that?

Mr. Angelo: Will you assist the Government to get the Arbitration Court to make a reduction?

Mr. McCALLUM: I shall do nothing of the sort, and if the Government bring down some of the measures that I am told they have on the stocks, a lively reception is in store for them.

The Minister for Lands: To which are you referring?

Mr. McCALLUM: I suppose the Government have so many that they want to know which one. I refer to the one resulting from the deputation of employers who waited upon the Premier.

The Minister for Lands: That is this one.

Mr. McCALLUM: This one, too. I have given comparisons and shown the effect of the measure, and I hope that I have said sufficient to convince the Premier, if he is open to conviction, that he will be doing a grave injustice to all Government employees, the navy, the charwoman, the widow clean-

ing a school, nurses in hospitals, everybody right up to an Under Secretary. He is imposing this taxation on all in Government employment, while men in private employment will not be subject to it. I hope the Government will see their way to adopt a more equitable method. If additional money is required, let the taxation be spread over the community so that each one, no matter what his position, will contribute according to his means instead of singling out employees according to their vocation. Merely because a man is a member of Parliament or an employee of the Government, instead of being in business, is no justification for singling out his income for special taxation.

On motion by Mr. Richardson, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES 1930-31.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

Department of Police.—Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister.

Vote, Police £254,842:

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [5.25]: I have a few remarks to make regarding the action of the Police Department in a distant portion of the State. A number of men who have been going about their business in the ordinary way have been apprehended by the police for no reason at all. I have asked a series of questions of the Minister regarding the matter, but some of his replies were not complete. There was an incident at Billablong on the 10th October. Eleven men were going on their way through the district when they were apprehended by the police. There were about 25 police and a large number of cars, which it is estimated carried 160 special constables who had been sworn in to apprehend the men. It has been proved that no violence of any kind has been committed in that part of the State, and yet those men who were going on their way have been apprehended by the police. Some of the men say they were searched. If my information is correct, one or two experienced officers were successful in restraining the specials, who desired the ordinary police

to get out of the way and let them have a go at the men. I have mentioned that the numbers were 160 to 11, and it shows the type of men the Government have sworn in as specials. I asked the Minister, by way of question, who was paying for the special police work, and he replied that no payment had been made. If the department is not paying for the special police work, it would appear that the squatters are paying for it. If that is so, a large number of men have been sworn in to protect their own interests when there was no justification whatever for it. What would happen if a Labour Government yielded to pressure to appoint specials from their ranks to safeguard their interests? What a hue and cry there would be throughout the land! Let me quote a statement by the pastoralists—

The discontented element has been taken by surprise on so many occasions that it does not know what to expect. All names of travellers along the tracks have been taken by the police, the movements of everyone has been carefully tabled, and, with motors and aeroplanes, it has proved possible to locate suspects at any point.

Even my own brother, who was speaking to another party in Yalgoo one evening, was apprehended in the public highway by a special constable. That is not permissible under British law, but it actually happened. I understand he wrote a complaint to the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Angelo: Did he get any satisfaction?

Mr. HEGNEY: I do not know. Yesterday or to-day a number of men were arraigned before the Carnarvon court on a charge of disorderly conduct. The disorderly conduct consisted of their trying to dissuade men from taking work which they as shearers had refused to do under the Dethridge award. The shearers afterwards were stopped by a large number of police and by about 160 squatters, who influenced the other men to go with them. That is the disorderly conduct with which they were charged. In the Carnarvon court men have been fined heavily, the total of the penalties and costs being £240. If violence had been used, there would have been warrant for the swearing-in of special constables; but the ordinary police could have attended to ordinary breaches of the peace. Nearly all the squatters in the North-West have been sworn in as special constables—a grave step to take. The Government talk about econ-

omy, and I would point out to them that there was no need to engage an aeroplane at a cost of £275 to the State, or to obtain fleets of motor cars, for the transport of police.

Mr. Angelc: What about the Bullsbrook incident?

Mr. HEGNEY: It came out in court that that was merely an old dispute between two men. Throughout the Australian States it has been the experience that in the case of a shearers' strike what is done by those on strike is always magnified. That remark applies to the Bullsbrook incident. Legal men in such conditions are apt to show themselves vicious. It must be acknowledged that the fines imposed upon the shearers in the North-West are absolutely vicious, as is also the default, fixed at four months' imprisonment. I am not concerned with the merits of the dispute, but I am concerned that men travelling along the public highway on their business should be apprehended. It is that I protest against. The journal published on behalf of the pastoralists mentions that a motor truck had to be enclosed in the manner of a bird cage for the purpose of conveying men from one place to another. In point of fact, that bird-cage truck has been used by its owner for over 12 months in that form, and it has actually carried members of the shearers' union travelling to work on various stations since the inception of the present season. Yet there were statements in the pastoralists' journal that this truck had been enclosed to protect those in it from violence. That is an absolute falsehood, and I speak from accurate information. Some of the special constables were half drunk, and had firearms in their possession; and they wanted the police to get out of the way while they themselves had an open go. I enter an emphatic protest against these happenings, and hope the Minister for Police will curb the spirit of the specials.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.35]: I wish to refer to the activities of the police in curbing street betting. I do not deny that I am in a large measure responsible for police activities in this respect.

The Minister for Police: That has been hidden so far. Why do you put the show away?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not care who knows it. I would suggest to the Govern-

ment that they increase the activities of the police, and so obtain more revenue. There are some people who have no objection to street betting, but in my opinion Perth is a positive disgrace on Saturday afternoon.

The Minister for Police: On Monday morning too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no city in Australia, there is no city in the world that I know where one will see the same spectacle as is to be witnessed here on Saturday afternoons and race days. And it is gradually growing worse. I hope the police will increase their activities so as to suppress the evil. In front of nearly every barber's shop and of nearly every hotel in the city and suburbs one would think public meetings were being held; the footpath is absolutely blocked, and women and children walking along the footpath have almost to get out on the tram track, and incur the risk of being run over by motor traffic, because these gentry will not move off the footpath. It belongs to them. I object to a public thoroughfare being taken possession of by people who have not the decency to stand aside and let others proceed along the footpath. Moreover, women and children passing hear vile language from the crowd. It would be interesting if the Licenses Reduction Board were to inquire the extent to which licensees of hotels permit their premises to be used for betting purposes. I know that the police have not the power they require—they have asked for it for years—to suppress street betting entirely. Under the existing law they cannot bring the charges necessary to secure that end. I hope the Government will cause the activities of the police to be doubled and insist on the footpath being kept clear on Saturday afternoon in front of barbers' shops and hotels. The present state of affairs is a reflection upon the city. Strangers visiting Perth would wonder what was the matter on Saturday afternoons. Such sights are not to be witnessed in any other city known to me. I repeat, the evil is increasing. If the taxes on sport should become law, the evil is likely to double in intensity, because numbers of bettors will not go to the course, with resultant increase in what is known as starting price bookmaking. Evidently it is a profitable business, because notwithstanding heavy fines, £15 or £20 or £30, the starting price bookmakers

cheerfully go on with the game. The man who is fined this week is not caught next week, because magistrates have threatened to impose imprisonment in the case of a second or third conviction. In order to avoid that, a new man is put on periodically. The bookmaker employs a different man every time, so that it will be a first conviction and incidentally a lighter fine. Then the fine is paid and the game goes on. A number of supposed hairdressing shops are not hairdressing shops at all. They do not exist for legitimate trade. They are merely there for shop betting purposes.

The Minister for Police: They take the hair off their customers.

Mr. Angelo: They take the scalps off them.

Hon. P. COLLIER. The hairdressing is merely a blind. I hope the police will take effectual steps to prevent gangs from gathering on footpaths for betting purposes on every Saturday afternoon.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [5.40]: While the Leader of the Opposition wants to speed up police activities in one direction, I shall be glad if the Minister will quieten them down a little in another direction. I refer to the activities of the Fremantle police with regard to unfortunates sleeping out. That is no crime, but merely the effect of the Government not having provided these people with either work or shelter. For that reason they are compelled to sleep out. During the last few weeks they have been visited by the police on an average two or three times a week. The police come round and awaken them, and ask for names and addresses. Unhappily, most of the men sleeping out have been doing so for some weeks. I suggest that an officer who does not know a man the second time he sees him should not be in the force. Some of the men sleeping out have been awakened repeatedly by the same officer. If people have nowhere to lay their heads, they should be left alone at night. As it is, they are not even allowed to rest. I hope I shall not have to draw attention to the matter again. The men not being provided with either work or shelter, the police should allow them to get the most comfortable sleep they can, during the early hours of the morning.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.42]: Almost without exception the police receive the merited thanks of all honest citizens. There are two matters to which I desire to draw the Minister's attention, and in connection with which the police might perhaps render greater assistance. One is where strangers go into some other district and take part in concerts, dances and so on, carrying with them a few bottles of beer or other alcoholic liquor, and sometimes causing much annoyance and distress to those who are enjoying the evening. I presume the difficulty here is a lack of police to carry out the work. I venture to suggest that greater consideration might be given to the subject, particularly on Saturday nights when these functions are held in small centres. The evil has frequently occurred, and it is one which causes a good deal of pain. The other matter to which I desire to refer is the widespread thieving that goes on in orchard districts. Stealing from orchards is quite a habit of some boys on bicycles. To some extent they may be pardoned, bearing in mind—

The Minister for Police: Heredity.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, heredity. We may sympathise with the lads, but similar trouble arises in connection with motor cars passing through orchard districts. It is extremely difficult for the orchardists to keep the thieves out of the gardens. All manner of methods are adopted in order to secure access to the orchards, and sometimes quite a considerable quantity of fruit is stolen. I hope it will be found possible for the Police Department to provide an additional constable or two, so that orchards adjacent to main roads and other thoroughfares largely used at week-ends may be protected.

MR. H. W. MANN (Perth) [5.45]: I dare say they are in the metropolitan area, that is, between Fremantle and Midland Junction, probably 200 starting price bookmakers. The reason why they frequent the footpath is that in the event of a charge being laid it can only be laid under the municipal by-laws.

Hon. P. Collier: For obstructing the traffic.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Yes; whereas if they carried out their operations within premises

they could be charged under the Criminal Code for keeping betting houses, and they would be liable to a heavier fine or a term of imprisonment. Many conduct their betting operations in front of hotels, but if they carried them on inside the hotel premises, the licensee would be liable to a heavy penalty and probably the loss of his license. So to evade the heavier penalties these people carry on their betting on the footpath.

Hon. P. Collier: It should not be allowed.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I consider these people are a greater nuisance on the footpath than they would be inside premises. Knowing the extent of the operations of the starting-price bookmakers, it would be necessary to double the police force if it was desired to get them all. Four or five men only are engaged in that work, and it takes up practically all their time. As it is they are not able to raid more than two or three places in an afternoon. We know that year after year the position is growing worse.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a reflection on the city.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is a remunerative business to those engaged in it, and there are horse owners who take advantage of it by carrying out starting-price commissions.

Mr. Pantou: They go to Collie to do that.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Yes, I suppose a good many commissions go to Collie. Owners get a better price by betting in that way. The whole thing is much more involved than it appears to be on the surface. I suppose twice as much money changes hands through the starting-price shops as changes hands at the racecourse.

Mr. Pantou: But in the city there are a great number of very small bets.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Yes, but there are probably 180 to 200 of these people operating on a race day in the metropolitan area, and in addition there are betting shops all over the State. This class of betting is not by any means confined to the city. It is carried on at Collie, on the goldfields and in every agricultural town.

Mr. Munsie: But not one shop holds as much money as a bookmaker on the racecourse.

Mr. H. W. MANN: No, but I dare say the shops taken together do. If the Premier wants to get additional revenue, he should extend his taxation to the starting-price

bookmakers, and I guarantee he will get more from them than he expects to get from the bookmakers on the racecourses.

Mr. Marshall: But you will have to catch them first.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is proposed to tax the men who are operating under control. There is no control over the starting-price bookmakers, and as the Leader of the Opposition said, more money will pass through the hands of the starting-price bookmakers when the proposed tax on winning bets is passed, because all the small punters will not like the idea of having their winnings taxed. So they will patronise the man who pays no tax.

Mr. Munsie: Yes, you will be driving them to the starting-price bookmaker.

Hon. P. Collier: I know it requires special legislation.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [5.52]: The thanks of the Committee are due to the Leader of the Opposition for the emphatic manner in which he has voiced his protest against the operations of the starting-price bookmakers operating in the metropolitan area. I assure the hon. gentleman that many a wife and sister will thank him for bringing the matter forward. I know of numbers of cases where women and children have to go without the necessities of life because their wage-earners attend regularly the starting-price shops and spend their loose silver with the bookmakers.

Mr. Pantou: That applies to the Tots a good deal.

Mr. ANGELO: Many women have told me of the hardships they have been subjected to because their husbands have wasted money in betting. Therefore I urge the Government to bring in the necessary legislation to deal with the matter as it should be dealt with. What is going on now is a blot on the fair city of Perth. If people want to bet, why do they not go to the racecourse?

Mr. Willcock: They cannot afford it; it costs them 10s. 6d. to get in.

Mr. ANGELO: They can patronise the leger. But no, they prefer to patronise the starting-price bookmakers in the city and spend with them what money they have instead of passing the time with their families.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.54]: Any effort to totally abolish betting or gambling in general will be about as futile as an ordinary individual trying to fly to paradise.

Mr. Sampson: No one suggested that.

Hon. P. Collier: My remarks referred to the crowds collecting in the streets.

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. member complained about the number who congregated in the streets and caused an obstruction on the footway, which probably is correct. That particular objection, however, need not be applied to Perth only. I have been in the streets of Boulder on many occasions and seen the crowds congregated there. If Perth is any worse than Boulder in respect to street betting, then I shall have to go over Perth again. I am speaking from personal experience when I say that to go through the principal streets of Boulder and Kalgoorlie on a day when there are races in the Eastern States, it would be possible to raise the same objection in regard to those towns as has been raised in respect of Perth. Then on days when there is racing in Perth the position is equally bad, if not worse.

Mr. H. W. Mann: I told you that betting was done all over the State.

MR. MARSHALL: It is not very much trying to argue that this kind of thing does not apply to an industrial centre of any consequence. Unfortunately, or fortunately, the industrialist is more inclined to take a risk, in other words, gamble, than is the ordinary individual who follows a more remunerative form of work. It is a belief held by the ordinary worker that by speculating on a horse race, some day he will lift himself up to a position whereby he will be above work.

Mr. Panton: He is an optimist.

MR. MARSHALL: He is. Every such individual I have watched has not raised himself in the way he expected, but has gradually sank lower and lower. I do not know of one man who has ever made a rise by punting. I have nothing disrespectful to say about those who indulge in a little gambling, but if the starting-price book-maker is becoming a nuisance to the community, it is about time something was done to control him, because betting, in any form, will never be abolished by legislation, no matter how stringent it may be, or how

severe the penalty is made. If there is any desire to get rid of these objectionable crowded spots around our city, and even in the country and goldfields districts, it might be advisable for the State to take control of the matter. We have the spectacle of the Government condoning gambling. They have brought down a Bill in which they show a desire that magistrates should take no notice of the Gaming Act, in suing or prosecuting people for successful bets which have been made on the race-course. The Government have shut their eyes to the Act and ask Parliament to do the same.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the vote.

MR. MARSHALL: I am making comparisons and will not deviate from the subject matter of the vote. Here is one thing that has happened. I now suggest we should do likewise with the other thing, namely, legalise it. We should have registered shops and places where betting can take place, and where the scope can be confined within reasonable bounds to the satisfaction of the community. It is futile to attempt to stop gambling. For years we have been trying to do it. I can hold out no hope of any law being introduced that will ever stop it. Whilst racecourses exist, gambling will go on. People can also gamble off the racecourse. Under our Gaming Act they are just as much entitled to gamble off a racecourse as they are to gamble upon it. The section of the community which can afford to attend race meetings can do so and gamble under the very eyes of the law. Another type of person, who has a pound to spend but refuses to pay the half-crown railway fare and the 3s. admission, may also want to gamble. Having regard for the proposed legislation, I do not think the Government will be backing down very much on their principles if they register betting shops and other places, and take control of all forms of gambling. I am sorry that outside the eulogy which has been passed on the efficiency of the police force, very little has been said about the administrative side. Long ere this I thought a Bill would have been brought down to create a board for the purpose of providing a tribunal of appeal for those who were dissatisfied with their dismissal, the penalties inflicted upon them, and the general anomalies of the administration. Most branches of our Civil

Service have such a provision. The police force is one of the few organisations which come directly under departmental supervision, but which has no appeal board. I recollect the introduction of a Bill some years ago to provide for such a tribunal. An amendment was moved to include promotions, but that amendment brought about the defeat of the measure. I was sorry about that. I believe the Police Union were quite satisfied with the Bill as presented. They also accepted the amendment, believing it would be to their advantage and that the Bill would still be passed. Unfortunately for them, the Bill fell through. I say quite candidly that the Commissioner of Police is inclined to be autocratic in his methods, although he may be very exact in the work he performs as administrator. I believe, in fact, he is more or less despotic.

The Minister for Police: Who is?

Mr. MARSHALL: The Commissioner of Police. I recollect his attitude long before I darkened the door of this Chamber. It did not reflect well upon him at that time. I do not want to go over the whole of the business but will refer briefly to it. A sergeant under his supervision was dismissed because a minority in a certain district signed a petition for his removal. The incident which brought forth this petition occurred at a time when practically 90 per cent. of the people were being carried away by passion. There were all sorts of cries about winning the war, etc. Certain matters came before the public and divided them very materially. Most of the existing organisations were split in twain by the divergence of views that were entertained. I was at the meeting where the trouble occurred. I regret to say it was a very hostile assembly. Certain people were extremely antagonistic to one speaker, who is well known to the Chamber. The sergeant had with him two young constables. He was a man of discretion, and he knew that if he molested anyone, or exercised undue influence in the hall, it would be extremely difficult to say how the three of them would get out of it. He was wise to adopt the attitude he did. He attempted to pacify the crowd, and succeeded very well. Because that attitude did not suit a certain section of those present, they petitioned to have him removed. Notwithstanding that there was sent in a larger petition signed by far more people than

those who had signed the first one, asking that he should be retained in that centre, the officer was removed.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you suggest he was removed from the force?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but he was transferred.

Mr. H. W. Mann: He is still in the force.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but he has enjoyed a fair amount of suffering ever since.

The Minister for Railways: He has enjoyed it?

Mr. MARSHALL: He has experienced it. Members may laugh, but there are men in the force who are likely to remain in a hopeless position if the Commissioner continues to exercise his powers in the direction he does. When a person is free he can laugh at the misfortunes of others, but there are some who cannot afford to smile, and their cases should be presented in just the same way as the cases of others should be. This sergeant, who is a married man, had served a long time on the goldfields and in country districts. Later on, after a few years in the city, he was transferred to Derby.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Which meant promotion.

Mr. MARSHALL: It does not matter whether it meant promotion or not. The point is he did not want to go.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Another officer who was similarly transferred has begged to be allowed to stay.

Mr. MARSHALL: Members of the force who are not very servile are singled out for particular attention by the Commissioner. I will state another case. The Police Union exercises very little influence on the political side. Although the organisation contains 500 or 600 members, these are spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and they do not carry much weight when the time comes for candidates to stand for election.

Mr. Parker: It depends on what the majority is whether they exercise any influence or not.

Mr. MARSHALL: If there had been a few in the East Fremantle electorate, probably the hon. member would not be here. There was a difference of only 15 or 20 in the votes.

Mr. Parker: That is what I mean.

Hon. P. Collier: They could have arrested that number of the hon. member's supporters.

Mr. MARSHALL: We could have defeated the hon. member had we known that this accident would occur, but we did not expect it. This union has no political pull to speak of, and no candidate for political honours has any need to fear its numerical strength, because that strength is dissipated. The union requested the Commissioner to allow their principal executive officers, the president and vice-president, to remain in the area in which the organisation is most active, namely, in the city. I am not taking the present Minister to task because what I am about to relate took place under another administration. Sergeant Clement, against his will, was transferred to Roebourne notwithstanding the many appeals that were made to the Commissioner. Before the organisation had the right to go before the Arbitration Court, and the Commissioner had a free hand, everything was all right. When the union secured the privilege to go to the court, they had two executive officers policing the award very closely. Without doubt this caused the Commissioner a great deal of annoyance. His powers were more or less confined, and he had not the scope to enable him to put it over his officers as he had prior to their reaching the court. When Sergeant Clement reached Roebourne and discovered that he could, by application, get further emoluments—and, strange to relate, he got them—for other jobs he was doing there, he desired to remain. Later on we had the spectacle of one of the ablest officers of the Police Union, the ablest from the industrial point of view they are ever likely to get, namely, Sergeant McGowan, being transferred to another centre. The union did their best to have him retained in the metropolitan area, because he was the president of the organisation. I admit he was warned prior to the conference that preceded his transfer not to accept office any more, and that he was to be removed. He appealed to the Commissioner to know where and when he was going, but the Commissioner could not tell him. All the Commissioner knew at the time was that he had to go. Notwithstanding the expressed desire on the part of the organisation to retain

the sergeant in Perth, on account of the services he was rendering and because he was policing their award, he was sent away.

Mr. H. W. Mann: In compliance with the award, was it not necessary that he should go to another station in order to secure promotion?

Mr. MARSHALL: I will tell the hon. member all the circumstances. His presence was desired in Perth by his organisation. He did not want to leave. I admit the sergeant had no case so far as his services were concerned, for he was entitled to leave the city and to be transferred.

Mr. H. W. Mann: In his own interests.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but he was entitled to be left in Perth by virtue of the services he was rendering there.

Mr. H. W. Mann: He had to go in order to get promotion.

Mr. MARSHALL: That has nothing to do with the case. I know of one sergeant—

Mr. H. W. Mann: I have interested myself in these matters.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.50 p.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: Dealing further with the position of Sergeant McGowan, may I mention that he is one of the most competent officers in the force, and that as an executive officer of the Police Union he presented the case at the Arbitration Court. He was one of those who never ceased keeping the Commissioner up to the dotting of the i's and the crossing of the t's of the award.

Mr. H. W. Mann: If that is the best you can say about him, it is not very much.

Mr. MARSHALL: At the moment I am not referring to Sergeant McGowan as a police officer, but from the aspect of his conscientiousness. When the enforcement of the award was entrusted to him, he enforced it strictly; and that, I suggest, was the principal reason for his transfer. By virtue of his position in the Police Union, had to police the award. In doing what the law said his organisation authorised him to do, he found himself continually at loggerheads with the Commissioner of Police. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) desires to imply that Sergeant McGowan's transfer was made by the Commissioner so that the sergeant might receive promotion. Sergeant McGowan did not want the transfer. The

Minister will admit that a deputation from the organisation requested, with Sergeant McGowan's sanction, that the transfer should not be made.

Mr. H. W. Mann: I introduced the deputation, and the Commissioner said the transfer was being made from a desire to promote Sergeant McGowan.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is the kind of thing the Commissioner says when he wants to get his own way. If the member for Perth wants to know anything in regard to sergeants being assisted to obtain promotion, I can quote a case where a sergeant refused promotion because, had he accepted it, he would have lost emoluments far exceeding those that would have accrued to him from his promotion. That sergeant has been permitted to retain his original position for many years. I believe the perquisites coming to him by virtue of his position as bailiff, and from other incidentals allotted to the police in the district, amount to hundreds of pounds annually. That sergeant refused promotion, and was allowed to retain his station with its perquisites. That has been countenanced for years, and is still being countenanced at the present moment. Sergeant McGowan, on the other hand, did not wish to leave the city for two reasons. First and foremost, his wife is a very delicate woman. The sergeant's last transfer was granted by reason of the fact that his wife is practically an invalid, and that goldfields climatic conditions are most unsuitable to her. Secondly, Sergeant McGowan himself is anything but a healthy man. The last time I saw him at Meekatharra, he had so changed that, had I not known him to be at that centre, I would not have recognised him, though well acquainted with him. McGowan's health has declined materially since his removal to Meekatharra. While there he was summoned by wireless to Perth because his daughter and his wife were both very ill indeed. Upon his arrival in Perth he was particularly harassed, on this occasion not by the Commissioner but by the inspector, to know when he would leave on his return to Meekatharra. Although his daughter was not expected to live, and was on the danger list, he was packed off by the department on Monday night's train.

The Minister for Police: I do not think it was the case of his daughter.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot hear the Minister's interjection. No sooner had the

Commissioner got rid of Sergeant Clement and Sergeant McGowan, in my opinion two of the best officers in the force, than he began to attack the award. I want the Minister to understand that. In fact, the Commissioner coerced the remainder of the executive into accepting his dictates. There was some justification for the promotion of second or third class sergeants, and there were two constables, stationed in Perth I believe, who were due for promotion. However, the Commissioner distinctly told them that he could not consider the advisableness of promoting them unless they agreed to an alteration or amendment of the industrial agreement. He said that as the sergeant to be promoted would be in the liquor section, it would be necessary to promote someone possessing experience in that branch. Strange to relate, the efficiency of the force was not affected by the promotion of two other constables, without experience in the liquor branch, provided the Commissioner could break the agreement. So long as the Commissioner could get his way and enforce an amendment of the industrial agreement, it was possible to promote one or both of the constables. Without amendment of the agreement, however, the Commissioner could not promote either of them, but would have to promote a man from the liquor branch. In order to emphasise my opinion of the matter, I claim once again that the Commissioner's one objective is to upset the industrial standard of the men. I think it was in 1927 that the police obtained permission to approach the Arbitration Court for the purpose of having their industrial standard adjudicated upon; and that has been the position for four or five years. The Commissioner never found it necessary to complain about the industrial agreement until such time as there was a change in the political aspect of Western Australia. The industrial agreement, and the fact of the police being subject to Arbitration Court awards, was quite all right for several years. However, following upon the change of Government it became apparent to the Commissioner that to permit the men to remain in one organisation and subject to the Arbitration Court was against the discipline and efficiency of the force. This is the first time a reference to the

matter appears in the Commissioner's report. I will read it—

Arbitration Court.—It is imperative that an alteration of the law should be made as soon as possible, either by granting the inspectors and sergeants a separate union under the present Act, or by removing the police from its operation and placing them under a board on similar lines to the civil servants, teachers or railway officers.

That is the Commissioner's idea. Like every other person possessed of knowledge of organisations, the Commissioner knows that if an organisation is split into sections and one section is pitted against the other, there is little difficulty in securing all one wishes and enforcing one's will.

Mr. H. W. Mann: In the Railway Department there are two separate organisations.

Mr. MARSHALL: But the class of work there is entirely different. As a matter of police administration and police affairs generally, it cannot be argued that there is an iota of difference in the work done. It is only a matter of seniority in rank. A sergeant is called upon to do precisely the same work as a constable, and the same may be said even of a probationer. In the railway service, however, one man is an engine-driver, another is a fitter, another is a guard. Those three classes of work are entirely different, and there is no analogy between them. I do not think any hon. member will say that the police work of a first, second and third class sergeant and of ordinary constables and probationers varies in any appreciable degree. However, the Commissioner wants all his own way, and unless he gets it he is very annoyed. Strange to say, the Commissioner himself advocated an appeal board in one of his reports. No sooner did he discover the effects of the appointment of the temporary board, than he immediately abandoned his contention that an appeal board ought to be constituted. He had found that the results were opposed to his desires. The point is easily discernible. The Commissioner was losing his grip, and could not pander to those who pandered to him. From my own experience I know what the Commissioner does. I have quoted one case to-day. In my opinion it is time the Commissioner's autocracy was curbed. Instead of accepting complaints about lack of efficiency in the department he administers,

the House should hold an investigation and ascertain whether the Commissioner is as efficient an administrator as his officers are efficient police constables, sergeants, and inspectors.

Mr. Angelo: When statutory work has to be done, the Commissioner's lot is not a happy one.

Mr. MARSHALL: Power and influence are great things, provided they are not abused. I do not say that the powers conferred upon the Commissioner are in any way excessive, but I do say that he does not exercise those powers entirely with discretion. He makes a point of particularly favouring those who give him no trouble but appear to be very servile and subordinate to him. When it comes to an officer who stands up to his guns and asserts his rights, the Commissioner has a different system of dealing with him. Sergeant McGowan is transferred to Meekatharra notwithstanding the fact that his wife is ill in the city and that he is unable to take her with him. I have already mentioned that his little daughter was on the danger list when the department packed him off on the train. He little knew whether his daughter's life would be lost by the time he reached Meekatharra. That is not the point that causes me to believe the Commissioner is so despotic and autocratic in his desires. I am satisfied that his desire is to disunite and disorganise the whole of the Police Association. If he could do that, he would accomplish much, and would then be free to exercise his powers to suit his own ends. The Minister will be unwise if he does not scrutinise closely the position as it obtains to-day. I desire to handle one or two other specific cases. I shall not quote utterances in Parliament here many years ago, but those statements have equal force to-day. I want to enter my protest against any section of the community possessing the right to have police officers allocated to their service for their special edification and advantage. For many years we have had the spectacle of at least two police officers having been delegated to the work of a certain organisation that controls their actions. Unfortunately, two of our able officers lost their lives in that particular service. That body has the exclusive right to the attention of those officers, who look after its interests alone. If we

permit members of the force to be placed under the control of any individual or organisation, then we shall have no regard for fair play or justice. I admit that the organisation I refer to, to the service of which two or more officers have been allocated in the past, has been liberal in that it has contributed the greater proportion of the salaries of those officers.

The Minister for Police: Do not believe too much about that.

Mr. MARSHALL: That was what I was led to believe by the answers given to a series of questions I asked in this House. I gathered that the organisation had been in the habit of paying for the services of those officers who had been utilised for the specific work of that organisation.

The Minister for Police: The organisation does not utilise them at all.

Mr. MARSHALL: Perhaps not, but certain work is allotted to those police officers, which implies that they are at the service of that organisation.

The Minister for Police: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: I say yes. It is useless the Minister saying "No." Even if that organisation paid the full salaries of the officers, I should still oppose the practice. The principle of allowing members of our police force to be employed by an individual or a body means that under such a policy the rich will survive and the poor will go to the wall. But the poor have as much right as the rich to the services of police officers to protect their property.

The Minister for Police: And they have that protection.

Mr. MARSHALL: But the police officers I refer to are at the disposal of one body.

The Minister for Police: The necessity for their services is apparent constantly.

Mr. MARSHALL: Thieving in the city goes on constantly.

The Minister for Police: And we have a special staff to cope with thieving.

Mr. MARSHALL: Why should I not have the right to have a policeman on my premises, year in and year out?

The Minister for Police: Because you possess nothing worth stealing!

Mr. MARSHALL: There is a lot of truth in that.

Mr. Angelo: Perhaps you should have a policeman there to keep you in order.

Mr. MARSHALL: I protest against this practice which has been further ag-

gravated by its application to the pastoral industry. Those in authority have gone to the extent even of swearing in special constables, men who know nothing of the law, and who have probably been hanging round looking for work.

The Minister for Police: They can all learn.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is all very well, but those special constables have not been trained in police work. They have been simply picked up in a haphazard manner, sworn in as special constables and sent out to do work of which they have not even the slightest knowledge. If there is anything likely to incense men who are smarting under a grievance, it is opposition of that description. There is nothing calculated to arouse a riot or warfare more quickly than preparation for it. We have confirmation of that assertion in the international sphere. The more armament provided, and the greater preparation there is for war, the more surely will war break out. That applies equally to our police force. The action of the authorities in sending special constables and police officers to interfere with the freedom of men who have been doing no harm, and have created no trouble, must serve to incite men to fight. I should not say "fight," because the men I refer to have had no desire to fight. That sort of thing is calculated to cause trouble. I am strongly opposed to, and protest against, any special section of the community receiving treatment of that description. It is true that the Commissioner will at all times be prepared to approach people to whom he finds himself subordinate, and to them he will pander.

The Minister for Police: Not on your life!

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, he will. He will become subordinate and servile to them. Then, again, when he meets a person whom he has been inclined to treat in the past in an autocratic manner, but who has perhaps climbed a little higher up the political ladder, he can at once become servile to him, thus reversing his previous attitude. What I said in 1918 regarding the Commissioner, represents what I have always found him to be.

Mr. H. W. Mann: There may be some things of which you may accuse the Commissioner, but you cannot accuse him of being politically biased.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member is not in a position to judge what political bias

is. He belongs to a political party, and having been bigoted and biased all his life, he is naturally a poor judge of bias in connection with political matters, and cannot judge others impartially.

The Minister for Police: That would not apply to yourself, of course!

Mr. MARSHALL: No, it would not. I am glad the Minister has returned to sanity. Recently the Commissioner of Police framed a regulation that was presented to Parliament, and I have to plead guilty to allowing it to pass without scrutiny. That regulation authorised the Commissioner to compel drivers of taxis, buses, trucks and other motor vehicles to submit themselves for the purpose of a medical examination. That regulation also embodied the right of the Commissioner to nominate the medical practitioner to whom those individuals should go. I admit that after a newspaper controversy on the subject, the Commissioner has relaxed his attitude, but the argument I am advancing goes to show what the Commissioner will do when possessed of such powers. On one occasion he forced a very elderly driver—the individual's name was mentioned in the newspapers, but I knew it long before it was announced there—to submit himself for examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Commissioner himself. The driver asked the Commissioner whether he could not go to the Perth Hospital, but the Commissioner replied, "No, you must go to Dr. ————" The doctor referred to by the Commissioner is not an eye specialist, but a general practitioner. The driver went to that doctor who, for some unknown reason, sent him, after examination, to Dr. Paton, who examined him and sent the man back to the original doctor. The man was asked by the doctor if he had seen the certificate that Dr. Paton had sent along. The man replied in the negative, and the doctor then said to him, "Then you are in for a bad time. You have a growth on both eyes, and it will not be long before you are blind." The man said, "I have been driving a car for years in traffic, and I have never noticed anything wrong with my eyesight. I can see the traffic as well to-day as ever." The doctor replied, "Well, it does not matter what you think. That is the position regarding your eyes. You had better sell your car and get off the road, if you are not prepared to pay for an operation." The driver was so distressed that he decided to seek further advice, and

he saw Dr. Horan, who is an eye specialist. He did not say a word to that doctor about what the other medical men had said; he merely asked Dr. Horan to test his eyesight, and after the examination, the doctor gave him a certificate setting out that, so far as he could see, the man had perfect eyesight for one of his age. That is a nice state of affairs. There are a hundred or more of these drivers, and yet, under such a regulation the Commissioner of Police can force each one of them to go to a doctor nominated by the Commissioner himself. It is but fair and just that if the law compels a man to submit himself to a specific doctor for a medical examination, the individual concerned should not be called upon to pay for the examination. It should be free. I have a recollection of another case of a somewhat similar description, which the member for Perth (Mr. H. W. Mann) will remember, and concerning which he may interject if he likes. In the instance I have just been referring to, I will admit that after the matter was ventilated in the Press the Commissioner granted the right to any individual who was required to submit himself for medical examination, to choose the doctor to whom he would go.

Mr. H. W. Mann: If the men have to pay for their examination, they should be allowed to go to their own doctor.

Mr. MARSHALL: The men should not be put to that expense at all, if they are required to undergo the examination. I admit that a number of these men are elderly, and some have been driving ever since taxis were first on the roads. At the same time, they are still active and efficient men, old but fully competent at the wheel, despite their age. If the Commissioner is to be in a position to force these men to submit themselves for examination, then the examination carried out at Perth Hospital should be sufficient. The other case I was going to refer to will be remembered by the member for Perth. In 1916, when a certain Act of Parliament was passed, it became compulsory for women of an unfortunate class to submit themselves to a medical examination, and they were not permitted to follow their occupation unless they received a certificate of cleanliness from a specified doctor. At a later stage there was an inquiry into the methods adopted, and the report submitted was most scathing. The police

officers did not come out of it very well. I am under the impression that the subordinate officers were not responsible for anything that happened, but that there was some intrigue going on from the Commissioner downwards. I do not think Dr. Blanchard was in the joke. Although the Royal Commissioner who conducted the inquiry did not use the same language as I have, he inferred that there was some underhand work going on. The evidence submitted was so much at variance that it was not difficult for the Royal Commissioner to arrive at his decision. It is very strange that the reputations of the two principal men involved in these particular cases did not come out too well. And it is equally strange that both those men who protected their superior officer soon received promotion. A third officer who had not as much confidence as the others shot himself, committed suicide. Had he known that his superior officers were going to be so generous to those who had attempted to protect them, probably he would have survived and got his promotion. I do not think everything is well in the Police Department. We have many regulations submitted for our approval, but it is utterly impossible for members of the Chamber to give recognition to every regulation and by-law presented to us, as they are in hundreds at the opening of each session. So gabbled are they by the Ministers submitting them, that unless one's hearing is as keen as that of a bloodhound, he cannot grasp them all. When regulations are presented to the Chamber it should be the duty of one of the clerks to read them out and give members an opportunity to know what the officers of the departments propose to do.

Hon. P. Collier: All regulations are placed on the Table.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know they are, but I should like to ask the Leader of the Opposition how many of the regulations laid on the Table this session have been perused by him?

Hon. P. Collier: If I am interested in any, I read them.

Mr. MARSHALL: And if I am interested in certain regulations and know they are on the Table, I too read them. But one cannot follow all the regulations that Ministers lay on the Table.

The Minister for Police: They are always there.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, hundreds of them are there now. But how many of us know what regulations the Minister himself has placed on the Table? Yet he expects members to sit here and grasp the titles of the regulations as he gabbles them off. Several regulations that have passed this Chamber have subsequently been found to be particularly bad.

The Minister for Police: Not this session.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, the one compelling taxi drivers to come up for examination went through this session, as did also the regulation giving the Commissioner of Police power to nominate the doctor, just as his subordinate officers in 1916 sent all those women to the one doctor. It is strange that the administration of the Police Department should carry on in this fashion.

The Minister for Police: There is no connection between the two cases.

Mr. MARSHALL: The difference between the two is only one of degree. They are both bad. The one in 1916 was bad, and the present one is equally bad; yet both got through. The one was an Act, and the other a regulation. I repeat that I am satisfied the Police Department requires a strict investigation, a real good cleaning up by an impartial tribunal. I care not whether it be a select committee or a Royal Commission. On two occasions motions have been carried in this House for some form of inquiry. The previous Government, unfortunately, evaded the position by saying they would have appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the police force if there had been any direct charges levelled against the administration. That is a pretty straight out answer to any request for an inquiry. But there have been numerous complaints in this Chamber, and we have seen a great deal of newspaper controversy regarding the administration of the force, some of it implying pretty bad motives. So I think the time has arrived when we should have an inquiry. Here is another case: An officer who served many years in the Police Department was one of those who took pleasure in seeing to it that he got what was due to him in the way of emoluments and proper treatment from his superior officers. Because he fought for what he considered his due, he was victimised and dismissed. I handled his case here at the time of his

dismissal. He was charged with insubordination and disgraceful conduct. As a matter of fact, most of the things he said were said at a police conference and were more or less libellous in character. But nobody took him into open court and attacked him for what he had said; nobody brought him to justice in the open. However, an inquiry was conducted behind closed doors, and he lost his job, although the investigating body did not dismiss him. They merely fined him. But that did not suit the Commissioner of Police, who took him to task under another section in the Police Act and dismissed him. He then applied to the Commissioner of Police for his credentials, which ought to have been on the file, but to this day he has not received them. They have been burnt or otherwise destroyed. He has been thrown out of the police force and is compelled to look for a livelihood in other avocations. The very credentials on the strength of which he secured his job in the Police Department should have been the first papers on his file, along with his application for the job. But instead of being on the file they have vanished, and although he has tried to get credentials from various Ministers, he has not been successful. He appealed to the Leader of the Opposition, when Premier, and subsequently to his Minister, but none of his efforts to secure his credentials bore any fruit. I know there is a great divergence of opinion in regard to this man, but I have a lot of respect for him. He is outspoken and aggressive, just as I am, and is apt to say things on the spur of the moment which another person more discreet would not say. At a police conference he made certain allegations which he was prepared to prove had been given the opportunity. He wrote to the Leader of the Opposition, when Premier, but got no reply, and he wrote to his Minister but got no final reply. So, of course, he has had to search for work in other avocations, a man who is now up in years and consequently cannot serve an apprenticeship to any new job. All this, simply because he thought things in the administration of the police force were wrong, and attacked them in the proper place, namely, at the conference of his union. In consequence, he lost his job. He was a member of the force for many years.

If he could make those allegations against the administration of the police force, and if that administration were not prepared to prosecute him for it, they by their silence acquiesced in his accusations. I want the present Minister to take notice of that.

Mr. Angelo: Tell us what the public say about members of Parliament. You do not speak of that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I would not mind if they dealt with me separately, but they include me with you; that is the trouble. Under date 11th November, 1929, here is a letter which this ex-officer of the police force addressed to the Hon. P. Collier:—

Dear Sir,—As you are Premier of this State, I desire to bring under your notice a condition of affairs in connection with the administration of the Police Department of this State, that calls to heaven for investigation. In the first place I may as well inform you that, on three occasions, two of them last year, and one the previous year, motions were carried unanimously by the members of the Police Union urging the executive of that body to do all in its power to get a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the administration of the Police Department of this State; moreover at the same time the Legislative Council carried a motion affirming the desirability of appointing a judge of the Supreme Court a Royal Commissioner to inquire into the same subject. Going a little further back to 1924, Mr. Hughes, a member of your then Parliamentary Party, moved in the Legislative Assembly for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the administration of the Police Department. At that time you and the Minister for Police were in favour of an inquiry by that method.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not true. I was not in favour of any inquiry by a select committee.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, I am not making the accusation.

Hon. P. Collier: I am just saying the statement is not correct.

Mr. MARSHALL: Well, it is for the Leader of the Opposition to defend himself.

Hon. P. Collier: I am not defending myself.

The Minister for Police interjected.

Mr. MARSHALL: Why not make him prove it; what right has he to abuse our Police Department as being nothing more nor less than a set of criminals?

Mr. Angelo: The Statute of Limitations covers this.

Mr. MARSHALL: And will cover the hon. member at the next election. He was fairly pale about the gills last time.

Mr. Angelo: I battled through all right.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, you wriggled out, but there is a further opportunity ahead and probably the hon. member will find himself in the same position as the man who wrote these allegations, in that he will have some grievance, not against the Police Department but against the electors of Carnarvon. The letter continues—

At any rate an amendment was moved proposing that the inquiry be made by a Royal Commission. After debating both propositions and dividing on them, I find that according to the division lists 16 voted for the amendment and an entirely different 16 voted for the motion. We, therefore, have the spectacle of a total of 32 members in the House of 50 voting for an inquiry of one kind or the other and, by wonderful party tactics, having both defeated. Now, in order to impress you with the seriousness of the matter, I must further direct your attention to a speech you delivered in the Parliament of this State on the 7th November, 1918, and contained in "Hansard," pages 1013-1018 of that year.

Mr. Angelo: In 1918?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes; I remember the speech. It was one of the best ever made by the Leader of the Opposition. I find myself in a similar position to-night, but I have not the ability to deal with the subject that my Leader displayed.

The Minister for Police: That is a very unnecessary observation, anyhow.

Mr. MARSHALL: The letter continues—

I cannot refrain from saying that I have never seen such a trenchant denunciation, such a serious indictment laid against an individual or administration as is embodied in that speech, directed against the rotten and corrupt methods of the Commissioner of Police and the higher officials of that department. You describe them as being political partisans wrongfully using the police of this State to gain political advantages for the ruling power, and victimising others of a different political faith; as being horribly mean and contemptible, willing to lie on the doormat and allow you to walk over them (that is wipe your boots on them) when you were a Minister yourself on a past occasion. But, when they thought your party (Labour) was smashed for all time, you could not get civility from them. You emphasised the fact that you were not talking about the rank and file of the police force, because they never come into touch with Ministers, and you wound up your scathing denunciation by saying that "you had made a mental note of some of these men and if the time should ever come that you should ever be in a position to exercise influence in high places, you could assure hon. members there would be no room in the Public Service for sympathisers of that

character: "that men of independence were wanted that would stand up for what they believed to be just and right, and it was in that respect the Commissioner of Police had failed." Further on you say, still trouncing the police administration, "This country is putrid and corrupt as far as the manipulation of files and letters are concerned.

The credentials lodged with his application have not been returned to him, though he has attempted on several occasions to secure them. So that statement is true in so far as it concerns this gentleman, at any rate. The letter continues—

On pages 1031-1032 of "Hansard," 1918, you further vigorously condemned the Gold Stealing Staff for its actions, also the payment of part of its salary and bonuses by the Chamber of Mines. When the Police Vote came up for consideration the following year, 1919, another vigorous and justifiable attack was made by a number of the members of the Labour Party on the police administration. The remarks of Messrs. Luty and Troy on pages 1406-1407, "Hansard," 1919, seem to indicate that the enormity of hiring out of squads of police to private institutions was realised then. Had the names of persons and places been omitted from the speeches of yourself and the others who condemned the administration, I should have taken what you said as a description of the law of the Turk as administered to subject peoples in the Balkan States, or the laws as administered in some central or South American republic. Yet we have corruption in a more intense form to-day, and those responsible more arrogant than they were then, because they seem to enjoy an absolute immunity from interference. But what perplexes me, and I think others, is your failure to carry out your expressed intention of 1918. I have no doubt you can again wipe your boots on them now that you are Premier, but such soulless servility should not absolve them from their past and present sins. I have come to the conclusion that there must be some mighty influence or hidden hand restraining you. At any rate, whatever it is, I am willing to assist you to overcome it and do the State an immense public service. Some time ago one of your Ministers told me that the reason no Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the administration of the department was, that no one had made charges against it. You and your Ministers had at various stages of your political careers attacked it, and said enough to overwhelmingly demand making charges by anyone else superfluous. However, if that will bring about the result desired so many times and from so many quarters, I will make the necessary accusations now, and undertake to substantiate them under the following conditions:

Mr. H. W. Mann: Is not the writer a man who was put out of the service because he made false charges?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know, but perhaps the hon. member has seen a private file.

Mr. H. W. Mann: I do not know what you are reading.

Mr. MARSHALL: No report of the inquiry was published. It was held behind closed doors, and the proceedings have not been made public. If the hon. member says that that was the reason for his being dismissed, he has some inside information. I do not know whether the statement is right, but I am satisfied there was something in one or two of the cases. The conditions under which the writer undertook to substantiate his accusations were—

First: that a Judge of the Supreme Court be appointed a Royal Commission to make the investigation; second: that I have the right to call the witnesses I require and to appear before the Royal Commission to conduct my own case; third: that the whole proceedings shall be open to the Press and public.

So he seems to have nothing to hide, though there appeared to be something to hide when he was tried. The letter continues—

I think those conditions are eminently fair and, to guard against any reduction of them to a lower level, I might mention that I had an unpleasant experience with a stipendiary magistrate who, while drawing his stipend for sitting on the bench, owned a licensed house not far from the courthouse.

I do not know whether that is true, but if it is, it is as well for the public to know it. That can be no virtue in a magistrate to whom we look to dispense justice. If there was anything wrong with the licensed premises owned by him—

Mr. Angelo: Why, the State owns the pubs.

Mr. MARSHALL: The State takes the responsibility, but it does not try the cases as this man does. The letter continues—

If that magistrate was let out on hire to the Chamber of Mines with the Gold Stealing Staff of Police, the circle of iniquity would be complete. If such a magistrate was appointed a Royal Commission, I should decline to have anything to do with the inquiry. I don't think it is necessary for me to try to impress on you the necessity for keeping the police force clean, except that I might mention that it is one of the most important integral parts of our governmental system, and one of the fundamentals on which our social system rests. Seeing that it gets its authority and power from the State, it should be the servant of the people as a whole, distributed over the State in sufficient numbers

to meet the demands for its services—those services as readily available to the humblest as to the highest in the community—and not let out on hire to companies, combines and wealthy persons who pay for the services for certain of its members and play them off against the common people, as is done to-day.

That is true and we are doing it to-day, letting out police to special industries or organisations. Those points in his accusations are evidently correct. I can confirm both, so that thus far he is not very wide of the mark.

The Minister for Police: You will make a mess of that letter if you interpolate too much.

Mr. MARSHALL: The letter continues—

That practice is a deadly violation of the basic principles on which the police force was founded. When a police force shows symptoms of being corrupt, it should be the duty of every man in public life to do all in his power to purge it of its unclean elements. It would take me too long to relate all my experiences. Therefore I will start with the reign of Mr. Connell as Commissioner of Police and, in making charges against his administration, they will necessarily be short—providing only the groundwork for the Royal Commission's inquiry. The charges are as follows:—In 1912 the Commissioner of Police, without justification, was instrumental in preventing my appointment to the Police Benefit Fund Board—a position to which I was elected that year by the contributors as their representative—or was a party thereto.

Is that to be taken in silence? I do not know whether the writer circularised people outside of members of Parliament, but if he is allowed to do so without being called upon to substantiate his charges, it is a bad advertisement for the police force.

Mr. Sampson: You are giving it the advertisement.

Mr. MARSHALL: An inquiry is necessary and urgent. If the member for Swan differs, I cannot help it. The letter continues—

In August, 1912, the Commissioner of Police (R. Connell), without reason or justification, issued a defamatory document called an order, in which he asserted that the Perth police were a lot of loafers and lummoxes, loafing about the hotels, getting drink they refused to pay for, until their conduct had become a public scandal.

A regulation was issued implying as much. I saw the regulation several years ago.

The Minister for Police: Many years ago.

Mr. MARSHALL: The letter continues—

Or, alternatively, if there was any justification for his assertion, he failed to take effective measures to rid the police force of such low characters as he described, thereby condoning their bad behaviour. In 1914, R. Connell, Commissioner of Police, contrary to good public policy and precedent, gave to Police Inspector O'Halloran the right to publish a "Police Manual" for the inspector's personal gain—the said manual being published ostensibly for the edification of the police, and in which spirituous liquors are advertised.

I know that is true; I have seen the manual. I believe the inspector profited by the publication of the work. The liquor trade advertised extensively in it and I assume paid for the advertisements, and the profits or proceeds went to the inspector. I do not know whether the Minister condones that. If he does, I do not. The letter continues—

In 1915, certain members of the Perth police were engaged in the white slave traffic. A Royal Commission inquired into their actions. In the course of the inquiry, the Royal Commission found that the members of the force concerned wilfully gave false evidence in regard to the most material elements of the case. The Commissioner of Police not only failed to inflict any punishment on them for their misdeeds, but showed preference for some of the worst of them afterwards.

Another accusation which is correct. The letter continues—

In 1918, R. Connell, Commissioner of Police, without justification and in abuse of his authority, was instrumental in having a Royal Commission appointed to inquire whether or not I was a loyal subject of the King, and whether or not I was impartial in the discharge of my duties, such abuse of authority being responsible for the expenditure of large sums of public moneys.

The Minister has had some experience of Royal Commissions. I have never had the experience of undergoing inquiry by Royal Commission into what I may or may not have done, but I remember this case. I also remember when the Minister was subject to a lot of abuse and unfair criticism, on which there was a Royal Commission of inquiry. To the Minister's credit he emerged with flying colours.

The Minister for Police: That was only a circumstance in my life.

Mr. MARSHALL: The letter continues—

In 1919, or thereabouts, the Commissioner of Police made a certain contract with the then Government concerning his services,

highly advantageous to himself, which is without precedent and savours strongly of a sordid political deal.

I do not know much about that, although I believe the Commissioner made wonderful strides to his own advantage as regards his term of office. The letter continues—

In 1921-1922 hundreds of pounds were misappropriated from the Police Vote by the Commissioner of Police, or with his knowledge, the said sums finding their way into the pockets of high police officials, one large amount being given to a police inspector, who commanded armed police at an industrial dispute, as a reward for his services.

That is true. Inquiries were made regarding it during the debate on the Estimates, and we were told that that was why he was paid. I believe the amount was £100. The letter continues—

In 1923 the Commissioner of Police wrongfully published a regulation (such regulation having the force of law) in which he has interfered with the free functions of the licensing laws of this State by making it incumbent on all members of the force, regardless of rank, stationed within the railway system, to report all breaches of the Licensing Acts to the Licensing Inspector in Perth (O'Halloran) before taking action or prosecuting licensees under the said Acts.

There is no doubt about the truth of that statement. The licensee of a hotel in the metropolitan area at any rate may not be prosecuted unless the charge is first submitted to the inspector.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Have you any fault to find with that?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know, but it may open the door to wrong-doing. A policeman intelligently carrying out his duty might find himself interfered with by the inspector. That would not be right. If a member of the force is competent to catch a licensee breaking the law, he should be able to summons him, just as he could summons anyone else for an offence. He would not have to go to the inspector before issuing a summons against anyone else, but could engage one of my legal friends opposite and obtain costs.

Mr. Parker: That is where you and I agree.

Mr. MARSHALL: The statement goes on—

The seriousness of such interferences can only be fully realised when one becomes aware of the fact that nine-tenths of the people served by hotels live within the railway sys-

tem of this State; that the plebeian or common person found on licensed premises when a breach of the Act is committed may be prosecuted at once and without reference to O'Halloran; that O'Halloran has two sons at least, and their relatives and friends, who are licensees and controlling and representing large interests under the liquor laws and, if one of them were found to have committed an offence against the liquor laws, we should have the spectacle of the police in that locality applying to the father for permission to prosecute his own sons or their relatives.

That spectacle arose beyond doubt. The hon. member will see that in that case it is most undesirable, if a licensee is found committing a breach of the law, that the constable, sergeant or inspector who finds him doing so must first confer with the father before he can initiate proceedings. If there is no other fault in it that in itself is sufficient. The letter continues—

In 1928, and for several years previously, licensing liquor inspectors, under the command of Chief Licensing Inspector O'Halloran, have been in receipt of large sums of money annually from the whisky merchants of Australia, which can be regarded as nothing less than wholesale bribery.

That is correct. It is a nice state of affairs that officers of the liquor department, calling themselves branding inspectors, should receive honoraria annually from the whisky firms. This has previously been dealt with in this Chamber. Inspectors are employed by the liquor department to see that the liquor is up to the standard of the manufacturers, and the firms distributing such liquor give them honoraria every year.

The Minister for Police: A good type of man selling a good whisky.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am talking about our officers and their being in receipt of honoraria for merely doing their duty. The letter continues—

In 1925, the Commissioner of Police passed a regulation setting up an Appeal Board (without authority) containing provisions which are a disgrace to civilisation. The tribunal set up is advised that it may disregard every legal form in its proceedings and otherwise conduct matters without observing the laws of man or God. Such exhibitions demoralise the members of the force. In 1926, the Commissioner of Police made a regulation for the government of the Perth police barracks in which it is inferred that liquor had been sold on the premises, and that some of the occupants at any rate are at times infested with certain diseases. If there is any justification for the regulation then the whole institution wants overhauling.

I believe there was a regulation—I do not know whether it was as drastic as this—instructing the officers what to do and what not to do. I believe that had some relation to the matter contained in the paragraph. The letter continues—

For years the Commissioner of Police has let out on hire members of the force to mining and shipping companies, wealthy merchants and others who pay all or the major portion of their salaries and get all their services. This is the most vicious system a civilised community could adopt. It is the initiation of a practice whereby only those who can pay for their services will get them, and the wealthy will have an immense advantage over the poor.

I do not want to say anything more about that, for I have already entered my emphatic protest. This has already been going on for many years. Even now, there are new avenues in which these principles are being applied, and to which I take bitter exception. The letter continues—

On the 11th February, 1928, a squad of police, without sufficient justification, made a raid on certain portions of the city and arrested 76 persons for obstructing traffic.

I suppose the Leader of the Opposition will not be displeased over this. It will suit him. Probably there will be even greater interest taken in the matter when people have read the papers in the morning. The letter continues—

Recruits were largely used in the raid, and the raid was carried out in such a crude manner that one batch of 20 men arrested were dismissed when they appeared before the court, and 17 of these could not be identified by the constables who arrested them. All lost a lot of time in attending court, and were put to the expense of employing a solicitor, while the persons responsible for the outrage suffered no punishment.

It is not a very grave offence. It is hard for a man to identify a person out of a batch of 20 others. If the Minister for Police had happened to be one of them, he would have been conspicuous enough for identification purposes.

The Minister for Police: Is this the history of the police force since its inception?

Mr. MARSHALL: These are charges which have been levelled against the administration.

The Minister for Police: I have not heard any yet.

Mr. MARSHALL: One is a charge of misappropriation of money.

The Minister for Police: They are charges of smokeless powder without any shot.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am sorry the Minister is not more serious over the matter. For many years past we have had ample demonstration of the administration of the police force.

The Minister for Police: This man has been writing that stuff for 25 years.

Mr. MARSHALL: This may be his last.

Hon. P. Collier: It will not be his last unless he dies.

Mr. MARSHALL: Evidently the Leader of the Opposition knows him well.

Hon. P. Collier: My word, I do.

Mr. MARSHALL: The letter continues—

The administration of justice within the Police Department under the Commissioner of Police is atrocious. Last year I had a charge of disrespect of superior officers framed up against me on statements I made previously at a police conference and published in the "Police News," by the Commissioner of Police and Inspector O'Halloran.

That is a matter I have dealt with. I disapprove of the method adopted in that case. The officer should have been tried in open court, or given some chance to ventilate his grievance before the public. He was not permitted to do so. Further on the letter says—

On entering the police service in 1895, I furnished the department with a number of excellent testimonials. Two years later I applied for their return and was refused. When removed from the force I applied to Commissioner Connell for them, but was ignored. I then applied to the Minister and was told they could not be found and must have been destroyed for want of accommodation. I asked for more particulars, but could get none. I have no hesitation in saying that I believe they were wilfully and maliciously destroyed. Few, if any, members of the force have any respect for the present system of promotion in the force. Two of the three persons who set the examination are members of the force, and the same persons judge the results. Such a system could be easily corrupted. Moreover, men have been promoted whom the force does not believe passed the examination set, and preference is shown for men with a bad past.

Hon. P. Collier: I suppose there would be no corruption or attempted political influence from the fact that whilst I held office that gentleman told me he was a sup-

porter of the party and asked me to sack the Commissioner of Police and appoint him to the position.

Mr. MARSHALL: It might have been a good change.

Hon. P. Collier: That is why this stuff has been written.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not particularly concerned about that.

Mr. H. W. Mann: It shows the type of man he is.

Mr. MARSHALL: I know that the last accusation is right.

Hon. P. Collier: He asked me to sack the Commissioner, and make him Commissioner.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is a matter between the Leader of the Opposition and the officer himself. The letter continues—

Police Union officials, who have taken an active part in union matters on behalf of their comrades, have been sent to different parts of the State by the Commissioner so that the union might be weakened.

At the outset of my speech I mentioned the case of an unfortunate individual who had had a severe time from the Commissioner on account of his political opinions. There was another motive behind the action of the Commissioner in that he knew this man had certain political convictions, and attempted to destroy them. The letter continues—

Should you appoint a Royal Commission, I hope you will leave the scope of the inquiry open so as to embrace anything that may arise relevant to the administration of the department. I know you will be advised if you consult officialdom to refuse an inquiry because there is a deadly fear in that quarter. You will be told that I previously made charges against ex-Commissioner Fred Hare and withdrew them. I certainly wrote a report in 1911 on Mr. Hare's administration of the department, mainly so far as it concerned myself. I sent it to him through the usual departmental channels. If there was anything untrue or wrong in what I said it was open to him to charge me with making false statements or insubordination, but he did neither. Contrary to practice, he sent my report to the Crown Solicitor, and the Crown Solicitor, finding Hare in a terrible mess, advised him not to take any action against me. The file was then sent on to Colonial Secretary Drew, a member of the Scaddan Government and, after considering it, Scaddan's Government wired to me at Norseman to come to Perth and re-state my charges against Hare. I came to Perth in response to that wire in December, 1911, and, as soon as possible afterwards, I put the charges in a con-

crete form, some of which were of a very serious nature. I then waited for weeks for the Government to appoint someone to hear the case. After a long wait, the Minister told me that the Government had decided to appoint a board of three to try the case. I was to nominate one member of it, Hare one, and the Government would appoint a chairman. I pointed out at the time that it was a crude method of administering justice appointing partisans to a bench, but, to comply, I nominated Senator E. Needham. Hare refused to nominate anyone, the Government appointed no one. On the 28th February, 1912, Mr. Fred Hare's retirement from the Commissionership of Police appeared in the "West Australian." It was not until after that announcement had appeared in the press, and finding myself tricked by the Government, and with the object of the inquiry destroyed and sickened by the long wait, that I asked to be allowed to withdraw and return home. These facts cannot be denied.

It is evident to me, judging by the attitude of the Minister, that very little notice will be taken of this matter. I am not convinced that things are as they should be in the Police Force. I wish specially to stress the transfer of Sergeant McGowan. His position as president of the union has now been taken by another officer. Having regard for the domestic disadvantages connected with his home, I consider the Minister should effect his return to a station nearer Perth. The sergeant did not apply to be transferred to Meekatharra. There were three other applications for the post, but the Commissioner refused to accept any of them, and forced the sergeant to take the position. He is a very sick man. If the Minister had been available when he came through from Meekatharra with me he could have seen McGowan who is much changed physically. I could scarcely believe that a man could fall away to such an extent. His wife is practically an invalid, and cannot be moved to Meekatharra. He must therefore live apart from his home with the dread of the worst to come hanging over his head. He is 600 miles from his home and there are only two trains a week he can travel by. There is no aeroplane service on which he could fall back. This places a severe responsibility upon him. The position has been aggravated by the fact that his daughter has been anything but well. Whatever else the Minister may do in connection with the administration of the police force, I appeal to him to bring the sergeant nearer to Perth, if he cannot bring him right into the city, so that he may have some hope of getting to his wife if the occasion arises. It should also be possible for him to receive

medical attention, if necessary. It is unfair to place this handicap upon him in the circumstances. I contend he was shifted solely because he was an active worker in the interests of the union. In his position he was up against the Commissioner nearly all the time, and he had very little peace at the hands of that officer on that account. I would make a final appeal to the Minister to move the sergeant nearer to Perth in order that he may reach the city expeditiously if the occasion should demand. If he receives important news from home on a Wednesday he cannot leave Meekatharra until the following night, and then cannot reach Perth until the Tuesday, unless he is able to hire an aeroplane. In view of the position at his home, the Minister is warranted in doing his best to bring this efficient and reliable officer nearer to Perth.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [8.45]: I shall not enter into the history of the police force, or make any complaints; but I consider that I am justified in bringing one matter under the Minister's notice. I refer to an action of the Licenses Reduction Board. It may be thought I am wandering in my remarks, but I want the Minister to state whether he is aware that in various country towns, preliminary to the annual inspections that precede renewal of licenses, the police are going around with a blue paper containing all sorts of queries and interrogations addressed to licensees. Country licensees are called upon to divulge what they pay by way of ingoing, what their rates and taxes amount to, what is the currency of the lease, and all sorts of confidential matters. I do not know that there is authority for this proceeding under the Licensing Act. The police are making all sorts of inquisitorial demands which I consider they have no right to make. Has that proceeding the Minister's approval? Never before in the history of Western Australia has such a thing been done. Indeed, I fancy this is the only year in which it has been done. At whose dictation is it being done? Surely business men are entitled to the secrecy of their private business affairs. People who have protested have been told that the information given is regarded as private and confidential. How do we know it is kept so? The practice is most pernicious. I do not know whether the Minister is aware that it exists. I suggest that he should nip it in the bud.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [8.47]: As regards the wants of one's constituents, this is not the time to stress such things; otherwise I might have something to say with regard to lack of police protection in a town of my electorate, Tammin. It is well known to all of us that there has been a large influx of the criminal classes not only from the Eastern States, but also from Great Britain and other parts of the world. In various places near the city we have heard of gunplay, of revolvers being flourished, of people being told to hand out what they have. To-day's "Daily News" contains a reference to the difficulty of obtaining guns and revolvers in Sydney as compared with Perth, where it is a perfectly easy matter for anyone to become possessed of firearms. The "Daily News" states—

To buy a gun in Sydney one must pay for the weapon, obtain the receipt, and then take out a gun license before the revolver is handed over. Particulars of the revolver are noted on the license, which is issued only after the applicant has satisfied a police officer that his intentions are honourable. Only when this license is shown to the dealer is the weapon handed over.

The Commissioner of Police has again voiced a complaint that he does not possess the power to handle this matter of firearms in a manner satisfactory to the community as a whole. The "Daily News" quotes the following from the Commissioner's report—

Legislation in regard to the carrying of firearms is long overdue, and recent happenings make it imperative that the law relating to the control of dangerous weapons be brought up to date. At present anyone from a child upward can carry a firearm, whether it be a concealable weapon or not, outside five miles of the boundaries of a municipality, and events have proved that such practices are not only dangerous to others, but often to the party in possession of the weapon. Legislation to deal with this matter has been drafted, and it is trusted that an early opportunity will be taken of placing same on the statute-book.

The present Minister for Police has in a former session brought forward a measure dealing with this aspect, but the Bill was defeated. I am sure that if legislation were introduced now, it would have a favourable reception. I invite the Minister's attention to the subject.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [8.51]: It is usually the unexpected that happens. I was quite convinced, when these Estimates were presented to the Committee, that they would go through with little or no discussion. I had forgotten, however, that the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) sets himself up as the champion of all who have anything to complain about either in regard to the Commissioner of Police or in regard to the administration of the police force generally. It has become an annual with the hon. member. He went back to one ancient source of complaints—I refer to ex-Constable Campbell. The memory of the Leader of the Opposition—fortunately it requires a good memory to go back to the period when ex-Constable Campbell first began his tirade against the Commissioner—will enable him to recall the fact that ex-Constable Campbell endeavoured to use for his own purposes the circumstance that he was a supporter of a certain political party. Now the ex-constable asserts that the Commissioner has no right to have any political opinions, although he was anxious to displace the Commissioner on the ground of his having political opinions of a definite nature. If the member for Murchison cannot bring along any better charges against the Commissioner than those of ex-Constable Campbell, I assure the hon. member there is no likelihood of an inquiry of any nature into the police force. That long letter brought to my recollection a little incident in my previous Ministerial career, when a certain officer was asked to make a report. I am referring to a highly respected officer; the Leader of the Opposition knows whom I mean. Unfortunately that officer could not dictate his minutes, but wrote them out and then handed them to a typist. On the occasion in question the officer sent in half a dozen foolscap pages, well written. The document reached me with a short minute by the under secretary, "The Hon. Minister. Report and recommendation by ——— herewith, in which I concur." I added, "And so do I. I read as much of the report as you did." I have read the letter referred to by the member for Murchison, and have forgotten all about it, as I have forgotten all about the officer's re-

port and recommendation. I do not remember anything at all about the letter.

Hon. P. Collier: That is all it deserves.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The letter may be described as "A Short History of the Police Force in Our Own Time." Turning now to more serious matters which have been mentioned, I agree entirely with the Leader of the Opposition that street betting is a subject that does not do us credit. I wish to give an assurance that I have issued no fresh instructions to the Commissioner on that subject. The Commissioner came to see me shortly after I assumed office as Minister for Police, and asked whether I agreed with my predecessor that the police should pursue the policy of trying to break down this rather serious practice of street betting, particularly in Perth. I told him that he had my approval for the continuance of his department's efforts. I admit at once that the existing law is not sufficient for the purpose. I hope that later—not this session, perhaps next session—we shall be able to review the whole question of the gaming laws, and then to deal with the question of street betting as well as some other questions which in my opinion require attention. There are too many avenues for gambling in an undesirable way. The man who wants to bet on horse-racing has any amount of opportunities to do so by attending the recognised quarters away from the city. In the city itself he has no right to bet. If there is not sufficient opportunity for betting in the recognised quarters, then the time has arrived when gambling of any nature might well be given up altogether. But I hold that we ought to legislate with a view to controlling gambling, especially in the public streets. South Australia proposes—I do not know whether the effort will succeed—to legalise shop betting outside the metropolitan area, taking the view that people in the metropolis who want to bet have opportunities on the racecourse, but that the man who lives in a small town has only the opportunity of betting in shops. Whether the South Australian proposal is desirable or not, I am not prepared to express an opinion.

Mr. H. W. Mann: In England shop betting is legalised and taxed.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That is so. The member for Murchison made some

references to the establishment of special police staffs for the purpose of dealing with special matters. He had in mind, I gathered, the gold-stealing staff in Kalgoorlie. The members of that staff are in no way under the direction of the Chamber of Mines. They are appointed by the Commissioner, their work is allocated to them by the Commissioner or one of the superior officers of the department, and they are responsible to the Commissioner and to no one else. The arrangement made with the Chamber of Mines, representing the principal mines on the Golden Mile, was that they should bear the cost of the special staff, seeing they wanted their services; but control of the movements of the staff and the discipline of the staff are matters that remain entirely with the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Marshall: That is contrary to a statement made by Inspector Purdue to the Press when Inspector Walsh and Sergeant Pitman were murdered. He then said that they had nothing whatever to do with the Police Department but were entirely the servants of the Chamber of Mines.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: That is true as regards the particular investigations those officers had to make. However, the members of the gold-stealing staff are part of the police force, just as Inspector Purdue is, and equally subject to the Commissioner.

Mr. Marshall: Well, that was the statement made then.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The violent attack made on the Commissioner is not, in my opinion, to the credit of the hon. member. After all, it was of a highly personal nature. The hon. member may differ from the Commissioner as to the administration of the Police Department. At times we all differ regarding the administration of various departments. I suppose there is no departmental administration to be found that is absolutely perfect. However, while it is the province of members to criticise departmental administration, it is not just or fair or reasonable for an hon. member to adopt the attitude of the member for Murchison and make an attack on the Commissioner as though he were a man trying to assume the position of being all-powerful. As a matter of fact, the Commissioner has been and still is subject to

the control of the Minister, who in turn is subject to criticism by members of this Chamber. I suppose my predecessors will say, and rightly say, that there were times when they disagreed with the attitude of the Commissioner. There have been times when my predecessors issued instructions in directions where I would not have issued them. Probably there were occasions when I gave the Commissioner instructions with which my predecessors would not agree. But that would not warrant either me or my predecessors, having a knowledge of administrative matters, in making a direct and brutal attack upon the Commissioner. Let me tell hon. members that probably no head of a police administration in the British Empire is placed in a more difficult position than is our Commissioner of Police. Even the Commissioner's secretary, now an inspector of the Police Department, is a member of the union by which all matters affecting the service are discussed in camera, the Commissioner being left stranded high and dry. That is a state of affairs which exists in no other part of the Government Service. With regard to the railway service, the hon. member referred to the work performed by officers as against that carried out by engine-drivers and firemen. No Government so far have permitted the Commissioner of Railways to be stranded in that way. We have held the view all along that officers who are in the position of his managers, and should be in his confidence, should be able to confer with him on all matters relating to the welfare of those engaged in that particular department. On the other hand, the Commissioner of Police has no one apart from members of the Police Union to help him in his work. He has no one to assist him except members of the union who, as such, are in a position to criticise him at the executive meetings of the union and at their annual conferences. It is quite possible for a constable to appear in the Arbitration Court and cross-examine his inspectors, the chief inspector, or even the Commissioner himself regarding matters affecting the discipline and welfare of the police force. To that condition of affairs the Commissioner is entitled to draw attention, and I am convinced that the time has arrived when we should separate those in charge of the work of the department from the men themselves who have to be under the control of someone. The work

of administering the Police Department cannot be left safely to any one man, much as I respect and have regard for the man who is occupying the position of Commissioner at the moment. It is not right that he should have no officer except members of the union about him, and that he should be thus stranded. There is a big difference between that section of the police officers who have to allot duties, and see that those duties are performed properly by the constables, and the section comprising the constables who have to carry out those duties. It is not fair that inspectors and sergeants, who may have to see that instructions are carried out, should be in a position to be carpented and criticised or cross-examined at union meetings because of some instructions they may have given to constables. I have as great a knowledge of unions as the member for Murchison, or anyone else in this Chamber. I know that it is not so long since that it was not a question of an employer or a manager of a business being in a union, but that the unions themselves decided that once a member secured a position as a manager or became an employer, that individual had to cease to be a member of his union. To-day we are in a totally different position regarding the police force. The decision of the Police Union was that, apart from the Commissioner himself, every member of the force had to belong to the union. That is against all the recognised principles of unionism. There is no reason why a manager should sit side by side with a member of a union, not on questions relating to industrial conditions, but to discuss conditions under which they shall work. I agree entirely with the Commissioner that while the rest of the force, other than constables, should be able to consider their welfare, they should be able to deal with such questions apart from the constables themselves. There is room for a separate organisation for those men, and in other countries separate organisations are permitted in the force. There is no reason why the constables should not have their own organisation, and the other higher officials a separate organisation altogether. But all should not be members of the one organisation.

Mr. Willecock: In actual practice, there has been no serious cause for complaint.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I doubt that. I believe the Commissioner of Police would not have lodged any complaint unless

he considered some harm had attached to the present position.

Mr. Willcock: But not as a general principle.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I think the Commissioner has in mind things that have happened that he considers undesirable. I believe he has in mind the fact that inspectors and sergeants are responsible for the conduct of constables, but who, being members of the one union, are subject to criticism and cross-examination at union meetings, because of instructions they may have issued in the course of their duty.

Mr. Willcock: Still, I think the general principle is all right.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Well, I have expressed my view. While I am still prepared to protect each section of the police force against the Commissioner or anyone else, by allowing them to have their separate organisations, I will help them to that extent. But I will not do anything that will have the effect of breaking up their organisations, and leaving the men themselves in a worse position than they have been in the past. I have done my part as Minister, as my predecessors have done, to protect the police force, and I am not prepared to drop them because I believe an evil has crept into the position through all the police officers having been forced into one union. After all, the Commissioner is merely human. It is not possible for him to be familiar with all that happens in connection with a police force the members of which are scattered throughout the whole State. The Commissioner must depend upon his subordinate officers and men for advice and information from outback centres. Yet some hon. members would imagine that everything that is done that, in their opinion, calls for criticism, is a scandal and is due solely to the action of the Commissioner. I deny that. Unquestionably, the present Commissioner of Police has acted under successive Governments and not one Government can charge him with preferential treatment. I believe that each Government can say honestly that he has acted impartially. If there is one Government officer who can say honestly that he has no political feelings at all, I am convinced it is the Commissioner of Police himself. No Government could charge him with having political leanings, and I am sure my predecessor in office will endorse that remark. I do not believe any suggestion to

the contrary. I believe he has acted in an absolutely disinterested and impartial manner.

Mr. Willcock: He has been most loyal in carrying out the policy of Governments.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: There is no doubt about that. He has been fair regarding his attitude to those under his control. The member for Middle Swan (Mr. Hegney) introduced another question. He dealt with the attitude of the police force in connection with the industrial trouble largely centred in the Murchison district. The Police Act makes provision for the swearing in of special constables. They are not sworn in except by a magistrate, and not until the magistrate himself is satisfied that such a course is warranted. The Commissioner of Police does not swear in special constables, but once they are sworn in those men are subject to the discipline of the Commissioner. If the hon. member can produce any evidence that the special constables have exceeded their duty, I will have an investigation made, and the Commissioner himself will investigate the matter, too. I do not think they could have acted as suggested, particularly if the members of the regular police force were present. It is possible they may have asked the constables to get out of the road and let them have a free run, but I do not think that if police officers themselves were present, they would have permitted any such thing. I do not propose to concern myself about the rights or wrongs of the present dispute. I propose to adopt the attitude that I have always followed, and that is to see that, without fear or favour, the Commissioner of Police and his officers carry out their duties. So long as I am Minister, and remain a member of the Government, I shall see to it that the Commissioner administers his duty without fear or favour, and that anyone who desires to carry on his lawful occupation shall be permitted to do so irrespective of the strength of those opposed to him. I declare emphatically that no law-abiding citizen need fear the police force of Western Australia. On the other hand, men who deliberately set themselves out to break the law, to destroy property and perhaps even life itself, will find the Commissioner, with my approval and backing, setting about to bring such people to justice at the earliest possible moment, and providing all the force necessary to prevent trouble.

Mr. Willcock: But such a condition of affairs does not exist in the present instance.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I would be much more satisfied if I could think along the lines indicated by the hon. member. I am not satisfied that such conditions have not existed, or would not have existed had not prompt and effective measures been undertaken at once.

Mr. Willcock: Oh, no!

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I have heard that story before. I remember years ago when I got "hark from the tomb" in this Chamber because of matters arising out of a trouble at Kalgoorlie. On that occasion we took such prompt action that no one lost a hair of his head, no one was injured, and the police had control of the situation promptly. Exactly the same result followed upon the measures adopted in connection with the trouble on the Esplanade some years ago. We took precautionary steps to prevent trouble arising. On the other hand, when there was trouble at Fremantle during the hon. member's regime, 50 per cent. of the police force were disabled before they were permitted to defend their own lives.

Mr. Willcock: That is quite wrong.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: It is not wrong. I hold the view that, although the police constables wear a uniform, they are still entitled to protect themselves.

Mr. McCallum: There was not a single policeman disabled on that occasion.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: What!

Mr. McCallum: Not a single one.

Mr. Willcock: There were one or two who had slight injuries.

Mr. Parker: What about poor Paterson?

Mr. McCallum: That was years before.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The case I refer to was in connection with the seamen's strike.

Mr. McCallum: Yes, and not a single policeman was disabled.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am quoting the Commissioner's own words. He said—

In addition, there were the two Fremantle troubles, and with regard to the latter one, namely, the seamen's strike, the police showed the utmost forbearance and it was not until some 50 per cent. of their number were casualties that they dispersed the crowd.

Mr. McCallum: What do you call casualties?

Mr. Griffiths: Nearly dead!

Mr. McCallum: Not one policeman was hit with a stone.

The Minister for Lands: One had to go to the Fremantle Hospital.

Mr. McCallum: We did not support that sort of thing.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I did not say that you did.

Mr. McCallum: You have exaggerated the position.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I am merely stating what happened. The hon. member knows quite well what happened. Before the police were permitted to disperse the crowd of law-breakers, a 5-ton truck of coal was emptied at the policemen.

Mr. McCallum: I never heard of that.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Then you hear of it now.

Mr. McCallum: It is not correct.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Of course it is. Only those that set out to break the law of the land need fear the police force of this State.

Mr. McCallum: The Minister should not exaggerate.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: Perhaps the hon. member will be aware of something obviously in power, there was trouble at Fremantle and at that time it was not safe for certain constables on duty at Fremantle to be found alone in the street.

Mr. Willcock: That was years ago.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I took the stand then, and I take it now, that men in uniform who stand for the maintenance of peace and for the protection of the public are entitled to exactly the same protection as they accord others. I take the stand that these men should be given an opportunity to protect themselves in the face of attacks such as I have referred to, and in that particular instance, when we armed the police constables, not another man was struck with a bottle. Before then the constables were regarded as easy prey, seeing that they were unarmed, and, in consequence, night after night constables were knocked down with bottles. Once they were armed so that they could protect themselves, there was peace in Fremantle. Exactly the same thing applies now and we are entitled to give protection to those who desire to carry out their lawful occupations.

Mr. Willcock: You are discussing two distinct things.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: No, I have been dealing with the one matter.

Mr. Willecock: You have brought up things that occurred years ago.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: We are entitled to use the police force for the purpose of protecting life, to assure peace in the community and for the protection of property.

Mr. Willecock: Everyone will subscribe to that.

Mr. H. W. Mann: The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) deserved credit for the part he played years ago.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: The member for South Fremantle had a free hand in the criticism indulged in in this Chamber because we took effective steps to protect life and limb.

Mr. McCallum: I tell you this, and the member for Perth (Mr. H. W. Mann) can back me up, that it was not the police that secured peace, but it was those who were with me that were responsible.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That is correct.

Mr. McCallum: It was not the police at all. The Premier knows that, too.

Mr. H. W. Mann: That was to the hon. member's credit.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: I have not said otherwise. At the same time, will the member for South Fremantle support the member for Middle Swan in his suggestion that we should withdraw the police force from what we know is an area in which there are possibilities, of which we must take cognizance?

Mr. Willecock: Possibilities! Newspaper possibilities.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: If there is no likelihood of trouble arising, no one will suffer in the process. But if the Commissioner is satisfied from reports received that there are possibilities, and if he can avert serious loss of life and property and general disruption, what sort of a charge would be hurled at him if he did not take precautionary measures?

Mr. Willecock: The Commissioner has lost his nerve during the last six months.

The MINISTER FOR POLICE: No, his nerves are as good as ever they were. We are told that there is no need to worry about the position on the Murchison. The hon. member mentioned the Bullsbrook affair. Would he suggest that when a man is lying in hospital and for a time the doc-

tors are not sure that he will not lose his life, it is merely the result of a good humoured dispute between two old friends? And it must be remembered that those men who were attacked were proceeding to work under an award granted by the Arbitration Court, and were therefore following a lawful occupation. They were entitled to get the protection made available at the expense of the community. I say definitely that the Commissioner acted in accordance with what is understood to be the proper policy of using the police force whenever he is satisfied it is necessary for the purpose of protecting life and property. On some other matters mentioned I will have to make inquiries, for I do not know the details. The member for Nelson made reference to a blue paper being carried about by a constable, and certain questions being asked of the licensee of an hotel. I do not know anything about that. I do not know why it was done or how it was prompted, but I will inquire into it, and if it is not in compliance with the law it will not continue. That is all I need say, except that the Estimates are framed largely on the basis of those of last year and that I believe the police force is doing very excellent work.

Item, Inspectors, £5,086:

Mr. WILLCOCK: I presume the police sent up to Carnarvon were in charge of an inspector; at all events I have read that in the Press. I think, with the member for Middle Swan, that the Commissioner took an entirely provocative attitude in sending up the police in such great numbers, and that he put the country to unnecessary expense in chartering an aeroplane, which should not have been done except in extraordinary circumstances. An action of that kind would give the whole community cause for alarm over a comparatively trivial trouble. If there is anything that does cause difficulty in an industrial dispute, it is an unnecessary display of force, for invariably it provokes reprisals. The Minister has said the Commissioner is a loyal officer who generally exercises very fair judgment. As a Minister for Police for three years, I can endorse that statement; but I am positive the Commissioner would never have suggested taking the action that was taken in the shearers' trouble. He must have been

inspired from some source, because from my knowledge of him, his judgment was much better than that. I knew him very closely during a disturbed time, and I can say he was never interfered with, that he was allowed to take any action he chose in an industrial trouble, so long as he could justify it. So I do not think the Commissioner would suggest that because half a dozen people were engaged in an industrial dispute, when it was known that there was not going to be anything serious, a formidable display of force should be made. For constables to go along the King's highway and demand people's names and search them, is a highly provocative action. And what necessity was there for the magistrate to swear in 100 special constables? As I say, if the Commissioner acted on his own initiative in this matter he has wholly lost his nerve, for six months ago he would not have thought of taking such action. Had there been hotheads in the community, such provocative tactics might well have caused serious trouble. As for the affair at Bullsbrook, there are more serious brawls in the city of Perth every day of the week.

Mr. Sampson: Surely you don't want to justify that sort of thing.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Certainly not. If the men at Bullsbrook had been armed with weapons endangering life, there might have been some reason for what was done. There was no possibility of any serious trouble there, no danger to life or property. If during the industrial dispute on the Murchison there had been a single attempt made on life or property, there might have been some shadow of an excuse for the chartering of an aeroplane.

The Minister for Police: You have heard that a number were fined to-day for being armed.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I did hear something about it, but I do not believe in members of Parliament criticising the decisions of magistrates. Still, on the limited information I have, I do not agree that even the fines were warranted. At all events, it was absolutely unnecessary to make a tremendous display of force by chartering aeroplanes and taking provocative action; nor was there any warrant for the police hailing up men on the King's highway, asking their names and searching them. I do not

believe the Commissioner of Police was responsible for it. No doubt he was influenced by some people who see red in a time of industrial trouble. During the trouble at Fremantle all sorts of alarming reports were brought into my office, and I was urged to issue arms to the police. Still we got through without any serious trouble. Only in a serious emergency should the police be armed. There was nothing in this latest industrial dispute to warrant the arming of the police or to justify the action taken. It was only through good fortune that that action did not result in an explosive outburst in which somebody might have got hurt. It was squandering money to hire aeroplanes to no purpose, and I hope that before money is again squandered in that way an inquiry will be held by the responsible Minister.

Mr. McCALLUM: I want to correct an idea that appears to be in the mind of the Minister—who was not in Parliament when the big trouble occurred in 1919. If he has the idea that the best thing to do in these troubles is to arm the police and make a show of force, I suggest to him that by gaining the confidence of the leaders of the men he will do more than any armed force can do.

The Minister for Police: I was not referring to that case.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister said the police were laid out with bottles every night, and that it was only after the police were armed that peace reigned in Fremantle. There is not a word of truth in that.

The Minister for Police: Yes, there is.

Mr. McCALLUM: I knew all about it. If there was any man in the country who knew exactly what was going on, it was I.

Mr. H. W. Mann: And I.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, and the hon. member. It was through the leaders of the men that peace was restored. If the Minister will follow that policy, there will be no need to arm the police or make a parade of force. Surely he should be ashamed to mention the display on the Esplanade. With the Red Cross nurses and ambulances, it was the greatest farce ever perpetrated. The Seamen's Union trouble concerned the overseas men, not our own. No sympathy was extended to them, and the only casualty on that occasion I believe was Inspector Sellenger,

who had his ankle or knee hurt. To say that half the police force were casualties before any action was taken is sheer nonsense.

The Minister for Police: I say it is not.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister does not know.

The Minister for Police: I do know, because I have the whole of the evidence.

Mr. McCALLUM: I know all about it. All that the Minister knows is what is contained in the report of the Commissioner.

The Minister for Police: That is what I am stating.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Seven constables were struck.

The Attorney General: The member for South Fremantle resided on the wharf, I suppose.

Mr. Willecock: Yes, and prevented a lot of trouble.

Mr. McCALLUM: I do not think anyone will dispute that I know what happened on that occasion.

The Minister for Police: You were called to book afterwards for arming the police.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Labour organisations did not support the men in that trouble.

The Minister for Police: You were called to book.

Mr. McCALLUM: I was not. The Minister after the statement he has made to-night, would say anything. I have no desire to talk about by-gones; I would sooner forget them, but I do not want the Minister to run away with the idea that the way to overcome trouble is to display force.

The Attorney General: Then what would you do; let people fight it out?

Mr. Willecock: Not interfere until the necessity arises.

The Attorney General: We must not act until the necessity arises!

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister must admit that if the dispute on the Fremantle wharf had not been stopped when it was, there would have been considerable loss of life that morning, but it was not armed force that stopped it. Reason will prevail where force fails.

The Attorney General: How could you reason with those men?

Mr. McCALLUM: We did reason with them, and succeeded. I am satisfied that if the trouble had not been stopped when it was, there would have been 500 addi-

tional tombstones in the Fremantle cemetery. I hope the speech of the Minister is not an indication of the policy the department will adopt in industrial troubles.

Mr. Willecock: I hope so, too.

Mr. McCALLUM: If the Minister needs the assistance of the Labour organisations, he can rely upon my help without displaying armed force.

The Minister for Police: Why not reason with those men now?

Mr. McCALLUM: I have nothing to do with the shearers' trouble; I know nothing about it.

Mr. Willecock: They are not making any display of armed force.

The Minister for Police: There is an award of the court that is not being observed.

Mr. Willecock: But should the police be used to compel men to return to work?

The Attorney General: No, the police should be used to prevent men from interfering with others who wish to work.

Mr. Willecock: Not by arms and aeroplanes, or by searching people.

Mr. McCALLUM: What I object to is that the Minister's speech could be interpreted to indicate that he favours intervention by armed force.

The Minister for Police: I did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. McCALLUM: I do not wish to misinterpret the Minister. It is too serious a matter into which to introduce party bitterness. Instead of the Minister committing the police to that kind of action, I would like him to send for the leaders and discuss the matter with them. By reasoning with them, it is possible to obtain assistance that cannot be obtained by the display of armed force.

The Minister for Police: The leaders deny knowledge of this trouble, as you deny it.

Mr. McCALLUM: If the leaders cannot prevent trouble, it is a pretty hopeless position.

The Attorney General: That is the position.

Mr. McCALLUM: Is it the position? I have not read of any dangerous situation having arisen over the shearers' trouble. The Bullsbrook incident was a good old British argument with fists.

The Attorney General. What! Kicking men in the guts! That is what they did.

Mr. McCALLUM: I understood it was a bout of fisticuffs.

The Minister for Police: No, they put in the boots.

Mr. McCALLUM: So far as I am aware, no weapons were displayed or used. I hope my interpretation of the Minister's speech is wrong, and I hope he is not likely to adopt a policy of force. If he does so, there is sure to be trouble.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I feel it my duty to say a few words, because the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) said I was conversant with the big trouble at Fremantle. If there was any man who deserved credit for what he did, it was the member for South Fremantle. I do not know whether it is wise to revive the matter after so many years, but the trouble has been referred to. I was in charge from beginning to end. The member for South Fremantle, who was then the leader of the industrialists, went with me to Fremantle in the police car on the Monday following the Saturday trouble. On the Monday night, shots were exchanged in High-street, and police and civilians were wounded. The hon. member faced the crowd in High-street, ordered them to the theatre and told them their duty as members of the union. He held the mob until peace was restored. I feel it my duty to say that, because there may be some misunderstanding of the attitude he adopted. If all leaders in industrial troubles would do what the hon. member did on that occasion and co-operate with those in authority, the troubles would be kept well in hand.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know that a big majority of the shearers regret the trouble that occurred at Bullsbrook, but it did occur, and we are indebted to the police for taking the necessary steps to preserve law and order.

Hon. P. Collier: As a matter of fact, the police did not arrive until the trouble was over.

Mr. SAMPSON: The action of the police in maintaining order in the shearing districts will be generally approved. After the remarks of the member for Perth, it should be opportune for a representative of the men to make a statement by way of inducing the shearers to return to work. If they do not, their places will be filled by others. If the Arbitration Court is to retain the respect

of the public, its awards must be obeyed. The defeat of the shearers is certain, and they will be acting in their own interests if they return to work. We hear accounts of the happenings in the Murchison district.

Mr. Willecock: What do you know?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is necessary that protection be afforded there.

Mr. Willecock: You know that, do you?

Mr. SAMPSON: I do.

Hon. P. Collier: You must have read it in one of your country papers.

Mr. SAMPSON: The ex-Minister for Police must know the position and regret the turn events have taken. I am satisfied that if the shearers were advised by someone in whom they had confidence, the trouble would soon be settled. If the Leader of the Opposition appealed to them, I believe some good would result. The men are under the impression they should stand by each other in resisting this award. That is entirely wrong.

Hon. P. Collier: We are not discussing the award.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Leader of the Opposition will agree that what is happening on the Murchison is aiming a serious blow at arbitration.

Hon. P. Collier: We are not discussing that question.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope, following the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, of the member for Perth and others, that something may yet be done to bring the trouble to an end.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Forests*, £19,884:

Progress reported.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

1, High School Act Amendment.

2, Supply Bill (No. 2). £970,000.

BILL—MAIN ROADS.

Returned from the Council with an amendment.

House adjourned at 9.49 p.m.