

understand that the road referred to will be made up from the proceeds of the sale, and I have every confidence in recommending this Bill for the favourable consideration of the members of the Council.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Road Board Act, 1911, (a) scale of trespass and poundage fees, Gnowangerup Road Board; (b) of the West Arthur Road Board; (c) Roebourne Road Board, by-law relating to water at Cossack. 2, Municipal Corporations Act, 1906, (a) By-law 36 of the Cottesloe Municipal Council; (b) By-law 64 of the Municipality of Geraldton.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) : I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, the 1st April next.

Question passed.

House adjourned at 8.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th March, 1915.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: Papers relating to the renewal of gold-mining leases (ordered on motion by Hon. J. D. Connolly).

By the Attorney General: Amendment of regulations of the Education Department.

By the Minister for Works: 1. By-laws of the Gnowangerup, Roebourne, and West Arthur Roads Boards. 2. By-laws of the Municipalities of Geraldton and Cottesloe.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK AND INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BOARD.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is he aware that Mr. Paterson, Trustee Agricultural Bank, said that the clearing need not be done out of their money by the settlers, as they could get an order from the settler on the Agricultural Bank? 2, Is he aware that settlers in the Quairading District, who have had work done by clearers, have had their orders returned on the ground that assistance was being given to settlers by the Industries Assistance Board? 3, Further, is any money earned under the auspices of

the Agricultural Bank for work done, to be deducted from the amount provided by the Industries Assistance Board, or is this merely a book-keeping entry?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The announcement Mr. Paterson made was that if the contractors would notify the Bank before commencing operations he could protect them from victimisation. 2, No order has been refused where an undertaking had been previously given to pay. 3, Where a settler is securing stores under the Industries Board's guarantee, and is at the same time drawing advances from the Agricultural Bank for improvements, the amount paid for stores is deducted from the Bank advances and credited to the store account.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK FORECLOSURES.

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, How many farms have reverted back to the Agricultural Bank since 1911—(a) By foreclosures of the Bank; (b) By foreclosure or forced desertion by being sold up by creditors? 2, What does the Bank intend to do with the farms still held by them, but deserted by the original owners? 3, Will the Government reinstate any of the original owners who are desirous of returning to their holdings and assist them to get a crop in this season?

The PREMIER replied: I must ask the hon. member to repeat this question next session.

QUESTION—RAILWAY, KALGOORLIE-FREMANTLE.

Alteration of Gauge.

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Premier: In view of the Prime Minister's announcement that strategical railways were necessary, will he urge the Federal Government to negotiate a loan so as to enable Western Australia to construct at once the railway from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle, on the 4ft. 8½in. gauge, to the construction of which this State is pledged; thereby not only fulfilling an ob-

ligation to the rest of Australia, but also providing a means for giving employment to the workers of Western Australia?

The PREMIER replied: The matter is under consideration and will be discussed with the Prime Minister.

QUESTION—RABBIT-PROOF FENCES DAMAGED.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Lands. 1, Is he aware that large portions of rabbit fences have been washed away by recent storms? 2, If so, what steps are being taken to repair fences damaged by such washaways? 3, What quantity of material has been sent out to fences during the last 12 months to meet contingencies of this kind?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. Unprecedented damage was done. 2, Extra men were put on to effect repairs, and the settlers also gave valuable help. 3, None. Sufficient for all requirements was already there.

QUESTION—MAIZE IMPORTATION, CUSTOMS DUTY.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: 1, What amount was paid for Customs duty on the shipment of maize recently imported by the Government? 2, Is it the intention of the Government to ask the Commonwealth Government for a refund of this amount so that the farmers of this State may be supplied with this maize at the cheapest rate? 3, Is it a fact that this shipment was held up by the Customs for the payment of a very small amount?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The duty on the maize amounts to £10,031 18s. 6d. 2, It is the intention of the Government to continue their efforts to secure a remission of the duty on the maize. 3, No. The Customs authorities have assisted the Industries Assistance Board in every possible way.

QUESTIONS (2)—WATER SUPPLY.

Wheat Belt Extensions.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is he aware that certain

settlers on the wheat belt pipe line extensions have to pay full rates, approximately £24 per annum, and that they are not using any of the water? 2, Would he be prepared to consider a scheme whereby (a) Where land is not sufficiently developed to utilise the full amount of water allowed, only one-third of present rate should be charged for the first three years, provided that not more than one-third of water allowed be used? (b) That for the second period of three years two-thirds of present rate be charged, provided that not more than two-thirds of water allowed be used? (c) That after six years from the inception of the water scheme the full rate be charged? 3, Is he aware, as things are now, settlers can only use 20 per cent or less of water they are charged for, which means that they pay £1 to £2 per 1,000 gallons for water they do use? 4, Is he aware that if the rate which works out at 6s per 1,000 gallons in this district is made to pay interest, etc., on outlay, why continue the charge of 6s. for excess water used, a rate which renders the use of water for stock an unprofitable proposition? 5, If, as is stated, the water scheme does not pay, will he inform the House what the Railway Department pays for water laid on to the Shackleton Siding?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No, but if, after applying for an extension, a settler may defer taking advantage of it the Government is not responsible. An extension is not laid until after a large majority of landholders affected have applied for it. The proportion of services to rated blocks on the several extensions, exclusive of the extension north of Baandee and Merredin, varies from 100, and on the whole reticulated area the percentage is 83. On the North Merredin and Baandee extension which was has only recently been completed and is not yet fully availed of, the percentage already amounts to 63. These figures show that a very large majority of the land-holders are making use of the supplies from the mains. 2, No. The proposition as stated in the question

is one of financial assistance to farmers, a matter which is receiving the full consideration of the Government. As special arrangements have been made for financial assistance to industries, it would not be right to specially favour a few by extending to them additional monetary assistance through the agency of the Goldfields Water Supply Undertaking, which is being worked as a commercial concern. 3, No. For the year 1913-14 the average cost to the farmers of the quantity of water actually delivered from agricultural extensions was 8s. 7d. per thousand gallons, and the cost to the Government of supplying such quantity amounted to 9s. 9d. 4, The water rate alone does not return sufficient revenue to meet annual expenses and, unless additional revenue is derived from excess sales, there would be a permanent loss. 5, The price of water delivered to the Railway Department at Shackleton is 6s. per thousand gallons, and the Railway Department pays an annual minimum charge of £200, whether an equivalent quantity of water is used or not. For the expired portion of the year commencing on 1st April last, the actual cost to the Railway Department under this arrangement is 6s. 5d. per thousand gallons.

Increase of Rates.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has his attention been called to a recent decision of the Local Court at Geraldton, when judgment was given against the Government on the ground that the Water Supply Department had levied rates and demanded payment for water, the supply of which had not been satisfactory? 2, In view of the above decision, is it the intention of the Government to reconsider its recent action in imposing an increase of 100 per cent. on the water rates in the Fremantle district without a corresponding increase in the water supplied? 3, Seeing that under existing conditions Fremantle consumers are being penalised, with those of Geraldton, by the increased rate for water not supplied, will he reduce the rates at Fremantle to their former level, or defer payment of the

said increases until an adequate supply is available?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes, but legal action is not yet completed. 2, No. 3, No.

QUESTION—LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Why the Land Act Amendment Bill dealing with the reduction in price of land purchases has been dropped? 2, Will he give the House an indication of the Government's attitude in the matter? 3, Will the measure granting this relief be introduced at the beginning of next session?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The Bill has not been dropped; its introduction has been postponed. 2, It was considered inadvisable to introduce a Bill until the actual re-pricing of land had been accomplished, and it was found impossible to do this in time for this session. 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—WHEAT SEIZURES, PAYMENT TO FARMERS.

Mr. HICKMOTT asked the Minister for Lands. 1, Is he aware that many farmers on the Great Southern Railway have not received payment for their wheat seized since the 1st of February? 2, If so, will he issue instructions for the remission of all fines on rents due on the 1st March by farmers who were unable to pay their rents on that date owing to this non-payment?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1 and 2, Payments are being made promptly by the Grain and Foodstuff Board on receipt of certified statements from their agent. Already payments have been made for two-thirds of the wheat that has been acquired. Additional statements of account are to hand to-day, and by to-morrow it is anticipated that four-fifths of the total purchases advised

to the Board will have been made. It is anticipated that payment of the balance of the acquired wheat and all future requirements will be made by the Board with the same expedition.

SELECT COMMITTEE, WHALING LICENSE.

Extension of Time, etcetera.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) [4.40]: We have barely had time, owing to the Colonial Secretary being unable to give evidence this morning, to draw up the report of this Select Committee on the whaling industry. The Committee sat this afternoon, however, and heard the Colonial Secretary, but they have since then hardly had an opportunity to complete their report. I move—

That the Committee have power to sit during the tea adjournment in order to complete and present the report after that time.

Question—put and passed.

Mr. HOLMAN: I move—

That the minutes of evidence and proceedings of the Select Committee be laid on the Table.

Question—passed.

Mr. HOLMAN: I have additional papers, which the Committee called for by resolution. I move—

That the papers do lie on the Table.

Question passed.

BILL—LICENSING ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT.

Order discharged.

Order of the day for adjourned debate on the second reading read.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker—Kanowna) [4.38]: I move—

That the Order of the day be discharged.

Question passed; the Order discharged.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Order discharged.

Order of the day for second reading read.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford) [4.39]: I move—

That the Order of the day be discharged.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER (Irwin) [4.42]: I do not often complain about the paucity of information contained in the replies of Ministers. I understand this, having been a Minister myself. It must be granted, however, that this is a very important measure, and although both the hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) and myself were consulted a little time ago with regard to this, in view of what the Minister has said we are of course, in the hands of the Government. Seeing that this measure has been on the Notice Paper for some considerable time, I myself informed persons interested in my district that the Bill was to come before the House. It has been on the Notice Paper, as I say, for some time. There is now, however, a motion to have it struck out. I would like, before this is done, to have something more definite with regard to the Minister's promise than that "Question No. 3 is answered by Question No. 1." The Minister will, I think, be good enough to inform us whether this measure will be introduced early next session. He has answered my No. 2 question, saying that there were so many difficulties in the way, that it was utterly impossible to proceed with the measure. If he will, however, give his promise, I am perfectly willing to agree to the discharge of the Bill from the Notice Paper, especially if it is going to give the Government more opportunity to present to the House a complete measure.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford) [4.42]: It is true that the Bill was drafted, and that we proposed to proceed with it, and that I spoke to the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) and the leader of the Country party with regard to proceeding

with the debate, when the Bill was introduced. We find, however, that there were difficulties in getting the information we desired in order to place it before the House. It is an important measure, and it is true the matter was dealt with before the last general elections. I do not think even that, however, would justify the Government in bringing in a proposal of that description until we are able to place before the country what it means from the financial point of view.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What is the nature of this Bill exactly?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a question of re-pricing lands which were considered to be over-priced by the member for Northam. The hon. member who has just spoken wishes me to pledge the Government that this Bill will be introduced early next session. I cannot do that, however. There may even then be many difficulties in the way. As a matter of fact I have been christened "Promising Bill."

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not unjustly, either.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not intend to make any further promises in this connection, therefore, until I can see daylight through them.

Mr. James Gardiner: Surely in your old age you are not going to depart from what you have usually done?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: My experience in political life is that if one expresses sympathy on any subject, one is immediately considered to have made a definite promise in regard to it. Consequently, I say, in reply to the hon. gentleman, that the Bill has been postponed, and that it has been postponed pending the receipt of certain information, when we propose to go further into it. We propose to get the re-pricing done, and if it is satisfactory we can then come to Parliament with the Bill, and submit this re-pricing to them, so that, instead of the Government being entirely responsible for the prices fixed, Parliament will be able to express an opinion in regard to the prices which will have been placed upon the public assets.

Mr. James Gardiner: Would that be adopting a general principle or would it be in detail?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will be based on general principles, but we propose to get the details out and Parliament will see the details of the re-pricing, which will be done during the recess. As to introducing a Bill at the beginning of the session, I cannot make that promise because there may be all sorts of difficulties in the way.

Mr. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [4.47]: I regret extremely that the Government have seen fit to drop this measure. I can assure the Minister for Lands that it was a measure which the country at large were waiting for very anxiously.

The Premier: The country at large does not know anything about it.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I want to draw the attention of the Minister to the necessity for doing something in connection with the repurchased estates. I am quite aware that what I am asking may require an altogether separate measure, but in my constituency there are several re-purchased estates, and the occupants of the areas find themselves in a serious position. I repeat that I regret the Minister has seen fit to drop the Bill, but I trust that when a measure is brought down it will be comprehensive and will meet the situation.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [4.50]: I want to say a few words in emphatic protest against the dropping of the measure this session.

The Minister for Lands: It is not dropped, it is only postponed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I object to the postponement or the delay or whatever the Government like to call it, the effect is the same. My electorate, and I imagine all the country electorates would have been affected by this measure.

The Minister for Mines: You are the only one who was returned.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That does not relieve me of my responsibility in the direction of doing what I can to get the Government to make reductions in the high and unfair prices of land in regard to which we have been taunting the mem-

ber for Northam and the members of the Opposition for the past three years. Considering that most of the blocks have been classified in detail, I fail to see any reason for further delay in this matter. The Government ought to be in the position of giving settlers relief by way of reduction in the prices which a glance at the classification plans in the department shows they are entitled to.

The Minister for Mines: We cannot stop here all the year.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I regret that the benefits of the proposed assistance will not reach the farmers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! the hon. member cannot discuss that question.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I was only protesting against the delay in dealing with this matter and the failure to give Parliament a chance this session of saying that the settlers would receive relief in regard to the extravagant prices which were fixed by the previous Administration. I am afraid, owing to this Bill, many settlers will leave their holdings or their securities will be abandoned and they will fall back upon the Agricultural Bank with great loss to the State. I regret also there is no way open to me at this late hour in the session to make my protest against the postponement of this measure more emphatic in its nature.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Greenough) [4.54]: I want to endorse the protests which have been entered by the previous speakers in connection with the withdrawal of this Bill. There is, however, one favourable aspect in regard to the withdrawal and that is that the Government will be prepared to submit a Bill next session. I hope that Bill will be more perfect. The Government will have time in which to collect all the information that they require and they should by next session be in the position of giving that assistance to the settlers which they stand so much in need of.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [4.55]: One of the main items which I had placed in front of me when I was touring my electorate during the recent campaign was the question of the re-pricing of land, and it was brought forcibly under my

notice in the eastern portion of my electorate and particularly strongly worded protests came from Cumminin and Emu Hill. The Minister told us that we are going to have a measure during next session and I suppose we shall have to be content with that. Though I do not desire to hamper the Government, I cannot but endorse what has been said, and place on record my protest.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.56]: I am indeed sorry that the Country party cannot accept the statement of the Minister with reference to the necessity for discharging this item from the Notice Paper. It is strange that the Country party are not satisfied at the dying moments of the session with the promise of the Minister. Have not the interests of the farmers been studied more closely than anything else during the whole of the present session?

Mr. James Gardiner: You surely have not read the *West Australian* or the *Sunday Times* or the *Daily News*, or you would not say that.

Mr. TAYLOR: I have no need to read those newspapers in order to acquaint myself with what has transpired during the session. No hon. member, no matter how prejudiced he may be, can fail to realise the amount of time which has been devoted to agricultural interests this session. The reason advanced by the Minister for the discharge of the Bill from the Notice Paper is that it is necessary that there shall be further investigation. The information which will be gathered during the recess will be presented to Parliament when it meets again, and it will be of great assistance when the next measure is introduced. I want to tell my friends who represent the agricultural interests, a solid party with one determined object in view, that I have passed that chrysalis stage which they are going through now. I came into this House 14 years ago as one of a small but compact party holding views that were more objectionable to the Assembly than the views of the members of the Country party. My friends will have to establish themselves as a party to justify the

claims of those who need them here before they will get my vote.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The motion is that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper. There is no reference to the attitude or the objects of the Country party at all.

Mr. TAYLOR: The arguments advanced by those opposing this motion are to the effect that this Bill should not be shelved even if it be immature.

Mr. Wansbrough: Who said that?

Mr. TAYLOR: And the Minister has admitted that he has not sufficient data to place before the Assembly to justify him going on with the Bill.

Mr. Willmott: You are off the track as usual.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not justified in discussing the observations of any member. The motion is that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Mr. TAYLOR: If an hon. member sets up reasons why a motion should not be carried, surely another hon. member who holds different views should be allowed to combat that argument.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member who is familiar with the rules of the House knows that a discussion must be relevant to the motion before the House.

Mr. TAYLOR: I have no desire to break the rules of the House or to disturb you, Mr. Speaker, in any way, but when reasons are given why a motion should not be carried, is it not permissible for another hon. member to show why in his opinion it should be carried? If I am not permitted to do that I do not know the value of the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have told the hon. member that he must not discuss the observations of hon. members unless they are relevant to the debate and the motion before the House is that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper. The hon. member may give reasons why the Bill should not be discharged or why it should be discharged, but they are the only reasons he can give.

Mr. TAYLOR: With all due deference to you, Mr. Speaker, although I may be doing it in a clumsy way, I am support-

ing the arguments advanced by the Minister. The Minister pointed out that certain investigations would have to be made and certain details obtained, and when they are at hand he will be in a better position to introduce the measure. He now asks that the Bill should be discharged from the Notice Paper so that he might be given the opportunity of having the investigations made with the object of submitting it to Parliament next session. It is unfair for hon. members of the Country party to take exception to the discharge of a Bill when the Minister has not sufficient data to go upon to submit the measure to the House.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.1]: I, like other members, regret that this Bill has had to be dropped, but I am prepared to accept the assurance of the Minister that it will be dealt with next session. We recognise it is a very important measure, and it is no use bringing a Bill before the House unless it will do all that is required or expected by it. This was a burning question in my district; one of the vital issues during the last election, and I suggest to the Minister for Lands when he brings down his Bill next session that the charges be retrospective.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not discuss the merits of the Bill. The motion is that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no intention of digressing. I would like to take this opportunity of saying that in my opinion, and I trust other members think likewise, that when bills are coming forward they should be placed before members of Parliament a little sooner.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You mean earlier in the session.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, the custom is that when a Minister introduces a Bill we are then handed a copy of the measure and expected to proceed with the debate.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: No, there is always an adjournment.

Mr. THOMSON: We have had experience of this during this session, when the Government have tried to force the second reading of a Bill, but I am offering

the suggestion that in the future we should receive the Bills a little time prior to them being introduced by the Minister.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [5.4]: It is with extreme regret that I have to speak on this matter. The Minister for Lands knows exactly the position of the settlers in the Avon district, and adjoining electorates; he has personal experience of the land there, and I presume this delay will mean that the Bill when brought forward will be sound in its construction.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss that.

Mr. HARRISON: If the Bill had been carried through this session it would have given help to the settlers in the eastern districts, and I am sorry it is proposed to shelve it.

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [5.6]: I regret very much that the Government have thought fit to withdraw the Bill from the Notice Paper, but we have the assurance of the Minister that no arrears of rent will be demanded until such time as the reclassification is made.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss that.

Question put and passed; the Bill discharged.

PAPERS—GOLD MINING LEASES, RENEWAL.

Debate resumed from the 24th February on the motion by the Hon. J. D. Connolly, "That all papers in connection with the renewal of Gold Mining Leases be laid on the Table of the House."

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth—in reply) [5.8]: It is not necessary to discuss anything further in regard to the motion, because the Minister has already stated that he has no objection to laying the papers on the Table. I think it was a pity that when the Minister had the papers here the other day he did not then lay them on the Table. It would have been fairer to myself had the Minister done this, because the Minister quoted extensively from the file, and I had not an opportunity of seeing it.

The Minister for Mines: I informed the hon. member he could have the use of the file.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister said that I could see the papers, but *Hansard* had taken them away, and the papers were not left in the House. When the Minister decided to lay the papers on the Table it was a pity he did not do so straight away.

The Minister for Mines: I have never known that practice to be followed—to lay the papers on the Table before a motion is carried.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The papers could have been left in the House, and I could then have had an opportunity of seeing them.

The Minister for Mines: You are asking for a privilege which has never been extended in the past.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is a privilege I have the right to expect. If I had seen the papers I could have justified certain statements which I made. The Minister for Mines stated that the Government agreed to the renewal of the leases on existing terms, and he said, "I can see no reason why the owners of our mining leases, or those who have invested their money in mining property in this State, should be singled out for a special form of taxation over and above those who have chosen to invest their money in other avenues in the State." In moving the motion I stated that I was not in favour of taxation on the mining industry or a portion of the mining industry. It is not a question of taxation at all, but a question of a premium for the renewal of leases. The Act distinctly stated that the leases shall be renewed on any terms or conditions which Parliament may impose. Then the Minister went on to say that if an investor puts his capital into any other business or industry he is only subject to the taxation which applies to any other citizen, those who have invested their money in the mines of our State should not only pay all the ordinary taxation, which is levied upon every other citizen, but that they should also pay an addi-

tional amount by way of royalty or some other charge for the right of having their leases renewed. I am not aware of this. The Minister then went on to say that because there are one or two very rich mines in the State, paying large dividends annually, that the whole industry should be singled out for a special impost.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member quoting from the debates of this session?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I made notes when the Minister was speaking, and I am quoting extracts from speeches delivered.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is all right.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I want to say that I deny wishing to impose a tax on the mining industry, or indeed on any particular mine, but these leases were granted on a 21 years' term. It is only following the practice which had been carried out in other countries, and I quoted New South Wales, where, at Broken Hill, the New South Wales Government exacted the same penalty as we suggested here. It was the same at Wallaroo, but a lump sum was fixed for a renewal. The Minister states that these are only two cases, but speaking from memory I should say that there are fully half a dozen cases which I could show from the papers if I had them where the same practice has been followed. The decision was not arrived at in a day or two; the investigation lasted for two years, from 1909 to 1911, during which time the State Mining Engineer got information from all parts of the world. It is not retarding the industry in the least or taxing the industry. On the contrary, if the impost had been made for a renewal on the dividend paying mines it would have helped the industry. It would have meant a return from these mines which have paid 24 million pounds of dividends of a sum of £20,000 per annum, which would have been spent in geological survey and in assistance to miners suffering from phthisis.

The Minister for Mines: Nonsense.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: At any rate £20,000 would have been paid into the coffers of the Mines Department, and spent in assisting the mining industry; therefore I have shown it was not a tax on the mining industry, but a just impost which has been placed on the dividend paying mines in other countries under similar conditions for similar renewals. The Minister for Mines stated that my statement was not correct when I said it would bring in £20,000 per annum to the revenue, but on looking into the papers further I find that it would mean either £20,400 or £20,600, and that is computed by the Mines Department on the dividends. I notice on looking at the mining statistics the dividend paid in 1913 amounted to £910,000 as against £800,000 in 1911, so that the year after the Minister assumed office the dividends were larger—we have not a report for the last year, that is, 1914—so that the amount obtained would have been greater than £20,000 and not less, as the Minister has stated. The file gives the calculation and shows clearly that £20,000 would have been obtained from the renewal of these leases. The Minister has said the Chamber of Mines representatives were not agreeable to this impost. They were agreeable to the impost. I regret I have not had an opportunity to peruse the file because it would bear out my statement. The Minister quoted extracts from the report of the proceedings of a deputation of mine managers who waited on the then Premier. It was not likely that at a public deputation they would put up other than the best case from their point of view. Deputations generally ask a little more than they expect to get, and it was not likely that at the first time of asking they would agree to pay for a renewal of the leases. Nevertheless, there is evidence on the file that the State Mining Engineer recommended it and that even some of these men at the deputation were agreeable, because the minute of the Treasurer in introducing the matter to the notice of Cabinet in 1909 stated that a representative of the Chamber of Mines had wait-

ed on him and discussed the renewal of leases and was agreeable to pay for them.

The Minister for Mines: That is not on the file.

(The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is on the file. The Minister did not read from file the statement that in 1910, the same year as the deputation, Mr. Govett, one of the mining directors, had waited on Sir Newton Moore in London. Mr. Govett has been a director of the Lake View and Star and Ivanhoe, I think, from their inception, and in asking the then Premier for a renewal of the leases he said they would be prepared to pay at least one per cent. royalty on future profits.

The Minister for Mines: You are romancing.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am not. I challenge the Minister to show me the file and I will read the quotation from the report of the interview Mr. Govett had with the then Premier.

The Minister for Mines: There is no mention of one per cent. You are absolutely romancing.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: At least one, but I think two members of the deputation made no secret of the fact years before that they were anxious to get a renewal of their leases, but as the Chamber of Mines representatives were not likely to say that they expected to pay something for the renewal. Still, we have the position that at least one director in London saw Sir Newton Moore and requested that a renewal of the leases be granted and they were willing to pay for it. In the year before, the then Treasurer, Mr. Wilson, said a representative of the Chamber of Mines had waited on him and was anxious to get a renewal and was willing to pay for it.

The Minister for Mines: Here is the minute and it says nothing of the kind.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The minute dated 5th July, 1909, states that Mr. Maughan in an interview referred to the fact that certain gold-mining leases were

expiring shortly, and others within the next five or six years, and suggested that arrangements should be come to with regard to renewal, in order that developmental operations might not be interfered with. The minute continues—

I asked him to put the position before you in writing, at the same time intimating that the State would expect to derive a much larger revenue than at present, at any rate, from those mines from which great wealth was being obtained. Before any definite promise as to the renewal of gold-mining leases is given, I shall be glad if you will bring the matter up in Cabinet, in order that some definite scheme may be considered and adopted whereby the revenue of the State might be increased, at the same time without placing an undue burden on those mines which are barely paying their way.

The Minister for Mines: That is not the statement you made. You said the people who interviewed the then Premier declared they were willing to pay.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I did not say that.

The Minister for Mines: I would not listen to a man who would make a denial of that kind.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have explained that Sir Newton Moore saw Mr. Govett in London and was informed that they were agreeable to pay, and that the Treasurer in a minute stated that he had seen Mr. Maughan, a representative of the Chamber of Mines, who was anxious for a renewal of the leases, and he wrote that they were willing to pay for it.

Mr. McDowall: That only says the Treasurer realised they ought to pay. It does not say the persons concerned were willing to pay.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Sir Newton Moore told the deputation that Mr. Govett had seen him in London and had expressed himself anxious for a renewal of the leases and had stated they were willing to pay a percentage, which, I think, was at least one per cent. The file contains information from the State Mining Engineer pointing out that in South Aus-

tralia £15,000 was exacted from the Wollaroo Mining Company for a renewal of their leases.

Mr. McDowall: That was after 42 years.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, double the term exacted here. If they exacted a royalty after 42 years, when the mines ought to have been worked out, how much more so should we for a valuable concession having at least 21 years to run.

Mr. McDowall: That argument does not apply.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The file contains information showing the practice in New South Wales, the Transvaal, Rhodesia, British Columbia, the United States, Mexico, and Russia, etcetera, regarding the law in respect to the renewal of lease. All this information was at the disposal of the Minister for two years before he granted a renewal of these leases without asking one penny. There was also a minute from the ex-Minister for Mines, Mr. Gregory, to Cabinet in June, 1911, to the following effect:—

In regard to the discussion in Cabinet which followed the request for an amendment of the Mining Act to provide for the renewal of leases, and the request of Cabinet that I should make provision for a royalty on profits on a graduated basis so that those whose mines could best afford it would pay the greater proportion, I now make this proposition on the basis outlined by Cabinet—1, The lessee to have the right of renewal of a lease under the Mining Act for a further period of 21 years, within five years of the date of the expiration of the first term of 21 years. 2, That upon such renewal (and it should be decided when the royalty should date from; that is, from the granting of the conditional renewal upon application prior to the expiration of the first term or at the expiration of the first term), a royalty be paid to the Department of Mines on profits obtained from any lease or group of leases worked with the consent of the Minister as one proposition, on the following basis:—When the profits do not exceed £50,000 per

annum, one per cent.; for any profit exceeding £50,000 but less than £100,000, two per cent.; for any profits over £100,000, 2½ per cent. So as to make it clear what I mean by this graduated basis, let me take for an example the Great Boulder Co., which has been paying £240,000 per annum in dividends. This company would pay on £50,000, one per cent., £500; on £50,000, two per cent., £1,000; on £140,000, 2½ per cent., £3,500; making a total of £5,000. The amount on which royalty should be paid would, so as to save any conflict in methods and accounts, need to be on the same principle as if subject to the Dividend Duties Act. It is a question whether any exemption should be made. If we are going to impose a royalty on profits, I think it should apply to all renewed leases where a profit exceeding £1,000 has been made during the year. Under such conditions, the estimated revenue would amount to £20,644, but the amount recoverable would probably be very small indeed for the next four or five years. At one per cent. the amount would be approximately £13,600 per annum when the principal mines had their leases renewed.

That is approved by Cabinet on the 20th June, 1911. These leases were not renewed by the present Minister until the end of 1913, so that the Minister had over two years to consider this full report by the mining engineer and the former Minister, both of whom recommended it. The Minister denies that there would have been £20,000 per annum obtained from the suggested tax for renewals. If in 1911 the dividends amounted to £826,000—and that is the calculation of the Mines Department—and in 1913 they amounted to £910,000, or £84,000 more, it follows as the night the day that the tax in 1913 would have produced more than £20,000, because the dividends were, roughly, £800,000 in 1911 and £900,000 in 1913. I do not intend to go into the matter exhaustively, but only desire to emphasise the point I made originally, that these leases should not have been renewed unless a just impost had been paid for such

renewal—an impost which the mining community throughout the State considered themselves entitled to pay. The Minister has quoted extensively from the *Monthly Journal of the Chamber of Mines*, and I am indeed pleased that the Minister has adopted that journal as a textbook for his mining policy. It is a common thing for members on the other side of the House to dub us on this, the Chamber of Mines party. I candidly admit that it hurts me to be called a Chamber of Mines party man, for the reason that, while I believe in the leading mine managers of this State and consider that probably no better men to manage mines could be found in any part of the world, while I have the greatest respect for such men as Mr. Hamilton of the Great Boulder, Mr. Nicholson of the Ivanhoe, Mr. Black of the Kalgurli, and Mr. Sutherland of the Golden Horseshoe, unfortunately they are only the mine managers, the Chamber of Mines is controlled by a body in London, for which neither I nor any other self-respecting man can have any esteem. When I refer to the Chamber of Mines, I do not include such men as Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Black, and Mr. Sutherland, or indeed any mining man at present in Western Australia. The Chamber of Mines journal now dubs me a narrow-minded person, and asserts that I never previously expressed these views; and the Minister has challenged me to state where and when previously I uttered my opinions concerning worthless companies controlled by a worthless coterie of stockbrokers in London. I shall not delay the House, but I can refer the Minister to *Hansard* as far back as the 20th July, 1905, when, speaking in another place, I referred to the Chamber of Mines in exactly similar terms. In 1905 I spoke of the swindles which had been perpetrated in connection with the Great Boulder Perseverance mine, the Lake View, the Associated, and others. I then stated it was a downright disgrace to the country that such mining swindles should be allowed to continue. When I refer to those responsible for the swindle, I

refer to the people in London, who speak here through the Chamber of Mines journal of this State, and not of the mining men here in Western Australia. Again, in 1904, some 11 years ago, a Royal Commission sat to inquire into the mining industry. That commission disclosed the outrageous swindle which had been worked in connection with the Boulder Perseverance mine and Boulder Deep. The late Mr. Hastie, who was then Minister for Mines and Justice, wrote to all the goldfields members of the State Parliament asking that we should express our views in connection with a Company's Act Amendment Bill and a Mining Act Amendment Bill which he proposed to introduce. In reply to Mr. Hastie, I wrote fully and precisely as I speak now, and as I spoke in 1905; and my communication is on the files of the Mines Department to-day. So much for the Minister's assertion, and so much for the assertion of the Chamber of Mines, that I had never spoken in this way previously, and that I speak in this way now only because I represent Perth. I have spoken in this way because the country could have obtained at least £20,000 yearly, which the mines were justly entitled to pay to the country. Information on the question which had been gathered by the Mines Department for two years, from 1909 to 1911, showed the practice followed in other countries. There is information on the file I have before me showing that the largest companies were anxious to obtain renewals and expected to pay for those renewals. However, the matter was considered for two years, during which period dividends appreciably increased. Again let me repeat that I am speaking only of the big dividend-paying mines. My proposal does not affect any mine unless it pays more than £1,000 a year in dividends, and if a mine paid £50,000 a year in dividends the tax would be only one per cent. A mine yielding £50,000 per annum, or say £4,000 per month in dividends would therefore have to pay only £500 per annum in taxation. Indeed, it is not a tax on the industry—rather is it in the

nature of ingoing for renewal of a lease. The Minister for Mines advances the extremely specious argument "Why would you allow Meekatharra, Westons, and the Edna May to pay big dividends, without imposing taxation on them?" He says that because this tax for renewal was not imposed by the Liberal Government on these leases before the first leases had expired, we have no right to say it shall be imposed. I refuse to believe that any deliberative Assembly would consider such a proposition. A mining lease is issued for 21 years on certain conditions. The Minister says that we should have broken that contract by putting an impost on these leases during their current term because the mine is doing pretty well, it is the same as if one were to raise the rent of a man in business because that man was doing fairly well. The argument, of course, is absurd if not much worse. If, at the end of a 21 years' lease held by a business man, the lessor said to him, "I re-appraise your rent at something more than the original rent; you are well able to pay the increased rent," the position is perfectly fair. In the same way the Government should have said to the mining companies, "You have paid only £1 per acre, equal to £30 or £40 or £50 a year, rent to the Government, while you have distributed millions in dividends, and there are now millions of wealth remaining in your mine, and therefore we ask you to pay one per cent. on your future dividends as a bonus for renewal as other countries have done." I must congratulate the Chamber of Mines on the possession of great persuasive powers.

Mr. McDowall: Do you think that is quite fair?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister for Mines belongs to the party who brought down as part of their policy a proposal that people should go out into the wilderness and take up agricultural land on a leasehold and not on a freehold tenure and improve land for 16 years, at the end of which period the rent of the land should be reappraised. Under those conditions, the holder of the land, if he did not wish to pay the increased

rent, would have to go. The holder was not to receive any unearned increment, but only to be allowed the bare value of the labour he put into the land. Now, however, when it comes to the turn of the wealthy mining companies which have paid 24 millions in dividends during a period of 18 or 19 years, which have created wealthy men by rendering possible some of the greatest swindles in the mining history of the world, such as the Boulder Perseverance swindle, the Minister takes an entirely different stand. I will quote from a speech of my own reported in *Hansard* of the 20th June, 1905—

The Royal Commission resulted from the fact that on the 25th March, 1904, at a general meeting of shareholders, the general manager's report was read, as is usual, and the report stated that the ore reserves amounted to 401,677 tons, containing 500,000 ounces of gold worth two millions sterling. Such was the report made to the shareholders, though there had been, for two months previously, reports stating that the mine could not keep up its average. Three months later, Nichols, the general manager, was compelled to sign a fresh report, which stated that the mine had instead of 400,000 tons of ore reserves, but 139,329 tons for 99,345 ounces, worth less than £400,000—an admitted loss of £1,600,000.

Then I go on to ask what would be said of any company which acted in this way. However, those companies were controlled from London: swindles of this kind were worked from London in order to put up the price of shares.

Mr. Green: How did you come to break with the Chamber of Mines?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Is there much sign of breaking? These are my words in 1904, 11 years ago, and I say they are a sign of consistency. I have maintained the same position ever since. My views on the subject are well known to the Chamber of Mines. In making these remarks I refer to the mines which are paying big dividends. I am not speaking of the small mines at all. The Ministry would like to say to every man going out into

the wilderness to take up agricultural land and carve out a home for himself there, that immediately that man who can only hope to get a bare living for his labour, at the end of 16 years, his rent is to be reappraised. To the wealthy mining magnates, however, who do nothing for this country except disburse the wages they are forced to spend here, who have extracted 24 millions of money from ground for which they pay £1 per acre—perhaps only a matter of £1,000 or £2,000 each during the whole of their term of 21 years—the Ministry refuse to apply the principle of reappraising although they get some of great value. When these companies are asked to pay something like one per cent., or £500 per annum, in the case of a mine returning £50,000 in dividends per annum, the Minister holds up his hands in holy horror. I congratulate the Chamber of Mines on having persuaded the Minister to look at the matter in their own way. The Minister saw in one direction in 1911 before he took office and he sees in the opposite direction now. I have no quarrel whatever with the mining industry; I believe that everything should be done for the mining industry; but a good opportunity was missed in this instance. Nothing has been done for this State by the companies I have in view. They have extracted, as they are entitled to extract, every pound they possibly could by hook or by crook get from this country. Again let me say, I exempt from my condemnation every mine manager in the State to-day. The Chamber of Mines is controlled by London boards, who have laid down the Chamber's policy in this regard.

Mr. Green: They are Britishers.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I wish these London boards were composed of Britishers. They may call themselves Britishers. Notwithstanding that this was their own money, with which they had a perfect right to do as they liked, and have received the just treatment to which they were entitled, and did do as they liked, still they had no claim to exceptional treatment at the hands of the present Minister for Mines at the expense of the

State. They were entitled to justice; but the State was entitled to justice also. The Minister should have seen that the State received fair consideration from mining investors when granting them renewals of their leases, which he failed to do. On this occasion, had not the Minister been led away by the persuasive arguments of the persons controlling the big dividend-paying mines, the State would have got what it was justly entitled to and which the mining companies could easily have paid—at least £20,000 per annum for the renewal of leases.

Question—put and passed.

RESOLUTION—WONGAN HILLS MULLEWA RAILWAY.

Order Discharged.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of a Message from the Council desiring concurrence in the following resolution—"That in the opinion of this House it is necessary, in the interests of the settlers, that the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway be immediately handed over to the Working Railways, or that not more than the ordinary rates chargeable by the Working Railways be charged by the construction department pending such handing over of the railway."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker—Kanowna) [5:45]: I move—

That the Order of the Day be discharged.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER (Irwin) [5:46]: I am glad this line has been opened. I realise there have been many difficulties in the way and that several members of Parliament have been rather anxious to secure an advertisement out of their action in regard to this railway and to the detriment of myself. Being in an indifferent state of health, perhaps I am a little supersensitive, but I desire to make an explanation. A promise was given by the late Minister for Works that this railway would be opened on the 1st January. When, during my electioneering campaign, I found that people were going 35 miles from the Government railway to cart their stuff back from the Midland Railway I said "Something is wrong." I found it was this that was wrong: that the

freights on the Government railway were so high that it paid people to cart the extra distance. I complained to the late Minister for Works and he said the probabilities were that the line would be opened on the 1st January so it was of no use worrying about the freights. Afterwards the present Minister for Works informed me that the line would be opened about the middle of January, and I made arrangements for several deputations to wait upon him—not to get money out of him, because I knew that that was an impossibility. Anybody who has had dealings with the present Minister for Works knows all about trying to get blood out of a stone. We had several deputations in reference to schools, and I said to him, "You had better take advantage of this." He told me, however, that there would be no official opening, that they desired to save expense. Then the Minister for Works found that, owing to the difference between the Working Railways and the Public Works, who construct these lines, he could not hand over the line, because they wanted telephone boxes and the expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000. I still desired him to arrange for the ordinary railway freights, but I had no chance from the word "go." He would not hear of it. He said "We are losing money on that line now," and no appeal I could make to him was of avail. Now, fortunately the line has been opened. The day is coming when the wisdom of this House will stop this dual control of construction. I would like to know what it has cost this country to have the Public Works constructing lines and the Working Railways taking them over. There are plenty of things the Working Railways want done which the Public Works will not do; and when the Working Railways want things done they have to be done, and in the end they are done at three times the expense which would have been incurred had they been seen to in the first instance. The wisdom of this House is going to insist that the one body shall construct the railway lines and be responsible for them. It is this dual control which

has been responsible for the delay in the opening of this line, delay other than that which could not be avoided. There is no disguising the fact that for months there was not sufficient water along the line to enable the department to do anything. I want to enter a protest against this dual control of construction which penalises the men who have to use the lines and confers no benefit on the State. If a return were prepared showing what the State loses over this dual control of construction, it would astound hon. members. I have no reason to object to the discharge of the order.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.51]: I hope the time is far distant when one department will construct and control railways. The construction of railways by the Works Department affords a valuable safeguard. There is no doubt that from the construction point of view the more extravagant body would be the Working Railways, and not the Public Works Department.

Mr. James Gardiner: I like your loyalty.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is justified. No doubt a good deal of increased expenditure has been brought about, but it has not been entirely due to the action of the Works Department. It has been due rather to Parliament restricting the amount voted for the construction of railways. We have been repeatedly told in this Chamber that railways can be constructed for about one-half the amount paid for them. We have been told that light lines are quite sufficient for agricultural districts. What has been the result? Thousands of pounds have had to be paid after the Public Works has constructed the light lines in accordance with instructions, the extra expenditure being necessary to bring the lines up to running standard because the money was not expended in the first place. The Public Works Department is not responsible for that. There has been a little delay of a few weeks in regard to the opening of this railway.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Of a good many months, I should say.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I mean so far as I am personally concerned there has been a little delay. I was under the impression that this line would be opened about the middle of January. The member for Irwin (Mr. James Gardiner) has repeatedly approached me in regard to the railway. I regret that accusations have been made in another place against the hon. member, implying that the opening of the line was delayed in his interests. I found that for the working of the railway extra buildings were required and extra facilities demanded by the Railway Department in the way of sidings, etc., involving the expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000. When it was declared that until these were provided the running of the line could not be undertaken by the Working Railways, the expenditure was immediately authorised, and as soon as possible the Railway Department took over the line. I wish to point out that even the rates charged on this line by the Public Works represented a reduction of some 50 per cent. on what had been previously charged, and a reduction of considerably more than that as compared with railways constructed by a contractor; so it will be seen that the people in the district have not suffered as great hardships as has been stated.

Mr. James Gardiner: At all events, 6s. 4d. was charged to carry 112lbs. 40 miles.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perhaps an error has been made in regard to this railway. It was the desire of the late Minister for Works to link up the line for the purpose of avoiding cartage by the settlers, and to do that he ran the line through without ballasting. He did that in the interests of the settlers, instead of completing the line in sections. No doubt this has caused a little dissatisfaction, because it took a longer period to construct the line after the rails were laid, than it would have done if the usual methods had been pursued; that is to say, it was longer before the Railway Department took over the line. I hope the same thing

will not occur again, and that any long railways will be constructed in sections which will be handed over as completed. I hope members will realise that it is better for the Public Works Department to have charge of railway construction than that the construction and management should both be under the Railway Department.

Question put and passed.

BILL—TRADES DISPUTES.

Order discharged.

On motion by the PREMIER Order of the Day discharged.

Sitting suspended from 5.57 to 8.0 p.m.

SELECT COMMITTEE, WHALING LICENCE.

Report presented.

Mr. Holman brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the whaling license.

Report received and read.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) [8.7]: I move—

That the report of the evidence and proceedings of the Committee be printed.

Question passed.

Mr. Hudson: I do not know whether there is any proposition before the Chair in connection with the report and whether advantage could be taken of the opportunity to—

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to speak in this connection. The Standing Orders are very decided upon the point that no discussion can take place at this stage.

The Minister for Lands (Hon. W. D. Johnson): I should like to ask a question. When a select committee reports, is it not customary for the members of it to sign the report? We have no guarantee so far as this report is concerned that it is endorsed by the committee. We have no evidence that the members of the committee have agreed to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Standing Order 355 is as follows:—

Every Report of a Committee shall be signed by the Chairman thereof.

Mr. Hudson: What I wish to know is whether a minority report may be presented.

Member: I think not.

Mr. SPEAKER: The only ruling I am prepared to give is that no minority report can be submitted at this stage.

Mr. Hudson: The hon. member who interjected seems to be under a misapprehension that this is a report. It is not. It is an intermediate report.

Mr. Holman: By way of explanation, I would say that those members who voted against any portion of the report have requested that their votes should be recorded, and they will be shown to have thus objected when the report is printed. There were only a few matters disagreed with.

Mr. SPEAKER: The subject cannot be further discussed.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Is it not possible for members of the committee to give a personal opinion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The matter has been entirely disposed of. Standing Order 358 sets out the following:—

If any measure or proceeding be necessary upon a Report of a Committee, such measure or proceeding, shall be brought under the consideration of the House by a specific motion, of which notice must be given in the usual manner.

Mr. Hudson: I give notice that I will move that consideration of the Report should be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in giving that notice at this stage.

Mr. Taylor: When the report is submitted for adoption is the time for the raising of that question.

Mr. Robinson: May I ask you a question, Mr. Speaker? What happens to Captain Andersen's lease, which is lying on the Table? What is the position with regard to it?

Mr. SPEAKER: We have nothing to do with the lease. I suggest the hon. member ask the Minister that question at the first opportunity.

Mr. Robinson: Will the Premier answer my question?

The Premier: The lease remains on the Table until the session closes.

Mr. Robinson: And then what happens to it?

The Premier: Then it will be duly filed and acted upon.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You will not grant it?

The Premier: It lies on the Table till it is agreed to or disallowed. It has not been disallowed.

BILLS (4) RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

- 1, Appropriation.
 - 2, Loan, £2,850,000.
 - 3, Road Closure.
 - 4, Permanent Reserves.
- Without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [8·46]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Thursday, 1st April.

Question passed.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [8·47]: In moving the adjournment of the House, I may say I think we are all pleased that the session has at last come to a close. We have had a very strenuous time during the last eight or nine months, and I am sure all members will be pleased at the opportunity to leave their Parliamentary duties behind them for at least a little while. We intend to adjourn for a period of about four weeks, hoping, of course, to be able by Executive act to extend the adjournment for a further period, but, under the conditions prevailing, it is desirable that we should retain the power to call Parliament together at any moment if the necessity should arise, though I hope it will not arise. For this reason we do not propose to adjourn for a lengthy period. While members may be able to leave their Parliamentary worries and responsibilities

behind them for a period Ministers, unfortunately, will not be able to do so. I suppose we shall have to be prepared, during the next few months, to accept just as much criticism as we have received in the past. I regret that we cannot spread that criticism over the shoulders of all hon. members as we have been able to do in the last few weeks. We are here, however, and shall have to accept the inevitable. We appreciate the difficulties of the present position. We realise that we are passing through a most trying period. I suppose it is the greatest crisis in history, and while it does not affect us to the same extent as it is affecting other parts of the Empire, still, we are not absolutely free from its effects. If one portion of the Empire is affected, other parts must of necessity feel the effects. The outlook is a little brighter than when we first met, and I am hopeful, by the time we reassemble, the dark clouds of war will have altogether dispersed, and that the Empire will have left behind the trying and difficult period which it is at present passing through. The difficulties in this State will not pass away so quickly. I am hopeful that we shall have a bountiful harvest next year, and if that is realised many and perhaps most of our difficulties will pass away. In the meantime, we will naturally have a great deal of worry. We may find it necessary to do things which under normal conditions we should never dream of doing, and I wish to impress on the House and the country, that any action taken by the Government will be with the object of weathering the trying period as successfully as possible, in order to completely recover our position. Everyone must feel the effects of the present conditions. Not one in the community will be able to escape without feeling the effects to some extent, and by some they will be experienced more than by others. We shall have to do our best to make the burden as light as possible by spreading it over as many shoulders as possible. We have had a wearisome session. We have been dealing with unusual matters. We have had to

give much attention to questions which, under normal conditions, would not have arisen, and this has made the work more difficult from Ministers' point of view. We have had to carry on the administration of the affairs of the State under abnormal conditions, and prepare legislation on lines for which there was no precedent. This has caused Ministers more work and worry than would have been occasioned under normal conditions. I hope that when we re-assemble we shall meet under clear skies feeling happy in the recollection that some, if not all, of the legislation passed during these trying months has proved beneficial to the community as a whole. I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the courtesy you have extended to members on both sides of the House, and also the Opposition for the consideration the Government have received from them. They have allowed us to close the session without changing the pilot, and I suppose it is always the object of the Opposition to endeavour to change the pilot. There are times, however, when it is desirous to retain the old pilot, although he might not be of one's own choice. We have had a strenuous session, and I hope the little rest which will be possible between now and our reassembling will be beneficial to all members. While we, as Ministers, may not return very much refreshed, I hope we shall be able to meet Parliament conscious of the fact that we have done our best in the trying period before us.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [8-53]: I take it the Premier will follow the usual course of proroguing Parliament in the interim. I presume he does not intend us to meet again on the 1st April, and then further adjourn.

The Premier: Not unless it is essential to do so.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I recognise that the House has had a very arduous session, and that members are entitled to some rest, and I hope that they will enjoy that rest during the ensuing three or four months. I do not envy the Premier and his colleagues the duties

and responsibilities they have to carry while Parliament is in recess. Notwithstanding that Ministers cannot get all they want, they must, so long as they hold responsible positions, carry on the affairs of the country to the best of their ability. It was not due to lack of effort on my part, or on the part of my colleagues, that we have not changed the pilot during the session. If we had had the slightest opportunity we should have done so, and, I believe, with some advantage to the State. With all our differences in this great State of Western Australia, notwithstanding that they are of vast moment to the whole of the people, they seem to sink into insignificance when we think of the terrible trouble the Empire as a whole is passing through. I hope members will enjoy the rest they have earned, and that when we meet again, not only will things in this State be brighter, but that the Empire will have pursued her victorious career and gained that great and glorious victory we all wish for her. I appreciate the work of the Chairman of Committees, and of the Officers of the House. You, Mr. Speaker, have always been courteous to all sides of the House. You have endeavoured to be impartial and we respect you for it. I hope you also will have a pleasant holiday.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER (Irwin) [8-56]: I, too, would like to thank members for the courtesy they have extended to my small party, everyone of whom, with the exception of myself who had some slight Parliamentary experience before, was new to the House. We in this House have realised to a very great extent how difficult are those problems with which we have been faced. Criticism has been heaped on us, but honest criticism is the just due of every member of Parliament. Everyone else can interpret his action at a higher or lower standard than the member himself. In this relation it must be recognised that we have been dealing with abnormal legislation to meet abnormal times, legislation necessary, not so much probably on account of the war as on account of the great devastation which

took place as a result of the drought. Occasionally one thinks that the outside public might be more charitable to the men who are trying to do their best for this State. It does not matter on which side of the House we sit, this work has been done above personal ambition, above party strife and with the one motive of doing the best for the State in circumstances such as the State has never before known. After all, as the Premier and the leader of the Opposition have stated, bad as our outlook is, it is remediable when we contrast it with the terrible outlook for the people of other lands, and it makes us feel that, bad as things are here, we still have something to be thankful for. We all look for the early triumph of the old land, because its statesmen are our statesmen, its soldiers and sailors are our soldiers and sailors. We take off our hats in reverence to the great minds who have built up our great nation, and we bow in reverence before the greater men who, frequently dipping their pens in their own heart's blood, have written the story of the grand Constitution under which we live and over which we hope the flag of liberty will emerge unblemished and triumphant from the present strife.

Mr. SPEAKER [9.0] : On behalf of the Chairman of Committees, the temporary Chairmen and the officers of the House I desire to thank the Premier, the leader of the Opposition and the member for Irwin for their kindly references. We have loyally endeavoured to do our

best and I appreciate the fact that the House recognises that. I do not think I need labour the remarks which have been made by the three gentlemen who have spoken, but I would like to say that before we meet here again much water, historically speaking, will have flowed under the bridge. Many things will have happened which to-day we know nought of, but whatever happens in an Imperial sense, our people will meet every situation with credit to the nation, and will honourably emerge from those situations, no matter how difficult they may be. So far as we in this State are concerned, we have many difficulties to contend against. Our trial is a great one, great insofar as it affects the local community, but our trial is nothing in comparison with the trials of the people on the other side of the world. Whilst I hope the day may never come when we may have to face a great national trial, if it should come I am sure our people will meet it with credit and will show that characteristic which has always been the pride of the British people. I hope that when this Parliament meets again the lowering clouds which are now over the community will have disappeared and that the people of the State will have started on an era of prosperity. I thank hon. members for their courtesy to the Chair and the officers of the House during the past session.

House adjourned at 9.3 p.m.

Parliament was prorogued by Proclamation issued in a *Government Gazette* published on Friday, 26th March, 1915, to the 29th April, 1915.