

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 1st September, 1943.

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

QUESTIONS (4).

RAILWAYS, GREAT SOUTHERN.

As to Passenger Accommodation.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that (a) On Saturday morning last when the Diesel train left Perth for Albany a considerable number of intending passengers (said to number over 100) were left behind, and had to wait until the evening train (6.35 p.m.) before they could commence their journey? (b) That additional intending passengers from stations between Perth and Pingelly were also left behind? (c) That when the Diesel train left Narrogin on the journey from Albany to Perth on Monday, many of the passengers were unable to get a seat, and (d) that intending passengers from stations between Narrogin and Perth were denied the opportunity to travel by the train? 2, That in being denied the opportunity to travel by those trains intending passengers were put to extra expense? 3, What is the cause for the department not being able to make the necessary provision for the conveyance of its patrons? 4, If the answer to No. 3 is that it was occasioned by the school holidays, will he (a) cause sufficient notice to be sent to the department when school holidays are to commence; or (b) if an insufficiency of rolling stock is the cause, suggest to the school authorities that holidays commence on different days so as to reduce the number of passengers offering on any one or two days?

The MINISTER replied: 1, (a), (b), (c) and (d), Yes. 2, No. 3, Shortage of coal, which prevented the substitution of a steam

train in lieu of the Diesel-electric coach or the running of a relief special train. 4 (a), The department has due notice of all school holidays. (b) Answered by No. 3.

FRUIT INDUSTRY.

As to Apples and Pears.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he able to advise the approximate number of bushels of both apples and pears in the 1942 season which were (a) "measured;" (b) marketed; (c) sold for stock food; (d) buried or otherwise destroyed? 2, Is he aware that except for a remarkably short period it was impossible to purchase pears during the season which recently closed? 3, Has his attention been directed to the fact that hundreds of cases of good sound high grade dessert pears of export quality were not marketed and were ultimately destroyed? 4, Why was this done, and the public thereby deprived of the customary right of purchase? 5, Realising that the price of apples to growers as determined under acquisition was raised by 5d. per case, will he continue to lend his influence to the efforts now being made to increase the payment for pears—which face the same disabilities as apples—to a similar increase (5d. per case)? 6, In the event of the apple and pear acquisition scheme being continued next year would he support a free marketing period for both apples and pears until the 1st March, and thus give small growers a better opportunity to pay their way?

The MINISTER replied: 1 (a) Apples—1,160,870 bushels; pears—93,141 bushels. These figures include a grade which would approximate 10 per cent. in the case of apples and 20 per cent. in the case of pears and which before acquisition (except for small quantities) was not sold. (b) Apples—717,141 bushels; pears—64,629 bushels. (c) Apples—11,724 bushels; pears—14 bushels. (d) Approximately 432,000 bushels of apples and 30,000 bushels of pears were not marketed. These figures would include approximately 116,000 bushels of apples and 19,000 bushels of pears of a quality and varieties such as Cleopatra and Dunns for which no complete market could be found. Growers received payment for this fruit. 2, I am advised that the statement made in this question is not correct. 3, This question relates mainly to the export varieties of pears, as others were paid for on a delivery basis.

The reason for acquisition is to provide a return for growers on fruit which was previously exported and which at the present time cannot all be sold on the local market. Many pears were too forward in condition to be held for any length of time. Shortage of cool storage space was also effective in reducing the quantity of pears stored. 4, The public has not been deprived of its customary right of purchase. 5, Yes. 6, This matter will be brought up for review before any introduction of a scheme for next year.

DAYLIGHT SAVING.

As to Use of Electricity.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER (without notice) asked the Premier: Would he state the amount saved to the State last year in electricity through daylight saving?

The PREMIER replied: I hardly think I could answer that question without notice; but I point out to the hon. member that electric lighting in the metropolitan area was last year governed by the National Security Regulations; there was no street lighting nor were there lights outside of houses, while lights inside houses had to be obscured. Consequently, a fair comparison could not be made. I am, however, obtaining some information as to what saving of coal would be effected.

RURAL INDUSTRIES.

As to Availability of Manpower.

Mr. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have representations recently been made to the Commonwealth Government to improve the rural manpower position? 2, If so, with what result? 3, Will he make a statement to the House as to the representations made and as to the prospects of further labour being made available now that the possibility of relief from the employment of prisoners of war no longer exists?

The MINISTER replied: I made representations very recently at an Agricultural Council Conference held in Sydney, at which two Commonwealth Ministers were present, as to the seriousness of the manpower position in the rural industries of this State. Members are aware that it is two years since I expressed the opinion in this House that, owing to the shortage of manpower in many rural industries, it seemed to me that the only source of labour was not on the farms

or in the country but in the Army. Members will recall the consternation that that statement caused, and I have no reason to differ from that view today. Continuous representations have been made particularly in connection with our seasonal industries, which make heavy demands on labour at very short notice, and for the Commonwealth to make adequate arrangements to meet those needs. As to the third question, which really embraces the whole subject, we have, departmentally and ministerially, made recent representations to the Commonwealth summarising the needs of rural industries and giving specific numbers of anticipated requirements for many of them, in the hope that before the actual need arises the manpower will be made available to us.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for one month granted to Mr. Rodoreda (Roebourne) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for three weeks granted to Mr. J. H. Smith (Nelson) on the ground of ill-health.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Trade Unions Act Amendment.
- 2, Pensioners (Rates Exemption) Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS, AMENDMENT.

As to Time Limit of Speeches, etc.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.41]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Standing Orders need amendment in the direction of limiting the time of speeches, and extending the powers of private members, and in other ways, and that this House requests the Standing Orders Committee to give its consideration to these questions.

The motion originally took a different form because I thought there would not be sufficient time before the close of this session to do anything concrete about this important matter. However, owing to the advice recently tendered to members I think that the Standing Orders Committee, if the motion is carried, will be able to give consideration to this subject before the advent of the incoming Parliament. The first proposal is one that is in force in other parts of the Commonwealth. It is that members'

speeches should be limited in time. A reasonably long time should be allowed when introducing Bills and motions, but a shorter time for following speeches. The idea is that when a member is not able to complete his speech because the matter is too involved or lengthy, the House would have the power to grant an extension. The objective is to prevent what is rare these days, namely, long rambling extempore speeches going on for hours; and, in other cases, where members lose their tempers and keep us here. I can remember one occasion when we were kept here until 2 o'clock in the morning because a particular member got piqued. We would do well to follow the Eastern States practice and have control over our speeches. It would enable the Government to plan the business better, in the same way as is done in the House of Commons. We would also get better speeches because the matter would be properly prepared and there would be better presentation. I leave that point because it is only a very small part of what I have in mind.

What I think is urgent to reform in Parliamentary procedure is that the private members should have greater powers without detracting in any way from the powers of the Government. During the many years that you, Mr. Speaker, and I have sat in this Chamber we have seen cases where important resolutions of private members of different sides of the House have been carried, and we have seen cases where the Government has taken action with alacrity to give effect to those resolutions. That is very praiseworthy indeed. The classical instance of the Government of the day speedily bringing down a Bill to carry out a resolution—which should be done on every occasion—was when a motion was passed to increase members' salaries from £400 to £600 per annum! The Bill was a very popular measure and has received the support of the people ever since. We often have a first-class resolution carried, but unfortunately in many cases nothing follows. Some years ago a previous Premier, who I am glad to see with us today, gave me the tip, by an expression he used, which has given rise to this motion. On one occasion in, I suppose, a weak moment after some tremendous effort on the part of a private member to have a resolution carried—and he was successful—the Premier walked out saying, "A pious resolution."

That attitude damns the efforts of all private members who try to reform the world on Wednesday afternoons.

This motion is an attempt to get this Chamber to agree to the idea of allowing a resolution carried either by a large majority or unanimously, to be put into effect. There is protection for the Government of the day in that it has only to look at the cross benches, or even to crack the whip to prevent any motion being carried. But some important motions do get carried. The Leader of the Opposition has already this session mentioned one instance and I could give many others. Some have been questions of the greatest importance to Western Australia. Another reason for bringing forward this matter is that the electors themselves need some encouragement to take an active interest in public affairs. If they feel that when their member brings some matter here in good faith and receives the full support of this Chamber, and then see time go by without any action being taken, it has a very damaging effect upon this institution. I have quoted cases, in past history, showing the tremendous disabilities in the House of Commons through the lack of a provision such as I am suggesting should be in our Standing Orders. There was the slave trade agitation which lasted a lifetime. With such a provision as this the slave trade could have been cleaned up in two or three years, but they were able to dodge the issue because there was nothing to force the resolution to be put into effect. It was the same with Samuel Plimsoll. Everyone knows that he got a Bill actually drawn by, I think, Disraeli but the big interests behind the scenes got to work and Disraeli dropped the Bill in a hurry. Plimsoll then had to go around the country for years. If this power had then been in force the resolution, the moment it was carried, would have been given effect to.

Now, it may be asked, should there be some alternative in Standing Orders when the Government decides not to carry out a resolution? Of course there must be! It is to go to the country on the issue. That may sound drastic, but if we intend Parliament to be an active and virile instrument of public opinion then when it brings forward and carries a proposal it should be put into effect. If the Government of the day says that it will not do so then its alternative would be to go before the people. This

proposal has two other sides. The first is this: When a member of Parliament brings a resolution forward to this Chamber, I regret to remind members, there is no power, to my knowledge, whereby the Government of the day need even permit that member to have his resolution debated. A classical occasion on this issue arose in 1932. It was my privilege and honour to bring forward a motion demanding an inquiry into a very intricate subject which was capitalised in the recent elections in the words, "What is physically possible can be made financially possible."

In 1932 I brought forward a motion urging inquiry into a matter of the depression and as to whether what was physically possible could be made financially possible. The motion was not permitted to be debated. Although it was moved in correct form in the early part of the session, the whole of the session passed and that abstruse question was not permitted to be discussed. This suggests to my mind that not only the mover of the motion but also the other members who would have spoken on it were scandalously treated. I do not condemn the Government of the day for its action, for really it did me a good turn. The Government did not want such a subject bandied about in those days. However, we have had an election recently on this issue, and some of the candidates at any rate used those identical words—what is physically possible can be made financially possible—showing that an issue which could not be debated in this Chamber 11 years ago is now considered to be within the realm of public policy. So I contend that the Standing Orders should be amended so that, when a private member brings forward a motion at the proper time, it shall be debated during the session and carried to a conclusion.

The third amendment I suggest relates to motions by private members of a kind that would have a continuing effect. If a motion was submitted and carried dealing, for instance, with public works policy, it would not be merely a resolution for the guidance of the Government of the day but would continue in force. Power would have to be provided under the Standing Orders that, when such a motion had been agreed to, the Government could change that policy only on a subsequent motion of rescission in the House. Let me give an instance of this. The type of motion I have in mind as a suggestion is one to the effect that in future public works will be constructed not only for

their utility but also for their aesthetic value. That, of course, would increase the cost to the Treasury and would have an effect on Government policy. Under my proposal, it would be impossible to alter such a policy without a subsequent decision of the House to rescind the motion in a subsequent session. All these proposals are bound up with the idea that private members should have the right to get work done by the Government, provided a majority of the House agrees.

The only other proposal I have to bring forward has to do with the broadcasting of Parliamentary proceedings. The time has arrived to draw up provisions to govern the broadcasting of proceedings in this Chamber. I do not say that the debates should be broadcast regularly or often, but certain features, such as the Governor's Speech and the Treasurer's Budget speech should be passed through the microphone to the people all over the State. Surely we should avail ourselves of this modern scientific wonder! The microphone could be fixed in the Chamber and linked up with the various broadcasting stations, and people throughout the State could then be kept in touch with the more important proceedings of Parliament. Instead of having to crowd into the galleries and listen to speeches, they would be able to turn a dial and tune in. There is need for amending the Standing Orders to arrange for this reform.

Summing up my contentions, I consider that the House should authorise the Standing Orders Committee to consider amendments firstly, for limiting the time of speeches, with provision for continuance where necessary; secondly, for power to require the Government to give effect to any motion that has received a majority vote of the House; thirdly, for provision to ensure that when a motion has been submitted, further debate shall be permitted and that it shall not be shelved, as happened on one occasion; and, lastly, provision for broadcasting certain speeches. I trust that my motion will receive the support of the House.

On motion by Mr. Watts, debate adjourned.

MOTION—ROAD SERVICES.

As to Control of Passenger Traffic.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [4.57]:
I move—

That in the opinion of this House the present absence of proper control of intending

passengers when attempting to board trams and buses at city terminals during peak periods of traffic, as well as causing confusion resulting in much inconvenience to patrons of these services, is conducive to grave danger of accident, and that a committee consisting of one representative of the W.A. Government Tramways Department and one representative of the Police Traffic Department and one representative of the Nedlands Road Board, acting for and on behalf of the travelling public should be appointed to report on the best means for control of such traffic and for elimination of such danger and inconvenience.

If the motion is passed by the House and if effect is given to it by the Government, if it does not suffer the fate indicated in the motion mentioned by the member for Claremont a few minutes ago, the committee appointed will have to inquire into the conditions existing at the traffic terminals in the city at the peak hours of traffic. It will have to inquire whether in fact scenes of disorder do take place at the city terminals of the trams and buses at peak periods of traffic and whether, if scenes of disorder do take place, they are of sufficiently marked character as to cause grave inconvenience to the travelling public. On one occasion a lady was knocked down on the footpath while attempting to get in—knocked down, I am sorry to say, by a rush of men who were determined to get in, and who brushed her on one side, with the result that unfortunately she lost her balance and fell. But everyone who has had the opportunity of being present when a rush takes place—and this is practically confined to the hours between five and six p.m., and a quarter to eleven and the departure of the last bus—will state that he has witnessed these scenes every time. That is the first issue, whether it is a fact that these scenes of disorder take place.

The next inquiry—if that is a fact—is whether these scenes of disorder, if they do take place, are of a sufficiently marked character to cause great inconvenience to the travelling public. I am quite prepared to admit that, if the scenes of disorder are only of a small character, the inconvenience which is caused might well be overlooked as being something more or less a part of the times through which we are passing. But that, to my own knowledge, is not the case. These are not scenes of mere disorder that we can afford to ignore, but scenes of the gravest kind.

The third issue to which the committee would address itself is whether such cases

of disorder do in fact create grave risk to human life. That, unfortunately, has been determined by the fact that two persons have lost their lives through them. In the case of one of these victims, at the coronial inquiry the coroner expressly stated that the loss of life was due to the want of control of persons anxious to become passengers on the buses and trams, and particularly on the buses which go to Nedlands and Fremantle.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: That is not worse than any of the other buses.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not suggest for a moment that the people living at Nedlands are likely to indulge in scenes of violence more than anybody else. The inquiry is not an inquiry into the crowding of any particular buses, but the occurrence of disorder and dangerous scenes in connection with traffic generally. And lastly, if the committee does find that those facts exist, its members will address themselves to the question of what steps can be taken, and should be taken, to eliminate these scenes of violence or scenes of disorder. The incidents which constitute the facts of this case are of long standing. They may be said to have come before the public over two years ago. Undoubtedly they are in some considerable degree attributable to the congestion in Perth of the very large numbers of people who, owing to their husbands or brothers or other male relations being swept off in the maelstrom of war, have come into the city and reside here. Consequently the congestion has been very much increased in the city and in the suburbs. But that is only a contributing cause. It is by no means the principal cause. It merely accentuates what is an evil that would otherwise also exist. Of course the fact that the evil is intensified by this congestion is no answer to the policy of doing nothing, which, I hope to be able to show to the House, is clearly the only policy that has been pursued.

The first interference of public bodies interested on behalf of their residents in these buses took place about 18 months ago. A deputation from the Nedlands Road Board waited on Inspector Campbell of the Traffic Police. That deputation placed the matters I have just outlined before Inspector Campbell and asked him whether it was possible to provide police to control these members of the public, and to arrange for their getting into the various buses in forma-

tion of queues, instead of rushing and contesting every yard of the way exactly as if it were a football match and the people were trying to get into the goal. Inspector Campbell promised to consider the matter, and although he was waited on at the beginning of May it was the 11th of May before a reply was received, which clearly shows consideration. The reply was to the effect that no police were available. It is important that I should make this clear to the House, because I shall endeavour to point out, and I believe I shall do so successfully, that at first the only answer made was, "We have not enough police." That was the only answer. There was no question about the existence of this evil, but it was said that there were not police available to deal with it. That was the effect of the answer made by Inspector Campbell on the 11th May, that the queue could not be arranged for without the erection of railings to enable supervision, and that in any case supervision could not be arranged for because of the shortage of police. To that the board replied on the 25th May informing Inspector Campbell that owing to the congestion which was quite apparent to anybody present at the time these things happened, they begged to insist on some attempt being made to control the passengers or intending passengers. They received a very prompt reply to say that Inspector Campbell had nothing to add.

In June, the following month, at the instance of the board I approached the Minister for Police, Hon. W. H. Kitson, and explained the matter to him—that this action was being left unaccomplished simply because of paucity of personnel in the Police Force. Mr. Kitson then promised that the matter would be attended to and police made available; at the same time he explained that a great many police had left the Force to join the Army, and that the new recruits obtained were not men of sufficient experience to be allowed to attempt to handle crowds; that therefore there was a scarcity of police for the purpose of carrying out this necessary work, but that the Police Department was able to, and would, make available a number of experienced officers. This action, Mr. Kitson stated, would take place on the following Monday. I think I saw it stated in the Press in the middle of the week that on the following Monday police would be made available. This promise was not

carried out on the following Monday. The board wrote to Mr. Kitson calling his attention to the fact that the promise to make police available for that date had not been fulfilled, and asked him to take steps to carry it out. In reply the board received a letter from Mr. Kitson, dated the 13th July, 1942, and containing amongst other matters the following:—

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th inst re the desirability of establishing some system of queuing up at peak periods, of passengers at the Perth terminals of the various bus routes, and have to advise that this duty has been undertaken by the police, but during the last week or two has been somewhat irregular on account of staffing difficulties.

I am assured, however, by the Commissioner of Police that attention will be given to this matter to the best of his ability with the officers available for this purpose.

I saw Mr. Kitson personally, and he told me that steps would be taken immediately. Further, he informed me then that the delay arose from the fact that the Police Force to a considerable extent consisted of raw recruits whom the Commissioner of Police was disinclined to put on to work of that character, but that experienced men were now available and would in future be made available.

On the 20th July a deputation from the Nedlands Road Board waited on the Minister for Railways and recommended for his consideration the queuing up of passengers at the peak periods of travel. That was just the week after the arrangements to be made by the Police Department were stopped. On the 20th July the deputation waited on the Minister for Railways, but it took till the 17th August, a period of 27 days, for a reply to be received; which again, I suggest, shows that the matter was not hurriedly answered. It was answered, presumably, after grave consideration. The Minister's reply then stated with reference to the matter of queuing up that a system of queues had been considered but deemed to be not practicable. That was very different from the only objection which had been put forward till then, namely that the police were not available. Now the Minister said the proposal was impracticable. He did not say it was impracticable because of the force of police available, but for some reason undisclosed. The board replied to that communication immediately—on the 20th August—stating that its members were most amazed

to receive the Minister's letter in view of the fact of the prior information made available to them, in view of the fact that they had been told the police were intended to be on the streets for the purpose of carrying out this duty.

The board asked that effect might be given to its request. On the 21st August, 1932, it wrote to the General Manager of the Tramway Department, not in the matter then of this queueing up, but as to another matter, which clearly shows the view of that particular officer in any affairs in which he interposes. This was a matter of asking him to stop trams on the road running down to Nedlands jetty at the bottom of the street known as Hillway, in order, amongst other things, to allow mothers of children attending the Infant Health Centre at the top of the street to get out of the trams. At that time certain places had been appointed for stopping of trams, and this was one of the places which had not been appointed, considerable inconvenience thus being caused to mothers with infants who had to walk some distance to reach their destination when the trams actually passed it. One would think that a reasonable request of that kind would be conceded in a moment. Not a bit of it! The manager of the Tramway Department replied that the stops had been made at various places, that a distance had been measured between one stop and another and then the same distance had been measured to another stop and so on, and that there was no reason to change the position.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: There was good reason to change that.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Undoubtedly! I am referring to this matter to indicate what I might describe as the bent of the official mind. Whatever they do is for the best and nobody must complain or ask for any alteration. That did not relate to queueing up, but I refer to it for the purpose I have indicated because one finds exactly the same official attitude in regard to queueing up. On the 2nd September, 1942, replying to the board's letter of protest to which I referred a moment ago, against the decision which was communicated to it on the 17th August, in reply to its request that the matter should be reconsidered, the Minister for Railways stated that if queues were established it would be necessary for them to be manned. The Tramway Department did

not have the staff or the inspectors to do this, he said, and it was doubtful whether the police would undertake such an addition to their duties.

Clearly again we come back to the excuse that police are not available. There is no question about its being the right thing to do, but police are not available. That excuse is put forward as being sufficient. In September, 1942, the board waited on the Commissioner of Police, having been told all along that it was merely a matter of the Police Force not being sufficiently numerous. The whole matter had been laid before Inspector Campbell and he clearly showed that he was opposed to using the police, not only because they were few in number, but generally. I may say that at that time the board pointed out—I think quite legitimately—that in fact the Police Force had been relieved of a lot of street duty by the abolition of the stationing of police at street intersections to direct traffic. This practice was entirely abolished because of the number of cars that had been removed from active service and also because at night time there was very little traffic in the streets. Consequently a number of police were made available for further and other duties. Mr. Hunter, the Commissioner of Police, received the deputation from the board very sympathetically and overruled the objections made by Inspector Campbell. He told the deputation that police would be made available for the purpose of controlling the disorder of which he had evidence at the bus terminus. This, in fact, did happen. Mr. Hunter carried out his undertaking but it was made entirely inoperative by the action of the Tramway Department. The purpose was defeated entirely.

I will recall what happened. The police attended and attempted to put people who were there in some sort of order. But when the buses came round they would not stop where the people had been collected but went further and stopped all over the place. There was no appointed place for passengers to enter the buses. Consequently when a bus passed a spot where passengers had been assembled in a proper line, and went further up the street, there was a wild rush and the whole object of the control broke down and the whole attempt to avoid this milling, this scrambling and fighting, was defeated. That is what happened. More-

over—it seems an extraordinary thing to me that this should happen—buses almost full of passengers from Claremont and Nedlands came to the point where new passengers were to be received and there was an immediate fight at the doorway on the part of those inside to get out and of those outside to get in. So the effort made to control the position was an absolute failure.

On the 19th September, 1942, the board wrote to the Minister for Railways reminding him of what had happened and saying it was glad a start had been made even though it had been made in circumstances which led to its failure. On the 13th October, 1942, the board wrote to the General Manager of the Tramway Department asking for co-operation by that department with the Police Department by arranging for buses to stop at marked places in St. George's-terrace, and also for a re-arrangement of the method of discharging passengers from buses at places where they were also going to receive new passengers. If one were asked to arrange circumstances which would lead to the greatest possible amount of jostling and fighting what more could one do than bring up a full bus to a point where a large number of people were desirous of entering it? The outgoing and incoming crowd coming together, like two tides meeting, must result in a large measure of turmoil.

To that letter asking for co-operation between the Tramway Department and the Police Department the manager of the Tramway Department replied on the 14th October, 1942, expressing the opinion that queues were useless and unnecessary, which he claimed to have been proved when tried by the Commissioner of Police. In other words, because by what his department had done the attempt of the police to control intending passengers had been made an utter farce, he alleged that proved that the police attempt was useless and also that the whole proposal was useless. He said he was not prepared to make a recommendation to the Minister in regard to the matter. In other words, he gave exactly the same reply as the one afforded when he was asked to make available a tram stop at the Highway to allow mothers of children attending the Infant Health Centre to get out, and go up the Highway to the centre which is at the top of that Highway. On the 22nd October the board replied to that letter of Mr.

Taylor stating that in its opinion queues were absolutely necessary and that the system would have been operating satisfactorily had the Tramway Department co-operated with the police when a trial was made.

In plain language the board told the manager of the Tramway Department, "If you had not blocked the police and refused to play in their yard because you were not the person who started the proceedings there would have been no difficulty in attaining success." The board invited Mr. Taylor to meet one of its representatives in order that both might go personally and view what was happening at the time I am talking about, when passengers were endeavouring to enter buses in St. George's Terrace in large numbers. In that way Mr. Taylor would be able to see what the existing conditions were. To that very reasonable letter Mr. Taylor replied that he was fully aware of the conditions and had nothing to add to his former letter.

The Minister for Works: A nice brief reply!

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is brief, but is it nice or is it what anyone is prepared to say is the proper sort of reply? Is any member prepared to assert that an official is entitled to write in that strain to a public body?

Mr. Fox: It was an austerity reply!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Very much so! On the 29th October a deputation from the board waited on the Minister for Railways. It was introduced by the member for Claremont and myself, and laid before the Minister this question of queueing up. There was present at the interview Mr. Taylor, the manager of the Tramway Department. The Minister indicated to the board his decision on the matter raised by the deputation by a letter dated the 19th December, some weeks later. Once more I stress the fact that this matter has been considered for such a long period of time that we must assume it received the greatest consideration, and that these letters are not mere accidents but are deliberate. I intend to quote portion of the Minister's letter, in which he stated that he had investigated the whole position and obtained the remarks of the manager of the Tramway Department in regard to certain statements made. I do not propose to deal with a side issue which apparently arose when the deputation waited on the Minister, but I propose to go on to

that portion of the letter dealing with queueing up. The letter stated—

Inspector Campbell had interviewed the General Manager of the Trams in regard to the queueing-up and Mr. Taylor had drawn up a schedule showing in what way the department could co-operate with the police. Mr. Taylor states that the Commissioner of Police never informed or consulted him in any way as to when he was starting the queueing-up trials but placed constables in St. George's-terrace at 5 p.m. on the 9th September.

There is the whole genesis of Mr. Taylor's action. Because he was not the initiating individual, because the police acted at the request of public bodies, he was not going to play in their backyard; he was not going to be subservient to them. If they did not appeal to him and let him lay down the law there was to be no law. I desire to read that sentence again, and then to continue—

Mr. Taylor states that the Commissioner of Police never informed or consulted him in any way as to when he was starting the queueing-up trials but placed constables in St. George's-terrace at 5 p.m. on the 9th September. This was the first the department knew that such was going to take place. After telephoning the Commissioner's office on the 10th September, Mr. Taylor received a letter informing him of the arrangements.

But apparently that was too late. The apology came too late, for he was never once guilty of collaboration with the police or anybody else for the purpose of seeing if this very great evil could be avoided. This, Mr. Taylor says, is wrong as the police had received co-operation from his department. However, the scheme fell down because of Mr. Taylor's attitude—"I was not consulted. I did not know anything about it. I shall not allow you to run my show." That is the spirit he displayed. Then the Minister goes on to point out the difficulty that would arise in a scheme of queueing up, such as that suggested by the deputation. I shall read the portion of the Minister's letter regarding that phase because it contains what seems to be a most extraordinary statement. I remind the House that during the peak periods there is a 2½ minutes' service. That is to say, if an empty bus were to draw up at a certain marked spot, it would take 2½ minutes to fill because the people would be there ready to board it. If they were drawn up in a queue they could quite easily walk in and take their seats within that brief period. On the other hand, if they are to be allowed to continue

to mill up and down and passengers try to board the bus while others are trying to leave it, a much longer time must necessarily be taken up in the transaction. However, this is what the Minister said in his letter—

A bus standing in the Terrace loading passengers is unable, with a 2½ minute headway, to load its passengers and depart before another bus arrives with a different destination. It would mean that if the bus ahead moved off, the passengers would have to be stopped from boarding and all the buses moved up. There is another point, viz., a trolley-bus cannot pass another trolley-bus without the poles being taken off the overhead wires.

I do not know that that should be a matter of very great difficulty because every Sunday morning when I am passing along St. George's-terrace I see trolley buses engaged in what is commonly known as "coasting" down with their power switched off. The buses coast down to the assembly point on the Esplanade and during that part of their journey the poles are down. It is much the same as with the trams when they are proceeding on a down grade with their poles down. The Minister continued in his letter—

From my own observations I am of opinion that the scheme is not workable and I have discussed the matter with Inspector Campbell, who confirms my opinion.

The Minister for Railways: And I have proved that as a result of my visits to capital cities throughout Australia.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not wish to draw attention to my disability, but I really cannot hear everything I should like to hear.

The Minister for the North-West: You are not bad on not hearing interjections you do not desire to hear.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I suppose that remark was well meant!

The Minister for Mines: That is a good come-back!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Then there is another interesting fact. Mr. Taylor disagrees with the others on the question of collaboration. The Minister said that the department—he referred to the Tramway Department—was opposed to stopping the buses in William-street. He mentions as the reason for the departmental opposition to the adoption of that course that there would be heavy wear and tear on the rubber tyres and braking equipment if the bus were to stop in William-street. That claim was in reply to the suggestion that the buses should

stop and unload the passengers in William-street before picking up the new passengers in the Terrace. The Minister says that because there is a fall of one in 14 at that point in William-street, the wear and tear on rubber and brakes was sufficient reason why the buses should not be stopped there. I shall not express any opinion on that point beyond saying that I have consulted an engineer who is an expert, and he assured me that the amount of rubber that would be consumed as the result of a bus drawing up to a proper stop without any rush or jamming of the brakes could not be discerned except under a most powerful microscope.

In any event, that suggestion is disproved by two facts. The first is that all the private buses stop in William-street, and the owners of those vehicles have just as much regard for their rubber tyres as have those in control of the trolley buses. The second is that the trolley buses themselves now stop on certain occasions in William-street, and no one has ever raised any objection on account of the destruction of rubber in consequence. The expert I have referred to is one who, I can confidently assure the House, knows his job, and he says it would take a most powerful microscope to discover the amount of rubber lost in the circumstances I have indicated, even though the grade might be one in 14.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Of course, you mentioned in your illustration that the bus was empty.

[*Mr. Sampson took the Chair.*]

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have given the reply of the Minister to the requests made by the deputation which waited upon him from the Nedlands Road Board to lay before him the reasons why the queueing up system should be tried out. When the board received the Minister's letter, a reply was returned intimating that the communication contained nothing that was convincing to the members of the board and urging reconsideration of the matter and the introduction of the queueing up system. In its letter the board drew attention to a fatal accident that had occurred between the time the deputation had waited on the Minister and the date of the receipt of the Minister's letter. They mentioned that the incident had been commented on by the Coroner, Colonel Mansbridge, as being due to the disorderly scenes that take place where the public

attempt to board buses. That reply was sent to the Minister on the 20th December. Since then the Board has endeavoured from time to time to have the matter attended to, and on the 8th July, 1943, it wrote to the Minister suggesting that if he did not intend to make arrangements himself for the control of the queueing up of passengers, he should allow the Nedlands Road Board to appoint officers to superintend the loading of buses so as to give effect to a system that it knew would be successful if properly handled.

The question might be asked: What is the use of making a suggestion like that? I reply that it could be given effect to in this way: The Minister should have several members of the board, who might be selected for the purpose, appointed as special constables and provide them with full power to act with all the authority of a police constable. If that were done these special officers could regulate the traffic of passengers in and out of the buses. I candidly admit that there are objections to that course—in fact, very strong objections. The first is that the men so appointed would not be trained to handle crowds. That objection could be reasonably taken, just as the Minister for Police on a former occasion raised an objection against the use of the raw recruits of the Police Force. It is a fact that the men so appointed would not be properly trained and, as we all know, another strong objection is that the public does not like police duties being carried out by men who are not in police uniform. Most people resent that sort of thing.

While it might be reasonable to suppose that possibly, even probably, attempts made by people in civilian clothes, although they might be wearing armlets to show that they were special constables, would be somewhat unsuccessful, still if no other means were offering whereby what was desired could be accomplished, here was one method available by which it could have been attempted. But the Minister never once made reference to it in any letter or telephone message. He might have availed himself of the argument I mentioned a moment ago to the effect that the course suggested might not be desirable, but he did not do even that! The only reply that has been made in response to the proposal was that a full investigation had been made of the present practice in respect of which no alteration would be agreed to. I rather suspect that that reply was written

by the manager of the Tramway Department; it was entirely in his form and almost a replica of the one he had previously sent to the board.

Mr. Watts: They always are.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It was plainly written in the spirit he displayed. That is the position, and that is the reason why I am now bringing the matter before the House. Finally, I shall refer to a letter sent by the Nedlands Road Board to the Minister under date the 13th August, 1943, to which, I understand, no reply has yet been received. The letter read—

This board has given consideration to your letter of 22nd July, 1943, addressed to our secretary, and in which you state that full investigations have been made into the loading of trolley-buses in St. George's-terrace, and that it is considered that the present practice is adequate, and that it had been decided to make no alteration.

It is abundantly clear that our board approaches this matter from an angle different to that upon which your conclusions and decision have been made.

We are concerned with the safety and convenience of the ratepayers of this district who are users of the trolley-bus system serving this area.

From that aspect, we are unable to accept your viewpoint and again ask that, if you are not prepared to take steps to institute a system of queues for trolley-bus passengers at the city terminus you (or the Government) allow this board to inaugurate and, if necessary, arrange for the control of such a scheme.

So again the board offered to undertake the work but once more it has received no reply whatever. To continue with the letter—

This board views the whole matter with considerable concern, which is shared by our ratepayers.

Events and present conditions justify our opinions and fully merit the stand which is being taken by us. In this connection, circumstances compel reference to a recent Press report of a coronial enquiry into the death of a citizen, which could unquestionably have been avoided had a system of proper control been exercised over bus passengers in St. George's-terrace. Furthermore, an observation of the daily chaotic conditions and occurrences at the city terminus of the trolley-buses during peak periods is convincing evidence of the need for reform.

The members of this board recognise that they have been entrusted with the well-being of the citizens of this district insofar as they are able to protect it, and, in order to fulfil that trust, they must make every effort to ensure not only the comfort and convenience of their citizens, but also the prevention of bodily injury and the preservation of life.

It is, therefore, with the full realisation of the most unsatisfactory conditions as they

exist today, a knowledge of their duty, and a firm conviction that a system of queues properly controlled will overcome the present difficulty, that this board is insistent upon action being taken.

So seriously did the board regard the position that it made this further approach to the Minister. By way of emphasis, the importance of a system of queueing up was illustrated to show how it would be a cure for all this evil. The board wrote—

That a system of queues initiates order where chaos existed has been proved by the commendable action of the children attending the Girls' School in East Perth, by the manner in which they adopted the scheme. Particulars of this have appeared in "The West Australian" newspaper, and must necessarily have come to your notice.

It is hoped that you will be kind enough to favour us with your reply of acquiescence and co-operation to give effect to our proposals and intentions in this matter, for which I thank you in anticipation.

This serves to show that the girls at the East Perth Girls' School were able to adopt the scheme at the instance of their teachers without any disorder whatever. Disorder, however, still prevails in the Terrace. No reply, so far as I know, has been received from the Minister to the letter to which I have just referred. There is no reply to the suggestion that the board should be enabled by authority given to it to carry out the supervision of this bus service. I desire to summarise what I have put before the House and to ask for its consideration. Beyond any doubt whatever, this is a matter that requires investigation. If this board which is simply one consisting of representatives of the police force and Traffic Department, with one representative of the travelling public and which certainly is not loaded against either the police or the Traffic Department, investigates this matter and finds that the statements are untrue that these disorderly scenes take place, that would be the end of the matter. If the Minister wants a get-out and thinks that the board asked for will bring in a finding against the evidence, why not try it?

I am certain, however, that the board, consisting as it does of men of repute, will not deny the facts, nor will the board conclude that these facts are only of a trivial character that can be ignored because they are alleged to be necessarily associated with the conditions of war. Nor will the board conclude that there is not grave peril of bodily harm in view of the fatal accidents which

have occurred on more than one occasion. If these allegations are proved true, I cannot see how there can be any question of their finding that this system of queueing up should not be resorted to. In London there is a much bigger traffic than there is here, one that is out of all proportion in size to what we have here. But the buses in London go from the kerb where there is a pole erected marking the number of the buses that stop there, and people get in and out without any pushing and without any turmoil whatever. Anyone who has been to London can see outside the Piccadilly Hotel in Piccadilly half-a-dozen buses going each to its own separate pole, wherever that particular bus should stop, and stopping exactly at the pole, and people getting in and out of the vehicles without any trouble whatever. The conductor waves his or her arm and people go in or get out in an orderly queue. Where is the problem in Perth? In London the problem is fifty times the size of that which we have here, and the success of the whole business lies in the queueing up of the people. Now we have it said by the Minister for Railways, and no doubt entirely inspired by the manager of the tramways—

The Minister for Railways: I am not inspired by anyone; I use my own discretion.

Hon. N. KEENAN: He uses the same language as does the manager of the tramways, and he says he is not in the least convinced there would be any use in adopting the queueing system. Although he has no ground for saying that I submit, with all politeness, that it would be of use. He has never seen queueing up, therefore how does he know anything about it?

The Minister for Mines: Queueing up is easier to adopt in London.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Is the Minister suggesting that people in London are more orderly than are the people here?

The Minister for Mines: They have been educated in London to queueing up.

Hon. N. KEENAN: People are educated to it in other places. If the Minister went to a racecourse, he would see people in queues extending for perhaps a hundred yards away from the tote, waiting there to collect their dividends. I know of no case where, once proper control has been instituted, people have refused to respond.

The Minister for Lands: There are orderly queues at picture-shows.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Yes. I know of no cases where, if control is legitimately sought to be exercised, control to which no objection can be taken, the public has objected. I am therefore reasonably certain that if an effort is made to deal with this evil of crushing and rushing into buses, success will be achieved.

The Minister for Railways: I was told by a leading transport man in Melbourne that queueing, so far as transport was concerned, was a failure throughout the world.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Did the Minister say he was told that by a lady?

The Minister for Railways: No, by a leading transport authority.

Mr. North: On a point of order! Are these interjections disorderly, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I maintain, if I may, that they are not disorderly.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Nedlands will kindly resume his seat. I need scarcely point out that interjections are disorderly, but a little license is perhaps admissible in certain circumstances. Up to the present I do not think the interjections have been unduly unruly.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I always agree with the ruling whether of the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker, and I thoroughly agree with the ruling just given, because I have no objection whatever to legitimate interruption.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. member will proceed with his remarks.

Hon. N. KEENAN: If I may say so without being disorderly, I now propose to conclude my remarks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite in order.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I wish to say a few words about the attitude of the public authority that is most interested in this case. That public authority has done everything in its power to discharge its responsibility, and to protect its ratepayers from injury and inconvenience, and has failed through no fault of its own. It is therefore time that the proposed committee be given an opportunity to succeed in the attainment of the objective. I have no doubt that the proposed body will produce what the Nedlands Road Board has not been able to accomplish in face of official opposition, the introduction of safe methods at the bus terminals during peak traffic hours.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

[*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*]

**MOTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK,
CASE OF A. J. ADDIS.**

To Inquire by Select Committee.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.55]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the case of A. J. Addis, formerly of Pingrup, farmer, particularly in regard to—

- (a) Whether there was sufficient of both legal and moral justification for his being dispossessed of his property, and whether the handling of his case by those then in control of the Agricultural Bank was just and equitable?
- (b) Whether a tender was *bona fide* submitted subsequently by his wife or himself to acquire the said property through the Agricultural Bank? If such tender was made, was the rejection of such tender justified? If its rejection was not justified, what loss has the State suffered?
- (c) Whether any, and if so, what compensation or other assistance should be given to Addis?

This matter was the subject of a motion in the Legislative Council in 1938 when the appointment of a Select Committee was sought. The motion was defeated on a division after some debate and the production, I understand, by the Chief Secretary of the file relating to the farmer in question. This man Addis is now and has been for something over three years a member of the A.I.F., and is at present holding non-commissioned rank as a sergeant. As to his earlier record of service, this occurred in the years 1914-1919, when he served, I understand, in the British Expeditionary Force in France and later in Germany. The reason for his service there being that he was an Irishman by birth and had not at that time visited this country. He was discharged from the Forces in which he had served at that time with an exemplary record. I have had an opportunity to see his discharge so that I have no doubt as to that service. I understand that anything against a man's character is mentioned in his discharge.

So far as the commencement of this story goes, he arrived in Western Australia in the Pingrup district in 1928. At that time he had £700 of his own money. Some time ago—prior to the moving of the motion in the Legislative Council—I had an opportunity to verify that statement

from the production of Addis's bank pass-book. It appears that in 1928, when he arrived in the Pingrup district to venture into farming, he was not without some means at his disposal. He took up a property which was formerly occupied by a man named Ellis, upon which there was a liability of about £310 at the time it was taken over by Addis, and little, if any, improvement, I understand, had been done. By 1931, Addis had cleared—or there was cleared on the property—a total of 1,550 acres, of which Addis had cleared the greater part. His indebtedness to the Agricultural Bank—which had started, as I said, with the old debt of his predecessor of £310—had risen to something over £1,300. Part of that sum had been incurred for advances for clearing in accordance with the usual practice of the Bank and part had been incurred in the supply of certain essentials for the carrying on of the property. On the 12th May, 1932, so I am informed—in fact the statement was made by the Chief Secretary in another place—the interest owing by Addis to the Agricultural Bank was £110. It is quite clear, then, that as the ruling rate of interest up to that time was seven per cent., or at least 6½ per cent., there was little more than one year's interest in arrear on the 12th May, 1932, which was practically the date on which he was dispossessed of the property.

It is necessary, in order to get a proper understanding of the position which arose in this case, to remember that during the 1931 season the main difficulties of wheat-belt farmers commenced, because it was at or about that time that the serious collapse in wheat prices took place. Wheat was fetching less than 5s. a bag in some instances and about 5s. a bag in others, depending on the exact time of the sale. Obviously, therefore, no wheatgrowing proposition would in such circumstances have paid at such prices. It is also plain that, with 1,500 acres cleared and regarding that as the only portion of the property which afforded any security, the liability at the time of the dispossession was less than £1 an acre. A great many farmers at that time were, and have been since and still remain, on their properties in a much worse position than that. However, in the year 1931 Addis had 640 acres sown to wheat and approximately 50 acres to oats. The crops on the property at that time are well within the re-

collection of some of the settlers in the Pingrup district; and I have been advised not only by Addis, but also by those settlers, that had Addis's wheat crop been harvested at the proper time, when harvesting normally took place, the crop might have yielded a total of 3,000 bags. At the figure I mention, 5s. a bag, assuming it was the figure at the time and I think it is right, although I have no means of checking it—the crop would have realised a total sum of £750. I will explain later on that the crop did not pay anything of the kind.

I will try to explain the circumstances and to verify them as far as practicable by certain sworn evidence given to the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission which sat in 1933 and early in 1934. I have the evidence book here if it is desired to refer to it. Before I do that, however, I would like to say that originally Addis had a tractor, but he was unable to meet the payments on it; and, of course—I have no disagreement to offer in this particular matter—the Bank did not see its way clear to guarantee payment of the tractor nor to provide liquid fuel for its use, because both those items would have involved very considerable expense. After some considerable argument, however, the Bank did provide a team of horses, the cost of which is included in the liability to which I have referred, a total of £1,300 odd. When the tractor could not be used, horses were not available and accordingly a suggestion was made to Addis that he should let a contract for the harvesting of the crop at a figure which I believe was nominated at 7s. per acre. He regarded that as an excessive charge, as it would cost £224 to harvest the 640-acre crop. That was more than the value of the horses and would have produced no asset to show for the money that had been expended in the taking off of the crop. He did not wish to agree to that proposal and subsequently, as I said, the Bank provided him with a team of horses.

Normally, the harvesting of the crop would have commenced early in December or at the end of November, but Addis had been unable to arrange for the supply of bags. As members will hear later, this is to some extent substantially borne out by evidence given by an Agricultural Bank officer to the Royal Commission. It had been tentatively arranged to supply bags earlier in the year, but Addis's application to the Bank for a guarantee for payment of those bags was

refused and in consequence they were not supplied in time to take off the crop at the normal period. There was no bulk handling of wheat at the time and all wheat that was to be marketed had to be bagged. Late in December a start was made to take off the crop, Addis using such bags as were available. They were mostly, I am told, second-hand bags. He did not have anything like a sufficient quantity of those bags to bag the wheat, and accordingly adopted the practice of emptying the wheat from the bags into a heap in the paddock, using the same bags over again. This might not have been a disastrous happening had it not been for certain heavy rains which fell in the very early part of 1932 having a most serious effect not only on the grain not harvested—a great deal of which was flattened—but also some effect upon the grain which had been harvested and was lying in the heap in the paddock. Farmers in the district, I understand, are prepared to testify—in fact I have been informed by one reputable person that he would testify—that a great portion of the crop was flattened and could not be harvested, while other portions suffered a substantial loss on account of storm damage.

The net result was that Addis finally succeeded in delivering about 1,000 bags of wheat, approximately one-third of the number which I estimated as being the likely crop from this particular 640 acres. It has been alleged against Addis that he actually harvested a much greater quantity of wheat which he did not deliver to the Bank, but used for his own purposes, disposing of it by some fraudulent means. That has been held against him throughout the history of this business, if I am correctly informed. In view of the provisions of the then existing Section 37A of the Agricultural Bank Act and the more recent and more embracing Section 51 of the Agricultural Bank Act, the action taken by the Bank would be substantially justified if it be true that he did so dispose of portion of his crop. On the contrary, if it be true that owing to the absence of bags and rain damage a great proportion of the crop was lost, then it is open to question whether the action of the Bank was not too arbitrary; and we must come back to the fact that Addis's financial position was no worse than that of the majority of farmers being assisted by the Agricultural Bank. In fact it was better. As I said, the Royal Commission sat in 1933

and in the course of its inquiry held a session at Pingrup, where Addis and other persons gave evidence. Addis's great desire was to have his position reviewed by the Royal Commission; but the Commission took up the attitude—as will be seen from a perusal of the evidence—that the matter had been decided by a judge of the Supreme Court. The Commission wanted to inquire into some allegations which it was said that Addis had made against inspectors of the Bank.

Here I shall quite frankly admit, as I said at the beginning, that Addis is an Irishman and that he has the temperament usually attributed to the people of that excellent race. He gets a little warm occasionally, and there is no doubt he was warm at the time with regard to this Agricultural Bank business. He had been charged with or accused of having threatened to shoot people; but, as I think was disclosed in the Legislative Council, the file shows that he was totally unarmed. He had made one or two other rash assertions which after all do not amount to much if one really feels, as I am convinced this man felt, that he has been wronged. The basis of his misdemeanours, if one can so term them, would in my opinion be the fact that he considered that he had been definitely wronged. Because he held that view and was suffering under a sense of grave injustice, he was unable—nor would we be able in such circumstances—to preserve an equable temperament during the whole of this somewhat trying period. Therefore, unless there can be adduced definite evidence, which I have not yet been able to find, that he not only used those words but also was guilty of overt acts and carried weapons, I suggest that those statements should be dismissed as of very little importance. We would then come down to the basic facts of the case.

Here I would like to interpolate that when the eviction order was sought by the Agricultural Bank, the matter was dealt with by the Supreme Court. Addis first of all was given leave to defend; but subsequently the judge took up the attitude that as Addis was in arrears with his interest the legal position was that, the interest being in arrears and the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act not applying to the Crown, no relief could be granted. The judge said, in effect, "The legal position is that I must make the eviction order."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. WATTS: Before the adjournment, I was saying it is true that this man's case has been the subject of a decision by a judge of the Supreme Court. I pointed out that the provisions of the Mortgagees' Rights Restriction Act, which give special reasons why a judge of the Supreme Court, in granting an order to a mortgagee, should be merciful unless the case is particularly bad, did not apply to a Crown instrumentality and therefore the governing question was concerned only with the legalities of the matter and in consequence he was fully justified, as the motion, I believe, indicates, in giving the decision that he did. But I think we ought to be more concerned in that aspect of the case which deals with, shall I say, the moral side? If the position of this farmer was substantially no worse than that of any other farmer in a similar district and if it was not conclusively shown—as it definitely was not—that he was guilty of fraud, it is a question whether the action taken was justified on ethical grounds and whether there is an indication that it was taken hastily or because it was desired to make an example of the person in question.

When the file was tabled in another place some years ago, the mover of the motion in that House quoted from the minutes of a deputation which, on the 17th July, 1933, waited upon the then Minister for Lands, Hon. M. F. Troy. That, of course, was some considerable time after proceedings had been taken. This deputation was introduced by the then member for the district and consisted in the main of representations of settlers in the district who were of the opinion, as the minutes of the deputation disclose, that there had not been sufficient of both sorts of justification for the proceedings taken. The notes of the interview contained words I am about to quote, from, I understand, a letter written by Mr. McLarty, then one of the Trustees of the Agricultural Bank under the old management, to the member for the district, the late Mr. Arnold Piesse, M.L.A. The minutes disclose that in the letter to Mr. Piesse, Mr. McLarty had stated that in view of the attitude of the members of the Wheat Growers' Union it had become more and more imperative that the Bank should vindicate its authority as to the dispossession of Addis. I would like members to take notice of that phraseology—

It had become more and more imperative that the Bank should vindicate its authority as to the dispossession of Addis.

It has been alleged by those who have espoused the cause of Addis in the past that he was made an example of because of certain acts or unusual things he had done which were of a political or quasi-political character; that he had, in short, got himself mixed up with public matters which were very controversial in nature and had consequently become a suitable object for action. I do not propose to say that that point of view is justified. One of the reasons I am moving for this Select Committee is in order, if possible, that we may find out. But there is some scintilla of evidence in that communication received by the hon. gentleman now deceased that such a set of circumstances actually existed. However, I now propose to deal with evidence taken by the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission at Pingrup in relation to this matter. That evidence is not complete. In view of the reluctance—and I think the proper reluctance—of the chairman of the Commission to go into this case at the time, there were many aspects of it not touched upon, but certain extracts from it have a considerable bearing on the matter and application to the circumstances, and therefore I propose to read them. At question 3669, we find the following:—

By the Chairman: We have been through your file. It appears that the Agricultural Bank attempted to foreclose on your property. You refused to give up possession and the Bank issued a writ to obtain possession. You entered an appearance. The Bank then applied to a Judge of the Supreme Court for leave to sign summary judgment. You opposed the application and the judge gave leave to defend the action!—That is so.

At question 3671 we find—

Your friends stuck to you, prepared a resume of the whole case, a deputation waited on the Minister for Lands and you had a second inquiry before the Minister!—That is so.

The chairman then went on to say he did not see that any useful purpose would be served by holding another inquiry, but at question 3673, referring to a letter written on the 29th December, 1933, in which Addis had made accusations against an inspector of the Bank, the chairman asked for evidence in support of the accusations. Addis said that as his position could not be investigated further, he could not see how he would do any good by enlarging on those matters, but he reiterated that he could prove what he had said. Then the inquiry

went on, and at question 3709 Addis stated—and I would like the House to remember that he was on oath before this Royal Commission—

Nearly all my crop was lost owing to the late arrival of the cornsacks. My loss was in the vicinity of seven bushels per acre, or £800 to £900.

It is quite obvious that if that statement is correct—and I shall show that it is—with 640 acres, Addis lost 4,500 bushels. He went on to say—

Fifty or sixty people are prepared to say I was a deserving, responsible and respectable citizen. My farm—

and I want the House to take careful note of this observation—

—was not visited by a Bank official between December, 1931, and April, 1932. When the inspector visited me, some of my wheat was in bulk and some in bags.

I have already explained that harvesting started very late in December and action was taken to dump some from the bags that were available in order that they could be used on harvesting again. Subsequently the rains prevented the balance of the crop from being salvaged even in that manner. Addis went on to say—

I had delivered £269 worth of wheat, but the Bank demanded £110 interest and seized goods and chattels.

Later on at question 3714 the Chairman asked, "Your wife made a tender of £1,000 for the property?" He replied, "Yes." At question 3715 the Chairman asked, "Does that still hold good?" The reply was, "No, because the bank turned it down." Question 3716 was, "Have you the capital to finance the tender?" and he replied, "We did when we made the tender." By question 3717 he was asked, "Had you the capital to work the farm if the tender were accepted?" He replied, "Yes." After the actual repossession the property, in due course, was offered, in accordance with the then practice, for sale by tender. Addis's wife made a tender of £1,000 to the bank for the property. No inquiry was made by the then trustees as to whether this £1,000 could be produced or not. No suggestion was made that when they produced the £1,000 they would then be permitted to enter upon the property because it would be their own and the bank would have no further claim upon it. The bank officials simply wrote and said the tender was not acceptable.

The position, in the net result, was this—and I will quote later on from the evidence of one of the bank officers to support this contention—that the property has never been occupied since that time and today it has practically reverted to its virgin state, which has meant that the whole of the money advanced against it—a total of well over £1,000—has been lost. When reviewing this matter some time after it did seem to me that it would have been a reasonable attitude on the part of the trustees of the bank at that time to have satisfied themselves as to the bona fides of this application because, so far as I can gather, there was no other application, and the rejection of this suggested payment of £1,000 meant that the property had no longer an occupier and, in consequence, became of absolutely no value to the community. Of course I may be in a slightly better position as an individual to gauge the bona fides of this matter because some time later—I would say from memory, not more than five years ago—I was shown by Addis a letter from certain of his wife's relatives, written about the time when this tender or application was made, in which they said that if he could get the property they would finance it. He had a somewhat pathetic desire—which is understandable—to remain on the property. He had done a great deal of improvements on it in the nature of clearing, and, as an officer of the bank said—as I will disclose later—he had always done a little more clearing than the advances from the bank covered. He had therefore manifestly done his duty by the bank for the advances he had obtained. At any rate no inquiry was made to find out whether the £1,000 was available or not. I want the House to remember that I have some knowledge of this communication, and I am satisfied that the application could have been turned into a bona fide one if the attitude of the trustees had been one of inquiry to see whether they could save some loss out of the wreck.

[Resolved: That motions be continued.]

In his evidence, Walter Wardle, then district manager of the Katanning branch and now, I believe, a senior officer of the bank in Perth, stated, when referring to Addis's property on the 16th February, 1934, in reply to question 3727—

A settler named Ellis originally had Addis's block. I do not think Ellis had had any advance from the bank. I do not know how Addis

came to get an advance. I was not here at the time. The property is 16 miles from Pingrup and is one of three in that locality. It is still vacant and on it in green letters are the words, "Under boycott for wrongful eviction." I do not think the property could be sold at present. We have better properties near to the railways.

That was in the early part of 1934. Now the property has gone back, substantially, to its virgin state. In view of the opinion expressed by the then district manager as to the difficulty of sale, it seems clear to me, and I think it will to other members, that Mrs. Addis's tender should have been given the closest consideration because it might have resulted in the sale of the property which the bank otherwise thought was unsaleable.

Mr. Doney: Was hers the only tender at that time?

Mr. WATTS: I understand so. It subsequently proved to be unsaleable because it was never sold. In simply rejecting the proposal, without taking into consideration whether or not the transaction could be completed from a financial point of view, is there not some evidence that the bank officials were not so much concerned with the realisation of the State's asset, but rather in keeping Addis and his family out of the property in support of the attitude that it was imperative for the bank to show its authority? I think there is cause for that belief in view of what transpired, and it is on that ground that Addis continues to make his complaint. He said that his financial position was better than that of a great many others who were allowed to remain. He denies that the loss of returns from his crop was due to any fraudulent action on his part, and shows that his wife's application as a tenderer was given scant consideration. This is borne out by the answer of Mr. Wardle to the next question, No. 3728. Mr. Donovan asked the witness, "Would it not have been better to accept the £1,000 offer by Mrs. Addis?" Wardle replied, "We would then have been in the same position as before. If he could not pay I do not see how his wife could have done so." By question No. 3729 Mr. Diamond, one of the members of the Commission, asked, "Suppose that she satisfied the bank that she could carry on without assistance?" Mr. Wardle answered, "Provided the interest was guaranteed."

I ask members to consider if £1,000 was paid to the bank for the property there

would have been no interest to guarantee as there would have been nothing owing to the bank. Certainly the position would not have been as Mr. Wardle said—"the same as before." It would have been quite different. The bank would have received a cash payment of £1,000 on the suggestion I put forward, and the farm would have been the property of Mrs. Addis. If the officials had said, "Produce £1,000 and we will think about admitting you to this property," they might, and I believe they would, have found themselves in a much better position. They could have said, "Yes, you can have the property for £1,000. You can take possession the day after you produce the money." But no such action was taken as far as I know. This account was in no worse position than that of any other farmers in the district. It is not necessary for the House to take my word for it, because it is here in answer to a question by Mr. Donovan, a member of the Royal Commission. The answer was given by Mr. Wardle to question No. 3731, when he said, "I do not think Addis's account was worse than that of other farmers in the district. I do not think he was picked out for eviction. I do not know whether he had taken a prominent part in a political meeting." There we have the statement that his account was no worse than that of other farmers in the district. If his account was no worse and he was evicted, it is obvious that he was picked out for eviction. Otherwise, why evict him? That is a reasonable question to put. In support of the contentions advanced by Addis, in question 3734, in reply to Mr. Diamond, Mr. Wardle said the value of the improvements on the property in 1933 was £862. Later on Mr. Wardle said—

It is not our duty to find bags for settlers, but I arranged for Cresco to supply two bales in January and two in February.

Therefore, on the say so of Mr. Wardle, the Branch Manager of the Bank at Katanning, it is clear that these bags were supplied as late as January and February, obviously far too late for successful harvesting. It is a well known fact that crops are not harvested in February. Does not that bear out the contention of Addis that he had not the bags at the proper time of the year? Does not every man with an interest in farming know what loss is likely to eventuate from harvesting delays of that character, quite apart from the damage that might have been done in the intervening period? At this time

Mr. J. E. Brown was Field Inspector of the Agricultural Bank in the Katanning district, and on the same day he gave evidence to the Royal Commission. Referring to Addis in reply to Mr. Donovan, question 3745, Mr. Brown said—

About the time of the trouble Addis had about 1,200 acres cleared. Other improvements were a small galvanised humpy, a dam and a little fencing. Addis always cleared a little in excess of the Bank's advance.

That was the statement I made earlier to indicate his behaviour as regards the money he received from the Bank and the work done for it being reasonable. We have Mr. Brown at the time saying on oath that Addis always cleared a little in excess of the Bank's advance. Surely this is another indication that, previous to this pickle arising, Addis had given a reasonable amount of satisfaction! In question 3746 Mr. Donovan asked—

Why was Addis singled out when other settlers there owed £1,400 and £1,900?

The inspector replied—

He was not singled out.

In question 3748 Mr. Donovan asked and was answered as follows:—

You must have taken action?—He would not deliver his wheat.

The Chief Secretary, in dealing with this matter in the Legislative Council five years ago, stated that wheat to the value of £269 had been accounted for. Yet Mr. Brown said that Addis would not deliver his wheat. Brown's senior officer, the then district manager, however, stated on oath that Addis had not the bags in which to deliver his wheat until January or February, too late in a district where there was no bulk handling at the time. Once again I suggest that it was a question of physical inability to deliver wheat which could not be harvested or which, when harvested, could not be properly looked after for the purposes of delivery. There is nothing in Brown's evidence to indicate that the actual state of the crop had been inspected by any officer of the Bank in the earlier part of the year. The settlers in the vicinity hold the view that the crop was lost by weather conditions and lack of bags, but the Bank apparently holds the view, without there being any direct evidence of its truth, that Addis harvested wheat and would not deliver it. I suggest that there is no evidence or, if any, only the scantiest evidence of that, and I

hold the opinion that Addis's contentions are correct.

In question 3749 Mr. Donovan asked Inspector Brown whether he would live on the farm if it were given to him and the answer was, "I would not." In question 3764 Mr. Donovan asked and was answered as follows:—

If you had been as exacting with the rest of the settlers in that area, do you think it would have been better for the Bank?—So far as I can gather, Addis brought the whole of the trouble on himself.

It will be noted that Brown said, "So far as I can gather, Addis brought the whole of the trouble on himself." Here we have a district inspector who is apparently not in a position to say whether Addis did or did not bring the trouble upon himself. He merely says, "So far as I can gather." That is what he told the Royal Commission on oath. Would it not be reasonable to expect that the Agricultural Bank should first, through its inspector, have been completely satisfied that the fault was that of Addis? I am not suggesting by any means that Addis is perfection. In question 3774, Brown was asked by Mr. Diamond—

For character, how did Addis compare with Lavater and Bell?

The witness's answer is illuminating. He said—

Until the trouble with the non-delivery of wheat, he appeared to be a good type of settler and a good worker.

So, without any apparent reason, a man who always cleared a little in excess of the Bank's advance, a man who appeared to be a good type of settler and a good worker, suddenly becomes one who fraudulently disposes of wheat, according to his detractors, though he himself offers a perfectly reasonable explanation. This is supported by the evidence of other people by no means allied with Addis. It was alleged, apparently, that Addis's wheat was delivered through a man named Crossley who occupied a nearby farm. Crossley had 150 acres of wheat. He was alleged to be Addis's brother-in-law, but I am informed that this is not true. Crossley, it appears, delivered wheat equal to 16 bushels an acre from his 150 acres, and Addis approximately 6 bushels from the crop on his property.

Inspector Brown admitted that he never saw Crossley's crop of 150 acres, but he did see the stubble. That is to be found in

his answer to question 3775. According to his statement in the next question, he estimated from the stubble that Crossley could not have got more than 9 bushels, and although not saying so, implied that the other 7 bushels for 150 acres came from Addis's crop. None of the witnesses anywhere offered any other proof than that. Brown said he never saw Crossley's crop but he saw the stubble. Even supposing that Crossley did have wheat from some source other than his own 150 acres, I am not satisfied there is any proof forthcoming that he got it from Addis's crop, for I have already given substantial grounds for the belief that that account is not according to what happened. Some of the settlers in the district have stood by Addis, to my knowledge, in this argument as to whether the crop was lost or not harvested. These men are known to me; and one of them in particular is a quite successful farmer in the district, with a very high reputation. He is not one who indulges in political or other matters of that kind, but one who looks after his property and attends to the smaller public affairs of the district, and to patriotic work and the like as every decent man does when opportunity offers. The evidence of such a man would be invaluable to a Select Committee in determining whether there has been a substantial injustice done in this case. A Select Committee, or some civil form of inquiry, is the only means by which we can ventilate a case of this nature. I have often in times past mentioned in this Chamber the difficulty which exists in regard to settlers who do not know what reports about them may be contained in the Agricultural Bank files—whether good, or indifferent, or otherwise. There is no means of their ascertaining just what is alleged against them. As a general rule they are simply told that the bank's decision is so and so, and they sometimes have cause to wonder why the decision should be such. In the normal condition of things one does not take exception to it, unless there is a case of grave hardship such as I believe has occurred in this instance.

It is not necessary, I submit, in moving for a Select Committee, nor is it possible, to prove every allegation that is made. If complete proof of every allegation were available it would be quite unnecessary to have any further inquiry, because the case would prove itself. What I believe to be necessary is to advance such evidence as will show that

there is reasonable ground for inquiry. That, I believe, I have done, particularly in regard to the evidence given to the Royal Commission by Mr. Wardell and Mr. Brown, which substantiates to a great degree the statement made by Addis in regard to the matter. I cannot believe that any man who continues to press his claim for inquiry as Addis has done would do so unless labouring under a grave sense of injustice. Only two or three months ago I had letters from him asking me to proceed with this motion for a Select Committee on this, the second occasion. Addis has no troubles at the present time. I believe he is perfectly happy and contented, for the time being, with his war employment in the Army. He shows every sign of being greatly improved in health, which a few years ago was failing because of the continual worrying he had done over this matter, causing grave concern to those who knew him and had great respect for him. Today he is stated to be contented, as I have said; and if his claim had been purely the product of, shall we say, some mania, that time has passed. He still holds very firmly to the statement that his reputation has got to be cleared because, he says, he has done nothing which is fraudulent or unlawful. And because there is evidence that that is the position, and because I believe the treatment he received was occasioned by a misunderstanding of his actions, or misinterpretations of some other people which were applied to him, I submit this motion to the House in order to remove the question for all time.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin): The Leader of the Opposition has very fully informed the House upon the facts, figures, and legal aspect of the case, and the reactions of the judge in what has for the past 12 years been known as the Addis case. But the more important moral side of the question was not so fully considered by him, nor was it sufficiently considered by the Agricultural Bank prior to the court hearing. I hope members will bear in mind that there is no intention whatever to allege anything against the judge. His determinations were, quite properly, based upon purely legal considerations; and of course nothing more is expected of him. My personal view is that this is a case where the plaintiff, or more properly perhaps the appellant, has not a completely convincing story, unless his front line service, his

exemplary conduct as testified to by the Army authorities upon his honourable discharge from the Army, his shell-shocked condition and his other injuries, and also the very obvious ill-effects of his war experiences upon his mental faculties are taken fully and sympathetically into account. I stress the word "sympathetically." Merely to inquire in court whether this fine soldier was or was not legally culpable would be simply playing with a case of this kind.

I ask members to consider how many returned-soldier farmers, or for that matter how many civilian farmers, away back in the bad days of the 1930-31 depression, could have stood up to the test that lost Mr. Addis his farm? In my opinion, perhaps not more than 20 to 25 per cent.—it may not be even as many as that—could have done so. In my view, Addis should not have been subjected to merely cold, correct, unbending legal processes. Plainly—and this should be evident from the information afforded by the Leader of the Opposition—what Addis wanted was sympathy, understanding, help. If he was obstreperous at times, as undoubtedly he was, that was the time he really needed more sympathy, more understanding, more help, plus, of course, tolerance and patience, in particular patience. I have had a great deal of experience in the matter of attempting improvement in the outlook of shell-shocked soldiers. Talk of patience! Men in that state of mind require the patience of Job. There is no doubt whatever on that point. Yet patience is an essential requisite, for it is patience and a considerate understanding of a man's case that ultimately cure shell-shock, except of course in cases not amenable to cure. Surely the House will agree that this man, whose case is now under review, needed nature's cure, which means that he needed open air and a placid life until such time as he was restored to normality, or as near normality as was possible in a case like his. In place of that, what did this poor harassed soldier get? What he got in full measure was work far beyond his strength, long hours and business worries that clouded his mind and judgment. He got the constant harassment of officialdom and ultimately he received what is usually termed "legal dues," a rather rotten thing for any man to get. I would not like to get my legal dues nor do I suppose any member here would.

Members are aware this is not by any means the first time that this case has been brought before Parliament. The Army appreciated this man; it had received four years of very valuable service from him and at the end of that time he was, as I have said, discharged with what the member for the South-East Province, who dealt with his case some four or five years ago, described as a discharge with an absolutely exemplary character. But then he was passed on to the tender mercies of people who probably had not known him in earlier years, and he was put off his farm, the farm he had bought with his own money; because of his violent temper, which no-one disputes; because it was said—although there seems to be no evidence to prove it—that he flourished a gun; because he was not paying promptly for his tractor and because he owed £200 interest. Suppose we admit that he had a violent temper and did flourish a gun, there is nothing so very bad about that. Normally his temper might be regarded as a breach of good manners and the flourishing of a gun as a breach of the law. But it surely can be remembered in this man's favour that those two weaknesses are quite obviously the inevitable effects of a disturbed mentality which was war-caused.

A little understanding, a little sympathy, at that juncture of this man's case would almost certainly have worked wonders with him. He could not pay for his tractor; he could not pay his interest. Who else in those days could have paid for his tractor promptly or paid his interest promptly? Very few farmers in those days could have come up to scratch in regard to those two matters. Probably, very many farmers in that district owed the Agricultural Bank at that time not only £200—a miserable sum in the circumstances—but over £300, £400, £500 or £600, and in some cases even a great deal more. Yet, for some strange reason they were not proceeded against for dispossession, so why those proceedings should have been taken in Addis's case I still have to learn. If the Minister for Lands, when replying to the debate, if he has the opportunity a little later on, will give us that information we will be very pleased indeed to have it. I put this question, too. Was it any part of the Government's concern, that is to say, any admissible part of their plea for dispossession, that Addis had an erratic temper or that he owed money other than

that which he owed to the Agricultural Bank—as in those days more farmers did than did not—or that he, in his dementia, flourished a gun? These matters had nothing whatever to do with the Agricultural Bank. Members will agree with me that factors of that kind find no mention, either direct or implied, in the Agricultural Bank Act or in any of the allied Acts. I ask, therefore, had the plea for dispossession any true relationship to those factors? To my mind they are wholly extraneous as evidence in favour of dispossession. Was the existence of an interest debt of £200 the only relevant fact?

Mr. Watts: It was £110.

Mr. DONEY: That makes the action of the Agricultural Bank and later the action of the judge, if I may go so far as to criticise a little, all the more remarkable.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not entitled to criticise the judiciary.

Mr. DONEY: I do not think I am criticising the judiciary. If I am, I am ready to cease doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Speaker is the person to decide whether the hon. member is approaching it.

Mr. DONEY: If I am approaching it, I give you my word, Sir, that I will go no further in that direction than I have already done. I only say, if I may be permitted, that it is regrettable in a case of this kind that a man's physical and mental state and the fact that he had, as a soldier, such a fine record, should have been given such scant consideration when his future and his farm were at stake. The plea touching the £110 owing for interest was legitimate; no-one is complaining of that at all. But as to the other two points—and I hope members will take some notice of them—the flourishing of the gun was surely a concern of the Police Department. It certainly was no concern of the Agricultural Bank. As to the tractor, that was a question for whosoever had the ill-luck to supply it. As to bad temper, the man who suffered most of all was this poor, unfortunate Addis himself. Therefore, we come again to the question of whether a mere £110 debt was sufficient reason for dispossession, when so many others owed so much more. That is the point, and I trust the Minister will give it attention when he replies later. I unhesitatingly say that that was not a sufficient reason. I make bold to say there must be many farmers

—scores of them—who owe not merely £110 but probably £1,010 and still there is no attempt by the bank at dispossession. In the circumstances, we are surely entitled to claim that that is a remarkable state of affairs. It is necessary that the House should understand that Addis lived away out at Pingrup, 16 miles from the siding. I wonder whether all members appreciate exactly what distance means in the bush. I do not think they do.

In the case of Addis, distance meant being seemingly endless miles away at the wrong end of a rotten road. It can be seen, therefore, that his transport problems were a constant worry to him and a terrible strain upon his financial and mental resources. I can quite easily believe that his transport troubles created others and those troubles grew thick and fast upon him. He brooded; there is evidence upon that point. He became a prey to his imagination. He felt desperate—there is evidence on this point—because his wife and six very fine young children faced a grey and melancholy sort of future, and because the money he had scraped together to the extent of several hundred pounds had gone and given place to that much worth of debt and more. We naturally ask, therefore: Was it any wonder that when his legal tormentors—Government officials and the police—appeared at his doorstep, he exhibited a violent temper and flourished a gun?

Mr. Watts: I do not think he ever had one, really!

Mr. DONEY: Well, allegedly flourished a gun! If he had not a gun, that makes his case much stronger and that of those who proceeded against him so much weaker. Even if he had a gun, however, and did flourish it, what else can we expect? It is only the normal re-action of a man in that condition. We can quite easily appreciate this; therefore anyone connected with established authority—the Agricultural Bank, the police, or be they what they may—quite naturally got the rough edge of what no doubt had developed by that time into an uncontrollable temper. It appears to me that as there was a technical case against Addis—and there is no doubt that even an interest debt of £110 did provide grounds for a technical case—and as he was regarded apparently and, it must be admitted with some superficial justification, as something of a damned nuisance to everybody, the bank must have come to a decision that for the general good of the

departments concerned and of his neighbours he should be got rid of. I quite readily admit that there are two sides to this case, but I cannot help feeling—and I believe the House will feel that way, too—that Addis was very harshly dealt with indeed. I repeat that his case was psychological and mental rather than merely legal.

Mr. Cross: What is he doing now?

Mr. DONEY: What has that to do with it? I think the Leader of the Opposition spent about 10 minutes explaining that the man was now in the Army and told the House about his rank and expectations. Now the member for Canning wants to know what he is doing! I met this man only once. That was in the train some 12 months ago. I found him a man in the very pink of condition and obviously a very different fellow from what he must have been in 1930-31. I admit that he still is a pretty pugnacious, pigheaded sort of fellow, but bear in mind that this man had been and still is a soldier and that pugnacity and pigheadedness are essential qualities in a soldier if that soldier is to be worthy of his calling. I am very anxious indeed that by-and-by when we vote on this question members should give consideration not only to the legal side but in particular to what might be called the psychological side. If members must have concern—as no doubt they must—for the legal aspect of the case, let them bear in mind that this man owed in interest only £110, and the Minister for Lands will probably be able to tell the House by-and-by that there are many accounts on the books of the Agricultural Bank disclosing that farmers owe £1,000 and more in interest alone, and yet for some inexplicable reason they have not been proceeded against.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have listened very carefully to the case submitted by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Williams-Narrogin in support of the motion. The Leader of the Opposition based most of his submissions upon whether Addis was properly evicted if the main consideration in his case was whether he delivered the proper wheat or not. I intend not merely to examine the legal side of the case but to endeavour to show to the House that this man has had the utmost consideration, not merely from legal people and not merely from the Agricultural Bank officials. It is as well to stress the point

that this case is many years old, that this man was proceeded against in 1932 and that the foreclosure took place in May of that year, 11 years ago. It is well to remember that following all the happenings subsequent to that date this case was ventilated in the Legislative Council in 1938 when a move was made in that Chamber for a Select Committee to inquire into it. That House turned down the motion for a Select Committee by 14 votes to 10. I am quite confident that had the Leader of the Opposition requested either privately or publicly in this Chamber permission to peruse these files this motion would not have come before the House. I take it that the hon. gentleman took no steps to see these files.

Mr. Watts: I asked your predecessor in office to let me see them and he refused. That was before the motion was moved in the Legislative Council.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is well to remember, too, that although that happened five years ago and a request was made for those files then, there has been no recent request for them, and it is well also to remember that these happenings took place prior to the present situation in the Agricultural Bank and prior to the present control of the Agricultural Bank. It was in April, 1933, that the then Agricultural Bank trustees declined to consider Addis any further because, as the documents show, they considered that he had given the bank a raw deal. They were not prepared to grant any further assistance and the only action they were prepared to consider was to enforce the security. Let us contemplate the type of men who were in charge of the Agricultural Bank in those days. The three trustees who made this decision were not unconscionable men. The trustees who decided that foreclosure should take place and recommended it to the then Minister were the late Mr. E. A. McLarty, the late Mr. Grogan and Mr. Maley.

Mr. Mann: Mr. Grogan is still alive.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am very glad of that. Those of us who knew Mr. McLarty's temperament will remember that, in spite of his having a full sense of responsibility, he was an extremely sympathetic man.

Mr. Doney: That is always conceded.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will read shortly to the House the comments of this extremely sympathetic man on this case

after he had given consideration to it. My colleague, the Minister for Works, has asked was not Mr. Moran the third trustee? He was, and Mr. Grogan was manager. It is on record under date 28th April, 1932, that no consideration is due to this settler. His record as a farmer is disgraceful, and action to enforce security should be taken. That note appears over the signatures of the three gentlemen I have named. In May, 1932, the usual notices calling up the debt were issued. I am wondering whether the raising of false hopes in a mind after a case has received such consideration as has this one, is a wise or kindly action. There are many documents to show that this man had not merely the utmost consideration from the Bank, but that the case has been scrutinised by many people capable of assessing the facts. If the facts were examined by any unbiassed people they could come to no other conclusion than that arrived at by those gentlemen of 11 years ago who dealt with the case when it was very fresh. In spite of what has been said about the officials the matter was conscientiously dealt with at that time. It is on record that the late Mr. Arnold Piesse, who was the then member for Katanning, wrote to the then Minister for Lands and said that from the inquiries he had made he was satisfied that the Bank was not at fault, but was well within its legal rights in the procedure it adopted.

Mr. Doney: It is not contested that it was within its legal rights.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will shortly deal with its moral rights. He made some further comments concerning the temperament of the man, but I do not intend to quote those in detail because I would not like to prejudice the case from that angle. But it is noteworthy that the then Minister for Lands, the Hon. C. G. Latham, received a letter from a nearby farmer at Pingrup regarding the dispossession of Addis, and he decided that he would take no steps to interfere with the foreclosure. The Hon. Mr. Latham was for many years Leader of the Country Party in this Parliament. It was on his decision that the foreclosure proceeded. Subsequent to that the Wheat-growers' Union investigated this case and sponsored it. Much activity took place in the district at that time because of the action of the Wheatgrowers' Union in its endeavours to have this case properly heard.

Another authority in this case, and one of the most impartial that it has been my privilege to deal with as Minister for Lands when considering difficult land cases, was the Land Committee of the Returned Soldiers' League. That committee consists of experienced farmers and it considered this case as one of a fellow-digger. The member for Williams-Narrogin suggested that this fine soldier did not have his case fully considered from every angle. I suggest that this fine soldier had his case fully considered by his own people; by the R.S.L. Land Committee. In discussing this case when the debate proceeded in the Upper House in 1938 the Hon. J. Cornell said this—

For years I have acted as one of the R.S.L. committee that deals with questions of land settlement. The committee had Addis's case in hand and eventually dropped it. When the R.S.L. land committee drops the case of a returned man, the committee must have good reasons for doing so. I have had long association, as a member of the committee with the officials of the Agricultural Bank, particularly the ex-Managing Trustee, Mr. McLarty, and also Mr. Grogan. When those officers decide to dispossess a returned man we can rest assured that there is justification for doing so. Indeed, the dispossession could probably have taken place 12 or 18 months earlier.

Mr. Cornell goes on to comment on the sympathetic character of the then trustees. Another gentleman who was then and I understand still is a member of the Land Committee of the R.S.L. is the member for Toodyay. He was a member of the R.S.L. committee that investigated this case and turned it down. When the case was before the court for repossession it was heard by Mr. Justice Dwyer, and the following appears from a copy of "The West Australian" of the 20th June, 1933:—

In giving judgment His Honour said that defendant objected to possession being given to the Bank because there had been no real default and the Bank had received £269. The Bank replied that it had only received £73. Defendant objected to the distraint and claimed that his credit had suffered and that he was entitled to £750 damages. There did not seem to be any real difficulty about the case. The interest was due to the Bank and had been due for some time and the default had continued for much longer than the two months allowed. The question was: Did the Bank receive the money? It seemed quite clear that it did not and as he held this opinion, this ended the defence and the counter-claim. It might be a duty—and he was far from saying that it was—for the Bank to realise on the proceeds of the crop. Even if this was so, it only showed that, in this regard, the Bank did not choose to exercise its right.

I would like members to note the following words. The learned judge said that—

He was perfectly satisfied that the Bank had behaved correctly both commercially (in relation to the other creditors), morally (in relation to defendant) and legally. Judgment would be given to the Bank to possess the property and the counter-claim would be dismissed.

It was the opinion at that time of the learned judge that on moral grounds as well as on legal grounds the Bank was quite within its rights. So I cannot support in any way the contention that this man was, as the Leader of the Opposition has suggested, picked out for eviction. It is also very interesting to note the words of my predecessor, the Hon. M. F. Troy, when he received a deputation on this matter subsequent to the foreclosure. This deputation was the one mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Troy, in his reply, said—

You have come here because you want to see justice done to Addis. Addis has received not only justice, but justice over and above his deserts ever since he has been on the land. The judge's statement that the Bank had behaved correctly, commercially, morally and legally was most comprehensive. I hold no brief for the Bank, but there is not the slightest suggestion in my mind that there has been any victimisation. If I had the power to reinstate Addis, which I have not, I would not dream of doing it.

Those are the comments of people, including a judge, who thoroughly reviewed the case. I will now read what Mr. E. A. McLarty said in reporting on this case to his Minister, and I think that by no stretch of imagination could anyone suggest that Mr. McLarty was unsympathetic.

Mr. Doney: I am referring to those who were on his doorstep.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. McLarty, in reporting to the Minister for Lands on the 12th July, 1933, said, *inter alia*—

Knowing from previous experience what an unreliable man Addis was, we reluctantly agreed to give him special assistance to put in his 1931-32 crop, and advances were made amounting to approximately £400 for the purchase of horses, superphosphate, sustenance, etc. Addis stripped part of the crop and dumped the wheat without bagging same. He came to Perth before completing harvesting, and in the end the department received about £45 out of the £400 advanced. . . . We have many unworthy clients, but I know of none who deserves less consideration than Addis. The trustees are not prepared under any circumstances to again accept Addis as a client, and this could not be done without stultifying

ourselves. The Wheatgrowers' Union has done everything possible to nullify the Bank's powers, and having failed to do so, are appealing to you as a final effort. A perusal of the file will, I am sure, satisfy you that Addis has received far more consideration than he deserves.

Those are the words of a man who gave all possible consideration to people on the land that were in difficulties. So I submit that those points dispense entirely with paragraph (a) of the motion. In connection with the tender dealt with in paragraph (b), it is perfectly true that, when tenders were called, only one response was received and that came from Mrs. Addis. There is no obligation on the Bank to accept any tender, and I understand from the document that no deposit was lodged with the tender. After full consideration of the matter, the trustees, two of whom are dead, rejected her tender, for reasons which were obvious to them and upon which they cannot be examined.

A very important point to be kept in mind is this: If we are to resurrect this case we must have an opportunity to get behind the scenes and find the reasons that prompted men of the calibre of these three trustees to give this case no further consideration and this man no further quarter. I find great difficulty in locating strong points in the submissions of the Leader of the Opposition and his colleague, and I find very little to assist me in coming to the conclusion that the case, having been investigated first by the three trustees, then by the Minister for Lands (Mr. Latham), then by the R.S.L. Land Committee, then by the court under Mr. Justice Dwyer and then by a later Minister for Lands, Mr. Troy, could be satisfactorily resurrected, that it could do any good to the man himself or give him any satisfaction.

Mr. Doney: The famous Beck case was resurrected after 20 years in far less favourable circumstances than this one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am submitting what appears to me to be the case of one farmer amongst many. It cannot be contended for a moment that the case was not investigated by people able to assess the facts, people who had a full knowledge of them, much better than could be done today.

Mr. Watts: That is the question. Did they have a full knowledge of the facts?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Had the hon. member moved firstly for the tabling of the files, they would have been submitted immediately.

Mr. Watts: The files do not disclose all the facts, according to what I have read in the evidence.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have not had much opportunity to counter what has been produced as facts on the other side. The whole case was investigated and investigated impartially, and I take it that every opportunity was availed of to present the facts at the time. Even if the case were dealt with by a Select Committee, notwithstanding that there has been an impartial hearing and a thorough inquiry, might not we reach the position that a Select Committee, even more sympathetic than the trustees, three from one side and two from the other, might decide that in spite of the facts disclosed, this man is entitled to some compensation and recommend to Parliament that certain compensation be paid? If that happened, where would it lead us? If it were a majority decision and Parliament endorsed the recommendation that the man should be compensated, it could happen that the recommendation might not be acted upon. It is conceivable that, even though the facts were against such a decision, the Government would again be blamed for not giving effect to something which past examination and scrutiny had shown to be unwarranted.

Therefore I submit that this is not a case, as the Leader of the Opposition told us, of a man having a sudden fall into disgrace for non-delivery of wheat. There is much more behind it than that. The facts, as I have disclosed them in the comments by Mr. E. A. McLarty, suggest that Addis was an unsatisfactory and unsuitable client before 1931-32.

Mr. Watts: Why did Mr. Wardle express those things before the Royal Commission on oath?

Mr. Doney: No witness on oath before the Royal Commission was asked as to the man's character.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is certainly very much of the evidence to show that there was dissatisfaction with this man prior to 1932; and if that is so, what happened subsequent to the putting-in of the 1932 crop has not the relative importance given to it by the Leader of the Opposition.

So I submit that all those people who heard the case gave it a fair and impartial inquiry. I can only deduce from the facts as I read them. I have not had the privilege of hearing Addis, as have the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Williams-Narrogin. I had the opportunity yesterday, but I refused to avail myself of it. Addis came to see me.

Mr. Doney: What grounds did you think he had for coming to see you?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very good grounds. But as he had been on the same day to the Leader of the Opposition, he certainly could not plead his case to both of us on the same day. I hope the House is sufficiently convinced that, after the case had been ventilated in the courts I have mentioned and even in the court of the Legislative Council, it too should not agree to a Select Committee.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

MOTION—TIMBER.

As to Logs for Metropolitan Milling.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.53]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the disposal of timber rights by the Forests Department which permits the transport of timber in log form into the metropolitan area for milling purposes is not in the best interests of the industry or the State.

On the 21st October of last year the member for Guildford-Midland submitted here the following motion:—

That in the opinion of this House the Forests Department's persistent refusal to make available cutting rights on the Crown forest lands within carting distance of the sawmills now operating in the metropolitan area is an unfair discrimination between the people of the metropolis and those of the country districts; it limits and/or prevents healthy competition, and consequently makes sawn timber relatively dear to consumers in the metropolis.

That motion was submitted to members to enable them to express their disapproval of the action of the Forests Department, and it was carried. I consider it highly important that I should make brief reference to the policy which the Forests Department has adopted. It is referred to, to some extent, in the Forests Act of 1918, which provides—

There shall be a department of the Public Service called the Forests Department having

under the direction of the Minister such powers, authorities and duties as are provided by this Act.

I may explain that my object in expressing the policy of the department is to show how very important it is that that policy should be maintained, and that the department and the work of the department should not be cramped and made difficult because of the carrying of a resolution in this Chamber. The policy further provides that the department shall have the control and management of all matters of forest policy. When we realise that in our Forests Department there are men who have made a life study of timber, it is surely most desirable that that policy should not be interfered with, for the reasons which were submitted. Under the Act the Conservator is required from time to time to declare working plans for State forests and timber reserves. Such plans regulate the management of State forests and timber reserves for a period not exceeding ten years. No one could criticise a policy which has as its object the beneficent results necessarily following upon the faithful observance and carrying-out of that policy. A working plan may specify—

(a) the maximum area from which forestry produce may be taken annually;

(b) the maximum quantity of forestry produce that may be disposed of annually;

(c) the silvicultural operations necessary to ensure the regeneration of the best species of forest produce on areas which have been cut over; and

(d) such other matters as the Conservator may think fit.

Now, every plan is subject to the approval of the Governor; and of course the plan to which I make reference was duly approved. Owing to the lack of forest management prior to the passing of the Forests Act of 1918, the sawmilling industry of Western Australia has been migratory. Towns have been built in the forests. They flourished for a decade or more and then disappeared. The idea of the sawmill as a permanent business, cutting only the real product of the growing forest, is now being developed, and I do not know that any elaboration is required to show that that is the right course to pursue. The first step to bring the timber industry as a whole on to a working basis upon a general working plan for forests was prepared; and it was approved by the Governor-in-Council in March, 1929. This plan had as its object the stabilisation

of the industry on conditions to maintain it in perpetuity. The plan provided for a considerable reduction in the rate of cutting, which had been far in excess of growth, and had resulted in the closing down of certain mills which had been long established on Crown land, and in a reduction of the intake of others.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is getting away from his notice of motion. The hon. member knows what the motion is.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, Sir; exactly; and when the motion submitted by the member for Guildford-Midland was carried—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not discussing what the member for Guildford-Midland moved. We are only discussing a motion to place the industry—

Mr. SAMPSON: I am merely pointing out that the resolution which was carried had the effect of undermining and seriously violating the policy—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the hon. member that what the member for Guildford-Midland did on some other occasion has no application to the present motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: My justification for the motion is the resolution which was carried. The position is that, if the present motion is not carried, the policy which has been adopted cannot be carried into active effect. My motion reads—

That in the opinion of this House, the disposal of timber rights by the Forests Department which permits the transport of timber in log form into the metropolitan area for milling purposes is not in the best interests of the industry or the State.

This aims to cancel the effect of the resolution which was carried by this House on the 17th November last.

Mr. Patrick: You are trying to show the effect of the resolution.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. It is fatal to the dependability and the usefulness of the Forest Department's policy, because a resolution carried by this House must be given consideration to by that department. Already a disability has arisen because of the passage of that resolution. An auction has been held and approval given to the issuing of permits enabling timber to be transported from the point of production in the forest, by road, to the metropolitan area, there to be milled. I crave your leave, Sir, to allow me briefly to set out the policy of the depart-

ment, because on that policy the position greatly depends. As a first step to putting the timber industry on a firmer basis, a general working plan for jarrah forests was prepared; and it was approved by the Governor-in-Council in March, 1929. This plan has as its object the stabilisation of the industry on a basis laid down to maintain it in perpetuity. It provides for a considerable reduction in the rate of cutting, which had been far in excess of growth and resulted in the closing down of certain mills which had been long established on Crown lands and a reduction of the intake of others.

During 1939 the first periodic revision of this general working plan for the jarrah forests was prepared and it received the approval of the Governor-in-Council. This revised plan has a term of ten years. The working plan provides for continuity of output. That is really the basic feature of the policy—perpetuity, the perpetual carrying on of sawmilling in the districts concerned, and not the transportation of logs from those districts to the metropolitan area, where the milling would be carried out. The forest is divided into sections, and the maximum annual cut and the order of cutting are laid down for each section for ten years ahead. This involves certain areas being held in reserve for future cutting, when present permits expire. Anyone with the slightest interest in forestry knows that that is of first importance. Cutting rights over these reserved areas are to be submitted to sale by public auction or by tender. The erection of mills on private property with inadequate timber supplies, and in the metropolitan area, where sufficient timber is not available to justify the expense incurred in the erection of a plant, has led to repeated applications for cutting rights on the reserved areas governed by the working plan. When the member for Guildford-Midland brought his motion forward he explained to the House that he did so as an act of principle. I do not propose to examine the reasons which prompted the hon. member excepting that his desire appeared to be that sawmills in the metropolitan area should operate. Unfortunately, he did not point out the effect that this would have on forest areas. It will have a very bad effect; because, after all, the maintenance of sawmilling plants in the metropolitan area is to a large extent an innovation, as I will

show as I proceed. I shall later show how Canada deals with this matter.

One important benefit of milling at the point of production is the unlimited space available. When timber has been milled in the metropolitan area, there is but a limited space in which to dry and mature it. Further, there is great danger when timber is stacked in the metropolitan area. Mills at Yarloop, Jarrahdale, North Dandalup, Dwellingup and elsewhere provide examples of the proper maturing of timber. In the metropolitan area there is insufficient room to do what is required. I realise the member for Guildford-Midland desired that those engaged in the milling industry in the metropolitan area should be kept busy, but that is not a good thing so far as the industry is concerned.

Mr. Cross: Do you not think we want any timber in the metropolitan area?

Mr. SAMPSON: Of course timber is wanted in the metropolitan area, but the milling of it in that area does not provide any advantage. In fact, it is a disadvantage. There is no difficulty in obtaining timber for the metropolitan area, so that the imaginary problem of the member for Canning will not arise. No reference was made by the member for Guildford-Midland, when moving his motion, to the injury that would result to districts by depriving them of bread-winners and their families, who would remove to the city. Surely, that is a most important matter. To take such people away from the country district is not the way to establish the State on sound lines. The hon. member made no reference to the closing of schools which would result if families removed from the country districts. We have only to carry this policy, which is the very negation of progress, into effect to ensure that schools would no longer be necessary in our timber areas. While it may be said that this refers only to forests which are near Perth, we have only to establish this principle of conveying logs from the bush into the metropolitan area and it is goodbye to the Forests Department, goodbye to this means of income to the State and goodbye to this very important primary industry.

Mr. Doney: There would be a heavy wastage of tyres and petrol, too, through bringing in logs instead of sawn timber.

Mr. SAMPSON: Exactly! No mention was made as to the petrol shortage and to

the fact that we are at present limited in the amount of petrol we can use. No reference was made to the injury done to roads by the heavy freight carried. Not one word of all this was mentioned, and yet it is a fact, so I am told, that logs which are brought in from the forest are carried in the main on the two back wheels of a truck and the consequent quick breaking down of tyres follows. In the bush, as members are aware, the logs are transported by whims that can travel through the bush and bring the logs to the bush mill and then later, when the commercial timber has been milled, the freight can be sent by rail and thereby perhaps a far greater benefit is done to Midland Junction than would follow the breaking down of the timber industry in the timber districts. As stated, the weight of logs which are brought down on motor-trucks is carried practically on the rear wheels and 95 per cent. of unmilled logs are brought in on trucks without trailer or semi-trailer. That is worth noting. These vehicles are not the right type to bring in the unmilled logs and weights of up to 12 tons are carried on those trucks. There was no reference made in the remarks submitted by the hon. member to the numerous breaches of the traffic laws and the unduly heavy loading.

Mr. North: Are the roads being affected at all?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. I will refer to that in a moment or two. No reference was made to cutting out railway traffic. Surely the great Western Australian Government railway scheme is of first importance. It is of more importance to Midland Junction and the State generally than that certain permits should be obtained to enable logs to be brought from the bush for milling in the metropolitan area. I am not sure that it is a good thing for those living in closely congested areas that there should be a milling of jarrah logs there, because the sawdust must be got rid of. The hon. member said when he brought this motion forward, it is no use to expect to use all the sawdust for the making of tennis courts. That I submit, was beside the question. If a fire has to be kept going to burn the sawdust, people living in the vicinity of the mill in the metropolitan area are going to suffer some disability. There are certain diseases that arise from the breathing of the smoke and irritation to the throat is caused thereby.

In the bush there would be no difficulty in getting away from the settlement. The settlement would not be right near the mill. It might be as much as a quarter of a mile away and so the conditions would be much better.

The member for Guildford-Midland referred to Mr. McKee who, it was stated, has a mill in Midland Junction but there are other points to which he might have made reference. He might have said that the work of the Main Roads Department and of the local authorities would be largely destroyed because these roads are not constructed in so substantial a fashion as to carry timber loads weighing up to 12 tons. I do not think I am exaggerating, because these logs are green, exceedingly heavy and very destructive to the roads. Only recently I went across from Piesse's Brook to Mundaring Weir and already that beautiful road is showing pot-holes and I am told that logs are transported along it. I do not know that the member for Guildford-Midland is responsible for that, but it is not the hon. member I am concerned with but the breaking down of a policy which has been brought about by the carrying of the resolution to which I have already referred. The breaking down of that policy must cause the closing of schools, the closing of stores, the cessation of the postal service and the development of the inland. All would go. Mr. McKee was referred to as having a mill in Midland Junction. He may be a very excellent man. I do not know anything about him except that he wants to mill logs in the metropolitan area. I am not going to criticise him but I want him and others interested in metropolitan mills to move into the country and do the job in the natural and proper place. We must put a stop to the idea of transporting logs by road and bringing about the very early destruction of our forests. It might be asked why would that be so.

Those engaged in the work in the bush are temporarily accommodated in tents. In a few weeks they cut out all the timber the department allow them to take so they pack up their tents and the place sees them no more. That is what happens when the milling is done in the metropolitan area. But if the policy of the department is carried out, only a certain quantity of approved timber may be cut and then there is an opportunity for the men to engage in other

work to which I will refer. Especially I would ask members to consider the number of orchards established throughout the hills districts, work which was initiated by forestry workers. The member for Guildford-Midland feels that everything in the world is right, that God's in his Heaven and all's well with the world, so long as timber is milled in the metropolitan area. That viewpoint I am sure will not stand looking into at all and I do not agree with it. Nor do others who have given consideration to it. The closing down of industry in the forest areas is wrong in principle and it becomes the duty of members of this House—having in mind the very important position which we hold and the fact that the Forests Department, being under Government control, must needs listen to what is said and carried here and act upon it—to see that when we do something we do that which is in the interests of industry and of the State.

Mr. W. Hegney: How many metropolitan mills are involved?

Mr. SAMPSON: I will name a few in a moment.

Mr. Cross interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: The member for Caning should exercise a little discretion. Perhaps it is wrong for me to expect too much.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must ask the hon. member to keep to his motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: Members are very interested in a subject that we have heard a lot about from time to time, namely the winning of the peace. We know that we are winning the war and now we want to win the peace.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no war and no peace in the motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: I want to show that the carrying of the motion last November was not on the lines of reconstruction. If the motion before the House is carried it will nullify the wrong which has been done and will be a step towards ensuring sound reconstruction, and in that something will be achieved towards winning the peace. The member for Pilbara has asked how many mills are in the metropolitan area. I admit that there are not many, but if there were only one it would be too many. We have carried a resolution which amounts to a direction to the department. We must not do something which will permanently and seriously injure the timber industry. Re-

ference was made to an offer by Mr. McKee to establish a steam-driven mill at Toodyay. I would have liked a little more information about that. I have no objection to a steam mill being put up at Toodyay; it is a wise thing. But members ought to know that at Toodyay there is an electricity plant.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Would the hon. member say that Toodyay was in the metropolitan area?

Mr. SAMPSON: Reference has been made to an offer by Mr. McKee.

Mr. SPEAKER: Reference is not made in the motion to anything outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. SAMPSON: I want to show that there is justification for my motion and that there was no justification for the carrying of the other motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member should have worded his motion differently if he desired to discuss all those things.

Mr. SAMPSON: Electric current is provided at Toodyay by the local authority. I will not dilate further on that point. At Walliston's siding there is a mill which is cutting fruit case wood. It is driven by electricity. Tognela is a fruit case wood-cutter on the Canning-Kalamunda road. He utilises electricity. We were told that electricity was not available, Smailes & Co., at Karragullen mill by steam and cut general timber, including fruit case wood. The W.A. Salvage company at Bedfordale carries on its work by steam and cuts timber, including fruit case wood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! What has that to do with the motion? The motion is to show that the carting of timber in log form into the metropolitan area is not in the best interests of the State.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is so, and I am showing that it is quite competent for Mr. McKee, or anyone else to go into certain timber districts and use electrical or steam power. If I could not show that, Mr. Speaker, you would probably come to the conclusion that there is no objection to bringing these logs into the metropolitan area.

Mr. Patrick: We want the mill on the spot.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, at the point of production in the forest.

Mr. Doney: Even as far away as Toodyay.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. That was continually referred to in the speech made by the hon. member. A Mr. Nicholas operating along the Albany road, Kelmscott, uses electricity. He cuts fruit case wood. When one considers all these things, one is astounded.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not as much as is the Speaker in listening to this, because it is not in the motion. I must ask the hon. member to keep to his motion.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have been asked what mills are concerned, and if I can show that electricity is available in certain places—

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing in this about electricity. All the hon. member has to show is that it is detrimental to bring timber in log form into the metropolitan area.

Mr. SAMPSON: I appreciate that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member to keep to the point. I have given him a lot of latitude.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have not got through the names yet.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is likely to either!

Mr. SAMPSON: May I show generally that numbers of mills are driven both by steam and electricity?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, we do not want to know anything about mills driven by steam or electricity. We only want to know that it is detrimental to bring logs into the metropolitan area by road.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is so, because the milling of the timber can be done on the spot with the use of either of these two types of power.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing about that. The hon. member must show that it is detrimental to bring the timber here.

Mr. SAMPSON: Very well.

The Minister for Works: Your case is based on decentralisation.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, to a large extent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Decentralisation does not come into this item.

Mr. SAMPSON: The transport of timber, in log form, to the metropolitan area seems to be in direct violation of anything that relates to decentralisation. We want to show that the work can be done in the country. I realise that you, Mr. Speaker, are a little doubtful as to whether it is in order for me to do that, and I do not propose to persist. Would I be in order in

referring to the history of a place known in the old days as Lion Mill but now called Mt. Helena?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, the hon. member would not be in order.

Mr. SAMPSON: The policy was carried into effect in those days, for some years at least. We want to encourage the industry in our outer districts. I hope no objection will be raised by any member on a point of order if I show that the establishment of orchards in the forest districts has been made possible by forestry, and that the railway in many instances was constructed to enable timber to be brought to the metropolis. Consequently the transport of timber to the metropolitan area in log form for milling purposes is not in the best interests of the State. It is very much the reverse. It was stated that it would be wrong if Mr. McKee were compelled to close down his metropolitan electrically-driven mill. May I suggest to that gentleman that he shift his mill to those districts where the timber is waiting to be milled. I was greatly impressed by the statement of the Minister for Forests when this matter was previously before the House. The Minister said—

The hon. member gives as his reason for speaking of "unfair discrimination" that the department's policy prevents competition and consequently makes sawn timber relatively dear to metropolitan residents. I do not propose to ask members to debate seriously the merits or demerits as to whether the metropolitan area should receive some advantage in the form of cheap timber as against country districts. I personally, as representative of a country district, disagree with any preference being given either to metropolitan residents or metropolitan industries.

The Minister's statement, in my opinion, was sound, and accordingly I have taken the liberty of quoting it. The question we have to decide is whether the timber industry is to be preserved. It will not be preserved unless the policy of the Forests Department is maintained. The product of timber mills can best be carried by rail. The timber mills, when carried on locally, are most helpful in the case of bush fires. We have had experience of this throughout the timber areas. Those concerned with local mills provide the best help when bush fires occur. How different is the position of the timber exploiter! I hope no objection will be raised to my using that word. I refer to those who, having obtained a permit over an area, secure all the timber they can get from it

and fold up their tents and depart. Those men live in tents. When timber mills are established, as they have been in various districts, good houses are built.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member is not careful, those tents will come down. I ask him again to keep to the motion. He has already mentioned tents twice, and it savours of repetition.

Mr. SAMPSON: The exploiters say, "Let us take the logs to the metropolitan area," and then, after they have greatly injured the life of the forest and the district roads and gained a temporary advantage, the future of the industry is destroyed. There is no exaggeration in that statement. Because of heavy overcutting in past years, it will be some time before the position can be rectified, but the department has the job in hand. Until the motion moved by the member for Guildford-Midland was passed, the department consistently refused to sell jarrah logs to sawmills operating in and around the metropolitan area. As a result of the resolution, the policy of the department has been affected and recently, following an auction, a permit has been issued that allows unmilled logs to be transported to the metropolitan area.

As I have pointed out, such mills do not lead to an increase in the consumption of timber. The local demand for timber is insufficient to absorb the building scantling and other sizes for local use. Those timbers are usually recovered as by-products of the export timber trade, and, without local business, export trade is unprofitable. The milling of logs in the metropolitan area does not mean the production of timber for export. It is interesting to recall the establishment of Barton's Mill many years ago, but that had to close down through lack of local orders. It was not closed down through the timber being cut out. Local orders were not available. From Barton's Mill to Pickering Brook the company had its own line, and from Pickering Brook there is portion of the Upper Darling Range railway over which the timber was brought down to Midland Junction and Perth.

Many mills operating in the forests areas cut timber for fruit-cases. As the Minister for Agriculture is aware, there are times when it is very difficult indeed to obtain fruit-case wood. Therefore I hope the policy of the Forests Department will command the respect of members. May I now refer

to some of the development brought about by forestry work? One of the largest orchards in Australia, Illawarra—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing in the motion about orchards.

Mr. SAMPSON: Orchards have been made possible because railways were constructed to enable the timber to be brought to the city.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will discuss the bringing into the metropolitan area of timber in log form.

Mr. SAMPSON: I see—

Mr. SPEAKER: I see the hon. member has not been obeying the Chair.

Mr. SAMPSON: I would like to refer to my early days.

Mr. SPEAKER: Had the hon. member included that in his motion, he might have been permitted to do so.

Mr. SAMPSON: I want to point out that the spirit of forestry is not confined to Western Australia. I think it would be in accordance with my motion if I referred to wattles.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will speak to his motion and nothing else. I have warned him several times, but he does not attempt to obey the Chair. If he does not keep to the motion, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. SAMPSON: You mean to say, Mr. Speaker, that I must not leave the question of hauling timber in log form into the metropolitan area? I promised earlier in my remarks to show what is being done in Canada.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing about Canada in the motion. The hon. member is entitled to show that it is not in the best interests of the State to bring timber in log form into the metropolitan area.

Mr. SAMPSON: I could do that if I were permitted to give argument in support of it. Otherwise I can merely keep on repeating that it is wrong to bring unmilled logs into the metropolitan area.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has done that quite a lot.

Mr. SAMPSON: I want to draw a comparison in order to illustrate my remarks.

Mr. Marshall: Why did not you display some capacity when you were drafting your motion?

Mr. SAMPSON: I should have discussed it with the hon. member, and then I could not have gone wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now proceed!

Mr. SAMPSON: I appeal to members to assist in this matter. There has been serious injury done, but the time is not too late for the adoption of another course. The effect of the resolution carried is to cramp the work of some of the best officers of the Forests Department. It is discouraging their efforts. The bringing forward of that resolution was exceedingly unwise. I submit it has been proved to be a bad thing when Parliament carries a resolution the effect of which is to limit the powers of the Forests Department; and that is what has been done. The powers in question are established for the good of the industry and the development of the State. We have to do what we can, and the very best we can, in order to develop Western Australia. We have taken the wrong turning in respect of this timber question. I greatly regret that the Standing Orders do not permit of further statements from me which, I am sure, would make it even more clear that the effect of the resolution carried last year is very bad. I am not permitted to point out what has been done in Canada, but I have here the "Vernon News" a newspaper which members are welcome to see. It says—

In the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia a local mill and box factory has been established, and 70 hands are employed.

That shows what results when the right policy is adopted. In British Columbia they do not send unmilled logs to Vancouver and say that they must be milled there. The Canadians mill logs in the district which produces them. And so, as you, Mr. Speaker, have been very severe in respect of this motion, I thank you nevertheless for the indulgence which you have exhibited.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member, of course, must not reflect on the Chair.

Mr. SAMPSON: I earnestly do appeal to members to realise the importance of this reconstruction matter about which we are so urgent. We shall do something towards it if my motion is supported.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	18
Noes	..	..	..	6
Majority for	..	..	..	12

AYES.

Mr. Boyle
Mr. Coverley
Mr. Doney
Mr. Graham
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Leahy
Mr. McDonald
Mr. McLarty
Mr. Millington

Mr. North
Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Perkins
Mr. Sampson
Mr. Seward
Mr. Watts
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Withers
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Fox
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Marshall

Mr. Needham
Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Cross

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 9.48 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 2nd September, 1943.

Address-in-reply, tenth day

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.32]: In addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, it appears to me the time has come to speak of many things. No-one can but agree with the thought expressed in the Speech at the pleasure we all feel at the recent turn of events in the war and the magnificent victories of the United Nations. None of us can but feel proud of those achievements, which are so notable and have been carried to such a successful conclusion by our Armed Forces. We should stress the importance and the magnitude of the efforts of the people of Great Britain in this gigantic struggle. I desire to voice my fervent hope that at the end of this war we Australians shall feel more British than ever before and that Australia will still more firmly be a part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Mention is made in the Speech of the State Shipping Priorities Advisory Committee. I wish to commend the work done by that committee; through its efforts supplies to Western Australia are coming forward in much larger quantities than even 12 months ago.

I also desire to mention the excellent results achieved by the Central Medical Equipment Control Committee of Melbourne, which has in every way endeavoured to meet the medical needs of Western Australia. Only yesterday I had further evidence of the thought which the committee had been giving to the requirements of the State in that direction. I am extremely pleased to note that the conversion of the Transcontinental line into a uniform gauge, at least as far as Kalgoorlie, is to be a priority work. I have just returned from the Eastern States and, while there, I had made up my mind that on my return here I would emphasise the need for the completion of that work between Broken Hill and Port Pirie, so that the merchandise and other needs of Western Australia could be brought across the continent. During my visit to the Eastern States I saw in retail shops and in wholesale houses many articles which we still require in Western Australia and which are in exceedingly short supply here. Inquiry led me to realise that the shortage was due to the lack of transport facilities. I instance particularly such articles as radiators and other electrical appliances. I also noticed how full the shops were of rationed goods and materials of all descriptions for the making of rationed goods, such as dresses, etc. One could not help being struck by the immense amount of jewellery which was being purchased by the people in the Eastern States. The increased amount of money at the disposal of the people and the rationing of essential requirements have given a fillip to the sale of jewellery and other luxuries.

Hon. J. Cornell: You could not buy a watch in Melbourne.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The jewellery is of a type which normally one could not be enthusiastic about. I mention these matters to emphasise the question of the equality of sacrifice in our war effort. It can be made nearly equal but, as in all life, there is inequality. Let us take one luxury line in this State—chocolates. I do not think that they are very necessary during the war, but one cannot buy them here. In Melbourne one can do so. I was struck by the number of sweet shops operating there and by the appearance of boxes of chocolates in them. I went to a picture show one evening and during the interval a boy brought around a tray containing boxes of chocolates varying in price from 3s. to 10s. These