

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 24th September, 1913.

3, Vermin Boards Act Amendment (introduced by Mr. McDonald).

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

QUESTION — TRAMWAY EXTENSION, MOUNTS BAY ROAD.

Mr. ALLEN asked the Premier: Do the Government intend to persist in their refusal to at once extend the tram lines to the bath site near Crawley, and thus prevent the citizens and children of Perth from having the much-needed up-to-date swimming baths on the Swan River?

The MINISTER FOR MINES (for the Premier) replied: As the Government have not been furnished with any direct evidence that the City Council is in a position to complete the erection of the baths before the ensuing summer season is well advanced, it is not proposed to arrange for the suggested extension of the tramway system during the present year.

BILL — WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Plant Disease (introduced by the Minister for Mines for the Minister for Lands).

2, Evidence Act Amendment (introduced by the Minister for Mines for the Attorney General).

RETURN — MILK ADULTERATION PROSECUTIONS.

On motion by Mr. LANDER (East Perth) ordered: "That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing the names of the inspectors of dairies who have conducted prosecutions for the sale of impure and adulterated milk for the period from the 1st October, 1911, to the 1st September, 1913."

MOTION—BALLA BALLA JETTY, LEASING.

Mr. GARDINER (Roebourne) moved—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the contract entered into between the Government and the Whim Creek Company for the lease of the Balla Balla jetty be cancelled.

He said: In moving this motion, it is quite unnecessary that I should make a long speech. On previous occasions I have availed myself of the opportunity to point out the mistake which the Government have made by leasing the jetty known as the Balla Balla jetty to the Whim Well Copper Mines Limited. In the first instance I consider that a great principle is involved, namely the principle of the nationalisation of public utilities. I think almost every member on the Government side of the House advocated some time ago upon the public platform that every means of public utility should be nationalised. Therefore, in connection with this motion, I intend to test, as it were, their opinion by forcing this question to a vote to ascertain whether they will adhere to the principle they advocated on the public platform some two years ago. It is some twelve months since I ascertained that the Government intended to renew the lease of the Balla Balla jetty. At that time I communicated with the Minister in charge and urged that the Government should take over this jetty. I am pleased to say that the present Minister for

Works is a staunch supporter of my view of the question, inasmuch as during his tour of the North-West he made a great speech as a result of which he won the support and admiration of probably 200 members of the mining community at Whim Creek.

Hon. J. Mitchell : Was that the Minister for Works?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes. He won the admiration of these people by pointing out the great disabilities under which they were labouring owing to a previous Government having leased the Balla Balla jetty to the Whim Well Company, and he made a promise—

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. GARDINER: A tentative promise was given.

The Minister for Works: No tentative promise was given.

Mr. GARDINER: Such a promise was given during the Minister's advocacy of the nationalisation of public utilities.

Mr. George: What is the lease; we do not know?

Mr. GARDINER: It is practically a renewal of a lease of the Balla Balla jetty given by a previous Government. The papers have been laid upon the Table of the House, and if the hon. member looks at them he will ascertain that the lease has been renewed for a period of twelve months, but the right has been reserved to cancel the lease at, I believe, three months' notice.

Mr. George: Have you protested against the renewal?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes.

Mr. George: Then vote against the Government and turn them out.

Mr. GARDINER: During the Minister's visit to Whim Creek he promised that the lease of the jetty would not be renewed. Unfortunately the Colonial Secretary, who is the Minister in charge of this particular department, has thought fit to renew the lease for a very nominal rental of £150 per year. I do not desire to criticise Mr. Sleeman, or anyone else for that matter who might have acquired the lease of that jetty. If the opportunity had presented itself

to any person to secure that lease on such terms they would decidedly have availed themselves of it and taken over the jetty, but my desire is to criticise the people who are responsible for having permitted that lease to be granted for £150 a year.

Mr. George: What is it worth?

Mr. GARDINER: To my mind it is worth £1,000 a year and I can quote figures to support that statement. Mr. Tindale, the engineer for the North-West, has supplied some figures regarding the tonnage over that jetty. The general cargo for the Whim Well Company last year was 2,692 tons and for private people, 1,569 tons. On this cargo the wharfage rates at 2s. per ton, would give £425, and I may say that there is no place on the coast where the charges would be as low as they are here. The charges at all other jetties are 3s. 6d. Then the figures show that 9,600 tons of copper ore belonging to the company went over the jetty and if we put the wharfage charge on that at, say, a minimum of 1s. 6d., we get £720. So that on these two items alone we would have turned over £1,100.

Mr. George: Who keeps the jetty in repair?

Mr. GARDINER: The Government do so and then they let it for the nominal sum of £150 per annum. I have gone through the papers and found that Mr. Sinclair who is recognised as a competent man declares that the Government cannot reasonably control this jetty. I disagree with that statement. I say that the Government could control the jetty if they possessed business acumen, and I believe they do. They could conduct it reasonably well in the interests of the people of that district. Mr. Sinclair admits that the Government have made a great blunder inasmuch as he states that the rent which is being obtained is altogether inadequate and he advocates an increase on the amount by 100 per cent. Mr. Sinclair was sent by the present Government to report on the conditions existing at Balla Balla. I do not wish to touch on the statements which have

been made in regard to a monopoly, although I am confident that a monopoly does exist and that the worker, the squatter, and all the small mine owners of that district are labouring under great disabilities owing to the fact that a private company control that jetty. That company's control is detrimental to the interests of the people in the North-West and in that district in particular. The people have to submit to the conditions which are imposed by Mr. Sleeman.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): And the charges in the agreement.

Mr. GARDINER: The charges in the agreement have nothing to do with it. We know that we may make conditions, but when we get 1,000 miles away from the seat of Government, the people who are in control, such as those who are now controlling this particular jetty, can violate the conditions of the agreement and it takes a strong man and strong evidence to prove that there has been a violation of whatever agreement has been entered into. That is the position which exists at Whim Creek and at Balla Balla to-day.

Mr. George: Has there been any complaint?

Mr. Underwood: Yes.

Mr. GARDINER: Every man there is compelled to submit to what Mr. Sleeman says. There are two concerns there: The West Pilbara Trading Company and the Whim Well Copper Company, and we are given to understand that they are entirely distinct institutions. The West Pilbara Trading Company, I am prepared to say, is a foreign company, but it is impossible even at the Supreme Court to ascertain who are the directors controlling it. The fact remains however, that Mr. Sleeman, who is manager of the Whim Well Copper Company, is also attorney for the West Pilbara Trading Company, and by reason of the fact that he is lessee of the jetty he is in control of one of the greatest monopolies which exists in the State. Mr. Sleeman is in the position to show that he can control the hotels, stores, and even the barber's shop up there. He owns or

controls absolutely everything. It is to be regretted therefore that this gentleman should have the lease of the jetty on the terms which I have already stated, and especially when we remember that the Minister for Works advocated that the jetty should be in the hands of the State.

The Minister for Works: You know well I did not advocate that.

Mr. GARDINER: I have letters in my possession to show that that is so.

The Minister for Works: I have a shorthand note to prove what I actually said.

Mr. GARDINER: I can produce a shorthand note taken at Whim Creek when the Minister condemned the late Colonial Secretary for his action, and yet he allows the jetty to slip out of the hands of the State for a paltry £150.

The Minister for Works: You know well that I was not then referring solely to the jetty.

Mr. GARDINER: The Minister was referring to the jetty alone. My local knowledge leads me to believe that it would have been a good proposition for the Government to have retained control. It has been said that the railway line which exists between Whim Creek and Balla Balla makes it impossible to conduct that jetty, but I say that that is not so. I was in business there prior to the advent of that railway line and I could get my goods carried for 10s. a ton. Now that the line is constructed we find that goods are not carted over the road which was constructed by a previous Government; they are compelled to take them by rail at a cost of 12s. a ton. It was cheaper to get goods to Whim Creek under the old system before the steamers called at Balla Balla. It cost £1 per ton from Pt. Sampson to Balla Balla, and now it is £1 per ton from the steamer to the jetty. It will be seen, therefore, that the private consumer has to pay a greater charge at the present time than in former days when we depended upon primitive methods. The Minister for Works thoroughly realised the position when he travelled through that country, and he gained the applause

of over 200 men who were being victimised by this company when he promised them that in the future, under the regime of the Labour Government, they would not have to suffer as they had done in the past.

Mr. George: He is a changed man since he came back.

Mr. GARDINER: The Balla Balla jetty has a greater record of tonnage than any other jetty above Geraldton. That is proved by official records. The tonnage that went over the Balla Balla jetty last year was 2,000 tons more than that at any of the others, and included among them are the jetties of Carnarvon, Broome, Point Sampson, Condon, Derby and Wyndham. And this is the jetty which has been leased to a private company! I would like to say that so long as the Government adhere to the principles upon which they were elected, they will always find in me a staunch supporter. But why they should lease the Balla Balla jetty which is absolutely the best on the coast, I cannot see. The Minister for Works is with me when I say that this particular jetty is the best on the coast. If the Harbour and Lights department have not a man with sufficient business acumen to control jetties such as this one, then I say that that department requires to be reconstructed. We ought to have men in the service capable of controlling jetties such as that one at Balla Balla. The only argument which has been adduced in favour of the leasing of that jetty to private enterprise is that Balla Balla is so far removed from the town, but I would point out to the Minister that Roebourne is 12 miles from Point Sampson, and that in regard to Onslow, a similar position exists, and that the tonnage carried over those jetties is small compared with what goes over the jetty at Balla Balla. Yet the Minister has the audacity and the impudence to tell me that because there were no goods sheds at Balla Balla it was impossible to run the jetty under State control. I pointed out that goods sheds could be built, but that they were unnecessary, and that at the other jetties along the coast we had depended entirely

on tarpaulins to keep the goods dry. This system has always been successful, and serious losses have never been sustained. Only recently at Point Sampson there were constructed elaborate goods sheds and yet we have absolutely given away the best jetty on the coast to a private concern.

Mr. George: How many years have they got it for?

Mr. GARDINER: It has been leased to them for twelve months, but the Government have the right to cancel the lease at three months' notice, and my object in asking the House to agree to the motion is that the Government might give this notice immediately. I hope the House will uphold the principle that the best jetty we have on the coast should be controlled by the Government in order to give the pastoralists and those who are endeavouring to open up that part of the State the facilities to which they are entitled. The Government in leasing this jetty have inflicted an injury on all the people in that district. Of course I do not blame Mr. Sleeman in the slightest. But the fact remains that if the jetty were under Government control, Mr. Sleeman would be in the same position as everyone else up there; but Mr. Sleeman, at the present time, by being the lessee of the jetty, has the key of the situation. I claim that if the Government were desirous of leasing the jetty they should have called tenders in a legitimate manner. This, however, was not done. If tenders had been called I am prepared to guarantee that £1,000 per annum would have been offered for the jetty, instead of which we find it has been given to Mr. Sleeman for a paltry £150.

The Minister for Works: We might if we had had a guarantee in regard to tonnage.

Mr. GARDINER: As I have already pointed out, the tonnage was assured. I am prepared to concede to the Minister that that tonnage belongs, or the majority of it, to the Whim Well Copper Company. The Minister for Works knows that where a Government jetty is constructed, if a private consumer lands his

goods two miles from the jetty, on the beach, he must pay wharfage.

The Minister for Works: It is questionable.

Mr. GARDINER: But it is laid down, and the same thing would apply in the case of Fremantle. If the owner of a lighter was to land goods on the beach he would still have to pay wharfage. A few years ago, prior to the advent of the lease of this wharf, the people running vessels on that coast could make a decent living. I was running a vessel at Balla Balla and making a decent living, but immediately the company got control of the jetty the lighters on the coast were absolutely crippled. We should allow the Government to take the jetty and give individuals the right to use that jetty, and enable me, or any individual who wishes to run a lighter equal facilities with the Whim Well Copper Company. An instance occurred recently where an individual bought some chaff, and it was placed on the jetty and allowed to remain there. The company would not deliver it. I am prepared to offer to the Government a guarantee of £1,000 for the lease of the jetty, which they have given to the Whim Well Copper Company for the paltry sum of £150. The plea is advanced that the jetty did not cost much to construct. Can that argument hold good? If natural facilities are in existence, are we to give those natural facilities away, because the jetty has only cost £3,000 or £4,000 to construct? The Government are to pay interest and sinking fund on a jetty 50 miles away, because it does not pay, but where natural facilities are provided and the Government construct a jetty cheaply, we are to give that jetty to a private individual, and allow him to make an immense profit and victimise the people who are endeavouring to open up the country. The Government are to control jetties that are difficult to run and which will not show a profit, but they are prepared to give a lease of a jetty to a private company which will show a profit. I was proud of the Minister when he was in the North-West and told the people there that he was a staunch supporter of their request: and when he condemned the previous Government for

leasing the jetty I was proud of him also. And I believe the Minister will now get up and support me in moving the motion, inasmuch as this jetty will be most lucrative to the State. There will be no injustice done to Mr. Sleeman. We can allow the copper of the Whim Well company to go over the jetty for nothing, and then show a profit on the goods that are landed. We can still make a profit after paying a wharfinger good wages. The Government will be conferring a boon on the people of the North-West inasmuch as they will be assisting the people who are now compelled to go cap in hand to Mr. Sleeman to give them a reasonable deal to carry their cargo over the jetty. It is quite unnecessary for me to elaborate at greater length on this question, as this is the fourth or fifth occasion on which I have spoken on this matter. I feel keenly on it, and the people in the North-West are in accord with the statements which I have made. I am sure the Minister for Works agrees with me. I have a typed copy of his speech in my possession, and I know what he then said. Mr. Drew, the Colonial Secretary, was acting ignorantly when he leased this jetty. He was acting on the reports of officials who absolutely knew nothing of the conditions. These officers did not know the conditions obtaining in the North-West, and they thought that the best person to run the jetty was Mr. Sleeman. I know I have the support of members on this side of the House, and I believe I shall gain the support of members on the other side on this question. Therefore I move my motion.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans): I second the motion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): In regard to the Balla Balla jetty, I may say at the outset that the late Government entered into a three years' agreement with the Whim Well Copper Company to take control of the Balla Balla jetty. That three years' agreement expired some time during the present year, I believe in July last. Prior to the expiration of the agreement the matter of running the jetties in the North-West

was inquired into, and Balla Balla came into that consideration. It was pointed out then that almost all the trade in connection with the Balla Balla jetty was carried on by the Whim Well Copper Company, and the figures as quoted this afternoon by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) show clearly that such is the case. There were 9,618 tons of copper carried over that jetty, also 2,692 tons of general cargo for the Whim Well Copper Company. Some 1,569 tons of general cargo was carried over the jetty for private people, which shows clearly as far as the jetty is concerned the principal users were the Whim Well Copper Company. In addition to that, the Whim Well Copper Company are the owners of the railway that carries the goods from the jetty. They are also the owners of the lighters that take the goods to the jetty, and it would be necessary, if the Government were to take control of the jetty, to avail themselves of the railway and lighters. I want to point out that when the hon. member spoke he referred to some chaff being kept on the jetty. If the Government took control of the jetty only, and made no provision for taking the chaff to the jetty and from the jetty, the chaff would still remain on the jetty, as it did with the copper company as lessees, unless the person who owned the chaff took it away himself. If hon. members will peruse the papers they cannot come to any other conclusion than that in framing the agreement the public residing around Balla Balla were amply protected. The agreement provides that only a certain rate shall be charged, and the interests of the public as far as the handling of cargo was concerned was conserved. The hon. member stated that the agreement was violated because this place was such a distance away from the seat of Government. It is very strange that not one complaint is shown on the papers that the agreement had been violated, or that the public were not properly treated. Seeing that is so, the Government can come to no other conclusion than that as far as the public are concerned they have been treated favourably by those who have had control of the jetty. Then the hon. mem-

ber referred to the monopoly. As far as the management is concerned there is a monopoly. But the charges are limited, and while the charges are limited it appears to me—

Mr. Gardiner: In what way are they limited?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I cannot say from memory, but the hon. member can get it from the file. But the charge is limited, and while a limited charge is made no hardship can occur.

Mr. Gardiner: But is there not the principle of nationalisation?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It has nothing to do with the principle. You cannot turn night into day, and everything else down in 24 hours. It takes time for all things. If the hon. member thinks he can revolutionise the whole place in a few hours he is much mistaken, or any other member who thinks likewise. The hon. member has pointed out that a mistake has been made because this jetty has not been let by tender. At the present time no agreement has been entered into at all. The agreement expired, as I have stated previously, about the 1st July. Since then there has been no agreement entered into. The company are continuing the old agreement, and no agreement has been signed for a continuation of the lease of the jetty. But it will require a notice of the intention to terminate the control of the jetty. When the hon. member protested, and I may say he had a perfect right to do so, he said some dissatisfaction existed of a late date. It must have been of a very late date this year.

Mr. Gardiner: January.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): When the hon. member protested the Colonial Secretary took steps to ascertain what was wrong, and he asked for a report from two responsible officers. He referred the matter to the Works Department and the Harbour Department. Mr. Sinclair went there and made various inquiries, and Mr. Tindale, who is well known and respected by every member as a conscientious officer, also reported on the question. But until it

was known that there was a possibility of the contract being re-let no objection from the hon. member or any person in the district had been made in regard to the Balla Balla jetty.

Mr. Gardiner: Objection was made last January.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): No objection was made to the Minister in charge of the jetties throughout the State. I have it from the Colonial Secretary's own lips that he never saw one protest of any kind in regard to the control of this jetty prior to the time when he took into consideration whether it was desirable or not to renew the agreement.

Mr. Gardiner: There was a ministerial promise.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I do not know anything about a promise. I am speaking on behalf of the Colonial Secretary. Mr. Tindale, the Engineer for the Nor-West, reported on this jetty, and he expressed the belief that the jetty would be a paying proposition. The hon. member for Roebourne stated that he could guarantee to get a thousand a year for the use of the jetty.

Mr. Gardiner: And I am prepared to pay a deposit to-morrow.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Taking wharfage at 1s. 6d. and general cargo at 2s., the jetty could only realise a revenue of £1,146, so I do not know where the man is coming in who is going to pay £1,000 to the Government for the leasing of the jetty.

Mr. Gardiner: The minimum wharfage on the coast to-day is 3s. 6d.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Mr. Tindale in summarising the position after he had investigated the matter said—

The jetty in itself would be a paying proposition operated by the department. The fact that the tramway belongs to the company, and likewise the launch and lighters, operate seriously against the success of working the jetty departmentally. The difficulty of securing suitable labour when required would be very keen, and it is hard to

see to what extent this difficulty would cut into estimated surplus.

Mr. Taylor: There is not much argument in that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It is a good argument in this case, because it is only occasionally that steamers call there. They are not at Balla Balla every day, and it is necessary that labour should be put on immediately when a steamer comes into the roadstead for cargo, and the only source where the men can be obtained is the copper mines.

Mr. Gardiner: That is ridiculous.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The Minister must take the report of his responsible officer who says that there would be no men available at any time when they were required by the department running the jetty when a steamer arrived to load or unload cargo. Hon. members must remember that this is an out of the way portion of the State. It is a jetty at which there are not a large number of lumpers available for employment.

Mr. Gardiner: Every jetty on the coast is in the same position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I have known even in Fremantle, where we have six or seven hundred wharf lumpers, times when labour has not been available when required, and much greater difficulty would be experienced at a place like Balla Balla. The Company on the other hand are able to bring their men from the mines to work the jetty when the necessity arises. Mr. Tindale goes on to say—

In view of these facts I do not see the way favourable to a recommendation to change the present system of control unless the Government are prepared to take over the railway and lighters, etc., also, and I do not think this can be seriously contemplated until some guarantee is secured of the life of the mine on which almost wholly the activity of the port depends. It appears to me that if this mine should close down the use of this jetty almost in its entirety will be done away with, and before the Government could take control of the jetty they would require

to spend a considerable amount of money to provide accommodation for the officials whom they placed there to take charge of the jetty.

Mr. Gardiner : What about the principles on which you got into Parliament ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : It does not matter about principle now. We are talking about a jetty. The principle to be borne in mind in regard to this matter is what is in the best interest of this State, and if it is to the advantage of the State, and it is possible to run any concern, no matter what it is, by the department, then it is the duty of the Government to take that concern in hand; but in such cases as this where it is not in the best interests of the State to take control of such a jetty, and other persons come along who are willing to control it, I say let them do it every time. Mr. Tindale's report continues—

It should be noted that lately the copper company have installed a concentrating plant at the mine, and that the product of this plant will very materially reduce the tonnage of ore shipped, and consequently reduce the estimated margin above.

So hon. members will see there is a possibility of a reduction in the tonnage over this jetty. There is no doubt to my mind that if tenders had been called there was a possibility of getting a small additional rental; but I am very much afraid we would not get a thousand a year. I consider, with the information which is made available, and which was supplied to the Minister in charge of the department, he took the only step open to him, seeing that there had been no complaint against those who were controlling the jetty, and seeing that no person had raised any question before the letting of the jetty was considered.

Mr. Gardiner : I spoke before the jetty was leased.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : The hon. member did nothing of the kind. The papers show clearly that the letting of the jetty was under consideration before the hon. member's protest was lodged, and in my opinion the Minister controlling the jetty has

taken the right step in seeing that this work was kept on until he had made due inquiries in regard to the position.

Mr. Gardiner : He has sold his principles.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : I hope the hon. member will keep to his principles equally as well as the Colonial Secretary has done during the years he has been in politics.

Mr. Gardiner : How long ? Since he has been a Minister ?

Mr. SPEAKER : Order ! The hon. member is not justified in reflecting on a member of another place.

Mr. Taylor : But he is a member of the party.

Mr. SPEAKER : It does not matter about him being a member of a party. The hon. member can deal with him elsewhere.

Mr. George : But we are not dealing with caucus.

Mr. SPEAKER : Order !

Mr. George : I beg pardon, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER : I hope the hon. member for Roebourne will not interrupt so frequently ; he will have an opportunity of replying later on.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : I was saying that I consider the Colonial Secretary has taken the right step. He has made an investigation and has been advised by his officers, and the advice of the officers has been borne out by the action taken by the Minister to preserve the best interest of the State. It is the Colonial Secretary's intention to call for tenders at an early date, so far as the working of this jetty is concerned.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) : On a question of this sort, I think an hon. member having complete local knowledge should endeavour to give this Chamber the fullest information so that members may arrive at a full estimation of the difficulties surrounding this particular proposition. There is no need to tell any half truths in regard to the matter. It is preferable that the whole thing should be explained to the Chamber so that the full facts will be in possession of hon. mem-

bers. It is true that I visited Whim Creek, and that I addressed a meeting, and I expressed then, as I desire to express now, the belief that one of the most complete monopolies that it has been my misfortune to find in my travels is that held by the copper company at Whim Creek. The conditions there are such that any Government, whether Labour or Liberal, might desire to relieve the people of, seeing the hold the manager has through the company over the people generally in that particular locality. But when the people at Whim Creek complained, and justly complained, their complaint was not in regard to the leasing of the jetty; in was in regard to the control this company had of affairs generally, and their particular complaint was of the fact that the company controlled the stores and all sources of the supply of food stuffs for the people who work on the mine. They said, "There is no competition, the company control everything. They absolutely dictate the price, and we are compelled to deal with them, irrespective of what the prices are." Consequently, I expressed my regret that any Government had permitted a monopoly of that sort to grow up in Australia. I do not remember whether there was any particular applause or not; I was not looking for applause. All I desired was to get an understanding of the conditions so that I might be able to advise the Government on my return to Perth as to what should be done. The hon. member for Roebourne has stated that the jetty is the key of the situation; that is not so at all.

Mr. Gardiner: Absolutely.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The jetty is a link, I am prepared to admit, but the key to the situation is undoubtedly the railway and the lighters. For instance, practically the whole of the business of the jetty is given by the Whim Well copper company, and if they ceased operations to-morrow, there would be practically nothing doing on the jetty. The boats that come into Balla Balla come to lift cargoes from the company, and if the company were to close down the boats would not

call there at all, or at any rate only at very irregular intervals. The amount of cargo coming into the port is so small that the boats would not go out of their way to come into that roadstead. The main difficulty is that if the Government attempted to take control of the jetty we would require to take over the lighters and maintain them there, irrespective of whether the trade was offering or not. With the Whim Well copper company the position is different. If they cease business they can put the lighters into other operations and they are no burden upon them, but the State would require to keep the lighters there and would not be in the position of knowing whether the company were going to ship ore or not.

Mr. Male: They would not give you their ore. They would lighter their own ore.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That may be. They may still elect to retain their own lighters and lighter their own goods; we could not, of course, compel them to trade with us. The hon. member would lead the House to believe that because previous to the railway line being there the people of Whim Creek got their goods carted for 10s. a ton, they could get them carted for that again.

Mr. Gardiner: They can.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I doubt that very much. The people who carted for 10s. a ton previously, had a good deal of carting because they were carting for the Whim Well copper company, but after that company used their railway the amount of stuff left over from that was practically nil, and no one could afford to cart the small amount of cargo outside that carted on the railway at 10s. a ton; it is impossible. It is an impossible proposition, and the hon. member must know perfectly well that he is trying to mislead the Chamber when he makes statements of that description. I am prepared to admit that if the railway were not there we could compel the company to give their carting to teamsters, and in addition to the carting they would

get from private individuals those teamsters could do it at the price, but to say they could do carting at 10s. a ton in competition with the railway is wrong. To say that there is no shed accommodation at Onslow and Roebourne is an absolute mis-statement. To-day there are sheds at both places, and only quite recently additions were made to the Roebourne goods sheds. We should have to do the same thing at Balla Balla. The hon. member may say that at first we might not have to do it, but we would be liable in the event of goods being damaged, and there is no doubt we would eventually have to erect shed accommodation. Even if we did all this, we must recognise that we could not get any return for the capital outlay. *If the Whim Well copper company did not enable us to work the lighters and also to work the railway it would be absolutely impossible for us to get the freight. I think it was the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) who interjected and said there was as much labour offering at Whim Creek as at any other jetty. That may be right up to this extent, that there is more labour employed at Whim Creek than at other ports, but at Roebourne when we want labour we can draw on the general merchants to assist us in lifting the cargo. We are not called upon to maintain lumpers between the arrival of different boats and when we do want labour the whole of the town is available for our purpose. We can draw on anybody and everybody who is willing to come to the Government's assistance, but that would not apply to Whim Creek because the company are the only employers of labour, and unless they agreed to their employees getting off for the time we wanted them it would be impossible for us to operate this jetty. The labour difficulty is the principal difficulty in regard to the operating of it. The hon. member stated that the amount of rent to-day is too small. If he confined his motion to that he might be doing the State some good. I am not in a position to judge if we could get anything like

£1,000 a year. but I do not think that any Government in the present state of the finances would hesitate to get the fullest possible amount. The statement that we could get £1,000 a year is based on the assumption that we could get increased rates. The hon. member for East Fremantle pointed out that the rate is 1s. 6d.; the hon. member for Roebourne said we could get 3s. 6d.

Mr. Gardiner: That is the minimum charge for Government jetties.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member should be prepared to say that £1,000 rental could be obtained provided that the rates were increased or the lessee were permitted to charge an increased rate, but if we charged an increased rate the hon. member would be one of the first to object to it because we know the increased rate would be simply transferred on to the cargo that was carried, and would eventually go on to the people the hon. member represents. There is no advantage to be gained by the Government getting an increased rent for the jetty if that increase is going to become a burden on the people of the locality, and we have no guarantee that that would not take place.

Mr. Gardiner: Three shillings and sixpence is charged to-day at Balla Balla.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The trouble is that this company control all the stores and they can transfer the whole of the stores.

Mr. George: The barber's shop and the butcher's.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hotels as well; they control the whole concern and can simply dictate the prices and it is absolutely impossible to compete against them. I am of opinion that if the men formed a co-operative society and attempted to get goods up from the South the company would either refuse to cart them or if they did cart them they would put difficulties in the men's way. There is no doubt that it is a pernicious monopoly, but for the hon. member to say that we could by taking over that jetty break up that monopoly is absolute nonsense. All that we would

be doing would be penalising the people of the State and giving no assistance or relief at all to the people of Whim Creek. The hon. member is not more anxious that I am to overcome the difficulties that have surrounded that place for many years, but unless we can get control of the railway line and the jetty it would be impossible for us to operate with advantage to the people, and undoubtedly it would become a burden on the State as we could not operate it with any profit. We have taken over other jetties in the North-West.

Mr. Gardiner: The worst on the coast.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I differ with the hon. member there. He knows perfectly well we have not taken over the worst jetties on the coast. He knows that there are better jetties than Balla Balla. There have been stages during the term in which this jetty has been leased to the company when nothing has been done at all. One cannot compare a jetty doing business in a spasmodic way as at Balla Balla with other jetties along that particular coast, where we have a constant trade. I know that during the last 12 months or so the Balla Balla jetty has been worked pretty fully, but there have been times when practically there was no output from that mine with the result that the railway was doing nothing and the lighters were doing nothing. We have to bear in mind the fact that Government working of this jetty would be a burden on the people generally for the reason I have already outlined, and we could not by taking it over and controlling it grant any relief to the people whom the hon. member represents. We went into the matter very fully, and came to the conclusion that it would be utterly impossible to work it departmentally unless we placed a big burden upon the general revenue and at the same time give no relief to the people of that district.

Mr. Gardiner: What would be the burden?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The cost of operating the jetty. We would have to maintain labour there for months

doing nothing. The boats call in very irregularly.

Mr. Gardiner: They call the same as at any other jetty. Every boat except the "Western Australia" calls at Balla Balla.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is not so. Even supposing they call in as regularly as at other places, I have already pointed out the difference that you can pick up labour when you want it at other places. Take Carnarvon and Roebourne; we do not maintain labour there constantly. When a boat calls in the merchants in the town and the people generally come to the assistance of the Government and all help to get the cargo lifted and distributed, but that would not apply to Whim Creek. The only employer of labour at Whim Creek is the copper company.

Mr. Gardiner: There are always people knocking about.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is absolute nonsense. The only employers of labour are the Whim Creek Copper Company and they would not allow their labour to help us, with the result that we would be in constant difficulty, while the increased capital for providing porters and accommodation would make it utterly impossible for us to do it without placing a burden on the people of the State. For the reasons I have stated there is no possibility of the Government operating this jetty departmentally except at a huge loss to the people. As I have already stated the Colonial Secretary has decided to call tenders just to test the statements made by the hon. member that if public tenders were called there would be competition for this jetty and we would get a considerable increase on the annual leasing fee at the present time. If so we would be only too glad to obtain it, but while there may be justification for doing that it would be wrong to run the jetty departmentally as it could not be done satisfactorily.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): Hon. members on this side of the House will have some difficulty in balancing the statements made in connection with this matter by previous speakers.

On the one hand they recognise the difficulty of administration from the standpoint of the Government and on the other hand they have a feeling at heart for the troubles of humanity as indicated by the hon. member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner), and are bound to feel sympathy for the mover of the motion.

Mr. Male: Not all of them.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member knows he has sympathy at heart for the troubles of humanity aside from party warfare. In going through these papers, certainly in a cursory sort of manner, I find there has been a great uproar in the district. I have a telegram here which almost reminds me of the trouble that there is supposed to be in Belfast at the present time, and in order that hon. members may have an opportunity of seeing eye to eye with those interested in this particular matter, I propose to read it to the House. This is the telegram sent from Roebourne to the Colonial Secretary and signed "Gardiner"—

Astounded and shocked lease Balla jetty renewed. I promised electors Labour Government would not adopt hole and corner methods of leasing without calling tenders. If tenders called for business people would have offered greatly increased price. Last year more cargo went over Balla than any jetty above Geraldton. Copper company victimising the whole of the district. Toweranna gold mine compelled to purchase teams and cart goods from Roebourne owing to attitude of the combine. Anticipate indignation meetings throughout the district. People waited impatiently present Government act up to principle of party and remove disabilities under which labour. Unfortunately content to act as predecessors and assist most pernicious monopoly in the State.

I find it impossible to justify your action and will have to tell electors. Now we can understand the trouble the Government have been in during the last few months; because we start with that telegram, and if we take this file we find that the whole forces of

unionism throughout Western Australia have been agitated upon this particular place, Balla Balla, and even the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green), in his position as acting secretary of the Trades Hall, has found it necessary to bring the matter under the notice of the Premier. I have here a telegram from Whim Creek, signed by one Carney, which reads as follows:—

Petition being forwarded strongly protesting against extension of jetty lease. No chance for opposition while company holds jetty. Pastoralists all signed petition. Living commodities famine prices. Necessaries of life unobtainable, have been so months, owing to company having control of everything. Private enterprise absolutely impossible under present conditions. Refer you your own request this place last year. Conditions worse now. Must have chance to live decently reasonably otherwise serious trouble will follow. Everybody up in arms against present conditions.

Ulster is not in it. Sir Edward Carson is not in it with this situation. Everybody is up in arms against Ministers. I have not heard of the Government sending an armed force up there, but I would not be at all surprised at the information. That the House may really appreciate the situation, for it is much more serious than the little motion on the Notice Paper would indicate, here is a letter sent to nearly every union in Western Australia. In this letter it is stated—

We ask you to induce your member of the Legislative Assembly to do all in his power to aid and abet Mr. Gardiner in his uphill battle against this company's monopoly, the cruellest and most complete ever known in Australia.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear. That is correct.

Mr. GEORGE: And both Ministers, with the knowledge of this feeling, get up calmly in the House and try to justify their conduct in carrying on the agreement, for the making of which they condemned the previous Government.

Mr. Green: How will you vote on it?

Mr. GEORGE: I will tell the hon. member in due course. Here we have on irrefutable authority the statement that the company is the most cruel and complete monopoly in Australia, and the Minister for Works, despite his speech of apology and explanation, says that that is correct.

Mr. Taylor: Who wrote that?

Mr. GEORGE: One George Graham, secretary to the A.W.A. This letter is sent by the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Federated Miners' Union affiliated with the W.G.F.M.A., whatever that may mean, to the Hon. P. Collier, Minister for Mines. Another copy goes to the Premier. Then we get on a little further.

Mr. Heitmann: Some of these old files are very interesting. One there is which shows that you talked yourself into the Commissionership of Railways.

Mr. GEORGE: This has nothing whatever to do with my occupancy of the position of Commissioner of Railways, nor has it anything to do with any past action of the hon. member. This file, I might remind the hon. member who has so impertinently interjected—if I were permitted I would say impudently—is a very juvenile file, being dated 11th June, 1913. I want it to be distinctly understood that in dealing with the matter in the way I am, I desire to recognise the fact that notwithstanding all that has been stated about the hidebound adherence to caucus, there are cases when caucus itself has to burst up and allow these gentlemen to speak out in their natural indignation; and when we do have opportunities of this sort it is only right that we on this side should listen to hon. members on that side, who know all the facts on the file. Then again, Mr. Green, a gentleman who was acting secretary of the Trades Hall, sends a letter stating that the resolution in connection with this particular matter has been endorsed by his executive. So we have, first of all, starting in small force with a small union, the appeal to the whole of the unions throughout Western Australia; and then on top of it a hand-in-hand Australian Labour Federation communication signed by

A. E. Green; we have this terrible affair of the Balla Balla jetty brought into the House and the attention of hon. members called to it. Now what is the business?

Mr. Underwood: Something you know nothing whatever about.

Mr. GEORGE: As far as can be gathered from this file, it seems that an agreement was made with this company some years ago; and the reason the agreement was made was because the Government could not get anyone else to look after the jetty.

Mr. Underwood: That is tripe.

Mr. GEORGE: This file actually states so. It may be lying, I have not the slightest doubt some of it is lying, but the file states that. It states that of 13,000 tons of cargo only about 1,000 really belonged to anybody but the copper company. Therefore, if this company had not been up there, there was practically little or no cargo to pass over the jetty.

Mr. Underwood: How did we get on before the company came there?

Mr. GEORGE: I might ask how did we get on before the hon. member came here, and how well we would get on if he went away. This company came here and did not commit an unpardonable sin in employing a great deal of labour. There is an equal obligation on the part of capital and of labour. Capital can be of little use without labour, and labour cannot work to any advantage unless there is someone to pay it. So there is an obligation on both sides. Despite the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Underwood), whatever may be the sins of this company, if they find employment in Western Australia for a number of men they cannot be too bad for the people to consider. The previous Government entered into an agreement with the company under the circumstances that were before them at that time, and which they considered right. Not even the hon. member who moved the motion has suggested that there was any palm oil or robbery in the matter. The Minister for Works went on one of his missionary expeditions into the North-West and

reached this particular place, and there, judging on the circumstances before him, he felt it necessary to state the reasons for the faith he had in him. He still holds that faith, the same faith as the hon. gentleman has, namely, that wherever possible things shall be nationalised. The Minister says in the House that his faith to-day is as strong as it was up there, and he says, in the light of after knowledge, that having gone into the question with the assistance of the Government officers, he and his colleagues have come to the conclusion that they could not make a better deal than they have done. He has said also that he desires to alter the conditions, and that the Minister in charge of the matter is making inquiries with the intention of altering these conditions if possible. Of course I rejoice at times when dissension appears amongst my friends on the other side, but as far as this particular case is concerned, I am not going to blame the Government at all. They are in the position of knowing all the facts of the case. They are there not merely as members of the Labour party, but as trustees for the whole of the people, and as trustees they have to judge the whole of the circumstances, not with partisan views, but with the application of common sense, and with a full understanding of the responsibility of their position. Is this Chamber going to tell Ministers when there is not the slightest suspicion of any wrong, of any palm oil, or personal interest—is the House going to tell Ministers, when they have acted honestly and conscientiously, “You have sinned because you have not acted up to the shibboleth we placed before you.” I do not blame the hon. member who brought this matter forward. He has done it as a matter of duty, but I say that when this matter has been ventilated as it has been, and when we have two Ministers telling us in a straightforward manner why this thing was done, and what they intend to do, I think the matter should be allowed to lapse and should not be pushed any further.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): I should say that the member for Murray-Wellington having finished, there is scarcely anything left to say on the question. He has told us all about the subject, prefacing his remarks with the statement that he knew nothing whatever about it; he has told us what we are to do, and he has told the House what are the duties of the House, and particularly what are the duties of members on this side of the House. When the hon. member was sitting behind the Government there was no caucus about him. The Minister simply had to crack the whip and he was frightened to open his mouth. He was like a sheep led to the slaughter.

Mr. Monger: I have no recollection of any such occasion.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, the hon. member is apt to lose his memory. I protest against this jetty being leased to the Whim Creek combine without tenders being called. It matters not on which side of the House I sit, as a representative of some of the people of this country I have the right to express my opinion. It demonstrates once more that this side of the House has considerably more independence in expressing opinions than our opponents have ever had.

Mr. George: I rejoice at the expression of your independence, but I have not seen it yet.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Possibly that is the fault of the hon. member's sight.

Mr. Taylor: Perhaps his intelligence.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I meant his mental sight. The Minister for Works and the Honorary Minister have stated that the company have a hold on practically all the business at Whim Creek. There is a considerable number of settlers out at the back of Whim Creek and the company not only monopolise the business at Whim Creek, and they not only have the jetty, the tram-line and the lighters for their own copper ore, but they get the carrying of all stuff going inland from Balla Balla.

Mr. George: That is a thousand tons.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And as the hon. member for Roebourne has pointed

out the jetty is, to a very great extent, the key to the position. If the company could not get the lease of the jetty they could not possibly put on the impositions they undoubtedly do in connection with their lighters and tram line. Another thing I want to point out is, that whether it is advisable to allow the company to have the jetty or not, whether it is advisable to run it by an officer of the State or let it to a private individual, it is absolutely necessary, in my mind that the State should be protected by calling for tenders for the lease. In the system of letting jetties practically a similar monopoly obtained at Wyndham in time past. When the present Government got a grasp of the state of affairs, they took the Wyndham jetty away from the monopoly and put an officer on, and the State, instead of getting a paltry hundred or couple of hundred pounds a year for that jetty, is now getting something approaching a thousand pounds a year.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What about expenses?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am talking about the profit after allowing for the expenses, and less, of course, interest and sinking. The Honorary Minister stated that even if there was a little extra revenue to be obtained possibly we could do without it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I understood the Minister to say so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): We can do with all the revenue.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Later on the Minister will be telling us that we must raise the license fee imposed on a few kangaroo shooters in order to get revenue. If a rich combine can get things pretty lightly as this company has done, kangaroo shooters should also be treated lightly. It has been stated over and over again that boats call at Balla Balla very infrequently and I would like to point out that boats will call at Balla Balla as well as any other port on the coast if there is anything

to call for. There is no difficulty whatever to prevent the steamers from calling there. It is not five miles out of their road on the trip to Port Hedland. They simply pull a little off the straight line and go to the anchorage. The anchorage is seven or eight miles from the jetty and there is no difficulty in loading from a lighter. Tides do not interfere with their work such as happens at Broome, Derby, Wyndham, and other ports north of Balla Balla.

Mr. Moore: What is the lighterage charge?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What the company like to make it, just under what it costs to cart stuff from Roebourne. If the company make the charge too high the stuff will be carted 60 odd miles to Roebourne and if the price is below what teams would charge the company get it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Whose lighters are they?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Mr. Sleeman's, the Whim Creek copper company's lighters. In regard to the statement that the copper mine is doing such an enormous amount of good for that country, I may say that I was in the district for a good number of years and during the whole of that time the company did not work at all.

Mr. Male: When was that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: From 1902 until six years ago.

Mr. Male: Who owned it in 1902?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I can not tell the hon. member.

Mr. Male: Do not abuse this company if you do not know.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I know the mine was not working.

Mr. Male: Do not abuse the present company for that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Well, the mine was not working, and the Balla Balla jetty was still in operation and the people of the Balla Balla stations such as Yanyarrie and Mallina got their stuff through. Although the copper mine undoubtedly lends a good deal of value to the jetty, the jetty is absolutely necessary for the use of settlers living behind Whim Creek, and

would have to be maintained for their benefit to assist them in opening up that part of the country. There are many other places besides the Whim Creek copper mine in that particular part of the State. For instance there is the Station Peak mine which at one time employed a considerable number of men. It is now under option and men are likely to be put on at any time. That is 40 or 50 miles from Whim Creek. There is the Toweranna mine and there is the Croydon copper mine, from the last named of which nearly as much copper ore has been taken as from Whim Well. The Croydon mine is also likely to start again. There are other mining propositions besides the many sheep and cattle stations and the stuff they require must go over the Balla Balla jetty. If it does not, they have to go to the cost of carting by teams a distance of 60 or 70 miles to Roebourne or Point Sampson.

Mr. George: How much wool goes over that jetty?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have not the figures before me. I am sorry the Ministry did not announce earlier that they intended to call tenders for the lease of this jetty. That practically settles the whole question and it is not now necessary to carry the motion. The reason for the motion has been removed by the fact that the Government intend to call for tenders.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You do not mind a private person having the right?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not going to discuss that question, but I do not agree with the Whim Creek company having the monopoly they have on this district and unless the Government have strong reasons I do not think they should submit to such conditions as well assist that monopoly.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They will have the right to tender.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And If they do they will have to pay a fair price for the jetty. I would point out for the information of hon. members that it is a difficult position. Mr. Tindale, in making his recommendation, also took into consideration the difficulty

in connection with the anchorage. There is no doubt it is not an easy place to anchor in, but, all the same, the Whim Creek copper company have gained a monopoly there which should be curtailed at least, and the Government should do their best to curtail it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Not through having the jetty.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know how they got the lease renewed. As regards the statement that no protest was made by the people in the North, I wish to say that we were under the impression that no protest would be necessary. It never entered into the minds of the people that a Labour Government would renew the lease without at least calling for tenders.

Mr. George: This is a motion to condemn the Labour Government.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not care what it is to condemn.

Mr. Monger: You will withdraw those words later on.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am of opinion that this matter has been nicely fixed up by Mr. Sleeman over a bottle of wine with some of the officers.

Mr. Monger: Oh! Oh!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am of opinion that it was got through by Mr. North and that his recommendation went through unnoticed by the Colonial Secretary.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is a serious charge.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have no time for Mr. Sleeman. I know the methods he adopts, and the system he is trying to work up there.

Mr. George: Did he send the champagne by wireless?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: He was in Perth not long before the lease was renewed and it would have been possible to have invited them to lunch at the incubator where the hon. member used to put in his time when he had anything to hatch. I do not desire to go any further with this matter. As the Government have given an undertaking to call for tenders for this jetty the reason for the motion has been removed.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: No.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : At the same time I hope the Government will do what they can to give those settlers behind the Whim Creek copper mine a fair chance.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) : I have listened with considerable interest to the debate, and I find that there are conflicting ideas as to how this motion will apply. To put it beyond any doubt, so that hon. members will be able to vote on a principle without any side issues I desire to move the following amendment :—

That after "cancelled" the words "and the jetty be controlled by the Government" be added.

However much the Honorary Minister and the Minister for Works tried to cloud the issue—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : I did not.

Mr. TAYLOR : The hon. member who moved the motion moved it in no unmistakable language. He conveyed to the Chamber that he was advocating a principle on behalf of that territory which returned him, a principle which was acceptable to the majority of his electors namely, that these jetties and any other institutions, should be controlled by the Government where possible, and the hon. member's speech has demonstrated to the electors that there was no impossibility.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Do you believe that ?

Mr. TAYLOR : I would not be on this side of the House if I did not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Yes, you would.

Mr. TAYLOR : We believe in the nationalisation of all forms of industry.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Why did not you do it ?

Mr. TAYLOR : I was the first Minister in Western Australia who nationalised one of the jetties northwards beyond Carnarvon, namely, at Port Hedland.

Hon. J. Mitchell : It would not pay.

Mr. TAYLOR : The principles for which we are here cannot be abandoned, and the hon. member is not satisfied for the Government to cancel this contract and call for tenders. The Honorary Minister has indicated in his speech that

it is the intention of the Colonial Secretary at an early date to cancel this agreement and call for tenders. That satisfies the member for Pilbara, but the member for Roebourne is not satisfied.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : You are acting for him.

Mr. TAYLOR : The hon. member did not move the motion without involving a principle.

Mr. George : Why not make this apply to all jetties ?

Mr. TAYLOR : If the hon. member will do so I will support him. However, I have an opportunity to move an amendment so that we can vote on a principle and not on side issues. I am not satisfied that we should allow the cancellation of this contract with the object of calling for tenders since the hon. member has involved a big principle which affects the Labour party.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TAYLOR : I was explaining just before the adjournment why my amendment should be accepted. Since that time, I have had an opportunity, and it has been the only opportunity, of perusing the file. I have not been able to go through it thoroughly, but from what I have been able to gather, I find that as far back as the 22nd January of this year, Mr. Sleeman wired to the Minister wishing to renew his lease, and asking that something definite might be done. Now we find that later on the agreement was finally arranged, but the file does not deal with the present agreement. The Honorary Minister read out the agreement. I have here a copy of an agreement, and perhaps the Honorary Minister may be able to tell me whether it is the agreement which is in existence to-day.

Mr. Gardiner : No, it is cancelled.

Mr. TAYLOR : At the head of this agreement there is "Tramway and jetty leasing contract for a period of two years and nine months from the 1st July, 1907." Is this the only agreement which was in existence ?

Mr. George : That has been continued.

Mr. TAYLOR: Now we find that the hon. member who moved the motion desires that the Government should exercise the power they have to cancel their agreement within three months. I have cursorily gone through the agreement, and I find that paragraph 28 reads: "The Government reserve to themselves the right to cancel this agreement at the end of each year by giving the contractor one month's notice in writing," but I find also that across that clause there has been written in red ink "cancelled, C.J.I." I do not know whether there are other agreements in existence.

Mr. George: Is there any date on the agreement?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am reading exactly what is here. The writing in red ink exactly covers the three lines of this Clause 28.

Mr. Monger: Who is C.J.I.?

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know; neither do I know what other agreement there is.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There is no other agreement.

Mr. George: Then that agreement cannot be cancelled at all.

Mr. TAYLOR: But it must have been renewed. If not, what agreement is there in existence?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): None.

Mr. TAYLOR: Then let us get back to the bedrock of things. Under what conditions are these people operating the State jetty at Balla Balla?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): On the conditions laid down in the letter.

Mr. TAYLOR: Conditions that do not exist, conditions which the Honorary Minister says are non-existent. Under what contract are they operating?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I tell you there is no agreement.

Mr. TAYLOR: They must be operating under some conditions. What conditions are they?

Hon. J. Mitchell: They can charge a pound a ton if they like.

Mr. TAYLOR: Then this House is asked to cancel an agreement which is

only in an embryo state. I suppose that there is some other understanding between Mr. Sleeman and the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Nothing except what is on the file.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not think the Honorary Minister is hiding anything, but these people must have some understanding with the Government that they are going to use the jetty under certain conditions, and one of these conditions is that they shall charge certain rates. Then we are asked to cancel an agreement which has not yet been signed nor yet been drafted. There is apparently only an understanding between the Government and Mr. Sleeman. Now we come to the point, that, since it was known in the North-West that the Government had handed over the jetty to Mr. Sleeman, the people began to raise their voices against the action. The population in the North-West is sparse, and it is not possible there to immediately call a public meeting in a space that might, literally speaking, be covered with a blanket, and you cannot raise the same enthusiasm there, because it lacks people with fiery eloquence and that power of speech which inspires. Although the people in those parts are scattered they felt so keenly on this question, and they considered that an injustice was being done to them that they raised their voices. What did they do? They appealed to their member, and their member, who had been in that portion of the State for some months, wired to the Government in strong language. That wire has been read by the member for Murray-Wellington.

Mr. Male: He wired asking the Government to carry out a promise he made on their behalf.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member wired down asking the Minister to carry out a promise that he had made to the electors in keeping with a policy which he was advocating.

Mr. George: Before he was a Minister.

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes, and even before he was a member of Parliament—when he was a member of the party. The member for Roebourne sent that telegram in fairness to himself and because of the prin-

ciples of the party he was supporting. He stated he was astounded; in fact there was every justification for sending it. The member for Roebourne told the people up there that private enterprise in control of these jetties meant absolute ruin to their interests, and declared to them that if they returned him instead of a Wilson Government supporter the jetties would be placed under State control. Then when the hon. member found that the lease had expired and that the Government were continuing to do the thing he was returned to Parliament to oppose, and knowing the principles his party were pledged to, he wired his natural indignation, and the telegram was such that any man full of youth and blood and vigour would have sent. Now we find the Honorary Minister and the Minister for Works trying to convey the belief that there was no protest.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There was no principle involved.

Mr. TAYLOR: Never mind the principle at this stage; we will deal with that later on. When is there necessity for a protest? When something irregular is done. That is the time to protest, and when the hon. member found that a wrong decision had been given he naturally protested. Let us see how far that protest went. I have gone through the files and have found that the secretaries of the unions up there wrote and wired to the Minister protesting.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Are the unions running this country?

Mr. TAYLOR: If they were, they would be doing much better than the hon. member would do. They all wired, and when they found they were not successful with their protest, what did they do then? As small bodies of industrial workers they then wired to more important unions. They communicated with Mr. McLeod, Secretary of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Miners' Union, in the hope of bringing additional pressure to bear. While the leasing of the Balla Balla jetty might not affect the mines on the Golden Mile there is a bond of sympathy between the unions which guarantees support, and recognising this the small bodies in the North-

West determined to appeal to the Kalgoorlie union in the hope of bringing the Government to book. In reply to that communication, Mr. McLeod wrote to the Government. Then what happened? The North-West bodies appealed to the Secretary of the Timber Workers' Union, the next largest organisation in the State. They wired to Mr. J. B. Holman, the secretary of it, and that gentleman wrote pointing out the injustice of this contract, and he asked that it should be rectified. What was the next thing they did? Did they not trace the injustice of this by every stepping-stone possible? They proceeded step by step until they reached the highest tribunal in their ranks. When they failed right along the line they determined to appeal to the Executive of the Australian Labour Federation, which is largely a political organisation controlling the destinies and the politics of the Labour party, and at that time Mr. Green, the member for Kalgoorlie, was the secretary of the Federation. What did he write?

The Colonial Secretary, Perth, Western Australia. Sir,—I beg to advise you that the secretary of the Roebourne district council of the Australian Labour Federation protests against the lease of the Balla Balla jetty to a private person. Their motion was framed as follows:—"That the action of the Government in granting a further lease of the Balla Balla jetty is detrimental to the advancement of this district, and is in restraint of trade and commerce, and is against the express wish of the large majority of the residents, and the promise of the member for the district that the Government would not again let this jetty; and further that this meeting heartily endorse the action of Mr. J. Gardiner, M.L.A., in connection with this matter, and have every confidence in him." With regard to the above I beg to inform you that at the last meeting of the State executive, held on the 9th instant, a resolution was carried that the foregoing resolution be endorsed by the executive. I have to ask if you would be good enough to arrange a time at a distance of a few

days ahead, when you would be prepared to receive a deputation on this subject. Yours faithfully, A. E. Green, acting secretary.

Mr. Green was then acting in the capacity of secretary of the Australian Labour Federation. However, we may view the statement of the hon. member for Roebourne, and although we may think that his resolution is indiscreet coming from a supporter of the Government, I make my statement and move my amendment with the object of justifying the action of the hon. member insofar as his earnestness is concerned, because he is not standing alone; he is standing with the support of every industrial organisation in the State that has touched this matter.

Mr. George: The Government must accept the motion.

Mr. TAYLOR: Every organisation that has investigated this subject is supporting the hon. member's contention. What does the motion ask this House to do? It simply asks the House to cancel the agreement, and the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin) has pointed out in no unmistakable language that it is the intention of the Colonial Secretary to cancel the agreement and call for tenders.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There is no agreement; I told you that before.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member is going to take away from Sleeman the opportunity of operating the jetty by giving it to somebody else on public tender, unless Sleeman's tender is higher. That is what the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is satisfied with. Now the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) is not concerned as to whether Sleeman should pay £150, or £500, or £1,000 a year for the jetty. The hon. member's contention is that the jetty should be run by the State. That contention appears in every line of his utterance this afternoon, but, unfortunately, the motion does not convey that. To make the motion convey what the hon. member desires, I wish, with his concurrence, to move the amendment which I have already indicated. There can then be no side issues on that point.

I believe my amendment will not receive the support of any member who believes in private enterprise. I want to be candid, I want to be fair, and I believe that by no side issue can a man who wholly believes in private enterprise support my amendment.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Private enterprise has nothing to do with the jetty.

Mr. Monger: You want your amendment to be defeated.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not, because I know there are only a small number of members in this House who will support private enterprise.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is a bad amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: The amendment puts the case in a nutshell. It precludes any side issues being brought in by members opposite; it puts hon. members opposite in their true light. It is of no use for political purposes trying to support some of the contentions of this side of the House.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We are not going to support the amendment, anyhow.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member would not support anything that would interfere with private enterprise or interfere with one person taking hold of any wealth-producing machinery to the jeopardy of the interests of the men. I believe this side of the House will support the motion. I do not think it is necessary for me to read these files, although they are bristling with points.

Hon. J. Mitchell: With Trades Hall unfairness.

Mr. TAYLOR: We have lost the sympathy of the hon. member for Northam because there is something in this C that emanated from the Trades Hall. That shows where a man's bias will blind his judgment, and how incapable some human beings are of deciding a question of equity. When any individual, no matter who he may be, has such a blind prejudice as will not allow him—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not discussing the amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am discussing a letter written by an industrial organisation, which the member for Northam referred

to as representing the Trades Hall. I think I am justified in giving some reasons why the hon. member's interjection is not genuine or relevant, and is prejudiced.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not justified in discussing any hon. member; he is justified only in discussing the motion or the amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: May I not discuss any arguments used by other hon. members?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, provided they are relevant to the motion.

Mr. TAYLOR: If an hon. member is permitted to use that argument in debate—and the hon. member for Northam has used that argument—surely another hon. member, with due regard to the decorum of the House, of course, has the right to reply.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not discuss my instruction that he should keep to the motion. I am not refusing him permission to discuss any matter which is relevant to the motion, but I have asked him not to discuss other hon. members or their intentions and prejudices.

Mr. TAYLOR: I have no desire to pursue that line of argument for one moment further; the argument is self-apparent. I only desire to say that the amendment must commend itself to that section of the people of Western Australia who are responsible for the majority sitting on the Government side of the House. I have already said, and I again emphasise it, that not one union in this State, great or small, which has been appealed to on this subject from a policy point of view, has failed to enter a protest in the strongest language possible.

Mr. Foley: Have these unions had the full particulars placed before them?

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member wants to show that the unions acted without knowledge and unfairly. I am not going to accuse them of that at this stage.

Mr. Foley: But do you think they have had the full information given to them?

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not think that the secretary of the Miners' Union, in Kalgoorlie, or the union at Whim Creek, or

the secretary of the district council of the Australian Labour Federation, at Roebourne; or Mr. Holman, the secretary of the Timber Workers' Union, or Mr. Green, the secretary of the Australian Labour Federation, would allow their respective unions to carry resolutions protesting against this, and I do not think that the Australian Labour Federation would instruct their secretary to forward a letter to the Premier—the Premier, mark you—protesting against a certain action of the Government without being seized of the full facts. The hon. member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) may think differently.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The A.L.F. only sent on the letter they received.

Mr. George: You ought to quote the *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

Mr. TAYLOR: The A.L.F. sent the letter on with their comments. The unions appealed to the *Kalgoorlie Miner* on this matter. I do not want to weary hon. members, but there is in this file two columns from the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of the most condemnatory language in regard to the action of the Government, which that paper is supporting.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you think it is from the *Kalgoorlie Miner*?

Mr. TAYLOR: That remark will show how far a person will go when he is pushed into a tight corner. Here is a two-column article pasted in the departmental file by one of the Minister's own officers and marked "from the *Kalgoorlie Miner*," and yet the Minister asks me do I think it is from the *Kalgoorlie Miner*? Would any other paper write anything condemnatory of the party it was supporting and be so hurt, so consumed with the fires of wrath over an action so damnable in its eyes as the letting of this jetty by the Government against their principles. Yet, with all this protest, the Government went along smiling and let the contract. Without any further words I move an amendment—

That after the word "cancelled" the words "and the jetty be controlled by the Government" be added.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I second the amendment.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue): I move—
That the debate be adjourned.

Mr. GILL (Leederville): I second the motion.

Motion (adjournment) put and a division called for.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): Hon. members opposite do not know what they are voting for.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to remind the hon. member for Murray-Wellington that he is not in order in speaking when the Speaker is on his feet.

Mr. GEORGE: I beg your pardon, sir. I did not know that you were on your feet.

Mr. SPEAKER: I accept the hon. member's assurance that he did not know.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes 22

Noes 11

Majority for .. 11

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Foley	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Gill	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Green	Mr. Swan
Mr. Holman	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lander	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lewis	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Heitmann

(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Monger
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. George	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Male	Mr. Layman
Mr. Mitchell	

(Teller).

Motion thus passed; the debate adjourned.

WEST PROVINCE ELECTION SELECT COMMITTEE.

Request for member to give evidence.

Message from the Council received requesting the Assembly to authorise Mr. W. Price to attend to give evidence be-

fore the select committee on the West Province election in 1912.

On motion by the Minister for Works permission given; and a Message accordingly returned to the Council.

MOTION—STATE STEAMSHIP SERVICE.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth) moved—

That the agreement between the Government and the Fremantle Harbour Trust in connection with the future management of the State Steamship Service be laid upon the Table of the House.

He said: I would like to say at the outset that it is in no spirit of idle curiosity that I move this motion. The past management of the State Steamship Service has been subjected to considerable criticism both inside and outside this House. Now that the Government have decided to make a move in regard to the future management, I think it is desirable that this House should be fully acquainted with the arrangements it is proposing to make. The criticism, as I have already said, has not only been in this House, but also outside. It is not very long since the Government, recognising, I take it, that this criticism was not altogether without foundation, and desiring to get to the bottom of it, appointed a Royal Commission. That Royal Commission held many meetings and took a considerable amount of evidence, and, as we are all aware, just at the time when the public were awaiting the summing up and decision, that Royal Commission was finally cancelled. The cancellation was brought about through one of the officers of the State Steamship Service resigning.

Mr. Underwood: What has the Royal Commission to do with this motion?

Mr. ALLEN: That officer certainly held a high position in the service, but it did not seem to me a sufficient reason for the Government cancelling that Royal Commission at the time it did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think it is my duty to direct hon. members that there is a limitation to the discussion on

this motion. The State Steamship Service has been discussed from almost every aspect, but that fact does not preclude the hon. member from moving this motion. At the same time it is not within the province of those speaking on this motion to discuss the Royal Commission. The motion is "that the agreement between the Government and the Fremantle Harbour Trust in connection with future management of the State Steamship Service be laid on the Table of the House." The terms of the motion will not allow the hon. member to discuss the Royal Commission or the determinations of the Royal Commission.

Mr. ALLEN: With all due deference, Mr. Speaker, I thought it was within my province to discuss the management in the past which made it necessary for the Government to make this change for the future.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not within the scope of the motion.

Mr. ALLEN: This State Steamship Service was entered into by the Government as a new enterprise, which never received the sanction or consideration of this Parliament. The sum of something like £100,000 of the people's money, probably more than that, was launched in this enterprise. Doubtless some of the people who have returned the present Government to office will support them in their action. There are, however, many unwilling shareholders in the State Steamship Service and they are desirous of having some enlightenment as to the management, not alone in the past but at present. I think that a great deal of the criticism of the State Steamship Service has been brought about by the reticence of the Government in the matter of giving information when it has been sought for in this Chamber. There is always a danger that where information is sought for and is withheld that there will be created a feeling of dissatisfaction and suspicion in the minds of the people seeking that information.

Mr. Underwood: Who told you that?

Mr. ALLEN: It is in currency in the town. I think it is necessary and important that the House should know

something about the future management of the State Steamship Service. And therefore hon. members should see this agreement or whatever documents there are leading up to an agreement. I take it that an arrangement would not have been come to without negotiations with the Harbour Trust.

Mr. George: You want the papers as well?

Mr. ALLEN: I want all the papers; even a letter might constitute an agreement. A little while ago a motion was tabled in this House for information regarding the balance sheets in respect to this particular enterprise.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot refer to that motion.

Mr. ALLEN: The State Steamship Service has been under way now something approaching two years, but up to the present the House has received no statement of how the enterprise was carried on under the old management, and it is on that account that it is necessary we should know just what the future management will be and how long we will have to wait before we have a statement. In private enterprises of a similar nature for every trip made by a boat a balance sheet is drawn up and they can tell whether the trip has been a paying or a losing proposition.

The Minister for Works: Do they publish the fact?

Mr. ALLEN: That is a different thing from what we have in the State Steamship Service. This is a State service with which everybody is connected. In a private enterprise they do not, of course, give out statements to the public generally every month.

The Minister for Works: They do not give them even to the shareholders.

Mr. ALLEN: I think this House should have information when it asks for it, and we should have statements at more frequent intervals than twelve months. We might have a quarterly statement, not necessarily an audited balance sheet, but a statement giving us some idea of how this service is paying. I hope the future management will be on lines which will enable us to have that

information. There is not the slightest doubt that the Government have had a very trying time in the management of this State Steamship Service, and that fact is largely due, in the first place, I think, to the fact of the plant not being an up-to-date one, and such a service needs an up-to-date manager; even if he has to be paid £1,000 or more a year, it would be probably cheaper than having a man at £500 or £600 a year. There is no doubt that upon the management of any business depends largely its success, and although I do not want to reflect on the past management we know that the success up to the present time, judging by the criticism levelled against the service inside and outside this House, has not proved satisfactory, and I hope this new management will be of such a nature that some of this uneasiness which exists will be allayed.

Mr. Munsie : The uneasiness is only in the minds of hon. members opposite.

Mr. ALLEN : I do not think there is anything in the hon. member's mind; it is a blank.

Mr. Munsie : It would be if it was like yours.

Mr. ALLEN : The hon. member sees double sometimes; he is like a mirror. It is a very serious matter if the State steamers are not a paying proposition. We cannot afford in Western Australia to-day to run any business at a loss. We have launched out £100,000 on these vessels.

Mr. McDowell : How do you know that £100,000 has been lost?

Mr. ALLEN : I say £100,000 has been launched. I am afraid, however, that it is a loss. We cannot afford in Western Australia to-day to put hundreds of thousands of pounds into a speculative venture, but if it has been done we have a right to see the loss is as little as possible, and if there is a loss we ought to know what it is, so that if necessary we may decide to cut the loss and have done with it. I do not desire to weary the House with any lengthy remarks. I cannot conceive of any objections being offered to placing the House in possession of those papers. As representatives of

the people whose money is being spent in these enterprises we should know what is being done in regard to the management thereof. I trust that the papers will give us some idea as to how the enterprise is going along.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) : I think it has already been explained by the Premier that there is no connection whatever between the State Steamship Service and the Fremantle Harbour Trust. It is impossible to produce an agreement when one does not exist. There is no agreement whatever between the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the State Steamship Service. It is true that recently an alteration has been made in the management of the State Steamship Service, but that alteration has not been made under any agreement with the Fremantle Harbour Trust. In the Treasury buildings various concerns are run, although there is no connection between them. It does not follow that because a set of books is kept in the office there is necessarily a connection between the management of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the management of the State Steamship Service. As a matter of fact the Fremantle Harbour Trust has absolutely nothing to do with the management of the State Steamship Service. That being so, there is no agreement between the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the State Steamship Service, and consequently the House cannot agree to the production of an agreement which does not exist. Under the circumstances of course, I must either ask the hon. member to withdraw his motion or I must ask the House to defeat it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) : There may be no agreement between the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the Government in connection with the management of the State Steamship Service, but the Minister will not deny that the secretary of the Fremantle Harbour Trust is the manager of the State Steamship Service. Will he deny either that the accountant of the Fremantle Harbour Trust is the accountant of the State Steamship Service to-day?

The Minister for Works: It has nothing to do with the Fremantle Harbour Trust.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: But these gentlemen are officers of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and they could not be appointed to the management of the State Steamship Service unless the Government had come to some arrangement with the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners. I mean to move an amendment which will make it possible for the House to carry the motion in an amended form. I mean to move to strike out the word "agreement" with a view to inserting "files and papers setting out the arrangements" made between the Fremantle Harbour Trust commissioners and the Government. We have sought information in regard to these State steamers from time to time, but we have never been able to get that information. We are told that the information will come along later. When however, an arrangement is made by the State Steamship Service under which men engaged to manage that very important work, the Fremantle harbour, are taken to control the State steamers, we have a right to know how far their services have been taken, and to say in the House whether their services should have been taken, and whether the arrangement should continue. Personally, I believe the arrangement is a bad one. I think Mr. Stevens, no matter how capable—

The Minister for Works: It is your province to say that anything the Government do is bad.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, I agree that everything they do is bad. I believe that Mr. Stevens is already fully occupied and has no time to manage the State steamers. Is it any wonder that we should desire to know how far Mr. Stevens' services are necessary to the management of the State steamers? We know that Mr. Sudholz is the assistant manager, and we do not know but what he is in effect the real manager. The member for West Perth (Mr. Allen) has put the case very moderately. Very strong language might be used in connection with this arrangement, but the member for West Perth does not desire to use strong language

on this occasion. We have already discussed the question time and again, and we have no desire now to discuss it in detail. We merely wish to know just what has happened. We allowed the Government to hide all that happened up to the appointment of Mr. Stevens as manager, but we ask them not to hide anything further. The Minister for Works has stated that shareholders in ordinary steamship companies do not get information from time to time; but I would point out that shareholders in such companies are at liberty to allow their officials to act as the shareholders may please. In this case, although Ministers have committed the country to the service, we are all responsible for the good management of the service so far as we can assist to that end. I would like to see these papers for the reason that I believe the arrangement is a bad one, and because I believe the House should take further action. I have already said that Mr. Stevens' time is fully occupied. The Minister knows that. The other day I saw that he had sent an expert to Geraldton to report on some necessary work there in connection with the handling of wheat. Presently there will be occasion to go into a similar question at Fremantle. Can we expect good management of the State Steamship Service from a man whose time is already so fully occupied? Ministers must remember when information is asked for that we are responsible to the country. The member for West Perth is doing his duty by the country when he demands to know how far the Government have gone. In order that it may be possible for the Government to supply the information we desire, that is to say, information in regard to this agreement, I shall move an amendment. Whether it is by form of agreement or whether the arrangement was made in conference, we want to know what the arrangement is. We want to know what the Government pay for the management of the State Steamship Service. We want to know what the position of Mr. Sudholz is, and the position of Mr. Stevens. We want to know whether the Fremantle Harbour Trust Com-

missioners were willing that this arrangement should be entered into. I shall be staggered if I find that they were, because I believe the arrangement will not be beneficial to the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I am surprised that the Honorary Minister, representing a portion of Fremantle, should have agreed to this arrangement whereby the services of two of the most important Government officials in the Fremantle area are taken to manage the State Steamship Service, a move which will detract from their more important duties in connection with the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I move an amendment—

That the word "agreement" be struck out with a view of inserting the words "files containing the papers setting out the arrangement."

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I hope the Minister will reject both the amendment and the motion. The Premier has given members on the opposite side his word that they will get all information when he delivers his Budget speech.

Mr. Monger: When is that to be?

Mr. LANDER: The Premier has given his word, and we should give him a chance. The State Steamship Service is the biggest bugbear the Opposition have, and I may say the biggest which the world has to contend with. It is cutting into one of the parasites that has been ruling the whole world, namely, the shipping ring. In Western Australia, with a population of only 300,000, we have had the courage to tackle it, and I hope the venture will be a success. Hon. members on the Opposition do not say anything about railways which have been built and shown a loss, but just because we have a little steamship service to the North-West they are raising a cry against it. It is only because it is cutting into themselves and their friends, because it is cutting into the Bovril Company and will cut in a bit further. Immediately a hoodle comes on the board they are like a pack of wolves. They have an assurance that they will get all particulars about everything.

Mr. Allen: We have had that a long time.

Mr. LANDER: I think if they go through the accounts of some of the things of the past Government they will find it was a long time before the House got information out of them. There were many things being carried on, and members on this side used to ask for information. There is not the least doubt the State steamers are hurting members of the Opposition, and I hope the Minister will reject, not only the motion but the amendment, and keep those members in the dark until the Premier has carried out his promise.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): The member for East Perth has let the cat out of the bag by confessing that it is desired to keep the House and the people of the State in the dark. It is just because we do not desire to be kept in the dark, because we believe the people of the State, having come to their proper senses again, are desirous of knowing what has happened in the dark, that my friend has moved the motion. In respect to the amendment moved by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) I really think that is what the member for West Perth (Mr. Allen) desired. That hon. member desires that the House, and through the House the country, should be enabled to see the way in which the Government have brought about this peculiar change in the management of the State steamers. We also desire to see this explained: We know perfectly well this arrangement has not the approval of the Fremantle Harbour Trust commissioners. We know perfectly well that the commissioners objected very strongly.

Mr. Lander: How do you know that?

Mr. GEORGE: I have it on the authority of the Colonial Secretary. We know perfectly well that proposals were made to the Fremantle Harbour Trust commissioners which the commissioners objected to. We want these papers in order to set our minds at rest on this important question. The communications between the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the Colonial Secretary are one thing, and the communications held by the Colonial Secretary and other Ministers with the secretary of the Fremantle Har-

hour Trust unknown to the masters of that secretary are entirely another matter. And we desire if we possibly can to see and let the country see how far the Government are prepared to go to practically seduce the loyalty of servants from those responsible for them and controlling them. I think that the fact that the secretary of the Harbour Trust has been in communication and negotiation with the members of the Government unknown to those to whom he was responsible and to whom he certainly should be loyal, is one of the darkest pages on the civil service book in this State.

Mr. Lander: Turn up past history.

Mr. GEORGE: It is one of the darkest pages no matter how black pages which have gone before may be, that has ever been written on the book of the civil service of this State, that a responsible officer, like the secretary of the Harbour Trust should be forced into the position of being absolutely disloyal to those to whom he is supposed to be loyal, and the Ministry or Government who would lead to the degradation of a civil servant in this way are unworthy of the confidence of the people.

Mr. Lander: Where does your information come from sometimes?

Mr. GEORGE: And even unworthy of the confidence of the member for East Perth.

Mr. Lander: You have traitors, all right, helping you sometimes.

Mr. GEORGE: The request for this information is replied to by the mouthpiece of the Government, the hon. member for East Perth.

Mr. Lander: No, he speaks on his own responsibility.

Mr. GEORGE: Replied to, I say, by the mouthpiece of the Government, the hon. member for East Perth, by saying we have from the Premier an assurance that the fullest information shall be given—when he chooses.

Mr. Lander: Did not he tell you so in the House?

Mr. GEORGE: It is only a few weeks ago since, in the pages of the biggest journal in this State, the *West Australian*, we were informed through an in-

spired paragraph that the Premier intended to deliver his Budget speech within a week.

Mr. Lander: And you know the reason why he has not done so.

Mr. GEORGE: Week after week has gone, fortnight after fortnight has gone, almost month after month has gone, and still we are looking for the Budget speech, and now we are told that it is possible it may be delivered in the course of the next three weeks, and the hon. gentleman there, with an effrontery that can be excused only by his sincerity, asks us to wait even longer. It is like the old song, "Whistle and I will come to thee, my lad." We have a right to know how the thing is going. The Government have entered into this socialistic enterprise, details of which I cannot, according to the ruling of the Chair, discuss, but they have entered into an enterprise and they are trying to keep us in the dark regarding it—I use the expressive phrase of the hon. member for East Perth. The Government of Western Australia, with a majority of 18 members, backed up by the powerful unions of the whole of this State, who believe in the voice of the people, are determined to keep the poor 16 members of the Opposition in the dark.

Mr. Allen: And the public also.

Mr. GEORGE: It almost reminds one of the old story of Goliath and David. Here in the Opposition we have little David and there on the Government side the big Goliath, and Goliath is shaking in his shoes and they are not number nines. Keep us in the dark, says the hon. member.

Mr. Heitmann: You were in the dark before you came out of the ark.

Mr. GEORGE: Perhaps the hon. member for East Perth could not have been speaking for the Government, and when supporters of the Government meet in caucus again he will be hauled over the coals for daring to say that they were keeping the country and members of Parliament in the dark. If we can stop it, they will not keep us in the dark. We will have a little more light thrown on this matter. We have had

an instance of keeping things in the dark in connection with that file to which I cannot refer.

Mr. Lander: You have had hundreds of instances.

Mr. GEORGE: Has the hon. member forgotten that the party to which he belongs sat for many years on this side of the House?

Mr. Underwood: We have more light than you are getting.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is perfectly true.

Mr. GEORGE: We have not yet heard from the Minister and I should not have risen if I had not felt that it would be very ungenerous on my part had I waited after the declaration of shall I say the opinion of the party, and not given the Ministry an opportunity to follow me and tell us their opinions. They ought to repudiate this sort of thing. We are not in the dark ages; we are living in an age of civilisation and light; we are not living in the days of the star chamber. We have only to go a little further, apparently, and it will be a case of "off with their heads."

Mr. SPEAKER: This discussion is entirely out of order.

Mr. GEORGE: What, the star chamber?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! No hon. member is justified in making a remark by another hon. member the subject of discussion, and that is just what the hon. member is doing.

Mr. GEORGE: Then we are not allowed to reply to arguments?

Mr. O'Loghlen: No, you had better give it up.

Mr. GEORGE: Or to statements?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can discuss the motion.

Mr. GEORGE: Then I take it it will be absolutely out of order for any hon. member following me to discuss me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I may say I cordially agree with that. The hon. member must discuss the motion. The mere fact that the hon. member makes a remark does not justify a discussion on that remark. Only the motion can be discussed.

Mr. GEORGE: I suppose I shall be in order in discussing the reasons why the papers should be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, provided they have not been referred to in previous discussions.

Mr. GEORGE: I have not spoken on the subject before.

Mr. SPEAKER: There have been two or three discussions on this particular matter. The hon. member for West Perth (Mr. Allen) had no difficulty in discussing.

Mr. GEORGE: I am discussing the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can discuss the amendment just and pertinently.

Mr. GEORGE: The amendment is that we should have the files containing all the papers referring to any agreement, arrangement or understanding made between the Government and the Harbour Trust.

Mr. SPEAKER: In connection with the future management of the service.

Mr. GEORGE: Yes. We desire to see what has gone before to give us some guide as to what we may expect in the future. I was referring to the question of the conduct of the Government in entering into negotiations with the secretary of the Harbour Trust apart from the commissioners who are the masters and controllers of the secretary.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member was perfectly right because that officer is concerned in the understanding between the Government and the Fremantle Harbour Trust.

Mr. Underwood: Come to your arguments.

Mr. Thomas interjected.

Mr. GEORGE: Is the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) right in interjecting, and is it right for another hon. member to say—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) interjected.

Mr. GEORGE: Is the Honorary Minister in order in interjecting?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member takes exception to the interjections they are not in order.

Mr. GEORGE: I have a decided objection, and I hope you will deal with them severely.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Is this a stone wall?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member complains that he is diffident about proceeding unless interjections cease.

Mr. GEORGE: I should like it to be understood that I do not object to interjections, but, seeing that I have to keep so strictly to this motion, interjections put one off the track. Interjections intended to help one are very acceptable; I use them myself. One hon. member wanted to know my authority for saying that there has been negotiations between the secretary of the Harbour Trust and the commissioners. I gave him my authority and I give it again, namely, the Colonial Secretary. I do not think it will be denied by the Government that there have been communications between the secretary of the Trust and the Government. I want to see exactly how far this matter has gone. While I can quite understand that if a Minister communicates with any officer in any branch of the service, that officer must necessarily feel it his duty to reply, at the same time, I cannot understand—and this is why I want to see the papers; to ascertain whether it is correct—an officer replying to such a communication without bringing it under the notice of those to whom he is primarily responsible.

The Minister for Works: How do you know he did not?

Mr. GEORGE: That is the reason why we want to see the papers.

The Minister for Works: The papers will not disclose what took place in that respect.

Mr. GEORGE: I want to see the papers to ascertain whether the confidence I have had in Mr. Stevens for so many years is fully justified. I believe he is an honourable man, and if he has deviated from the path he should have taken, I want to ascertain what has caused him to do so.

I have known him for too many years to believe anything against his character personally or officially.

The Minister for Works: You reflected on his character just now.

Mr. GEORGE: If he entered into communications and negotiations on a matter of this sort, apart from the commissioners, when he must have known of the negotiations going on between the commissioners and the Minister, he has not been absolutely loyal. I want to see the papers to ascertain how such a state of affairs has arisen, if it has arisen.

The Minister for Works: You made a definite charge of disloyalty.

Mr. GEORGE: If this state of affairs has arisen as I suggest, I will stand to what I have said. If Mr. Stevens, or any subordinate officer goes against the head of his department and negotiates apart from him, he is not loyal to the department or to the State. The Honorary Minister has subordinates and if his subordinates, without his knowledge, communicated with another Minister and negotiated with him on matters with which the two Ministers might not be in accord, he would say that that officer was disloyal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I do not think so.

Mr. GEORGE: I have known Mr. Stevens too long, and I want to know how such a situation, if it has arisen, has occurred.

The Minister for Works: You must have a very poor opinion of Mr. Stevens.

Mr. GEORGE: No, I have a very good opinion of him.

Mr. Heitmann: We do not want to know your opinion.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member is uncouth and impudent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GEORGE: I say uncouth and impudent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have called the hon. member for Cue to order; the hon. member for Murray-Wellington will proceed with his remarks.

Mr. GEORGE: I respectfully submit, Mr. Speaker, that it was very difficult to quite know whom you meant; I thought you were calling me to order.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, the member for Cue.

Mr. GEORGE: I waited to hear how—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Whenever I call an hon. member to order I do not desire that any hon. member shall further discuss my remarks unless, of course, he desires to move to that effect.

Mr. GEORGE: I am not aware that I discussed your remarks. I simply explained that I thought you were calling me to order and I sat down immediately.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well; proceed.

Mr. GEORGE: To tell the truth, I do not know where I am.

Mr. Underwood: When are you coming to your arguments?

Mr. GEORGE: The only arguments that would appeal to the hon. member are such that, according to the forms of the Houses, I am not allowed to even refer to them. I trust that the motion will be carried as put forward by the member for Northam and I await with considerable interest to hear the reply of the Minister to the statements I have made. If the Government refuse to let us have these papers there will be justification for every stricture I have made this evening. If we get the papers we shall see who is to blame for this most peculiar state of affairs.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It is rather difficult to get at the bottom of the hon. member's intention in moving for these papers. As you, Mr. Speaker, have stated on several occasions this session this matter has been dealt with, but some other phases of the subject appear to be continually cropping up. The member for Murray-Wellington stated that this arrangement had been made against the wish of the Harbour Trust. The hon. member knows well it would be a matter of impossibility to enter into an arrangement that affected the secretary of the Harbour Trust, if the Harbour Trust were not willing. The object of this motion is to ascertain what arrangements have been entered into, and I am surprised at the statements which have been made by the member for Murray-Wellington when he

says that for many years he has known the secretary of the Harbour Trust, whom he has considered an honourable man, and that he is loth to believe that this officer would do anything that was dishonourable. Yet the member for Murray-Wellington declared that this officer had been connected with one of the blackest pages in the history of the State. How much are the hon. member's words worth when he makes statements such as that? Putting aside the question whether the arrangement may be satisfactory or not, I have been informed, and on as good authority as that of the hon. member, that Mr. Stevens did discuss this matter with the members of the Harbour Trust.

Mr. George: At a meeting of the Trust?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Before it was dealt with by the Trust, and we must remember that there is not one question that is placed before that Trust which does not come under the notice of the secretary, who is the responsible officer. If the hon. member communicated with the Harbour Trust to-morrow the letter would be received by the secretary prior to the meeting of the Trust at which the subject would be discussed. There has been no definite arrangement entered into at all with the Harbour Trust. The only question was whether they would allow their officers to carry on the additional duties in connection with the State Steamship Service. The Harbour Trust agreed to that, but the member for Murray-Wellington declares that they did not agree. I have seen a copy of their agreement.

Mr. Male: The Minister for Works says there is no agreement.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I have seen the minutes, showing that they agreed that Mr. Stevens should carry on with the others the management of the State Steamship Service.

Mr. Male: Is there an agreement?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): There is no agreement. The Colonial Secretary waited on the Harbour Trust, but prior to that the members

of the Harbour Trust knew all about it. At the first meeting of the board the Colonial Secretary waited on the Trust, put his views before them verbally and these were discussed. I know the members of the Trust were not unanimous on the question of the management of the steamers, but one member does not constitute the whole board. The majority of the Trust were in favour of the request made by the Colonial Secretary, that is, the arrangement which was entered into so far as the Harbour Trust were concerned. Therefore, there is no necessity for such a motion as that moved by the member for West Perth.

Mr. George : Who controls the secretary ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : I do not desire to suggest ulterior motives, but it seems to me that the object of moving this motion is for the express purpose of making the general public believe that the Government are keeping something in the background, or, as the hon. member stated, in the dark. I want to say that the general public have become dissatisfied over the action of the Opposition in regard to this question. The public see now that the Opposition are not sincere, that there is some other object in view and they view the Opposition with suspicion; so that instead of doing good by continually bringing up this question, the Opposition are doing themselves harm.

Mr. E. B. Johnston : Let them go.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : The hon. member asked whether there had been any communication with the secretary of the Harbour Trust. I have answered that by stating that there must be a communication with the secretary before it gets to the Trust. All communications go to the secretary first, and this question was not dealt with in a manner different from any other question that comes under the notice of the board. The secretary of the Harbour Trust has to meet the Colonial Secretary continually in regard to the administration of the Harbour Trust Act and these interviews take place once or twice a week. There is nothing wrong in that,

but according to the member for Murray-Wellington the secretary has no right to do so.

Mr. George : Provided he informs his employers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : He does.

Mr. George : Then show us the files.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) : I have told the hon. member that all this has been done verbally. It would be necessary to get the minutes of the meetings of the Trust. I have seen a copy of these minutes and I know that the Harbour Trust agreed to allow Mr. Stevens to take on the management of the State Steamship Service for a period of six months and that is the only form of agreement which has been entered into.

Mr. George : Were there any negotiations with Mr. Stevens unknown to the Harbour Trust ?

Mr. MALE (Kimberley) : I take it the member for West Perth in moving this motion expected to get as much satisfaction from the Government as we have had in the past in connection with State steamers. We know it is futile to attempt to get any information at all, but in spite of that we shall persist in trying to obtain it.

Mr. Turvey : You will get as much as you deserve.

Mr. MALE : We have found the Minister for Works and the Honorary Minister evading the question, as they usually do, in connection with the State steamers. The Minister for Works stated that there was no agreement between the Harbour Trust and the State Steamship Service, and the Honorary Minister tells us that there is.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : No, I did not; I told you what took place.

Mr. MALE : The Honorary Minister stated that there was an agreement between them to the effect that the State Steamship Service might have the use of certain officers of the Harbour Trust.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : That is another matter altogether.

Mr. O'Loghlen: There is nothing wrong in that.

Mr. MALE: There is a good deal wrong with that, and I say the Minister is evading the question in trying to point out that there is no connection between the two services. There was such a connection, and it was to such an extent that one of the members of the Fremantle Harbour Trust resigned.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Too thin.

Mr. MALE: It is not too thin. This gentleman's last letter to the Press proved that the matter was anything but too thin, when he dealt with the Colonial Secretary. Let us look at the position of the other members of the Harbour Trust. Should we expect that an officer working directly under the Colonial Secretary, and who happens to be a member of the Harbour Trust, is going to resign from the Trust? It is hardly likely, as his hands are tied. Are we to expect that an officer of the Public Works Department, working directly under the Minister for Works, will resign on this question? Certainly not. Surely it is putting the Harbour Trust in a false position. The Colonial Secretary practically assumed unto himself powers over the officers of the Harbour Trust and sent out his mandate that they were to take charge of the State Steamship Service.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The Engineer-in-Chief was not present.

Mr. MALE: If he was present he was put in a false position. We have the Colonial Secretary coming along to the Harbour Trust and practically telling the officers of that Trust what they would have to do. Such a course is wrong; it was absolutely wicked, and unfair both to the Trust officers and to the public. The State Steamship Service, leaving out the question of whether it should have been started or not. I say has been mismanaged from the start. At its very inception was any expert called in to advise the Minister? No. Off their own bat and without expert knowledge or expert information they rushed in and bought steamers.

Mr. Green: And did not appoint you agent.

Mr. MALE: If they had done so the steamers might have been more successful.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That aspect of the question has been discussed already this session.

Mr. MALE: I am not going to discuss it, but my point is that they get these steamers and instead of trying to obtain the best management possible they advertise for an officer to take charge of the vessels at a salary at which it would have been quite impossible to secure the services of an expert.

Mr. Thomas: Do you think the present man is incompetent?

Mr. MALE: I am not saying anything about that. What is the position to-day so far as we can judge? We cannot get any information, but we know that the management has been bad up to the present. It is even admitted by the Ministers to be bad, inasmuch as they are to-day changing the management. This shows that they evidently are not satisfied with the past management. Something went wrong and they declared that they would have to change the state of affairs and allow others to have a shot at it. What did they do? They looked around and declared they would try the officers of the Harbour Trust. The Colonial Secretary, I take it, practically issued instructions that the Trust should take over the Steamship Service and run it for the Government.

The Minister for Works? You know he could not do that.

Mr. MALE: He did so. It seems to me that this Government do all sorts of things that they ought not to do. They muddle along somehow and then pass the responsibility on to someone else. Now they are giving the State Steamship Service a trial under different management for six months, and if something goes wrong we will then have another change. But what are we doing this time? We are casting the responsibility from the Minister on to someone else.

Mr. Thomas: Do you want the Minister to manage it himself?

Mr. MALE: The member for West Perth is justified in asking for this agreement. It may not be a written definite agreement, but there must be minutes in the Harbour Trust office, and there must be papers or letters somewhere or other to show what arrangement was made between the Minister and the Trust, and we are justified in seeing those papers and knowing exactly how this service is going to be managed or mismanaged in the future. We have a fair idea of the mismanagement in the past, now we want to know what is going to happen in the future. We are justified in asking for these papers, but I know quite well we shall get nothing. In spite of that, we intend to persist, and we will persist till we do get something, even if we have to wait for that Christmas box or New Year's present which has been promised us by the Premier, the figures which are to come out after Parliament has gone into recess.

Mr. ALLEN (in reply): In moving the motion it was not my desire to get the papers out of mere idle curiosity or in order to provoke a long discussion. The motion in my name was not as exhaustive as is the amendment moved by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) and I am pleased to accept that amendment. There is a desire to keep us, as the member for East Perth (Mr. Lander) has said, in the dark. It is deplorable that Ministers of a responsible Government should treat the Opposition and the people represented by the Opposition in the manner they do by withholding information. The refusal by the Government to afford us information has been most noticeable during the time I have been in Parliament. Why should we not have the information asked for? If I cannot get the information under one motion I will move other motions until I do get it. For the life of me I cannot understand why the Government refuse this information. They talk about waste of time. They are themselves responsible for the waste of time. If they would give the information in a straightforward

manner not one-half the time would be wasted. There is no reason why we should not have the fullest information. The refusal of information creates a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction. The people are anxious to have this information.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We cannot help it if you move for what is not in existence.

Mr. ALLEN: The Honorary Minister knows full well that there are papers in existence which constitute the agreement. The truth is Ministers are playing a childish business, and say, "You want this, so you shall not have it." It is a disgraceful proceeding for Ministers to treat us as they do.

Mr. Monger: The only thing to do will be to move for it in another place.

Mr. ALLEN: If we cannot get it under this motion I will move other motions, any number of them.

Mr. Underwood: Do not move the world.

Mr. ALLEN: I would like to move you.

Amendment put and passed.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	21

Majority against .. 10

AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Moore
Mr. George	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Male	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Layman
Mr. Monger	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Foley	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Gill	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Green	Mr. Swan
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lander	Mr. Heltmann
Mr. Lewis	(Teller).

Question thus negatived.

**BILL—NEWSPAPER LIBEL AND
REGISTRATION ACT AMEND-
MENT.**

Order Postponed.

Order of the Day for the second reading read.

Mr. HUDSON (Yilgarn): I move—

That the Order of the Day be discharged.

Question negatived.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may move for the postponement.

Mr. HUDSON: After it has been carried that the motion be gone on with?

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion was that the Order be discharged, and the House has refused the discharge. The hon. member may move that it be postponed.

Mr. HUDSON: Is it not open to any member to move that it be discharged?

Mr. SPEAKER: Not while the hon. member is present.

Mr. HUDSON: Because the position, I take it, is that those who are anxious to proceed with the matter are at liberty to take it up. I have done all I desire to do. I was asked to introduce the Bill, and I have introduced it, and the members who voted against its discharge, if they desire to proceed, I do not wish to deprive them of the opportunity of getting the information and dealing with the Bill later.

Mr. SPEAKER: The second reading could not be proceeded with, because the Bill has not yet been submitted to the House. If the hon. member will not move to postpone the Order it must lapse by default.

Mr. HUDSON: To put the matter in order, if there is any complication, I will move the postponement, but only out of regard to the procedure of the House. I move—

That the Order of the Day be postponed.

Mr. GEORGE: On a point of order. How can you postpone that which has not been presented to the House? It cannot be postponed, or anything else done with it if it has not been placed before the House.

Mr. HUDSON: On another point of order, I should say that what I seek to have postponed is, not the Bill, but the Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is perfectly correct. The question is that the Order of the Day be postponed.

Motion put and passed; the Order of the Day postponed.

**MOTION—GAME ACT REGULA-
TIONS.**

Debate resumed from the 27th August on the following motion, moved by Mr. Underwood:—"That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor praying that the regulations made under The Game Act, 1912, and appearing in the *Government Gazette* of the 11th July, 1913, be disallowed."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): When this motion was previously under consideration it appeared that the principal objections held by various members to the regulations were on account of their restrictions, which are prescribed in the present Act. Since then a Bill has passed in another place which is now on the Notice Paper of this Chamber and which, if it becomes law, will remove a great deal of the restrictions that members object to. But the regulations provide principally for the imposition of licensing fees. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) pointed out that any man who wished to kill kangaroos would have to pay a license fee of £4, being £3 for killing, and £1 for selling the skins. I desire to inform the hon. member that the opinion of the Crown Law Department is that such is not the case.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Why did they draft the regulation?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The license fee for £3 for killing kangaroos includes the fee for selling the skins, but the man who trades in the skins and who does not do any killing has to pay a license fee of £1. There are two different license fees, separate and distinct. This question is one that, so far as I am personally concerned, I fail to get a grasp of. The member for Pil-

bara stated that kangaroos in the north-west part of the State are a pest, that they are a nuisance to the squatters, that they are doing a great deal of injury, living on food required for other purposes. Then we find the member for Gascoyne (Mr. McDonald) saying that the squatters refuse persons permission to go on their runs to kill kangaroos.

Mr. McDonald: Under conditions though.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It was pointed out that persons had been prosecuted and fined because they had been on the runs killing kangaroos. If the kangaroos are such a pest it naturally follows, in my opinion, that the squatters would be only too pleased to get them killed.

Mr. George: Hunting disturbs the sheep.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): They would be only too pleased to get the kangaroos removed from their holdings. But I want to explain that Parliament passed a Game Act in 1912 which threw on the Government increased responsibility. It placed on the Government responsibility for protecting game, and if there is increased responsibility, it is necessary that some revenue should be obtained to carry the Act into effect. Then it has to be considered in what manner the revenue can be obtained without imposing undue hardship. During 1912, about £30,000 worth of kangaroo skins was exported from Western Australia, and I would like to say here that kangaroo skins to-day are bringing a very high price. There is a good market for them and no difficulty in disposing of them, but while those engaged in killing kangaroos received such a reward as £30,000, the State received only £215, so I think that the officers, in recommending a regulation such as this, were justified, considering the large amount of money that was being earned by those engaged in killing kangaroos and selling the skins. Therefore, the regulations increased the licence fee from £2 to £3, which, on the basis of last year's revenue, will only mean approximately £650. That is the

total revenue that will be derived by the State from this £30,000 which went into the pockets of those engaged in this industry.

Hon. J. Mitchell: This motion refers to game.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): But the principal objection is to the killing of kangaroos. In order that this Act may be administered properly it will be necessary for some additional revenue to be obtained, and there are other methods by which revenue can be raised.

Mr. McDonald: Could you not give them a license for killing dugongs and raise revenue in that way?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I do not know anything about that. Under the Ordinance Act of 1853 a royalty was imposed on kangaroo skins. It was apparently thought necessary to protect the kangaroo of this State and so there is a possibility by putting a small royalty on skins we may derive a great deal more revenue from the export of skins than we can by charging a license fee. Then it has been stated that a number of squatters get the natives in their employ to kill kangaroos for food and the squatters sell the skins without being obliged to pay more than one license fee. I am assured that under the amending Bill, if it becomes law, it will be possible to make regulations whereby these persons who engage natives for killing kangaroos can be charged a fee, and so we will be able to get over that abuse.

Mr. McDonald: You prevent white men living at the game so that natives may kill them for nothing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I do not think that a revenue of £650 from an export trade worth £30,000 is going to prevent many persons from engaging in the occupation of killing kangaroos. Another objection to the regulations was voiced by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George). He pointed out that kangaroos caused destruction to orchards and the owners have no opportunity of killing them, but Section 21 of the Act gives power to the Minister to grant a permit to those

persons for a period not exceeding 12 months.

Mr. George: Is that the new Act?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The Act of 1912. The Minister can give permission to those persons to kill kangaroos if they are found destroying property in the manner the hon. member has described, but the hon. member's complaint is that after killing the kangaroos the owner must let the hides rot. The new amending Bill, however, will allow the Minister to make regulations enabling these skins to be disposed of.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Some persons want to kill kangaroos for food.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Provision will also be made to meet the case of those settlers who kill kangaroos for food. They will be allowed to kill kangaroos for food and the regulations will enable them to dispose of the skins. At the present time dealing in kangaroo skins is a very profitable industry, and I am informed that even opossum skins are realising to-day 9s. each.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: But you do not allow people to kill opossums.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Whether we allow them or not, they do it, apparently. I mention this fact because one or two members for the south-western portion of the State have pointed out that opossums are becoming a nuisance in their districts, which shows that a great deal of trouble is caused because the opossums are protected when their skins are of so much value. I certainly think that if it is the desire of Parliament at any time to pass legislation which involves increased expenditure over such a wide area as is necessary under the Game Act, Parliament should realise also that it is necessary to increase the revenue in order to provide for the administration of this legislation. There is no doubt in my mind that in many parts of the State it is necessary to protect various forms of game, otherwise they will soon be depleted.

Mr. George: Human beings are more important than opossums.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): We are not debarring human beings. We will take as many of them as we possibly can get, but we also want to see that when human beings come to this State and engage in an industry of this description, they contribute something to the revenue of the country.

Mr. Underwood: Are "pommies" more important than opossums?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have looked up the Game Act, and I would like to ask the Honorary Minister if opossums are affected by these new regulations?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The regulations deal principally with the licenses for killing kangaroos. I was only replying to statements made by hon. members in discussing the regulations. I say again, that if it is the desire of the House to see the Game Act properly administered, then hon. members must expect that certain fees will be exacted from the industry.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You want revenue out of everything.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): We need it. This license for kangaroo killing may be a serious question so far as the district of the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is concerned; but the regulations are made for the whole of the State, and I am of opinion that if it is objectionable to charge a license fee provision must be made in the amending Bill to enable the State to receive revenue by way of royalty, and that will be quite fair in view of the large reward won by persons engaged in killing kangaroos. I hope the hon. member for Pilbara will realise that there is no desire on the part of the Government to unduly tax anyone. Our one desire is to cut taxation down as low as possible, but it is found at times necessary and almost compulsory to put on certain classes of taxation that otherwise would be avoided, and, having regard to the fact which I stated before, that £30,000 worth of kangaroo skins was exported last year and the State received only £215 in revenue from the industry, I ask hon. members if they consider that

the State is receiving a fair return from the industry.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley): It is my intention to support the motion. It is rather surprising to me that the Honorary Minister in speaking on this motion has failed to grasp the intention of the member for Pilbara.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): To knock out the £3.

Mr. MALE: The Minister has failed to distinguish between game and pests, or vermin, but there is a very great distinction between the two. So much distinction in fact, that instead of deriving £215 per annum from this industry, as the Minister stated, it is only within the last 12 months that the Government have not been subsidising pastoralists on a pound for pound basis for the destruction of kangaroos; yet in face of that, the Minister would tell us that he is to derive revenue from the destruction of vermin for which past Governments have been paying a bonus.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That is the Act, you know.

Mr. MALE: But the Honorary Minister's argument is very unsound. Would it be reasonable to obtain a royalty or impose a tax for the destruction of rabbits? Would anyone dream of suggesting this because the State is able to derive a big revenue from the export of rabbits? The fact that the skins sold realised a value of £30,000 does not imply that the shooters have made an income of £30,000. In addition to the Government subsidy the squatters have been putting up pound for pound with the Government for the destruction of kangaroos and a bonus has been paid by the Government and the squatters to the extent of threepence per head for the destruction of this pest.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Yet they prosecute persons for going on their land to kill kangaroos.

Mr. MALE: That is a different proposition. Would not the Honorary Minister prevent a person from going into his lambing paddock to shoot without permission? Would he allow anyone to go into a paddock and shoot indiscriminately where he had fat bullocks mustered for

shipment? Surely he would expect to be asked for permission.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Yet they give pound for pound to have the kangaroos killed.

Mr. MALE: In Kimberley alone in less than two years a quarter of a million of kangaroos were destroyed, and yet the Honorary Minister confuses the issue between what is game and what is vermin. What the Government should do is to encourage the people in the North to destroy these vermin where they are doing damage and where they are in such numbers that it is necessary for them to be destroyed. Will the Honorary Minister say that because in destroying wild dogs the shooter is able to get a certain return for the skin, therefore the Government are entitled to a revenue from the destruction of wild dogs? No. The Government give a poll tax of 5s. a head for their destruction in addition to what may be derived by the shooter from the sale of the skin. On these grounds it is my intention to support the motion moved by the member for Pilbara. What may be applicable in the North may not be applicable in the South, but as far as the northern portion of the State is concerned, I am certain that no undue taxation should be imposed on the shooters of kangaroos.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore): This motion asks for the disallowance of a regulation which provides that a license fee shall be paid for the killing or selling of native game. I think that the license fee under discussion is a very high one, but hon. members have dwelt not so much on the actual fee as upon the question of killing kangaroos generally. They have not referred to other game except in some instances to opossums. These licenses are required for shooting all game, whether wild duck, pigeons, or marsupials: in fact any game appearing in the second schedule, but hon. members have in mind principally kangaroos. I do not wish to speak outside of this phase of the question, because it is the most important. The Honorary Minister has stated that the squatters object to persons going on to their runs to shoot kangaroos,

though at the same time they say that kangaroos are plentiful, so plentiful that they are doing damage.

Mr. Underwood: Some squatters, not all.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: Squatters do refuse to allow people to go on their runs to shoot kangaroos unless they have power in some way to control them. They object to people going on to their runs to shoot kangaroos without first securing permission to do so. They do not object to the fact of them going on but they consider, and quite properly too, that they should be able to regulate and control the shooting on their runs. Hon. members generally perhaps do not realise the danger of allowing people to indiscriminately shoot on runs where sheep and cattle are depastured. There is a danger not only to the stock, but to human life. A great deal of this country in the North is not heavily timbered, and a bullock might be killed at a very long distance. If such people are allowed to go on the runs without permission, the owner cannot say a word. They can camp at the owner's well and shoot kangaroos at their own sweet will. The owner may say "You are disturbing my stock; you cannot camp here," but they can reply, "What has that to do with you? We will shoot where we like." They can put bullet holes in his troughs and in his tanks and when the sheep come in there will be no water for them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You mean they will shoot tanks instead of kangaroos?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: That is what the squatter objects to. If he has control, he does not object. The Honorary Minister must agree that it is not right that people should be allowed to go on to a sheep or cattle run and shoot without having the permission of the owner.

Mr. McDonald: Where there is only one sheep to 30 acres?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I do not know where that happens, but that is not the question. There may be 3,000 sheep at a watering place. One sheep does not remain on 30 acres of land

and another sheep on the adjoining 30 acres. The habits of the sheep are gregarious, they go about in flocks. It is unreasonable for hon. members to expect owners to agree to indiscriminate shooting. I think a mistake has been made in extending the operations of the Game Act to the northern country. That is the weak point in the administration. The Game Act provides that certain districts can be proclaimed under the Act, and if a certain district is not proclaimed, the Act does not operate. It would be much better if the Government did not proclaim these northern areas where kangaroos are a great menace. If it is considered that certain game which it is desirable to preserve might be destroyed, the Government can proclaim the district under the Act, but they have power to exempt kangaroos.

Mr. Underwood: Why should the Game Act operate at all in the North?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I think it would be better if it did not operate in the North. There may be certain rare birds which it is desired should not be destroyed entirely, but it is easy for the Government to regulate the matter. It is going too far, however, to provide that kangaroos in these areas should not be shot. I would prefer that no license fee should be charged for shooting kangaroos in the northern areas. In parts of Western Australia where these animals are dying out, it is right that they should be preserved in some way.

Mr. Underwood: At the Zoo.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: But where they are a menace to the people on the land, it is only right that the people should be allowed to destroy them in whatever way they like. In spite of what the hon. member for Pilbara stated the other night, the kangaroo in my opinion is an excellent article of food. Those in the North are not as good for eating as those in the South. In the southern portion of the State kangaroos make excellent meat, and a number of settlers depend on them largely for food. In dealing with this Act by regulation every provision should be made to allow persons to kill kangaroos in the southern districts for food.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): When the Act is amended, that will be done.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: It is an iniquitous thing that after killing a kangaroo for food the people are required to destroy the skin. Where people kill these animals for food they should be allowed to make use of the skin by selling it. The license fee prescribed is a big one to pay for the privilege of destroying kangaroos. I do not think it was contemplated by the hon. member who introduced the Bill that there should be such a high license fee as the one provided.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I do not think he would agree to any killing at all.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I think the idea of a license fee was to assist in the administration of the Act. It was thought that the law would be administered by the Acclimatisation Society, and that if they charged a fee it would assist them to administer the Act. But it was never thought that the fee would be made so high. It was expected that it would be a nominal fee to enable them to raise a few hundred pounds a year to assist in carrying out the provisions of the Act. I hope that restrictions will not be made against the destruction of kangaroos in those districts where they are proving troublesome to the people on the land. At the same time I hope that in dealing with the question those who own the land will be allowed to have something to say in regard to the people who may be permitted to go on their land to destroy kangaroos. All that land owners want is simply the right to refuse a man permission to go on his country to shoot kangaroos if the applicant is a man who is careless, who cannot be depended upon, or is liable to do considerable damage. I do not like the idea of disallowing a regulation made by the Government in all good faith and as they consider in the interests of the country. It is rather a drastic proceeding. It is a serious thing for the House to adopt the attitude of disallowing a regulation passed by the Government, but I hope that after

what may be said by hon. members the Minister will be able to give an assurance that the matter will be considered with a view to lessening the difficulties likely to arise from the payment of this license fee. If the Minister is not in a position to give that assurance I shall feel myself called upon to support the hon. member in the motion he now places before the House.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): As it is only a motion to disallow a regulation, I propose to vote with the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). I would like to point out in connection with these licenses to kill or sell native game, that a man may take up a £3 license to kill, sell, or barter game. But if a dealer wants to take out a license to sell the game he has bought, he must pay a further license fee of £1. I have no objection to a license fee of £3 being set against the right to kill ducks, and in fact that would be too small in the south-west portion of the State. I think the killing of wild ducks for sale should be prohibited, but when it comes to the killing of kangaroos, particularly in the North, I remember that we used to have an amount on the Estimates each year as a bonus to be paid to people to kill kangaroos. I am entirely opposed to the idea of making money out of these license fees. The kangaroos there should be destroyed because they are doing damage. There are parts of the South-West where the kangaroos should be destroyed, too, because they are doing damage. But in most parts of the South-West I think they should be protected to an extent. I would be very sorry to see the kangaroo wiped out. Settlers should be allowed to shoot for food, and those who are likely to have their crops destroyed by kangaroos should be allowed to protect their crops. But in parts of the eastern districts kangaroos are not plentiful and do no harm. They should be protected there, I think. The license fee, however, seems to be apart from the question of protection. If it is wise to allow men to kill or barter, the license fee should be small indeed, as there would seem to be no reason why it should be made a means of

obtaining revenue. While I am with the hon. member for Pilbara, I hope the Government will set up other regulations, as they can easily do if the Act before us will not be amended to meet the case and protect game that ought to be protected, and give farmers the right to take game for food. I hope the Minister will agree, so far as the North is concerned, that only in rare places need any protection be set up. Probably around Carnarvon and other populous centres the wild game might be protected at some seasons of the year. I am perfectly prepared to wipe out these regulations, because they are only regulations and other regulations can be set up by the Minister to meet the case which is demanded. As the hon. member for Murray-Wellington pointed out, in the whole of the South-West the kangaroo is protected by regulation. If it is, and if it is impossible under that regulation to kill opossums and kangaroos doing considerable damage to crops, I hope that regulation will receive the attention of the House.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE (Katanning): I am quite sure that the desire of all hon. members of this House is that protection should be provided for the native game of this country. At the same time, so far as kangaroos are concerned, I am quite sure that the regulations in question go too far, and that, as a matter of fact, the principal Act goes altogether too far, inasmuch as it gives to the Government, or indicates to the Government, something which does not fulfil the wishes of the people, especially those in some of the agricultural districts. I am referring, more particularly to the protection of kangaroos and opossums. I know that in parts of my own district the protection at present afforded to kangaroos and opossums is not very favourably looked upon. As a matter of fact, it is generally known that in some of the newer areas the kangaroos do in many cases an immense amount of harm and damage. Under the protection that has existed during the last few years, these animals have been allowed to increase very largely

in numbers, and, as those with experience of them know, they often travel long distances. While provision was made under the principal Act for persons who are suffering damage to obtain a permit for the destruction of protected game, that provision only relates to game actually found upon the person's land. I would point out that it is very difficult to catch wild game such as the kangaroo or the opossum upon the selectors' holdings. They travel long distances. Kangaroo-, especially in summer, come several miles and make an attack upon a wheat field during the night. As a rule they are not found there during the day. They get in to the crop at night and the damage lies not in what they eat but in what they roll down, and, judging by the amount of destruction found in some crops, one would suppose that they indulged in athletic exercises among the wheat. I think the Act goes too far in protecting what admittedly in certain parts of the State has become a nuisance, and a means of destruction to valuable property. I have a letter here written from the Tambellup district only a few days ago by one of our settlers, who says, dealing with opossums,—

You are aware that the opossum is a destructive pest in an orchard. It not only eats the fruit but it breaks down the limbs of the fruit trees. There is not the slightest danger of the opossum becoming extinct, owing to the immense amount of unoccupied timber country, but even if it were the Government could reserve certain parts of the State for breeding grounds for the animal. My neighbour, Mr. G. C. Moir, tells me that his crops were badly damaged by kangaroos at Warrenup, the year before last. This year he decided not to put a crop in at that place, and yet the police officer at Tambellup is complaining that too many kangaroo skins are coming in.

I just quote this letter to illustrate what damage is being done by kangaroos. I think a certain amount of sympathy can be extended to the Government in this matter, as the principal Act passed last session was introduced as

a private measure, and there is not the least doubt that the Government were not in possession of the fullest information when framing these regulations. I am not so sure that the amending Bill which is now on the file, and will no doubt be discussed by the House, is going in its present form to overcome the difficulty, and considering the fact that the kangaroo is known to be a great pest in the North-West I feel that the regulation fee for licenses provided by the Government is altogether too high, especially in view of the fact that it is known that kangaroos exist there in very large numbers, and are also destroyers of a great quantity of feed, and certainly must be reducing the carrying capacity of the country so far as valuable stock are concerned. It has also been pointed out that squatters object to kangaroo hunters going upon their holdings, but there is one strong reason which has not been touched upon by hon. members why there is an objection to kangaroo hunters going upon private property without permission. That is that the carcase which is left behind forms a breeding place for the much dreaded blowfly, which is a very destructive agent in the matter of blowing sheep, causing large losses thereby. This is, I think, one of the strongest reasons why owners of pastoral areas object to kangaroo hunters going upon their property without permission. I suggest to the Honorary Minister that he might give the House an assurance that, considering the fact that the principal Act was passed without very full discussion last session, and considering also the objections that have been raised by hon. members to the regulations, that he should undertake to suspend these regulations pending the opportunity which will be offered to the House by the amending Bill to further consider the whole question of the protection of native game. Unless that assurance is given by the Minister, I am inclined to support the motion of the hon. member for Pilbara, simply for the reason that I consider the kangaroo should not, on the whole, receive that protection which it is receiving to-day.

I am quite satisfied we are many years too early in the matter of protecting kangaroos. That class of game is not likely to become extinct for many years to come, as there is so much unoccupied country, even in the agricultural districts, which is not likely to be occupied for many years which will afford sufficient protection to these animals; and I am, further, of the opinion that in the more settled districts every opportunity should be given to the settlers to destroy kangaroos which are likely to become a nuisance to them, while the settler in the early stages of settlement should be able to kill kangaroos for food, and further than that realise upon the value of the skins which under present conditions are being allowed to waste after killing, and are lost not only to the settler, but also to the State. I trust, therefore, that the Minister will at this stage agree to suspend these regulations. The hon. member for Moore did not like being forced to support the motion because it is a serious step to take, and I think the simplest way for the Government would be to agree to my suggestion and give the House an early opportunity of discussing the amending Bill, and thus deal generally with the question of the protection of game.

Mr. S. STUBBS (Wagin): The member for Katanning has stated the case regarding the kangaroo fairly and concisely, and it is my intention, whilst not altogether agreeing with the whole of the motion as moved by the member for Pilbara, to tell the House that the kangaroo pest in the Great Southern districts is one that requires serious attention. Only last Monday morning before leaving to come to Perth a young man who has a contract with me for clearing one of my paddocks, came to the homestead and said he had been summoned by the policeman of the district for committing a breach of this particular Act. I asked him what the offence was, and he said, it was not having a license. I asked him whether he had shot the kangaroo for food and he said that he had sold a tamar skin, and that would be the subject of the charge which was to be heard at the

Wagin police court. I found that he was telling me the truth and as he did not desire to defend the case in Wagin, I agreed to call upon the policeman in Wagin and plead guilty for the man. At the same time I looked up this particular Act and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the Act is wrong in this respect regarding the kangaroos. On Sunday last, while traversing one of my paddocks I saw fourteen huge kangaroos rise from behind the rocks in the centre of the paddock, and on going out to see what mischief had been done I found that they had trampled down half an acre of crop just as if horses had gone over it. If hon. members had seen what I saw there, they would agree that the regulations regarding the prohibition of shooting kangaroos were wrong.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is the Act, not the regulations.

Mr. S. STUBBS: Then the Act should be amended, and the sooner that is done the better. The member for Katanning suggested an early amendment of the Act.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is on the Notice Paper.

Mr. S. STUBBS: I hope the House will have an opportunity of discussing it at an early date and the objectionable section regarding the shooting of kangaroos amended so that people should be permitted to shoot without a license. We should be allowed to destroy kangaroos, especially in places where they do so much damage among growing crops.

Mr. A. N. Piesse: And sell the skins too.

Mr. S. STUBBS: Yes. If all kangaroos were destroyed it would not be a national loss. I do not know what there is that is wonderful about a kangaroo that we should protect it. So far as I know the kangaroo, it does nothing but mischief, and it is an animal that in no sense of the word can be termed useful or ornamental. They provide good food sometimes, but it is tough meat, and we get enough tough meat as it is now.

Mr. Underwood: That is all altered now.

Mr. S. STUBBS: But not the price. However, that is not the question before the Chair. I desire to support the motion of the hon. member for Pilbara and I hope the House will agree to it.

Mr. TURVEY (Swan): The motion deals with regulations under the Game Act, 1912, and most of the discussion to-night has centred around the kangaroo. It is regrettable that the motion has come on at the present time whilst a Bill is just about to be introduced.

Mr. Underwood: It does not touch the question.

Mr. TURVEY: However, if, as stated by the hon. member who has moved the motion, the Bill does not touch the question, it is my intention to support the motion. It has been pointed out by members representing the North-West constituencies that the kangaroo there is a pest, and we have heard from the hon. member who has just resumed his seat that kangaroos are also a pest in the Great Southern districts. I also want to emphasise the point that in the horticultural parts of the Darling Ranges many of the orchardists find the kangaroo a bad pest.

Mr. George: And the opossum too.

Mr. TURVEY: The kangaroo goes into an orchard and frequently ruins it, by stripping the bark off the fruit trees.

Mr. Monger: The kangaroo?

Mr. TURVEY: Yes, and opossums too. It will therefore be seen that the kangaroo is practically a pest in all parts of the State. I believe in preserving native game on reserves which are specially set apart, but I do not believe in preserving game which is a pest to such an extent that we are placing restrictions upon the settlers. Further, at the present time we are depriving settlers of their right to shoot kangaroos even for food, but I do think this is inflicting a hardship, notwithstanding the expression of opinion from the member for Pilbara that the only good he could see in the kangaroo for food purposes was that it did not spoil the pork when it was being cooked. We cannot get

away from the fact that settlers are very glad to have the opportunity of shooting kangaroos. I understand from the Minister that the Bill about to be introduced in the Chamber will make provision for the settlers shooting kangaroos for food purposes, and in that connection, even where they do that, and where the settlers shoot them on account of the damage they are doing, it is only right that these people should be able to sell the skins of the kangaroos they have destroyed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): It appears that whilst there may be some objection to the regulations, there is also a very big objection to the measure that permitted the regulations being made. Under the circumstances, I think in order to meet the desires of hon. members, we might suspend the operations of these regulations until we get an opportunity of dealing with the measure which will shortly be before the Assembly. That will give us an opportunity of dealing with all the phases of the question, and after it has been discussed, the question of amending the regulations in conformity with the new Bill as it will appear before this Chamber, will be dealt with. Under the circumstances, I can agree on behalf of the Government to suspend the operation of these regulations. I feel therefore, that I am justified in asking the member for Pilbara to agree to the motion being withdrawn, and then we can deal with the question when the Bill is before us.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (in reply): In bringing forward this motion I did so in conjunction with the member for Gascoyne, the member for Roebourne and others, so as to get the feeling of the House on the question of whether this license, particularly on kangaroos, was warranted and I am pleased that the discussion that has taken place has endorsed my opinion. With regard to the proposition brought forward by the Minister for Works that the Government will suspend the operation of the regulations until the amending Bill is considered by this House, there is one diffi-

culty, which to me is a serious one, and it is that the Bill before the House will have to go to another place, and if the amendments are disallowed there, that will be the end of the Bill and the end of us too. The position, as I have pointed out previously, is that when the Game Act was passed we were assured by the then Minister, Mr. Mitchell, and the then Premier, Sir Newton Moore, that the measure would not operate at any great distance north of Geraldton. That was never given effect to. I complained once or twice, and when the Bill came before the House again last year an assurance was given by the Premier that there would be an opportunity given early in the next session to deal with the question. And in the meantime these regulations are sprung upon us. I do not think it has been done intentionally, indeed I am certain it has not been done intentionally, either by the late Ministers or the present Ministers. But the officer in charge of the department has done it intentionally. He has neglected to take notice of the promise his Ministers have given in this Chamber. I contend it is the place of Parliament to put that officer in his place, and I would prefer that Parliament put him out of his place and put him on the track. Then there is the possibility of the extermination of the kangaroo. It has been pointed out that the kangaroo is not a very beautiful animal or a very useful animal, nor altogether a very desirable animal where anything can be destroyed. At the same time I have an Australian sentiment, and I would not like to see the kangaroo entirely wiped out. But I will give the House an assurance that there is no possible earthly hope of the kangaroo being wiped out of Western Australia; I do not care how many men hunt or shoot him. The hon. member who is practically responsible for all this trouble, the Hon. W. Kingsmill, is very solicitous for the preservation of the kangaroo. I can assure that hon. gentleman that so long as the kangaroo does not take to drinking patent medicines there is no chance of his being wiped out. If he were to take

to patent medicines it might be dangerous, but that is the only danger before him.

Mr. Foley: What about his drinking milk?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: He has drunk milk and pulled through. There is talk now of preserving opossums. The man who would preserve opossums would preserve snakes. The only place fit to preserve opossums is on the postage stamps. I would suggest to the Prime Minister that as he has wiped out the kangaroo from our postage stamps the only use for the opossum is to put him on the stamps. In regard to the Honorary Minister's statement combatting my assertion that men might possibly be charged £4 in licensing fees, that is, £1 to sell the skins and £3 to kill, I may point to Section 10 of the principal Act, which has the marginal note 'License to sell game.' The section reads as follows:—

No person shall sell or take or kill for the purpose of selling any imported or native game or dispose thereof for gain or reward until he has taken out a license for that purpose and paid the prescribed fee therefor. Licenses to sell game shall be signed and issued by the same persons as under this Act are authorised to sign and issue licenses to take or kill game.

Under that section a man cannot sell game or kill game for the purpose of selling without a license to sell. Under another section he is required to have a license to kill. According to the ordinary English of it he requires a license for both purposes.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Prosecutions are being made now under the section to kill.

Mr. Turvey: He must have a license to sell before he can kill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. The gentleman responsible for this Act, the Hon. W. Kingsmill, a university man, says that the Act does not prescribe that. But it takes a university man to read it in that way.

Mr. McDowall: You ought to have sympathy with him, for you are an authority on the classics.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: But I am not. However, when it comes to criticising the drafting of Bills, the hon. gentleman should consider Section 10 of this Act, which is his Act. In regard to the question of squatters, it has been pointed out that on some runs the leaseholders object to kangaroos shooting on their leases, and that at the same time they have a lot of natives shooting for them. That is a fact to a certain extent. Some pastoralists have a great number of natives living on their place, working about for them. On these stations, or some of them, they employ the natives to shoot kangaroos. The natives are fed on the kangaroos, and the skins are brought in. On the other hand, there are many stations that have practically no natives at all. Take for instance, the DeGrey River station. They have something like 200 natives who live there and regard the place as their home. Carlindi is a new station, and is the home of no natives. They have there only two or three natives employed as stockmen and in other similar capacities. The kangaroos may increase and do increase on Carlindi, and on Lalla Rookh. There are no natives to kill them there, whereas on the DeGrey station they kill practically all the kangaroos. It has been pointed out that this is a big State, and that it is very difficult to devise hard and fast regulations to suit every part of it. Emphatically there is a big difference between many stations in this country. In reply to the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male), I desire to say I hold the opinion that a pastoralist who pays rent for his country should have the power to prevent men coming into any part of his holding and disturbing his stock, interfering with his ewes when they are lambing, or when he is mustering, or at various other times. Insofar as the member for Gascoyne (Mr. McDonald) is concerned, I believe he agrees with me in that. It is not his desire to in any way inconvenience the leaseholder, or to interfere with the genuine carrying on of his business as a pastoralist.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member is not going to discuss the land question.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Section 7 of the Act provides that the Governor-in-Council may suspend altogether the operations of the Act. In my opinion it would be advisable to entirely suspend the operations of the Game Act, so far as the North-West is concerned. In the Southern part of the State we have many birds and a few animals which it may be desirable to protect. In the North at the present time I do not think there is any. In the Southern parts I think it is undoubtedly desirable to protect ducks. In the North it is not necessary to protect them. The few shooters who are there, and the few possibilities of selling the ducks if they were shot, are not sufficient to warrant interference with anybody shooting game of any description up there. It also applies to a lesser extent in regard to kangaroos. Although it has been pointed out here that kangaroos are an undoubted pest in the North-West, still, there are some parts where it may be necessary, or at least desirable to protect them. We could protect them, I think, without damage to anybody, say along the Darling Range, and particularly on the fauna and flora reserve; but in the North-West is it not necessary to protect them.

Mr. A. E. Piesse: You could protect them in the more closely settled areas.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, but in the North-West it is not necessary. As has been pointed out by the Hon. F. Connor there should be no license required for killing wallabies in the Kimberleys. I may inform the House that the wallaby of Kimberley is a small animal, and the skin is not at all valuable. It is found necessary to pay a subsidy to shooters to shoot this animal. I believe many pastoralists in the Kimberleys are paying as much as 3d. per head for killing wallabies. If we come to count up we will find that a man has to kill something like 320 wallabies, at the subsidy he gets, before he has paid for his license fee. Where the pastoralist is paying a subsidy for the destruction of an animal

it is wrong of the Government to charge a license fee for the killing of it. There is just one other question. It has been pointed out that a great amount of money has been returned to some people by the exportation of kangaroo skins. I have pointed out that a considerable amount of money is obtained from the exportation of rabbit skins; yet nobody ever attempted to put a license on rabbit shooters. The Honorary Minister has told us that £20,000 or £30,000 is obtained by the export of kangaroo skins. How many times do we require to multiply that to get the export value of wool? This goes to prove that a sheep is an infinitely better animal to have in the country than a kangaroo. The sooner we get the kangaroo out and the sheep in, the sooner we will have more population in the country. Accepting the assurance of Ministers that they will suspend these regulations and give the matter full and fair consideration, I will, with the permission of the House, withdraw the motion.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): May I ask the Minister a question arising out of the statement made in regard to the suspension of these regulations?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member would not be in order, but with the indulgence of the House he may do so.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I wish to ask the Minister if it is possible to suspend a regulation which has the force of law. It is, of course, impossible to suspend the law, and if the Minister desires to suspend the regulations it will be necessary to withdraw them altogether.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The Minister for Works gave an undertaking that he would suspend the regulations.

Hon. J. Mitchell: But you cannot suspend them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): You may rest assured that no action will be taken under these regulations.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. member desires to withdraw the motion?

Mr. Underwood : Conditionally on the suspension of the regulations, yes.

Hon. J. Mitchell : But they cannot be suspended.

Mr. SPEAKER : It is not within my province to give a decision upon this point, nor have I been asked for it, but the hon. member for Northam has spoken to me respecting the matter, and I told him that I was not aware of any authority to permit of the suspension. However, under Section 11 of the Interpretation Act I believe the Minister has power to withdraw the regulations and to put them into operation again at any time.

Hon. J. Mitchell : The Minister would have power to withdraw the regulations, and, of course, make other regulations.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : That is what we will do.

Hon. J. Mitchell : Then I am perfectly satisfied with that.

Mr. Taylor : May I ask the Honorary Minister if that is without any regard to the passage of another Bill ?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Hon. members desire that no further action be taken under these regulations pending the passing of a Bill which is now before this House. The Minister for Works gave that distinct promise and I think that should satisfy hon. members. The regulations will be withdrawn and after that it will be necessary to make other regulations when the amending Bill is passed.

Mr. Underwood : I have every confidence in the honesty of the Government, and as I have the assurance of the Minister I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Question, by leave, withdrawn.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : 1, By-law of the Geraldton Local Board of Health. 2, Regulations under the Jetties Regulation Act, 1878. 3, Additional Port Regulation 46A. 4, Amended Food Standards and Regulations under the Health Act, 1912.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 25th September, 1913.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary : 1, Amendment to regulations under the Mining Act. 2, Amendment to general rule 12 under the Coal Mines Regulation Act.

PERTH TRAMWAYS PURCHASE MONEY.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : In reply to the question asked without notice by the Hon. Mr. Colebatch yesterday with regard to the method of payment in connection with the purchase of the tramways, I have to state that the whole of the amount is paid in cash.

BILL—SUPPLY (TEMPORARY ADVANCES) £223,145.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) : When the villain in the melodrama makes his first nefarious attempt and is foiled and returns to the charge, he, on the second occasion, as a rule, comes back with a considerable amount of disguise. With regard to this Bill I can, at all events give the Government, who, having failed in the piece, and are behind the Bill, the credit for discarding any attempt at disguise. We have in this Bill the same measure absolutely letter