

man, Long & Coy., Ltd., and the Cargo Fleet Iron Coy., Ltd., of Middlesbrough, Pease and Partners, Ltd., Saltburn-by-the-Sea, S. Fox & Co., Ltd., Sheffield, Colvilles, Ltd., Glasgow, and the Steel Co. of Scotland. With the re-opening of the River St. Lawrence, Canada, after the winter frost, the busiest coal export period of the year has begun at Swansea. Canadian bookings are heavier than usual.

That conveys the information that things are improving in Great Britain. Perhaps the migrants who desire to go back would be better off if they did so. Some people say it is impossible to send them home because they have been brought out under contract. Others say that the Federal Government control migration. That is not so in the case of these people. The State Government controls these British migrants. On the 23rd April the newspaper published a paragraph headed "Unwanted Britons; Repatriation from Dominions," reading—

In the House of Commons to-day (April 21st) the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Graham) informed Mr. Somerville (Conservative) that the shipping companies' voluntary returns showed that last year Canada repatriated 2,534 Britons, and Australian and New Zealand authorities repatriated 218.

If they can be repatriated from Canada, they can be sent home from Western Australia.

Mr. Hegney: Canada is much closer to England than Australia is.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Distance does not count in an argument of this kind.

Mr. Marshall: What if the Federal Government refused to issue the necessary passports?

The Minister for Lands: You know they are already doing it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not know that.

Mr. Marshall: There was a case quite recently.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There have been one or two cases in which trouble occurred over securing the necessary passports. If the House decides that those who wish to go Home may do so, I do not think the Federal Government would stand up against it. I do not think if there was a move like this emanating from the Western Australian Parliament, the Federal Government could stand up against it. I hope the House will treat this matter seriously and will vote for this motion. It is a most important and

urgent question. I will not cease to agitate for something to be done for these people until I find that Parliament is prepared to vote with me in the matter.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 20th May, 1931.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—FARMERS' DEBTS.

Royal Commission.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Lands: Seeing that the scope of the proposed Royal Commission on Agriculture is stated to be confined to the relationship between the farmer and his creditors, will the Government at a later date extend the Commission's operations to an inquiry into the larger question regarding costs of production and how the wheatgrower can be kept upon the land on a business footing?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The terms of the Commission will be made public very shortly, and should, I think, prove satisfactory.

Security of Tenure.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Do the Government intend to introduce legislation to ensure security of tenure to farmers where circumstances warrant it? 2, In view of certain information laid before the Government, will some protection be afforded to the buyer of land to prevent such glaring injustice as has been made public by the Merredin Agricultural Society?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, No. The Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act should meet the position. 2, The matter is receiving consideration.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERSHIP.

Mr. PANTON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many applicants were there for the position of Public Service Commissioner, and what was the name of each applicant? 2, What specific qualifications were required for the position? 3, Were there any returned soldier applicants? 4, If so, what was the full name, occupation, and classified title of each? 5, Was the Government's policy of preference to returned soldiers considered in making the appointment? 6, If that policy was considered, in what respect did each soldier applicant fail to meet the specific qualifications? 7, Will the Minister lay upon the Table all papers dealing with the appointment? 8, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Thirty-five. 2, The fullest knowledge of the Service and financial position of the State, coupled with administrative ability. 3, Yes. 4, The names of applicants cannot be supplied, as many may seriously resent it. 5, Yes. 6, The qualifications of others were superior. 7, No. 8, This is not desirable.

QUESTION—MCNESS PHILANTHROPIC SCHEME.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What amount has been made available for the erection of homes under what is known as the McNess philanthropic scheme? 2, From what sources and to what

extent respectively have these amounts been provided? 3, Do the conditions relating to the scheme provide for limitation of contracts to State trading concerns? 4, In view of the general difficulties being faced by all sections, including the business community, and the inequity which follows limitation of timber and other supplies to State trading concerns, will he make all tenders for Government and Government-controlled work and material open to the public generally?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, £20,000. 2, £5,000 from the McNess Fund and £15,000 from the Commonwealth Government. 3, Only partially. The restrictions apply to timber and bricks alone, which are already in stock and paid for by the State. 4, The funds were made available to relieve unemployment as far as possible. The best use is being made of these by consuming stocks in hand and paid for, and using available funds for wages rather than additional material.

QUESTION—FARMERS' SUBSIDY SCHEME.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will he state upon whom, if anyone, falls the liability for payment of workers' compensation insurance premiums in the case of sustenance men employed under the farmers' subsidy scheme? 2, Is it the farmer, the local governing authority, or the local unemployment committee; or does the Treasury as actual paymaster carry its own risk?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The farmers. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—LAND AND HOMES, LTD.

Mr. KENNEALLY (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary: Will he, as Acting Attorney General, give attention to the question of having a stay of proceedings applied to actions which have been listed by Land and Homes, Ltd., against certain persons in this State, seeing that notice of motion has been given by the member for Canning (Mr. Wells) that a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into the affairs of the company in question? I had proposed to move the adjournment of the House

in connection with the matter, but I understand there are difficulties in the way of that course. Various people will be badly hit unless some attention is given to the matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Speaking as Acting Attorney General, I have to reply that the Government have no power whatever to stay proceedings in the law courts. I think it would be most dangerous if the Government, or anyone else, had that power. Whether it would be wise or unwise to grant the power, we have not got it; and therefore we cannot stay proceedings in the law courts. To do that we would have to get a Bill passed. I certainly do not propose to attempt to do anything illegal.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motions by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) and the member for Forrest (Miss Holman), on the ground of ill-health.

BILL—CHARITABLE PURPOSES INCOME DEDUCTIONS.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, Bill introduced and read a first time.

BILL—COLLIE RECREATION AND PARK LANDS.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [4.42] in moving the second reading said: The small litho which I have laid on the Table shows the reserve which is to be vested in a board under this Bill. The measure has been held over from the earlier part of the session. It proposes to vest in a board a small piece of land by the Minninup Pool on the Collie River. While the land is in the territory of the Collie Road Board, the greatest benefit from the proposal will be received by the residents of the Collie Municipality. This means that while any improvements effected would be carried out by the road board, the benefit would be received chiefly by the

municipality. Accordingly the Bill proposes to vest the land in fee simple in a board to be appointed, consisting of two members of the municipality and two members of the road board, with a chairman to be appointed by the Governor. The intention is to make a recreation and pleasure resort of the land. Hon. members who have visited Collie will know that the pool in question is a very fine one. The locality requires some beautifying in order that the fullest advantage may accrue to the residents of the district. The Bill applies the provisions of the Parks and Reserves Act to the proposed board and to the land. At present the road board have not power to develop the reserve, and the Bill enables them, through the proposed board, to raise money for the necessary improvements. The proposed board will have power to grant leases, erect buildings, and make any other improvements that are desirable. The limit of any lease will be three years, except by the express approval of the Governor-in-Council. This measure is merely the usual type of reserves Bill, except that the land is being vested in fee simple in the proposed board. All the people in the district will benefit, and will be enabled to subscribe towards the funds required.

Mr. Corboy: Is it usual to grant power to lease?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but in this case it is necessary to obtain legislation for the purpose. In the city of Perth several measures of this nature apply; in the case of North Perth legislative approval of a similar nature was granted recently. In fact, Parliament has generally granted approval of the leasing of such reserves. In this case, however, we have a reserve which will benefit residents within the areas of two local governing bodies, and it was thought wise to appoint a board comprising members of both bodies. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) will be specially interested in the Bill, as he has repeatedly brought this matter under my notice. The measure is to be read in conjunction with the Parks and Reserves Act, and all the powers contained in that Act will be available for the functioning of the proposed board. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. M. F. Troy, debate adjourned.

BILL—SPECIAL LEASE (ESPERANCE PINE PLANTATION) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [4.45] in moving the second reading said: It is proposed by the Bill to vary legislation passed by this House. The measure was introduced by Mr. Angwin, when Minister for Lands, to grant a lease of 45,000 acres to a company for the purposes of a pine plantation. The company carried out certain experimental work which did not prove altogether successful and turned their attention to production in other directions. Now, with the approval of the House, it is proposed to give the company power to continue their experimental work and to dispose of certain portions of the land held under lease. In July, 1926, the Government were approached with a proposal to lease an area in the Esperance district for the afforestation of soft woods, it being the intention of the company to sell bonds to the investing public along similar lines to operations carried on in New Zealand, South Australia and other States. I think it was that phase that commended the legislation to the House. It seemed to hon. members to be unwise to send our money to other States or countries for afforestation purposes seeing that we had in all probability equally good land within the State for the purposes I have indicated. The annual output after the first crop matured in from 25 to 30 years, was estimated at 200 tons per acre. The imports of softwoods and by-products into the Commonwealth at that time were considerable, and as the land required by the company in the Esperance district was such as did not appeal to the general public for cereal growing and was therefore lying idle, a Bill was presented to Parliament and was subsequently passed giving the right to an incorporated company to secure 45,000 acres on lease for a term of 30 years. It was provided that 500 acres should be planted and established with softwoods during the first year, and thereafter not less than 1,000 acres annually out of every 1,500 acres were to be planted and the land fenced. After the legislation was agreed to, a lease was granted to the Esperance Pine Forests Ltd. at a rental of 3s. per acre for a term of 30 years dating from the 1st January, 1927. The company secured the services of a forester and pro-

ceeded with the establishment of a nursery for seedlings. Experiments were conducted to ascertain by demonstration the best methods of working the soil and of plant treatment. In March, 1928, the nursery was well established with about 250,000 seedlings ready for planting and 650 acres had been cleared for that purpose. An extensive sub-soil examination was made and, unfortunately, it proved that the soil was unsuitable for the growth of pines. In February, 1929, further advice from the company showed that some 30 men were engaged in planting-out operations and a further area had been laid down as a nursery. It was then estimated that between 600,000 and 700,000 seedlings would be available for planting. Clearing was then proceeding with respect to some 2,000 acres, while wells had been sunk, roads and tracks cleared, and additional living accommodation provided.

Hon. P. Collier: Did we not discuss legislation this session regarding this matter?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. In the early part of the session it was proposed to introduce legislation, but owing to an earlier closing than was anticipated, the Bill was not proceeded with. In August, 1929, advice was received from the company that although genuine efforts had been made to comply with the terms of the lease regarding the planting of pines, experiments had shown their efforts to be unsuccessful, owing to the difficulty of destroying the native vegetation. Out of 250,000 seedlings that were planted, 101,000 died. Up to that time about £7,500 had been spent upon genuine attempts to develop the property under the terms of the lease. In view of their experience, the company turned their attention to farming the land and hon. members who had an opportunity to go down to the Esperance district last year saw the wonderful results the company had secured. It was claimed by hon. members who saw me on their return that splendid results had been obtained by the company and they were able to show me photographs of various fodder crops such as oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, subterranean clover, lupins and many other plants. It was estimated that if the company proceeded with the pastoral side of the proposition thoroughly, it would be necessary to spend about £50,000 on the property. The Bill, which I now submit to hon. members, provides that the land may be used for purposes other than pine plantation, such as for clear-

ing, ploughing, planting and the establishment of pastures. It also provides that within 12 months the company select 25,000 acres out of the 45,000 they hold and on improving the land to the extent of £4,000 in value, plus fencing, payment of survey fees and the purchase money, the company will then be entitled to the fee simple of the land. The company will have to spend the equivalent of that which would be required under the provisions of the Land Act if the land were taken up separately by various settlers in 5,000-acre blocks. With regard to the balance of the holding, 20,000 acres, the Bill provides that the land may be cut up into blocks in accordance with the areas prescribed in the Land Act, with a maximum of 5,000 acres and a minimum of 1,000 acres. It is also provided that the holdings must be improved and may be sold by the company with the approval of the Minister for Lands. Moreover, the land will be subject, generally speaking, to the conditions of the Land Act, the purchaser being required to take possession of the land and reside upon it for a period of five years. It was deemed advisable to include those provisions in the Bill to prevent the possibility of the company trafficking in land, of which we have had experience in the past. Originally the company desired to subdivide the land into much smaller blocks, but with the knowledge we have of similar types of country to that over which the company are operating, it was deemed advisable by the Government to limit the minimum area to 1,000 acres. We do not think it would be a safe investment for an individual to attempt to develop, say, 100 acres of that type of country, hence the provision for larger minimum holdings. The Leader of the Opposition knows the country there well, and I believe a siding down there has been named after him.

Hon. P. Collier: Immortality!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The lease to purchasers of blocks will be for a term that will expire concurrently with the special lease granted to the company and will expire concurrently with the special lease granted to the company and will be for 30 years as from January, 1927. No transfer will be registered unless the land to be transferred has been improved in accordance with Section 68 of the Land Act, with effect as from the 1st January, 1927. The company will be jointly and severally liable with the purchaser for the

due compliance with all improvement conditions, and if the conditions in respect to any subdivisional section of the 20,000 acres have not been complied with, then the property will be liable to forfeiture to the Crown. That means to say that if the improvement conditions are not carried out on a block, it will be liable to forfeiture just as if the purchaser had selected his holding from the Crown direct. Any land that is not disposed of to purchasers during the currency of the lease to the company, namely, 30 years from the 1st January, 1927, will be forfeited to the Crown. It has been pointed out by the company that if the Bill becomes law, further capital will be forthcoming. Great efforts have been made by the company to raise capital for the purpose of carrying on operations for which investigations have shown the country to be most suited. Unfortunately the Act governing the lease gave authority to the company to use the land for the purposes of pine plantation only, and while that Act remains on the statute book, it has been impossible for the company to raise capital to carry on work for which the land is suitable. The company has advised me, and hon. members interested in that particular part of the State have also informed me, that if authority were granted to the company to make use of the land for purposes most suitable, the establishment of a freezing works at Esperance will be justified in due course. I am sure the member for Kanoona (Hon. T. Walker) will be pleased indeed if that prediction should prove to be well grounded. In addition to that, I am advised by the company that not only can they turn to account the land under discussion, but that Crown lands now lying idle can also be made use of similarly and that in time the establishment of fertiliser works will be warranted in the Esperance district. I am not sure when that will be, but I hope that the predictions of the company will be justified in the near future. The 45,000 acres leased to the company is sandplain interspersed with swamps of poor soil with evidence of alkali. I do not think there is much of it, but the land may be affected by the salt lakes that are known to exist in that area. It is within the knowledge of hon. members that at least one company is operating in the district and getting a considerable quantity of salt from the lakes. It is interesting to note that the

Esperance Pine Forests Ltd. made great efforts to grow pines, but unfortunately found the land unsuitable for that purpose. They did not throw up their work, but turned their attention in other directions and, in order to provide some return to the shareholders, they proceeded with other experiments, with results that I believe justify us in agreeing to the Bill now before hon. members. When I was first approached by the member for the district and others with a request for a variation in the conditions governing the lease. I was dubious as to whether any such action would be justifiable. After going into the question and securing the expert advice of the Conservator of Forests and of the officers of the Agricultural Department, I came to the conclusion that the Government would be justified in agreeing to the introduction of amending legislation in order to give the shareholders a reasonable chance of securing the return of their money. Many people invested funds in the company's operations in good faith and the company desire to provide those people with an opportunity to get their money back. They have a competent officer in charge of the work who has shown himself possessed of a thorough knowledge of the work under his control. I believe that if we agree to the amendments contained in the Bill, the shareholders will get their money returned to them. In addition to that, I am convinced that this move will be beneficial to the Esperance district, and God knows Esperance requires a little push along. I realise the country warrants further experimental investigations because I believe the Esperance district is capable of producing much more than we secure from it now. I admit that the Bill provides for a distinct departure from ordinary land settlement conditions. So far as I am aware, never before has there been such a large area of land leased to a company, because companies are regarded as individuals under the provisions of the Land Act. On the other hand, I am convinced that the proposal embodied in the Bill represents the more honest way of doing what many others have done when they secured areas of land in the names of friends and relatives. The company have done what seems to me to be right in asking the Government to approach Parliament to secure authority for the alteration of the terms of their lease. I have nothing to hide and if hon. members

think that further investigation should be made by a select committee, or if they require to see papers connected with the proposal, I shall raise no objection. On the other hand, if hon. members are agreeable to the amendments embodied in the Bill, I am sure we have provided sufficient safeguards, not only for the purchasers of blocks in the area now leased to the company, but for the purpose of protecting the interests of the State as well. For my part, I do not think there will be much objection raised to the Bill, and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. T. Walker, debate adjourned.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [5.0]: Apart from the provisions of the Bill, I think the manner of its introduction, and more particularly the extraordinary things that were said by the Minister for Works, who introduced it, demand the consideration of the House. This is a Government Bill. It is not a private Bill in introducing which the Minister would be dealing with something relative to his own electorate; it is a Government Bill, yet the Minister who introduced it said he had not taken it to Cabinet, that it had not been considered by Cabinet that "I"—using the first personal pronoun—"That I have decided that this is what is wanted, and I bring it to the House." He went on further to say that he was going to permit Government supporters to use their own discretion as to whether they voted for or against the Bill, and he was magnanimous enough to add that he had graciously conceded to the other members of the Cabinet that they, too, should exercise their own discretion as to whether they voted for or against the Bill.

Mr. Kenneally: It included even the Premier.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: This Bill was on the Notice Paper before the Premier left the State. We understand from that, of course, that the Premier, as head of the Government, endorsed its coming here. So the remarks of the Minister for Works undoubtedly included the Premier, intimating that he, the

Minister for Works had been graciously lenient to the Premier and given him a free hand to vote for or against the Bill. What does that involve to the House and to our system of government? Does it mean an alteration in the whole method of Cabinet government in this country? Are we to understand that Bills introduced to Parliament as Government measures do not come with the backing of the Government? Is there to be a complete turnover of the whole system, as we know it throughout British communities, of the responsibility of Cabinet to stand or fall by the measures they bring down to Parliament? Is this an innovation, that we are to be told that all history is to be denied and that Cabinet Ministers are to carry no responsibility for measures they bring down to the House? If the statement of the Minister for Works connotes his right to bring down a measure on his own initiative and graciously give other Cabinet Ministers discretion to vote against him, it certainly connotes also the right to tell the other Cabinet Ministers that they must vote for him. Is that the position the Government have come to, that there is to be no Cabinet responsibility in the matter, that one Minister can come down and pronounce a policy and bring in a Bill and then leave the other members of the Cabinet free to deny any responsibility for the Bill, any allegiance to it? What is to be the position of the Government or of the House? What are the people to understand from this? Who are the responsible men in the government of the State? Are the Cabinet responsible? This is an innovation, something that has not existed in the past. I have discussed it with men of lengthy Parliamentary experience here and in other countries, and I find that no parallel case can be cited. I have been unable to discover a parallel case in this or any other of the British Dominions, an instance of a Minister coming down to the House and saying, "I am doing this. It is my idea. I have not consulted Cabinet, and other Ministers can do as they like. The Government have not been consulted. I have decided the whole question." It has been the practice, nay, it is the responsibility of all Governments, that if they bring down a measure containing Government policy and that measure is defeated, the Government resign. They are in duty bound to resign. But if this Bill be defeated, who is to resign?

Hon. P. Collier: Why, all the other Ministers!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Is the Minister who brought down the Bill to resign, or are the Government to resign? Do the rest of the Government get out and leave the one Minister in office, or does this one Minister get out alone? What is the position? Let us carry it further. I understand that one of the clauses of the Bill, Clause 4, represents a burning question in the Nedlands electorate, a question uppermost in the minds of the people of Nedlands. What is to be the position in regard to that?

Hon. P. Collier: Has the member for the electorate been consulted?

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The member for the electorate happens to be a member of the Government, so he has not been consulted. Are Cabinet going to deny responsibility for this measure being here? It is a Government measure, after all.

Hon. P. Collier: No, it is an "I" measure, not a Government measure.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: If the member for the electorate were to advise Cabinet that he could not support a measure such as this because his electorate is vitally affected, what would be the position? But since we do not accept 100 per cent. of all that the Minister for Works said when he declared he had not submitted the Bill to Cabinet, we can visualise what happened in Cabinet when the Bill was under discussion. The Minister for Works says, "This is what I have decided upon," and the Chief Secretary says, "I will have nothing to do with it, for my electorate is up in arms about that question in Clause 4. They took it to the courts and succeeded in defeating it before the courts. I will have nothing to do with it." Then the Minister for Works says, "Never mind about you; you can step aside and I myself will go on with it."

Hon. P. Collier: Mighty Mussolini!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: What is the position of the rest of the Cabinet? What is the Chief Secretary to say to his colleagues? Does the Chief Secretary agree with other members of the Cabinet and come here to defy the wishes of his electorate? We have to admit that the Minister for Works has not been so severe on the Chief Secretary as he might have been, for he has extended to him the privilege of voting against the Bill. But what if the Minister for Works had declared that the Chief Secretary must vote for the Bill? For if he gives the Chief Secretary the privilege of voting against the Bill, it connotes full power in the Minister for

Works to insist upon the Chief Secretary voting for the Bill.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The Chief Secretary will have to consider his position.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Has the Chief Secretary to consider his position only if the issue is decided the one way? Must not all Ministers consider their position, whichever way the Minister for Works decides? It is the principle involved which I am discussing, not the actual decision that has been reached; the principle that one Minister has the right to bring down a Government measure and say whether Cabinet are to carry the responsibility, whether the other Ministers are to vote with him or alternatively vote against him?

Hon. P. Collier: "All the other Ministers are fools, but I am going on with it."

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There are other Government departments, particularly the Railways and Tramways, vitally affected by the provisions of the Bill. Are we to understand that the Minister for Railways has not been consulted about it?

Hon. P. Collier: No, he has not.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: He, too, is given a free hand to vote for or against the Bill. There is no backing of the Bill by the Government. It means a denial, a repudiation of all Cabinet responsibility to the House if Government measures are to be brought down here and Cabinet disown responsibility for them, if one member of the Government is to have the Bill and the rest of the Cabinet can stand from under. It brings us back to this point, if the Bill be defeated, what is to happen? The defeat of any Government Bill brought here as a matter of policy entails the resignation of any self-respecting Government. From the attitude of the Minister for Works we can gather that some members of the Government are going to help defeat his measure. Then who will carry on the Government? To whom will the House look then? It is a complete reversal of all that we have known. It is a question where Cabinet responsibility is to end, and how far this new attitude is to be allowed to go.

The Minister for Lands: It is catching.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: There has never been a similar instance in this Parliament or in the Parliament of any other British Dominion. At any rate, I have not been able to find one. Moreover, men of lengthy Parliamentary experience have told me that

no such instance has ever occurred. So it cannot be catching, for it has never previously been tried. It is something entirely new, being tried here for the first time, so far as I can learn. Of course, it may be that somewhere something like it has happened before, and that those with whom I have discussed the matter have not had knowledge of the earlier instance. However, it raises the issue that this House should know definitely where it stands and where we are to understand the responsibility of Cabinet begins and ends. The Premier, in the Governor's Speech foreshadows the legislation that is to come down during the session. There is the policy of the Government, and on that the Government stand or fall. They put it up to Parliament to accept or reject, and if Parliament rejects it, self-respecting Governments go out. But not so with this Bill, for the Minister for Works says that other Ministers are free to vote against it.

Hon. P. Collier: "I have never consulted my colleagues in the matter."

Hon. A. McCALLUM: "Never. I should have done it, but I have not." He said he had brought it here on his own responsibility and that other Ministers could do as they liked. He said he knew that a number of members of his own party were against him, and that he believed other members of the Cabinet also were against him, despite which he was going on with it.

Hon. P. Collier: Mighty Mussolini!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The House is entitled to know how far the Government are shouldering responsibility for this measure. We want to know whether this is the policy of the Government.

Hon. P. Collier: Or of the Minister.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Are Ministers prepared to stand or fall by it? Has there ever been known in any British dominion an instance of divided responsibility in the Cabinet? Has there ever been an issue in any dominion or in Great Britain where there has been such divided responsibility?

Hon. P. Collier: Is it a Government Bill, or is it the Minister's Bill? He says he never consulted the other Ministers.

The Minister for Lands: It is a Government Bill.

The Minister for Works: You show me that in the report of my speech.

Hon. P. Collier: Your speeches are doctored up every day. Although we follow

your speeches, no one understands them. You have to get your officers to help doctor them.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: If there was a measure dealing particularly with a Minister's own electorate, he might introduce it as a private member, but that is not applicable to this Bill. By no stretch of imagination could anyone contend that this was a private measure. It is a Government measure.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: It is not limited to Wyatecham.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is not. If it were, perhaps I should not raise much objection.

Hon. P. Collier: It ought to be.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I object to this departure from Cabinet responsibility. We are entitled to know whether Cabinet are prepared to stand or fall by this measure, or whether, when there is an important measure on which a division of opinion exists, this is to be their method of dealing with it. Are we to have the Bill thrown before Parliament with the statement, "Do as you like with it. I am going on with it, but the rest of the Cabinet and party can do as they please with it. Cabinet takes no responsibility whatever for it"? The Minister, in his speech, told us that one clause would vitally affect two important revenue-earning departments of the State. Yet he said the rest of the Cabinet had not been consulted on the Bill. According to the Minister there is no question of Government policy: the Cabinet do not care whether the Bill goes through or goes out; the Minister intends to go on with it. Where is the limit?

Hon. P. Collier: Both railways and tramways will be affected.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Yes, and yet we are told that the Minister controlling railways and tramways has not been consulted. This measure will have an important bearing on the finance of those departments and the Minister has introduced it without consulting Cabinet. Are members of the Cabinet so divided in their views that they cannot stand up to this Bill?

Hon. P. Collier: They have no views.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The House should insist upon the Government declaring themselves. We are entitled to know whether the views expressed by the Minister are a true statement of the position. Is the Minister for Works introducing Bills dealing with the

finances of the State without consulting other members of the Government? Is there any policy in the Cabinet?

The Minister for Lands: I told you it was a Government measure.

Hon. P. Collier: But the Minister for Works did not say so last night. You are contradicting each other.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Deputy Premier did say it was a Government measure, and the business sheet shows that it is, but the Minister for Works has told us that the rest of the Cabinet may vote against it.

The Minister for Works: I never mentioned the word "Cabinet" in the whole of my speech.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister said that his colleagues in the Cabinet could vote against it, and he went so far as to say that some members of the party were opposed to an important part of the Bill.

The Minister for Works: I said nothing of the kind.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: The Minister said that he knew a number of members of his own party were opposed to the Bill. We shall not take much notice of what the Minister is reported in "Hansard" to have said. We take notice of what he says here.

The Minister for Works: So even "Hansard" are my satellites!

Hon. A. McCALLUM: We are not so unsophisticated as to be misled by that statement.

Mr. Kenneally: You are not reflecting on "Hansard."

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Not at all.

Hon. P. Collier: We are sorry for "Hansard" when they have to report the Minister.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: I am not reflecting on "Hansard" at all. The Government should declare themselves and let us know clearly whether they intend to handle the business of the country in this way. We have a right to know how the Cabinet stand when Government Bills are introduced in future. The first part of the Bill, dealing with the reduction by half of license fees to farmers and pastoralists, follows to some extent the principle laid down in the existing Act as regards horse-drawn vehicles. The case put up in favour of the concession to the horse-drawn vehicle was that it was not off the farm except for a very small part of the year while the carting was being done. During the rest of the year the vehicle was on the farm. Last night the Minister said that motor trucks were on the roads for only

about two months of the year. That statement is ridiculous. I venture to say not a farmer in the State would back up that assertion. A farmer would not keep his truck on the farm for 10 months of the year. Would he incur an expenditure of several hundred pounds for the purchase of a truck to use for only two months of the year?

Mr. Panton: If farmers do that, no wonder they are all broke.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: My experience is that trucks go to the sidings two or three times a week and never less than once a week. Any number of farmers have one-ton or two-ton trucks which are used as motor cars as well, and the argument that applies to horse-drawn vehicles certainly does not apply to motor vehicles. I am prepared to regard the concession as a subsidy or a form of assistance to those engaged in the agricultural industry who are so hard pressed at the moment, but I cannot support it on the ground of equity as compared with other parts of the State, or on the ground suggested by the Minister that the concession would be on all fours with that granted to horse-drawn vehicles. Only as a special consideration to a hard-pressed industry can the introduction of this principle be supported. Another proposal in the Bill is that the license fee, instead of being an annual one, should be half-yearly. In some parts of Australia license fees are paid half-yearly or quarterly, but there is a difference between paying an annual license fee in two or four parts and in taking out two licenses in the year. Where the license fee is payable in two or four parts, it is still an annual license fee, but this proposal would permit of licenses being taken out for one part of the year and not for the other part of the year. This would be an inducement for people to take out a license to cover the period when they were engaged in carting heavy stuff over the roads and not take out a license for the other half of the year, setting the vehicle aside for that part of the year. I would not oppose a proposal to permit of payment being made quarterly. I know of instances in the city—and quite a number in Fremantle—of carriers who have paid license fees running into hundreds of pounds and their vehicles are idle. The license fees for some trucks run into about £100, and it is a lot of money for people to find if they have several trucks on the road. They have to wait the whole year before they can get the money back. In these times, at

any rate, it would be more equitable if the license fees were payable quarterly. The only other point in the Bill deals with the right of the Government to make regulations to prevent motors from picking up or setting down passengers at given points along tram routes. Regulations were framed to that end, but the Government, instead of stipulating a point at which such vehicles could stop to take up or set down passengers, used the regulations to prevent competition with existing facilities and to prevent trading over considerable portions of different routes. They allowed the motors to ply on the routes, but prevented them from picking up or setting down passengers along considerable portions of the routes. The court held that the regulations were ultra vires, and the Minister is asking for power to frame regulations designed to overcome the objection. Be that as it may, I am looking forward with interest to what will happen amongst members of the Cabinet. The district represented by the Chief Secretary is vitally affected. Another district affected is Subiaco, which is represented by a supporter of the Government.

Mr. Hegney: And Swanbourne.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Maylands, Leederville and Mt. Hawthorn are considerably affected; in fact practically all the districts handy to the city are affected, but it is in Nedlands that this is a live issue. People of the Nedlands district took the test case to the court. I shall watch with interest the attitude of the two Ministers who will face this issue from opposite angles. I again emphasise that this House and the people are entitled to know just where Cabinet responsibility begins and ends. We want to know whether, when departments like the railways and tramways will be vitally affected financially, the Minister should ask Parliament to pass a Bill without his having consulted other Ministers.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. N. Keenan—Nedlands) [5.29]: I confess that I have heard with some astonishment that it is improper or impossible for any Government to bring down a measure that is non-contentious, that is to say, in respect of which the party supporting the Government are given a free rein to vote as they please, or that on such an occasion, as has happened over and over again, it is not also the right of anyone sitting on the Government side of the House to express an opinion on any part or on the whole of such a measure. If that

right were denied, how often would members expect legislation to be brought down dealing with matters that are not of vital importance in the policy of the Government of the day? A number of instances could be quoted to illustrate what I have just said. The other day, in the Federal Parliament, the Government brought down certain Customs duties. The matter was contentious and those duties were defeated.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: That is always recognised as non-party matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is what I say. Many matters are recognised as non-party, as this one is.

Hon. A. McCallum: But the Federal Government were not divided upon those duties.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: How does the hon. member know that.

Hon. A. McCallum: Members of the Government voted solidly on the point.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I accept the hon. member's statement.

Hon. A. McCallum: I have never known the Government to be divided in the way you suggest.

The Minister for Lands: You mean the Ministry?

Hon. A. McCallum: I mean the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Is there supposed to be a shackle upon every member of the House who happens also to be a member of the Government?

Hon. A. McCallum: It is a matter of the policy of the Government.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The Government must take the responsibility for a Bill brought down by them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are certain measures brought down by the Government to which is attached this responsibility, that if the House does not accept them it shows that the Government do not possess the confidence of the House. There are, however, certain other measures of a non-party character although brought down by a member of the Government.

Hon. A. McCallum: That is a different point altogether.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is the point. I am prepared to support the second reading of the Bill but in Committee intend either to move, or support any other member who moves, for the deletion of a certain clause. The Bill as a whole I will vote for.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Will you move that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the hon. member desires to anticipate me in that connection, I will not deprive him of the opportunity.

Hon. A. McCallum: Can you state a precedent for such action, or state any case where any member of the Government has moved to amend a Bill brought down by his Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The matter has, perhaps, been somewhat clouded by the manner in which it was explained to the House.

Mr. Corboy: That is an Irishman's compliment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I mean as it was explained upon this issue, that the Bill is not brought forward as a party measure but brought forward because it is desirable to have a determination by the House upon the question.

Mr. Raphael: You will not take the responsibility but you want to place it upon us.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot hear the voice in the distance.

Mr. Raphael: You are not game to take it on yourself, but desire to put the responsibility upon us.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am afraid the hon. member does not possess a sufficient sense of responsibility for that. I do not wish to be led away from the track, and will confine myself by stating that I support the second reading of the Bill, though in Committee I reserve to myself liberty of action to deal with one particular clause.

Mr. Raphael: Your Leader has granted you that liberty.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Thanks.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.35]: I have no particular objection to the Bill; indeed, I approve of most of its clauses. That relief should be given to farmers in circumstances such as these, and might also be accorded to others in a similar plight, is perfectly reasonable. I think the sandalwood getter might also be included, and in Committee I intend to move in that direction. If there is a necessity to help any section of the community, it is that section which follows the occupation of sandalwood-getting. Those people get very few orders nowadays, and are compelled to utilise trucks in order to convey their wood to the nearest railway.

Mr. Corboy: Generally speaking, they are worse off than the prospector.

Hon. M. F. TROY: They are indeed badly off. I do not see why in any circumstances the truck used by a farmer, a prospector, or a sandalwood-getter, or any man who needs one in which to carry his produce to market, should bear the high rate now operating in the country. To-day the circumstances under which these people have to earn their livelihood are such that we might well ease the load as far as possible. I asked the Minister for Works, when he was moving the second reading, why it was that the prospector should have to be certified to by the Mines Department. Why is it necessary that the bona fides of a prospector should be certified to, and the farmer go unscathed? All the farmer requires to do is to prove to the satisfaction of the licensing authority that he uses his truck to run to the nearest siding. Why is there not the same provision for the prospector? It should not be necessary for him to be certified to by some officer of the Mines Department. He should be treated in the same way as any other man. I have no objection to the time set down for the paying of license fees. I should like to see all taxation nowadays met in two or three payments. Taxation is heavy, and people are not able to find the money conveniently for payment in one sum. It is a good thing to spread the payment over the whole year. Neither do I see any objection to the clause which has caused some friction between Ministers and has been referred to by the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum). I fail to see why buses should be run in competition with the railways. The railways are owned by the community, and it is in the interest of the community that they should pay their way. We in this House represent the people who own the railways, and it is to our interest to see that they are not subjected to unfair competition. I do not care whose interests may be affected. No member is justified in supporting private competition with the railway system in which the savings of the people are invested. Our railways are of far more importance to Western Australia than are buses. Without the railways the country could not carry on. The buses operate only where they can get a lot of traffic and can make a profit. They will not go out to the back country and bring in wheat. They will not take out superphosphate and return with wool, or cater at all for the people outback. Without the railways the country

would be bankrupt and could not carry on. It is unwise that we should have regard for other interests, and entirely ignore the interests of that which means so much to the advantage and progress of the State. I will support any legislation that will limit the handicaps now placed upon the railways and enable them to become more profitable. I do not agree with the member for South Fremantle when he says that a Minister should not introduce a Bill unless it has been viséed by his colleagues, although I have never known it to be done in this House. At the same time I have never known a Minister to bring down a Bill with which his colleagues were not in accord, and would not stick to him, although I have known it to occur that members of the same party as the Leader of the House have exercised their discretion in respect of the vote they have given upon a particular Bill. This is an important measure. Here we have in the Government the Minister for Railways who is deeply concerned about the railways and tramways. The Government are also deeply concerned about the financial position and the manner in which it is so vitally affected by railway returns. We also have in the Government the Chief Secretary. He is concerned about the constituency of Nedlands, and is opposed to what should be the policy of the Government of the day to see that the railways are made to pay. It is extraordinary that, in connection with legislation of this kind, so vital to the country, there should be a rift in the Cabinet. I can now understand the magnanimity of the Minister for Works who, when introducing the Bill, indicated that he left it to members to please themselves with regard to it. Have the Government no policy in the matter of whether there shall be unfair competition by the buses against the railways? Have they no regard for the fact that the railways ought to pay? They are in disagreement because the constituency of the Chief Secretary will be affected. That is why we have this unfortunate position occurring amongst members of the Government. I have no complaint to make against the Bill with which I am in accord, but I do complain of the attitude of the Minister who brought it down. When I asked a simple question he was rude to me. That rudeness is not surprising in the least. It is his general conduct as a Minister. He would be well advised if he cultivated a little more humility in Parliament. His head does not contain all the

brains in the House. I would point out that Ministers are sometimes made by accident. A few years hence this country will not know that the Minister for Works ever existed. If anyone does refer to the hon. member as the Minister for Works at one time, people will say, "Where was that?" Time effaces all things, and time removes all things. The Minister says he is not allowed to speak. Apparently it is only with reverential awe that we must approach this Minister. We hope to treat him decently and with respect in this Chamber, but he must first command that respect from us. Let him be tolerant to members and they will be tolerant to him. I support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.42]: I support the second reading of the Bill. I regret it is found necessary to maintain the very high license fees for motor vehicles. In the circumstances the payment of these fees by instalments when necessary should receive general support. It is much to be regretted that the proposition which is most frequently put forward, namely, the imposition of a tax upon petrol which would be hypothecated or paid to the State, has not been advanced.

Hon. A. McCallum: The High Court ruled that it could not be imposed by the States.

MR. SAMPSON: It is very much to be regretted that it is not possible constitutionally to do this, for it would remove every phase of those inequities that prevail at present. The Bill proposes that one-half of the fees payable according to the scale of the Third Schedule shall be chargeable in the case of motor wagons used by private producers, prospectors and others. I am sorry the Minister has not carried out the principle set out in Part I. of the First Schedule relating to vehicles licensed and used by private producers, and where 25 per cent. only of the fees otherwise paid are levied. In Committee I propose either to support an amendment by another member, or move it myself, that the charge for motor wagons or trucks used by private producers, prospectors and others, as set out in the Bill be reduced to 25 per cent.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Everyone in the State has to make a martyr of himself in these times. Why attempt to make special provision of that nature?

MR. SAMPSON: The primary producers and prospectors are not using the roads of the State to any great extent or for any long period. Consideration should be given to the fact that the use of the roads by these people is very limited. The principle approved by the member for Geraldton (**Hon. J. C. Willcock**) in Part I. of the Third Schedule dealing with ordinary vehicles, should be carried further. I was amazed a little while ago to learn that it was cheaper to convey building material from Perth to Wiluna by motor truck than by rail. If that is the case, the problem is not to be got over by increasing the licensing fees. I suggest that the railway authorities should look into the charges that they impose and see whether they are not excessive. It would appear to be the case that they are excessive, otherwise it would be impossible for a motor truck driver to convey building material so great a distance and compete successfully with the Railway Department.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: The Commissioner of Railways has heavy maintenance charges to meet.

MR. SAMPSON: I realise that the railway system must be maintained, but at the same time a motor truck owner has also to maintain his vehicle. The capacity of a train to move large quantities of material is surely sufficient to render competition by motor truck impossible. I was surprised when I was informed that motor transport was cheaper than rail transport over such a great distance, and consequently I suggest it is time our railway authorities looked into the matter of their charges so that they may be able to compete with motor vehicles. I am not levelling any charge against the Railway Department; I am merely stating that in my opinion the matter of the charges should be investigated, and if possible varied. It is a reflection on the railway system if motor vehicles can successfully compete with the department. One thing that has helped to create the competition is the unfortunate policy adopted in the past of constructing main roads parallel with our railway lines. Most people believed at the time that it was a wise thing to do; now they realise that the policy was suicidal, that the maintenance of our railways and the successful conduct of the system is of the first importance for the development of the State. We appreciate now the grave error that was made when so many roads were

constructed parallel with existing railways. We were offering every encouragement to commercial and other travellers to use the roads in place of the railways. I agree with the remarks of the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) regarding the construction of main roads, and I regret to learn now that the Minister proposes to complete certain roads and make their construction so perfect as to permit of them also to be used in competition with our railways.

The Minister for Works: When did I say that?

Mr. SAMPSON: I think the Minister said so; if those words were not used the argument will not be affected. What I understood, however, was that certain main roads had been constructed in part, and that those roads remained to be completed and that if they were not completed a big loss would be sustained by the State. I question whether it would not be wiser to abandon the completion of that work even though a considerable sum of money has already been spent. In that manner we should do away with the possibility of further competition with our railways. I suggest that it might be well to call a halt in regard to the completion, or even the construction of certain main roads, the effect of which will be to reduce the State finances to a position even worse than it is to-day. I support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.53]: I have not much to say on the Bill except to remark that it is the duty of all members of the House to endeavour to conserve the national expenditure incurred in providing transport facilities for the people within the State. The temporary advantage that may be afforded to some who are in isolated districts should not outweigh the importance of the principles we have established. I was rather astounded to hear the remarks of the Chief Secretary (Hon. N. Keenan) earlier in the afternoon in reply to the points raised by the member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum). The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), who has now the honour of being the father of the House, says that so far as his experience goes—and it extends over a period of 29 years—he does not know of an instance that can be compared to the position that has been disclosed to us. The member for South

Fremantle also told us that he consulted authorities, and neither can he find a parallel in the Commonwealth or even in the British Empire. The Chief Secretary told us that he was prepared to move an amendment to a vital part of the Bill containing the policy of the Government. In connection with Government business to be submitted to Parliament, we know that Cabinet makes up its mind as to what it is proposed to do in the best interests of the country. All Ministers agree on a certain line of policy. If there is anything in a Bill that is being considered on which an agreement cannot be arrived at, the obvious thing is to leave well alone. I consider it is an insult to Parliament for the Government to come along and say, "We are introducing a Bill to the House, but we do not care whether it is passed or not." How can the Government govern the country if the members of it do not know their own minds on matters of policy? Here we have a straight out matter of vital policy which admits of no argument.

The Minister for Works: One clause.

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK: A vital principle in that one clause. If the members of the Government could not collectively make up their minds on that clause, the obvious thing for them to do was to leave out that clause. But the Government bring down the legislation and when the Bill is being discussed we are told practically that they are not the leaders of the country, that they are not showing the country what they require done. I expected a little more from the Chief Secretary after the high stand he took a few evenings ago at Nedlands in connection with national problems. Yet the Chief Secretary whom everybody puts on a pedestal, we now find on a small matter which affects his constituency, will agree to overthrow that which the Government regarded as a subject of high principle. The Chief Secretary now comes right down to the parochialism of pandering to his constituents. This is not the example that should be set by the Chief Secretary; indeed I am surprised that a man holding the high reputation of the Chief Secretary should adopt such an attitude in this House. Surely his influence in the Cabinet should be sufficient to permit him to say, "This is a matter I find a considerable difficulty in supporting: I think it might be left to the House to move an amendment."

Mr. Thorn: You would not expect that from him after his wonderful speech at Nedlands the other night.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: It is really surprising to me that a man who rose to a high plane on that occasion should take the stand he disclosed this afternoon. No matter how it affects national finance or the country generally, instead of taking the broad outlook we might have expected of him, he is prepared, in the interests of a few people in his constituency, who may be inconvenienced by a possible regulation, to throw overboard Government legislation by voting against something that has been submitted as a matter of public policy. The members of the Government made up their minds that a certain thing should be done in the interests of the State, not in the interests of Geraldton, Subiaco, or Nedlands. We now find one member of that Government saying, "It does not matter how it affects the State generally, the Government should not introduce legislation which is not in the best interests of my constituency." Now, because what is proposed is likely to affect the constituency represented by a member of the Cabinet, that member is going to throw overboard all principles and oppose that which the Government as a whole believes is absolutely in the interests of the State. There is no ambiguity about what has been said. The Deputy Premier who is in charge of the House told us it was a matter of Government policy.

The Minister for Works: He said it was a Government Bill.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Well, does not a Government Bill contain the Government's policy? The Bill outlines what the Government policy is, and various phases of that policy are dealt with in the Bill. Before the debate closes, the Deputy Premier should tell us definitely and exactly what the Bill proposes, and whether it actually contains matters of Government policy on which Cabinet agreed. In the House of Commons, no matter what happens with regard to business to be submitted to the House prior to its submission to the House, in the House Ministers speak as one. Ministers may have mental reservations, but to hear an outspoken reservation such as that made by the Chief Secretary is astounding. I dare say the Government can get away with it, but this seems to me to be absolutely the end of responsible government.

There is no responsibility in a Government who introduce legislation and say, "Some of us mean this, but some of us do not." A member of the Government has in this instance indicated that he intends to move an amendment. I suggest that before the debate closes, the Government should let us know where they stand. Government supporters do not know where Ministers stand. The followers of the Ministry are anxious to do the right thing by the country, and to give their leaders loyal support; but having listened to speakers on the front bench, they do not know what to do. The hon. member who occupies the position of Leader of the Government for the time being should tell the House what the Government want as regards the Bill. Then Government supporters will know where they are, and Opposition members will know where they are. We on this side of the Chamber may at the present time have a tender feeling for the Government and be anxious to support their legislation as far as possible; but on this occasion we do not know how to help them. Two Ministers have told us two different things. Therefore, no matter how anxious we on this side may be to help the Ministry, or how anxious Government supporters may be to help their leaders, no one knows what to do. Before the debate closes, there should be a declaration of Government policy.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [6.3]: I think I can express my views on the two questions here involved within five minutes—one question being the Bill itself, the other the Government's attitude towards the Bill. As to the measure itself, let me say in the first place that any concession to owners of motor vehicles who are engaged in primary pursuits is the order of the day. Therefore I raise no objection to that aspect. As regards the collection of license fees half-yearly, I believe that that system would cause a good deal of difficulty to the department concerned. It is not only a question of two payments. The police will have considerably more difficulty in controlling persons who should license their vehicles, when that has to be done twice a year instead of once. The additional charge proposed will no doubt cover the extra expense involved, but there will be considerably greater difficulty in policing the various owners who should license their vehicles. When one bears in mind the number of vehicles licensed

throughout the vast area of Western Australia, for all of which the police are responsible, one recognises that the proposed concession would greatly increase the difficulty. While commending the concession, I realise the disadvantage involved in it as regards policing motor licenses. Turning now to the aspect of competition by motor buses, all of us have difficulty in adjusting what is right to what is popular. We on this side have had to encounter that difficulty in the past. It would be very simple and easy for us on this side to declare that there ought to be no interference with those who run motor buses. My Ministerial experience was that I had to bear my share of the responsibility for anything supported by the Government of which I was a member, whether I liked it or not. There was no escaping responsibility by assuring people that the responsibility did not rest with me. I had to bear my share. Governments often have to do unpopular things. We expect a member of the Government such as the Chief Secretary to have some sense of responsibility. On a vital question such as this, we expect the Chief Secretary to stand behind the Government. I quite understand that the Minister introducing the Bill is endeavouring to protect public property. This question has not arisen recently, but has been continuously in evidence. It is a very fine thing for a Minister representing a metropolitan constituency to say, "I do not agree with the Bill." The fact remains that the Government, having a sense of their responsibility and being custodians of public property, are introducing the measure. In the circumstances it is ridiculous for any Minister to think that by a declaration in this Chamber he can relieve himself of a responsibility that the Government have to carry. No matter what their followers may do, Ministers have to bear the responsibility. If the Bill is passed as printed, will the Chief Secretary relieve himself of responsibility and curry favour with his electors by simply saying, "I disapproved of the measure"?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: By saying, "I voted against it"?

Mr. MILLINGTON: What are we coming to? I am surprised that a man standing so high in the estimation of the public should adopt such a weak attitude. It is contemptible for any member of the Government to endeavour to wriggle out of respon-

sibility by pandering to a section of public opinion. That is the kind of responsibility one has to stand up to if one wishes to take a share in governing the country. Weakness of that description cannot be passed over lightly. I as a Minister was never allowed to relieve myself of responsibility.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You never wanted to.

Mr. MILLINGTON: An active Ministry, doing things, must make some few mistakes. I had to stand up to such mistakes. If there is a mistake made by any labourite in the world, we have to take full responsibility for it.

Mr. Marshall: Even for the mistakes of Jock Garden in Sydney.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, or for something done in Russia. Some people blamed us when Trotsky did things which did not meet with the approval of the sane section of the community. But a Government containing many ingenious members may follow another precedent. In passing, it is remarkable that the precedent should be created by a legal man. I understood that legal men never did anything without a precedent. The one now established will prove useful in the future. I see some ground for hoping that as time goes on Governments will be able to do the right thing, while Ministers who wish to wriggle out of a responsibility will be able to do so if they are sufficiently ingenious. The Government had better bring the Chief Secretary to heel.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: We do not yet know the Government's attitude on the Bill.

Hon. A. McCallum: The Chief Secretary may be in the majority.

Mr. MILLINGTON: In the Government proposing to deal with city traffic there are four strong Country Party members. We expect them to exert their strength in this case and say to the weaklings who are inclined to vacillate, "You must stand up to your job." I quite expect that by the time the Bill reaches the Committee stage the Chief Secretary will have decided whether to offend a few noisy electors or stand by the Government in which he holds a portfolio. The Chief Secretary is used to making decisions, and I fancy he will decide that it is far better to offend a few constituents who have no regard for public property than to offend the Government who are the custodians of public property. Whatever Gov-

ernment may be in power, the competition of private concerns using roads made with public money will continue. That competition will need some standing up to; otherwise the tramways, built at great public expense, will have no possibility of paying. It is disturbing to know that just recently tramways which had paid ever since they were installed are beginning to prove unpayable. Therefore the Government cannot possibly be relieved of responsibility if they do not take the necessary action to ensure that those tramways do pay. As regards main roads running alongside railway lines, I see nothing mysterious in that position. The towns are all built alongside the railway lines, and it would be a strange thing if a main road made a detour of, say, 20 miles into the bush upon approaching a town and then came back to the railway line. Main roads go in the most direct line from town to town. I am glad that the road to Kalamunda is more direct than the railway. Roads do not religiously follow the railway lines, but all main centres in this State that are connected by rail are also connected by road. This is on account of the vast area of Western Australia. At the same time, our population cannot afford the upkeep of a railway plus the upkeep of a road. Still, I cannot understand the attitude of those who contend that a main road should be constructed somewhere else than on the direct line between two towns.

Mr. Marshall: They are not both necessary for the one purpose.

Mr. MILLINGTON: With reference to Wiluna, one hon. member was greatly perturbed because a motor proprietor thought he could carry goods cheaper than they are carried by the railways. However, few of those people appreciate the actual cost of carrying on trucks.

Mr. Sampson: A firm of contractors have been operating there for a long while.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The important thing connected with Wiluna is the Wiluna mines. No railway to Wiluna would have meant no mines at Wiluna. Even at some sacrifice, the railway should be given the custom of those who desire freight to be taken to a place like Wiluna.

Mr. Sampson: That is all right, but business people have a habit of accepting the lowest tender.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [7.30]: I support the second reading of the Bill because I believe its provisions to be necessary in order to protect the interests of the State in connection with railways and tramways. The Bill is also necessary on account of the faulty drafting of the Act, which does not provide the requisite power regarding the making of regulations. The Bill will get over that difficulty. I commend the Minister for the manner in which he presents Bills to the Chamber. He goes to a great deal of trouble and the information he places before the House is of great assistance to hon. members in dealing with the various clauses. I cannot understand the hostility displayed by Opposition members to the Minister. It appears to me that the Minister for Works is singled out for the scorn of the Opposition, and immediately he rises to his feet they hurl insults across the floor of the Chamber. We had the spectacle the other night of Opposition members interjecting before the Minister had a chance to explain the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is treading on dangerous ground.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The provisions of the Bill will be in the best interests of the State, and I propose therefore to support the second reading, although at the Committee stage I may desire to amend some of the clauses.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [7.32]: I support the Bill as introduced by the Minister. I shall not enter into a controversy regarding the difference of opinion that appears to prevail in Cabinet and in the ranks of Government supporters, more than to say that probably tantalising tactics may ultimately result in promotion.

The Minister for Railways: That did not get you very far in the last Parliament.

Mr. MARSHALL: I remember occasions when the Minister did not secure election to Parliament.

The Minister for Lands: I did not think you were old enough to remember those days.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even though the Minister was able to put up a lot of bluff. Speaking to the Bill, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: That is better.

Mr. MARSHALL: The measure will have my wholehearted support. Before I comment on a few of the features of the Bill, I would remind the Minister of a promise

he made but which I do not see fulfilled in the Bill. He gave us to understand that at the earliest opportunity, he would provide an amendment to the Traffic Act to deal with third-party insurance. The Act does not deal with that phase. In these days accidents occur almost weekly without the victims having any possibility of securing compensation or damages from the guilty parties, because of the latter's financial standing. Victims of accidents are therefore cast upon their own resources, although the motor drivers responsible for their condition should be made to contribute compensation to them. The Bill does not contain any reference to third-party risks at all. I agree with those who have entered a protest against bona fide prospectors being asked to secure a certificate from an official of the Mines Department regarding their standing in the industry. To date we have got along fairly well, and so far it has been merely necessary for a prospector to apply to the Mines Department to secure a refund of anything paid above the minimum rate prescribed in the schedule to the Act. I do not think it necessary to make it obligatory under the Bill for a prospector to write to the Mines Department and secure from a departmental officer a certificate to establish his bona fides. I agree that there are many engaged in prospecting who have but recently followed that calling. A number of parties have left Perth and, apart from one or two included in the personnel, those concerned are out prospecting for the first time. Such persons, although using their vehicles for prospecting purposes, would not be able to prove that they were bona fide prospectors because the Mines Department would have no records dealing with them. Those people now out for the first time may be in the back country for a couple of years. The Bill is too drastic in that respect. The older prospectors are well known in their districts.

The Minister for Works: The Bill is open for reasonable amendment.

Mr. MARSHALL: So long as the Minister will meet us along those lines, I can let that point rest. I am surprised at members who take exception to the Government making regulations to protect the millions of pounds invested by the State in the provision of railway and tramway facilities. It is astounding that any member of Parliament should be so much more concerned

about private enterprise, which is in a sense merely a "johnny-come-lately." Western Australia was developed by the expenditure of huge sums of State money upon the construction of railways, tramways and roads. By that means the population was increased and our industries expanded. We now have over £30,000,000 invested in the State-owned facilities, and that money was expended before private enterprise sought to cope with the requirements of the people. Private enterprise sat idly by until huge sums of the taxpayers' money had been spent in providing transport facilities that built up a large population in a short period. Then when the possibility of huge profits was apparent, private enterprise stepped in to compete against the State-owned facilities. I would not be so bitterly opposed to private enterprise if the same responsibility were shouldered as the Government have to shoulder. We find motor cars, trucks and buses running from Perth to Pinjarra and even further afield. But we do not find those vehicles carrying anything but goods for which the higher rates have to be paid for transport over the railways. Motor traction will not haul goods for which low rates are payable, and thus, having picked the eyes out of the goods to be lifted, leave the poorer type of trade to the railways, thus causing the taxpayers to make up the deficiencies on railway running. If the people could but regard the position from their own point of view, they would realise that the loss of the higher class freight must increase enormously the deficit on railway working and that the result must be increased taxation to make up for the deficiency. The State has provided at enormous cost transport facilities and roads to enable people to develop their holdings under reasonable conditions. They have provided tramways in order that the people may have means of transport between their homes and the city. If losses are made by those State-owned concerns, the general taxpayer must make good the deficiency. In the first place they must provide increased direct taxation to make available the State's quota necessary under the Main Roads Agreement for the construction and maintenance of main roads. Secondly, they must pay increased rates in order to furnish funds for the maintenance of other roads. The Minister for Works deserves all credit for his attitude because if there is one individual in a posi-

tion to be severely attacked for the introduction of the Bill, it is that hon. member. He represents an agricultural district and there is not the slightest doubt that unthinking people—I do not make the statement in an offensive way—do not appreciate the fact that by being prohibited from using roads except on payment for the concession, they are being saved from having to pay a larger sum by means of direct taxation. No doubt the Minister will be severely criticised by people in his own electorate.

The Minister for Works: I have been already.

Mr. MARSHALL: In defiance of that criticism and at the risk of losing some of his political prestige, the Minister has introduced the Bill having regard solely to the interests of the taxpayers of the State as a whole, and I am surprised at the Chief Secretary, who is the member for Nedlands and a Cabinet colleague of the Minister for Works, should have intimated to the House that he intended to attack the Bill in order to satisfy the desires of a few who happen to live in his electorate. I am wholeheartedly with the Minister for Works in his desire to make those who have reaped the benefit from the huge expenditure of public funds pay for it now. The aggregate amount of State funds involved is altogether too great for Parliament to ignore or to permit private enterprise to step in and unfairly compete with the State-owned transport facilities. It is not fair to ask those taxpayers who have no interest whatever in these particular matters annually to fork out of their pockets huge sums in the aggregate to maintain roads, railways, and tramways, in order that private enterprise might come in and successfully compete against them. The reduction in fees comes as a blessing not in disguise. There is quite a big section of primary producers who use their vehicles for little else but to feed the railways. In such cases any Government would be wise in giving them special consideration. Speaking for the hinterland, I may say that all the motor trucks and trailers used in and around those districts are used on natural surface roads. The license payers themselves find virtually the whole cost of the making and maintaining of those roads. Incidentally those people feed our railways, thus giving work to quite a number of others and assisting to make the railways pay. Their position from

the national point of view is much better than that of others who compete against our railways by picking the eyes out of the merchandise offering for transportation.

Mr. Sampson: The schedule of charges could be revised.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member does not seem to follow the argument. The truck owner who competes against the railways does not carry all classes of merchandise, but merely picks out the best of the trade offering. When the hon. member was a Minister, he did not put up any argument for reduced rates and maintain it at the cost of creating a split in the ranks of his Government. Even if motor transportation were to compete against our railways in a fair and equitable way, it would have a very bad case to present. The roads which the motor owners use have been made at enormous cost to which those people have contributed very little indeed, in fact nothing more than other taxpayers have contributed. Even in those circumstances their case would be bad enough, and in addition the hon. member must admit that they do not carry all classes of merchandise, but merely select the best of the trade that is offering.

Mr. Sampson: That is why the schedule of charges should be reviewed.

Mr. MARSHALL: And there is another thing: The Government step in and say to the Commissioner of Railways, "You cannot charge more than a certain rate for wheat and for superphosphate." The Commissioner, therefore, is bound to confine his rates to the schedule dictated to him by the Government. Then the Government say to him, "On the other hand, you must run these railways purely as a business proposition." Consequently, to make up the loss which the Government say he must incur in point of wheat and superphosphate carriage, he must raise the rates on other commodities. When the hon. member was a Minister he did very little indeed to correct that state of affairs.

Mr. Sampson: It is not too late to do something now.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, if the electors of Swan would take up the matter, they would soon have a new member.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing about that in the Bill.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not think there is. I am thankful for your correction, Sir. I hope the Minister, when replying to

the debate, will outline the effects of the Bill on the reduction as it applies to trailers and semi-trailers. The Bill proposes to make a 50 per cent. reduction.

The Minister for Works: That is the reduction on the present schedule.

MR. MARSHALL: If the Bill becomes law, will it be that those mentioned in the parent Act will pay only 25 per cent. of the total in the Third Schedule?

The Minister for Works: No, the original fee will be reduced by 50 per cent.

MR. MARSHALL: That is what I wanted to know. It looks a little complicated. In order to arrive at what a Bill contains, we have to turn up the parent Act and its several amendments, and compare the Bill with the existing law. Between the three or four existing Acts one has to read many things before he knows exactly what the new Bill contains. I wish the Minister every success with his Bill, so long as he gives me an assurance there will be no imposition on the prospectors, of whom there are now hundreds out who were never out before. Their vehicles are used solely for prospecting. Surely those men deserve as much consideration as the older men, who can certify their bona fides by approaching the local authorities. In view of the amendment the Minister proposes to introduce in Committee, I wish the Bill every success.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [7.53]: In supporting the second reading, I thank the Minister for the consideration he has shown to primary producers in the 50 per cent. reduction on motor trucks, and especially for the assurance he has given to the member for Murchison that trailers and semi-trailers, which are used only in a small way in the pastoral areas, will have special consideration, bringing the fee to 50 per cent. of what appears in the Third Schedule. I am also pleased to note that prospectors are to get special consideration. I will support the amendment suggested by the member for Mt. Magnet, namely, that sandalwood-pullers also should come under that clause. For sandalwood-pullers and prospectors are totally different from owners of other motor trucks that are hired to cart produce and carry goods. Even the pastoralist and the farmer cart goods which are going to bring them some profit. But the prospector makes no profit out of his motor truck. He is out trying to find new fields,

and it is problematical whether he will succeed. Therefore he requires special consideration. As for the sandalwood-puller, we know that on every ton of sandalwood pulled the Government reap a big royalty, and so they are already getting something out of the successful puller. The revenue derived by the Government in the form of royalty on sandalwood, and the benefits that will accrue to the State by the discovery of new gold mines, not only warrant the Minister in granting a 50 per cent. reduction in license fees, but would warrant him going farther and charging the prospector and sandalwood-puller no license fees at all.

MR. J. H. SMITH: You must say the same for the timber-getter.

MR. ANGELO: But he knows what he is going to get, and he does not pay the huge royalty that the sandalwood-puller pays.

HON. S. W. MUMSIE: The sandalwood-puller does not run on a single mile of road that has cost the Government anything.

MR. ANGELO: No, the sandalwood-puller scarcely uses a made road at all. Neither does the prospector. So on those grounds also it would be only a fair thing to exempt those men from the payment of license fees.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS

(Hon. J. Scaddan—Maylands) [7.55]: I do not propose to follow the discussion along the constitutional aspect arising from what the member for Mt. Magnet terms a split in the Cabinet. It is not altogether new to have an official announcement in respect of a given measure that all members, including members of the Cabinet, are free to vote upon it as they think fit. That has often occurred, and indeed has always occurred on a proposal for an increase of members' salaries. For before a Government introduces such a measure there is always doubt as to whether it will pass. When those most keenly supporting it are successful in getting a majority to carry the measure, it is introduced and thrown on the Table as a non-party measure. It is not of infrequent occurrence for a Minister to say, "We have introduced a Bill, believing it contains what is desirable, but if members think otherwise they are entitled to express their opinions and vote accordingly." In fact, judging from public utterances and newspaper comments during recent weeks, there seems to be a keen desire on the part of everybody that we should drop the partisan view on all im-

portant questions, and consider them solely from the point of view of public benefit. We might well follow that advice in regard to most of our measures, instead of setting out in one way or another to save our faces and maintain public kudos. After all, the Bill is a very innocent one and, from the public standpoint, unimportant. Why we should consider it from the aspect of how we should vote on a certain clause, I cannot understand. But from another aspect the Bill is certainly important, and that is a matter to which we should give attention. I am not going to deal with the proposed reduction in license fees to certain persons, for I think they are very desirable. The Minister for Works met me very satisfactorily when I passed on to him a request from a deputation at Mt. Magnet that the prospectors should be exempt from the payment of license fees, by agreeing, as he has done in the Bill, to make a reduction of 50 per cent. The prospectors are in a different position from that of all other owners of licensed vehicles in that in the greater number of instances the prospector, after paying his license fee, has to go out and clear his own track. None of the cost of making that track falls upon the community, yet the prospector has to pay just the same license fee as any other owner of a motor vehicle. The trouble is to get something that will be fair to everybody. I do not know any Act of Parliament giving just that result. Even the conditions prevailing amongst prospectors differ. A few of the men are using main roads, but others cannot do so. So we could not meet them all equally well by providing in the Bill that they should pay nothing at all. The only popular thing that any Government could do at the present time would be to provide bonuses for anybody producing anything at all, and relieve all of taxation. Then we would become extremely popular. That, of course, is not possible. One question that may be considered controversial is contained in the final clause dealing with competition between motor vehicles and Government-owned concerns. I am afraid that too often members of Parliament, and certainly a great percentage of the public, regard a Government concern as something owned by individuals and run for their own benefit. The Government are merely in the position of a board of directors, acting for the community as a whole, and the money they have spent, if borrowed, has been ob-

tained with the guarantee that the public will find the interest and repay the amount when it falls due. I emphasise that this is an obligation, not of the Government or of the individuals who form the Cabinet, but of the community. When we invest money at the request of the community, as we have invested it in our railways and tramways, it is done in the belief that the community desire the facilities and are prepared to pay for their upkeep and operation, and eventually repay the money borrowed. In recent years Government facilities have suffered serious competition from motor vehicles. In the metropolitan area the trams have suffered seriously because of this competition. For years there was a regulation, framed not by the present Government, but by a previous Government, providing that motor buses and taxis should not take up or set down passengers along existing tram routes, because they were unquestionably depriving the tramways of traffic and thus transferring the financial burden from the people who obtained the service to the rest of the community. Any facility such as a tramway should not be permitted to incur a loss and have that loss transferred to other sections of the community who derive no benefit from its operation. If we permit motors of any type to deprive the tramways of traffic earnings, although it may be considered that the people who enjoy the service provided by the motors benefit, we are really transferring to the whole of the community the burden of finding interest charges and repaying the loan by which the service was provided. People lose sight of the fact that when they are riding in a bus, so far from paying only a 3d. fare, they are really paying more because they have to find additional taxation to cover the loss on the money invested in the trams. In the Claremont district particularly there has recently been a serious agitation against the alteration of a bus route. We insisted that the buses should not continue to operate along a certain section of the tram route. There have been petitions, meetings of protest, and applications by the municipality and the road board that we should allow the buses to operate on the old route. Eventually the position became so serious that we kept a record and, as was explained by the Minister for Works when moving the second reading of the Bill, notwithstanding that the rest of the tramway system showed a serious falling off of traffic, during the months we kept the buses off the

tram route in question, there was an increase in the number of passengers carried. In that may be found evidence of the fact that we protected the interests of the community who had provided the wherewithal to lay down the tram tracks. None of the tram tracks have been laid except at the request of the community served by them, but because some other form of transport is a little more mobile or may meet the convenience of the people a little better, are the rest of the community to be saddled with the cost of the convenience that one section of the people demanded? If people are going to use the buses, there should be a tax on the fares of the buses to make up the loss consequent upon people not using the trams. We frequently hear it stated that trams are out of date and that we might as well pull up the tracks because they are of no further use.

Member: Some of the trams are out of date.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: In structure some of the trams may be out of date.

Mr. Kenneally: But the remedy is not to pull up the tracks.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is what I was about to point out. Recently the Town Planning Commission submitted a lengthy report following careful investigation and consideration, and I think they should be in a position to speak with some authority. On page 58 of the report appears the following statement:—

In 1926 a traffic census showed—Trams constituted 8.2 per cent. of total traffic, 13.8 per cent. of street passenger traffic and carried 71.2 per cent. of total passengers.

We hear talk about congestion in the city of Perth, and yet we have this evidence that only 8.2 per cent. of total traffic is due to the trams and that they carried 71.2 of the total traffic. Then follows this statement in heavy type:—

The Commission are satisfied that for purposes of the movement of large masses of people expeditiously and cheaply and with the minimum use of street space, the tram car is still the most effective.

Mr. Marshall: Of course it is.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Commission add—

This opinion is supported by most expert transport authorities in Australia and abroad.

That being so, the remedy does not lie in pulling up the tram tracks. The only remedy I can see is along the line of protecting the interests of the community by keeping the buses off the tram routes. The Commission also stated on page 80—

Buses and taxis should be regulated along routes not occupied by tram routes and should, if possible, avoid passing school sites. Bus routes should be regulated to roads constructed to take the loads entailed by this form of traffic.

There is a definite recommendation after inquiry. What is the use of having Royal Commissions if, after they have made complete investigation of all the details and viewed the question from the standpoint of the community interest, rather than a constituency interest, we set aside their reports and take no further notice of them? As a result of the investigation by the Town Planning Commission, we have the recommendation that bus routes should be quite apart from tram routes. In some instances that is not entirely possible. Consequently the only remedy is that, while buses run along tram routes, they shall not pick up or set down passengers who should be carried by the trams. Members will probably say, "Give us a more frequent tram service and speed up the service." While the buses are taking the traffic, we cannot possibly provide additional trams because to do so would not pay, but if we can get the passengers along tram routes that the buses have been carrying, we can give a more frequent and speedier service and make it pay. We cannot continue to lose money on these services.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: There are no buses along Beaufort-street.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: In the Mt. Lawley-Inglewood district, which is probably as thickly populated as any part of the metropolitan area, there are no bus routes served by trams, and I have never heard of any agitation from those suburbs for the displacement of the trams and the putting in of a bus service. But once buses start running in any district where there is a tram service or a railway service, there is continuous agitation for an increased bus service and a decreased tram service. As at Claremont, however, the people who ask that the buses be permitted to continue operating, request also that the trams be retained. I said, "You surely do not want both." The reply was, "Yes, we do. The

buses may not always be there, and we want the trams to remain in case the buses are not continued in future." What an absurdity! It is better to maintain the permanent facility and later call on the buses if the permanent facility fails to meet requirements, but it cannot be shown that the trams so far have failed. They carry a very much greater proportion of the traffic, while occupying much less street space. The Town Planning Commission's report gives details of passenger traffic. During 1930 the Perth tramways carried 35,856,457 passengers and to do that travelled only 3,628,737 car miles. According to the Government Statistician, the buses carried 7,889,000 passengers but travelled 6,867,000 miles to do it.

Mr. Marshall: Where is the congestion?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is due to the fact that buses and taxis are doing what the trams could do with less crowding of the streets. Yet people view the question from the standpoint of what is at the moment more convenient for them. I declare emphatically that we cannot go on permitting this method of transport to be piled on the community and expect all facilities to pay. It does not matter what means of transport are provided, or whether by the Government or private enterprise, the people who use them have to pay for them. The community cannot afford to pay for all the means of transport that are provided in the metropolitan area to-day. Someone must lose in the process, and those who are going to lose are either the people who are living in the metropolitan area and are paying more than they should for means of transport, or else the loss will fall upon the general taxpayer. Therefore I appeal to members of the Country Party, who derive no advantage from the tram system in Perth, to consider whether they should be parties to permitting the people who want something to-day and desire, butterfly-like, to flit away to something else to-morrow, to transfer obligations which they should bear to the rest of the community. If there are any complaints against the tramway system, there is a proper place to lodge them. I hope members will consider this measure, not as a Cabinet matter, for it has nothing to do with the Cabinet, but in the community's interest, in the interest of the people who have to back the expenditure incurred in the past to provide facilities, who have to pay the working costs of the system

and the interest charges, and provide a sinking fund to repay the borrowed money. If members do that, there is no question what their attitude will be.

Hon. M. F. Troy: How do the Government stand?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Never mind that. I am not concerning myself about the attitude of anyone else, but I shall be particularly careful of my own. The only reason why the clause to which I have been referring appears in the Bill is because the regulation, introduced by a previous Government, was ruled by the court to be ultra vires. The only other method of meeting the situation is to allow Parliament to decide, Parliament, the trustees of the people, who have borrowed in the name of the people to provide these facilities. Will Parliament give the protection desired? I say that unless this Bill is passed, we shall unquestionably be permitting these facilities to become a burden on the taxpayers in general, instead of the people who obtain the benefit of the service bearing the cost of it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [8.14]: I wish to tell the House that this is a Government measure, but it is not a party measure. It is a very simple Bill, and I am pleased at the way it has been accepted by the House. It provides for some small relief for the people who are engaged in primary industries. That is the main idea of the two clauses. The other clause has been very ably explained by the Minister for Railways, and I do not propose to say much about it except that, like many other measures introduced from time to time, it is a Government measure. It is desired to leave to the discretion of members the matter of determining which way they shall vote. They have their responsibility just as Ministers have. It is quite safe in their keeping. I hope members will exercise their judgment in the best interests of the State. The first clause of the Bill gives relief from taxation. The other protects the assets of the people. We should view the measure from that standpoint alone. The member for Murchison raised the question of third-party insurance. I am interested in that from the hospitals point of view. Many cases are now in those institutions as a result of motor accidents. I have had a committee

appointed to go into the question of what assistance we shall give to those who are injured by motor accidents in the city. The committee will also investigate the legislation in existence in other parts of the world. When the investigation is far enough advanced, the House will be asked whether it desires legislation along those lines. These things cannot be done in a day. We must profit by the mistakes made in other countries. We want to be fair in any legislation we bring down and to see that it carries out the intentions of Parliament. The question may be raised that the farmer has no right to get relief from taxation. I would point out that he is first taxed to build and maintain his roads, and then he is taxed for using them. There is a vast difference between the ordinary farmer conveying his produce to the railway or taking goods from the railway to his farm, and the contractor or man who is carting stores here and there. I hope consideration will be given to that phase. If any relief can be given to the primary producer and all sorts of producers, no matter how small it is, it should be given as an encouragement to them to go on producing. These remarks include those engaged in mining or sandalwood getting. It is the intention of the Government to give that relief so far as is possible. I want to disabuse the minds of members about the Bill. Those who sit on the Opposition front bench know it is a Government measure. There has been a good deal of discussion as to the parentage of the Bill. There is nothing to be ashamed of about it. It is a Government measure, and a non-party one, and it is left to members to vote as they feel will be in the best interests of those who are to benefit.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.18]: I support the Bill. I should like to ask one question of the Minister. Suppose Clause 3 is not carried, what steps will the Government take with regard to the withdrawal of certain routes over which traffic is now allowed to ply for hire?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall—in reply) [8.19]: I would say in reply to the member for Claremont (Mr. North) that the Minister has power to revoke all routes. If the Government wished to restrict competition with the tramways, some action would have to be

taken with some of the routes. It is not right that the whole responsibility for doing that should be placed upon the Minister. That is one reason why this Bill has been brought down. When I referred to it as a non-party measure I did so because I believe that this is a measure which cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be called political. It is not a party Bill. I want the assistance of members so that they may tell me in which direction it is possible to improve it. If I had declared this to be a party measure, of which members of the Government had approved, I would not be in a position to accept any amendment. This does not affect Government revenue except to a small extent. It does, however, affect the revenue of the local governing bodies. The maximum that we take out of the traffic fees from any road board is 22½ per cent., and on the goldfields it is down to 10 per cent. Members must realise, therefore, that by this Bill they will be reducing the revenue of local governing bodies. For that reason they should voice their opinion as to whether they believe the local authorities in their electorates are prepared to do with less revenue. That is another reason why I have asked members to regard this as a non-party measure. The member for South Fremantle (Hon. A. McCallum) advocated quarterly licensing fees, and suggested that although the license would be for 12 months it should be paid in four equal instalments. Deputations have waited upon me asking for that privilege. Unless the license is collected during the currency of the year, it cannot be collected afterwards. The suggestion would mean that local governing bodies, including the traffic authorities in the metropolitan area, would be called upon to issue four licenses a year. License discs differently coloured are carried by various types of motor vehicle. The hon. member's suggestion would mean that a separate plate would have to be issued for each quarter, two for each half-year, and one for every year. There would thus be seven different cards issued, of which it would be impossible to keep track. There would also be the extra administrative cost. Deputations from the Royal Automobile Club and other organisations connected with the industry have asked me for this concession. I replied I was prepared to agree to half-yearly payments, and they accepted that. That is why it has not been possible to carry out the suggestion of

the member for South Fremantle. The member for Mt. Magnet suggested another amendment. I am prepared to agree to any reasonable amendment, but I would point out to members that they will be depriving local governing bodies of revenue, and they must accept full responsibility for so doing. I do not think the Minister should be called upon to accept the responsibility. The member for Murchison referred to the third-party risk. I have been inquiring into the position in that respect. I have received copies of the English Act and regulations. The position in this State, from what I am told by the insurance companies, is that if a person takes out a comprehensive third-party risk, there are so many things to take into consideration that the average cost works out at about £8 a year. In times like these we should not by legislation increase costs to that extent. A while ago I met an officer from New Zealand who gave me some information concerning the legislation in his country. I have read the New Zealand Act. I believe there are regulations under it which exempt certain classes of third-party risk, and which I think deal only with the person who is knocked down by a motor car. I have cabled for a copy of those regulations.

Mr. Marshall: You mean motor vehicles, not motor cars alone?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, motor vehicles. I understand that in New Zealand the fee is £1, and this policy is taken out when the vehicle is licensed. Reference is also made to the bona fides of prospectors. If an amendment is moved in that regard, I will give it consideration. I want the member for Murchison to understand that this Bill is not amending the Third Schedule of the Act. It amends only Section 10. It will reduce the fees by 50 per cent., but this has nothing to do with the fees mentioned in the Third Schedule. We shall arrive at the 25 per cent. he referred to, but in a different way. The Traffic Act has proved most unpopular because of the exemptions it contains. Almost every day and sometimes two or three times a day since it was passed last year people have come to my office for explanations and for exemptions. From my own electorate four road boards have written and asked me to alter the Act and to give them something more. I knew when I brought it down that it would be unpopular, but it was brought down in the

interests of the State. Many deputations have waited upon me with respect to motor traffic, and some of the requests have been most reasonable. Certain buses never attempt to pick up passengers along the tram routes, but others are always cutting in and attempting to do so. This amending Bill will make Section 42 of the Act clear, and we shall be able to make new regulations dealing with that matter. I am pleased at the reception members have given to the Bill, and am also pleased to hear the remarks of the member for Murchison about myself. It is a change for me to have nice things said about me from the opposite side of the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MOTION—SECESSION, REFER- ENDUM.

MR. H. W. MANN (Perth) [8.28]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should introduce a Bill to enable a referendum of the electors of Western Australia to be taken on the question:—"Are you in favour of Western Australia withdrawing from the control of the Commonwealth Government, and assuming full Dominion status within the British Empire?"

When asked by the Dominion League to take charge of this motion, I readily agreed to do so, knowing full well the responsibilities cast upon me. No doubt many members take a different view, and rather than have a severance from the Commonwealth they would be prepared for a tightening up of the Federation. Were I living in Melbourne or Sydney, had I a knowledge of those States only, and were all my interests there, I would probably agree with their views, but after living in this State for upwards of a quarter of a century, and seeing the effect Federation has had upon local industries and how deterrent Federation has been to the development of the State, I am forced to throw my weight into the scales for home rule for Western Australia. There were those who opposed Federation a quarter of a century ago, and we must admit that their vision was further-reaching than that of some of us. Reading the speeches of the opponents of Federation, including the late Mr. Vosper, one cannot but acknowledge

that they saw much that we did not see. They saw the evil effect Federation would have on the small States. They realised that the big States would grow greater, and that their powers would increase to the detriment of the smaller States. That is exactly what has taken place. Some of those who were in the front rank fighting for Federation look back now on those years with sorrow, because what they expected has not eventuated. They have not seen one great people satisfied all to live under one flag. They have seen dissatisfaction with Federation grow with the passing of the years. When Federation was enacted Western Australia had many industries in their early teens, so to speak. Upon the consummation of Federation some of those industries removed their works to the Eastern States; others closed down, turning their factories into warehouses and becoming agencies for Eastern States manufacturers, who shipped their goods here. Our Eastern brothers look upon us with great regard because of our usefulness in providing a market for them. We have represented an assured market for the manufacturers of the Eastern States now for upwards of 30 years. Can any hon. member point to anything that has been undertaken by Eastern authorities for the benefit of Western Australia? Every agitation of the kind which has taken place has started from this end. We are amazed to realise the tremendous fight which the few members representing Western Australia in the Federal Parliament have put up. Remembering that just half a dozen members represent this State in the Commonwealth Legislature, we have it borne in on us what an uphill fight they have always had against the 40 members representing Eastern States industrial centres. We remember the years of waiting for the construction of the trans-Australian railway. Years and years went by, Western Australia remaining in a condition of isolation.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The railway was never promised.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I understand it was.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It was never an obligation on the Federation.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I understand it was a promise, although not in the contract. There was an unceasing agitation of Western Australian Federal members, members

of every shade of political opinion, for the construction of the railway.

Mr. Withers: Would you leave the railway on the hands of the Commonwealth now?

Mr. H. W. MANN: No. Provision can be made for meeting our share of the responsibility. During the 10 years prior to 1930 this State had a profit balance of upwards of 50 millions in its overseas trade, and during the same decade it had an adverse balance of 64 millions in its trade with the Eastern States. The price we are being charged for our association with the Eastern States is too great. We cannot afford to pay it. Much as we appreciate their company, it is too expensive for us. Western Australia cannot afford to bear any longer an adverse trade balance of £64,000,000 every 10 years.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: If we did not get those things from the Eastern States, we would have to get them from somewhere else.

Mr. H. W. MANN: No. We would manufacture them ourselves.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Why did we not do it?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I will tell the hon. member.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Are we so hopeless and helpless?

Mr. H. W. MANN: The reason is that well-established factories dumped goods on us.

Mr. Wansbrough: Would they not continue to dump?

Mr. H. W. MANN: No. We would have our Customs.

Mr. Wansbrough: Another stone wall.

Mr. Withers: Are you now putting up a case for secession, or a case for a referendum?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am putting up a case to justify a referendum on the question of secession. After years of agitation by Federal members representing Western Australia the Commonwealth Government were so impressed that they appointed a Royal Commission, consisting of Eastern States experts, to inquire into the position. The Commission took evidence from all sections of the community in Western Australia, the late Government of this State appointing Mr. Keenan, K.C., to put forward our case. The Commission brought in a

report very much in our favour. One commissioner actually reported—

In my opinion Western Australia should never have entered the Federation, but having done so, there is, I feel convinced, only one complete and satisfactory remedy for her present difficulties, and that is secession.

Mr. Angelo: And he was not a West Australian.

Mr. H. W. MANN: He was an expert from the Eastern States, appointed by the Federal Government to investigate the position.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Who was he?

Mr. H. W. MANN: Mr. Entwistle. The relief granted by the Federal Government is inadequate, and so far as I see there is nothing short of secession that would give the opportunities this State deserves to develop its industries.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Of what political complexion was the Government that did not give adequate relief?

Mr. H. W. MANN: All Federal Governments, whether Labour or National, have failed to give this State the deal to which it was entitled. It was, in fact, the Bruce-Page Government who appointed the Royal Commission in question; and the same Government dealt with the Commission's recommendations. It does not make the position any better which Government it was.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: No. It makes the position worse.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Bonuses and agreements and the tariff, while helping industries in the Eastern States to prosper, are continually reacting to the detriment of this State and its people. I shall begin my argument by referring to the sugar agreement. It may be suggested that that argument has been worn threadbare, but I wish to put up the facts as I find them.

Mr. Corboy: Is there not on the Notice Paper a motion referring to the sugar agreement?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I shall not anticipate that motion.

Mr. Corboy: You cannot.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I maintain that one of the outstanding disadvantages of Federation to this State is the sugar agreement.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You cannot discuss that.

Mr. Corboy: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. member is not in order in anticipating a notice of motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was going to raise that point myself. Seeing that there is on the Notice Paper a notice of motion dealing with that subject, I think it would be well to let the matter alone at present.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I wish to refer to Sections 92 and 99 of the Federal Constitution. The latter reads—

The Commonwealth shall not by any law or regulation of trade, commerce or revenue give preference to one State or any part thereof over another State or any part thereof.

I suggest that the prohibition granted to the corrugated iron industry infringes that prohibition. I maintain that the embargo on the importation of corrugated iron does interfere with the regulation of trade, commerce and revenue, and does interfere with the general flow of trade between State and State.

Mr. Corboy: There was nothing to prevent the establishment of a factory here to manufacture corrugated iron, was there?

Mr. H. W. MANN: Previously the duty on corrugated iron was—Britain preferential 20s., intermediate tariff 55s., and general tariff 60s. Those rates of duty were increased to—British preferential 110s., intermediate tariff 130s., and general tariff 150s.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Do you regard that as unconstitutional?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I regard the embargo or prohibition as unconstitutional.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Why do you not take action?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am taking action of a kind that appeals to me, in moving this motion.

Hon. M. F. Troy: That is only talk.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Formerly the iron could be imported and sold here for £24 per ton. When a monopoly was given to the one firm in Sydney, the price was raised to £27 per ton. Although the firm made a definite promise to the Federal Gov-

ernment that there would be no further increase in the price, it was subsequently raised to £28 10s. per ton. To show the iniquity which arises from monopoly, to show how unscrupulous traders become when placed in a position of advantage—

Mr. Marshall: That is private enterprise.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is all private enterprise. In this State there is a combination called the Galvanised Iron Dealers' Association. I shall not go into details, but shall merely show what opportunities monopoly gives to traders to—I will use the term—rob the general public of large sums of money. The association called a meeting which Mr. Reilly, the manager of Lysaght's, was invited to attend. He did attend, and was asked whether anyone else was going to be allowed to sell Lysaght's iron, or whether the sale of it would be left to just the three or four traders comprised in the association. The desire of those traders was to exclude the State Sawmills and many other traders from the sale of this iron. This gentleman's reply was, "No; these people have been stirring up the Federal Government, and you have to keep them quiet. They must be allowed to sell the iron: otherwise you will have to sell to them and give them a share of the rebate." It was agreed then that the State Sawmills should be allowed to come in as first traders, and finally it was decided that the others should come in as well, but only upon stated terms. They were not to receive the same commission as the other traders had been receiving, and they had to take supplies on sight drafts, whereas the others were getting them on 30 to 60 days drafts. What position are those traders in? Hitherto they had been importing galvanised iron from overseas and selling in the open market. Now they have to depend on the iron manufactured in Sydney and have to pay £5 to join the association before being allowed to get their supplies. On top of that, they must sell the iron under conditions laid down by the monopolists in this association. It means that, whereas the pastoralist who probably required 100 tons of galvanised iron for buildings on his station, was able to get his supplies at £24 a ton, he now has to pay £28 10s. per ton, which represents, on 100 tons of iron, an increased charge of £450. Surely an instance of that description must influence members in coming to the conclusion that we cannot

continue to remain in the Federation in face of such treatment. It is said that the tariff is assisting the industries of Australia.

Hon. A. McCallum: But the treatment you complain of is at the hands of local people here.

Mr. H. W. MANN: That is so, but they would not have the opportunity if there were no monopoly in connection with galvanised iron.

Hon. A. McCallum: There is the same monopoly in the importations of local manufacturers.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I do not know that there is; I know the position is as I stated it, because I have evidence of it.

Mr. Wansborough: Is that your chief reason in support of the motion?

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is one of my reasons.

Mr. Marshall: Do you suggest that if we secured home rule for Western Australia, we would have freetrade?

Mr. H. W. MANN: No, but we would not have a mad-run tariff.

Mr. Marshall: Then you would not be in control.

The Minister for Lands: A selection would be made from your side of the House.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I propose to read an extract from the "Evening News" published in Sydney, as follows:—

The closing of Lysaght's works at Newcastle until a prohibition against the importation of galvanised iron was granted, is another proof of the failure of protection. There was formerly a customs tax of £2 a ton on galvanised iron. Freight, insurance, wharfage dues and primage duty added £3 9s. 7d., and the exchange rate £1 11s. 1d. In addition to these advantages, local manufacturers received a bounty of £3 10s. per ton. The advantage over imported galvanised iron was therefore £10 10s. 8d. per ton, plus concessions in the railway rates. Yet with this huge advantage Lysaght's Ltd. declared that it could not face competition of any kind, a humiliating confession from an industry which promised, when asking for the increase in the bonus granted last December, to employ more men. Primary industries have to sell in the world's markets, but their costs were loaded £10 10s. 8d. on all galvanised iron used to assist this industry, which now declares that it cannot sell even in a sheltered market. So much for protection. The request for the prohibition of the importation of galvanised iron should have

been refused outright. There was even less justification for it than for the embargo upon the importation of sugar.

Hon. M. F. Troy: That is not a fact. The position is that the people in the country areas cannot buy it. If it was £5 a ton, they could not buy it to-day.

Mr. H. W. MANN: That does not make any difference in the position.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You prove that.

Mr. H. W. MANN: That does not get away from the fact that if a pastoralist wishes to purchase 100 tons of galvanised iron, it will cost him £450 extra because of the embargo.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You seek to prove that protection is of no value, despite the fact that there are no sales.

Mr. H. W. MANN: In the House of Representatives Mr. Corser made the following statement:—

Lysaghts Ltd. had closed its works for a few days, only to create an atmosphere favourable for its request for an embargo. Under protection, worth £385,000 annually from the bounty and Customs duties, Lysaghts Ltd. was unable to compete against imported iron, although the cover of £426 for each man employed by the company exceeded his wages. The assistance being withdrawn by the Government would be extorted from consumers.

Mr. Kenneally: That sounds very much like a quotation from "Senator."

Mr. H. W. MANN: I have given the authority; I said I was quoting the remarks of Mr. Corser in the House of Representatives. I am sorry I cannot deal with the sugar embargo but I have said so much for one monopoly that is affecting the primary producers.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You could deal with the Paterson butter scheme, which takes £2,000,000 out of the pockets of our people.

Mr. H. W. MANN: That is so.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is a scandalous thing.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I have discovered some interesting figures dealing with the wool industry, which is the primary industry of this State.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Of Australia, not of this State.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Yes, the principal primary industry of Australia and one of the principal of this State. Apart from agree-

ments and bounties mentioned already, there are other bounties, including those affecting sugar, iron, sulphur, wine, cotton seed, cotton yarn and other lines, which represent in the aggregate £10,726,000 a year. I shall give the House some information regarding prices and conditions in connection with the woollen industry. These show that in 1908 wool brought 6½d. per lb. In 1924-25 it brought 26.32d.; in 1929, 10.7d.; in 1930, 8d. to 10½d. An analysis has been made of the cost of producing that wool and the result works out as follows:—Wages, including managers' wages, food, horse, saddle, and allowing one man to every 2,000 sheep, 3s. per sheep; maintenance, repairs and depreciation, 1s. to 2s. per sheep; destroying noxious weeds and animals, 4d. to 9d.; shire and P.P. rates, 4d.; rams, 4d.; crutching and dipping, not done in some districts, nil to 4d. This gives a total of from 5s. to 6s. 9d. per sheep. Shearing, including classing, 9d. per sheep; fuel, oil, duplicates, packs, cartage and all essentials, 4d.; selling wool (including rail freight), 10d., or a grand total of 6s. 11d. to 8s. 8d. per sheep.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Where did you get those figures?

Mr. H. W. MANN: From a book entitled "Australia's Spurious Democracy."

Hon. M. F. Troy: You would!

Hon. J. C. Willcock: What an authority!

Mr. H. W. MANN: Hon. members can deal with the figures themselves.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The title of the book indicates how fair it is likely to be.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The average weight of wool on a sheep is 7¼ lbs. and with a price of 10d. per lb., that gives a gross average return to the pastoralist of 6s. 9d. as against 6s. 11d., which is the cost of production.

Mr. Kenneally: That is why they are so poor.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Do you not know that there are no pastoral areas in Australia where the costs are the same. They vary on each station just as the costs on each farm vary.

Mr. H. W. MANN: That is so, but the figures I have quoted represent the average.

Hon. M. F. Troy: I have heard people say that they cannot grow wheat at 5s. a bushel, and yet they are doing it.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The point is that the primary producers and the pastoralists have to purchase their supplies in a highly tariffed market, and to sell their produce in the open market overseas, in competition with producers from other parts of the world. With the tariff such as it is to-day, it is absolutely impossible for pastoralists to make a living. They have to purchase in a market where the tariff is always 100 per cent. up on the original cost of the article, and yet have to sell their produce in open competition overseas. I shall furnish some remarkable facts showing retaliation against Australia's tariff, as a result of which we have lost upwards of a £12,000,000 market for our wheat. I will first read an extract from the "West Australian" under date the 11th February, 1930, as follows:—

The imposition of a prohibitive tariff upon Australian wheat and butter by the French Government represents definite retaliatory action following the increase in the tariff imposed on French wine by the Federal Government.

Hon. M. F. Troy: What is your authority now?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I said I was reading an extract from the "West Australian."

Mr. Pantou: That will be right.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The hon. member can object if he likes.

Mr. Pantou: I am with you. I said that if it appeared in the "West Australian" it must be right.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Fancy, the "West Australian"! More ex-parte statements.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The article continued—

Australian wheat and butter merchants view the position with grave concern. They do not accuse France of unfairness, for though, in this tariff skirmish, Australia stands to lose very much more than it can possibly gain, the provocative action originated with the Commonwealth. The latest list of statistics—those for the year 1926-27—show that wine was only a minor item among the Australian imports from France, whereas our exports of wheat to that country reached a considerable figure. During that year Australia's total imports from France were valued at £4,767,163, while our return

trade was valued at £17,627,139 of which wool accounted for £13,164,721 and wheat £2,027,476. Our exports of butter to France have been considerable too. If France maintains her ban upon Australian wheat and takes all her import requirements from other countries, the world market position may not be greatly affected. The position is more serious from the point of view of butter, for the French market has absorbed large quantities of Australian butter recently and this will be replaced, now, by the Danish.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Do you know that the sales of wheat and butter in England have fallen off?

Mr. H. W. MANN: That is so, but that does not make the position any better.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But it is not called retaliation.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Perhaps not.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Italy and Germany and other countries have done the same thing.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I will give the hon. member some particulars regarding the retaliation. In the House of Representatives on the 13th February last, replying to Mr. Francis, the Minister for Customs, Mr. Forde, according to a telegram published in the "West Australian," admitted that since the Federal Government had amended the Customs tariff, France had imposed a super tax of 200 per cent. over and above the previous rate, on Australian wheat and butter.

Hon. M. F. Troy: He did not say it was retaliation: he said that since action had been taken, other Governments had also taken action.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Is it not a reasonable inference to draw? Of course it is.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is most unreasonable.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is the only reasonable inference that can be drawn.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is not: it is the way the matter is put in the paper.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Proceeding the report in the "West Australian" stated—

Before the imposition of the super-tax, he continued, the French duty on Australian wheat had amounted to 1s. 6d. a bushel, but with the imposition of the super-tax the duty had become 4s. 6d. a bushel. The French tariff rate had since been raised to 3s. 6d. a bushel and Australian wheat was, in consequence of the super-tax, liable to a rate of

10s. 6d. a bushel. Before the imposition of the super-tax the duty on Australian butter had amounted to 16s. 4d. a cwt. With the super-tax the rate had become 49s. a cwt. The French tariff on butter had also been raised and at present the duty on Australian butter, exclusive of the super-tax, would be 32s. 9d. a cwt. Inclusive of the super-tax the rate payable was 98s. 3d. a cwt. When abroad recently, members of the Federal Ministry had made representations to the French Government to relieve Australian primary products of retaliatory imposts, but the matter was bound up with proposals by France for a reciprocal trade agreement with Australia. When the proposals had been considered, the case for Australia would be presented to the French Government.

Year after year it is becoming more and more apparent that Australia must look within the Empire for her markets because we are losing our other overseas markets owing to this excessive tariff. The position of the Australian wheat industry provides proof of this assertion. If we produce we must distribute. Mass production is useless without mass consumption. In the last decade purchases of Australian wheat by foreign countries have progressively declined. The falling off is illustrated by the following table of wheat exports from Australia to half a dozen foreign countries—

	1924-5.		1928-9.	
	Centals.	Value.	Centals.	Value.
	£	£	£	£
Belgium ...	2,664,085	1,527,800	596,954	259,568
France ...	8,748,515	5,055,175	1,180,437	480,141
Germany ...	1,837,170	1,002,004	601,138	233,296
Italy ...	9,336,303	5,334,520	3,516,031	1,440,209
Japan ...	4,211,176	2,228,549	3,375,779	1,353,874
Netherlands	1,978,429	1,164,843	1,100,479	461,714

Hon. M. F. TROY: In 1928-29 the embargo was not in existence.

Mr. H. W. MANN: There has been a tariff all the time.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, the Bruce-Page tariff.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am not seeking to excuse the Bruce-Page Government. All Federal Governments have treated us in the same way. Germany has put a duty of £9 0s. 6d. per ton on wheat, France has imposed a discriminatory duty of 5s. a bushel on Australian wheat. Italy is conducting a campaign to make herself self-contained.

During the last three years she has reduced her purchases of wheat outside her own confines by nine-tenths. The virtual stagnation in the Australian meat industry is a matter of serious concern. This trade with non-British countries is also declining. Italy in 1924-25 took from Australia 489,381 centals of beef worth £725,510. Four years later her purchases had declined to 32,119 centals worth £44,495. In 1924-25 France took 29,098 centals of beef worth £44,539. In 1928-29 she purchased no beef in Australia at all. What is the reason of the tremendous falling off in trade with those countries?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have no money with which to buy.

Mr. H. W. MANN: But they buy from other countries. The falling off in wheat in those countries reaches the enormous figures of 12 millions sterling. Now I am going to give you the effect of taxation as follows:—

	Commonwealth.	States.
1919 ..	£32,000,000	£12,000,000
1923 ..	£52,000,000	£22,000,000
1926 ..	£54,000,000	£25,000,000
1927 ..	£58,000,000	£29,000,000
1928 ..	£56,000,000	£31,000,000
1929 ..	£56,000,000	£32,000,000

Can we afford to be taxed to that extent? Of course we cannot. We are becoming more poverty stricken all the time, and we have no surplus money for development because we are so taxed that it is impossible for this country to develop. Now I am going to quote Mr. Prowse. Speaking on the Budget in the House of Representatives in July, 1920, he said—

Australia is naturally a great primary producing country; but it is hamstrung, shackled and hobbled at every turn. Western Australia is compelled to buy in a protectionist market and to sell in the open markets of the world in competition with coloured labour. Last year we (W.A.) bought from the Eastern States £10,600,000 worth of goods, and sold them £1,200,000 worth of goods, an adverse trade balance to Western Australia of £9,400,000. Had the State been able to buy its requirements free of legislative restrictions it would have been able to expend an additional £3,000,000 in developing its territory. Federation is the greatest enemy of Western Australia.

Now I am going to show the condition of shipping. In the year of Federation, 1901, the tonnage that entered and cleared Commonwealth ports was 11,761,000 tons, and in 1929 it was 10,925,000 tons, or a reduction of 836,000 tons after 30 years of Federation.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Reduced shipping applies all the world over.

Mr. H. W. MANN: This position was considered by a commission and that commission, after taking evidence from every section of the community, made this recommendation—

That until the State of Western Australia is granted the right to impose its own Customs and excise tariffs, the Commonwealth shall pay to the State a special payment of £450,000 per annum in addition to the 25s. per capita payment made in accordance with Clause 4 of the Surplus Revenue Act of 1910, the aforesaid special payment to include the special annual payment now being made to the State of Western Australia in accordance with Clause 5 of the said Act. The above special payment of £450,000 to commence on the 1st July, 1924.

In addition to that, one of the commissioners made this recommendation—

In my opinion Western Australia should never have entered the Federation. But having done so, there is, I feel convinced, only one complete and satisfactory remedy for her present disabilities, namely secession. If that event occurred, all other recommendations in this report would be unnecessary. As, however, it cannot be taken for granted that secession will take place, I have joined in recommendations having the object of relieving, at least to some extent, the present financial disabilities of the State of Western Australia.

That report was made by three gentlemen who had no particular interest in this State. They were guided purely by the evidence adduced before them, and they made a report in every sense favourable to Western Australia. The whole tone of the report shows that Western Australia was labouring under terrible disabilities in the Federation. That report has never been challenged. It has been accepted by the Federal Government and some slight relief was given for a short period. But we are now reaching the end

of that period and our last position becomes worse than the first.

Mr. Kenneally: Thanks to your own friends Page and Bruce.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It does not matter whether it is Page and Bruce or Scullin and Theodore, there is no difference when it comes to the treatment of Western Australia. They are concerned only with the industrial centres of Eastern Australia where the bulk of the votes lie.

Mr. Kenneally: It will be a good thing for George Pearce to be told that.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am now going to read a statement showing what our financial position would be if we were out of Federation.

Mr. Marshall: I move that it be taken as read.

Mr. H. W. MANN: It might be, so far as you are concerned. I am going to submit the figures prepared by Mr. Watson.

Mr. Wansbrough: Who is Mr. Watson?

Mr. H. W. MANN: He is an accredited accountant. He has published these figures and they have never been challenged.

Hon. A. McCallum: They have been challenged the country over. The Chief Secretary at his meeting at Nedlands proved them to be wrong.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I am going to stand by Mr. Watson's figures and put them to the House. Members can attack them if they wish.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You have no figures of your own and so you produce another man's. Why do you not produce some figures of your own?

Mr. H. W. MANN: The hon. member can attack these if he pleases.

Hon. A. McCallum: You are quoting the figures of a man who is so patriotic towards Western Australia that he wanted to pay his income tax into Victoria, not Western Australia.

Mr. H. W. MANN: What does that prove? What has it to do with the accuracy of his figures?

Hon. A. McCallum: It shows his sincerity in posing as a friend of Western Australia.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Here are Mr. Watson's figures:—

STATEMENT SHOWING THE EFFECT OF SECESSION UPON THE FINANCES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Based upon the actual figures for the year 1929-1930.

ADDITIONAL REVENUE TO STATE TREASURY.		
	£	
Customs and Excise Duties ...	5,360,000	
*Federal Income Tax, Land Tax, Entertainment Tax, and Estate Duty collected from W.A. ...	915,000	
*Other Federal Revenue from W.A. ...	255,000	
	6,530,000	
+Proportion of Temporary Advance to cover Deficit ...	126,000	
	6,656,000	
†Less:—Commonwealth Grants, already included in State Budget as Revenue:—		
Road Grant ...	£384,000	
Special Grant ...	£300,000	
	684,000	
Total Net Additional Revenue on comparative basis ...	5,972,000	£5,972,000
EXPENDITURE BY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT IN, OR ON BEHALF OF, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.		
	£	
‡Contribution towards Interest on State Debts ...	474,000	
‡Contribution towards Sinking Fund on State Debts ...	93,000	
‡War Pensions ...	793,000	
‡Invalid and Old Age Pensions ...	631,000	
‡Maternity Allowance ...	45,000	
‡Air Service Subsidy ...	18,000	
Loss on Post Office—		
Total Receipts ...	£909,000	
Total Expenditure (including Interest, Sinking Fund and Depreciation on Capital Value of Postal Assets in W.A., viz.: £3½ Million) ...	£930,000	
	21,000	
Half Share of Working Loss, Interest and Sinking Fund on Trans. Railway on basis of Capital Expenditure of £6½ Million ...	80,000	
†Interest and Sinking Fund on War Debt ...	1,230,000	
†Defence ...	272,000	
*W.A.'s proportion of all other expenditure by Commonwealth Government ...	£659,000	
Less—Duplicated expenditure, etc. ...	£391,000	
	268,000	
Total Additional Expenditure ...	3,630,000	£3,630,000
Minimum annual financial gain to Western Australia from Secession ...		£2,042,000

* Actual and population basis.

† Population basis.

‡ Actual amount expended by Commonwealth in W.A.

Mr. Withers: That is on the present tariff.

Mr. H. W. MANN: The tariff does not come into it at all. The statement, prepared by that capable gentleman, shows that we would have a credit balance of over £2,000,000 if we were free of Federation.

Mr. Withers: The Chief Secretary made it £1,600,000.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I have already told the House that he was dealing with a different year.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Members will have an opportunity later on to refute the figures submitted by the hon. member. I ask members to give him an opportunity to proceed.

Mr. H. W. MANN: When the Scullin Government came into power, they adopted their own methods of dealing with the adverse trade balance. We have been suffering an adverse trade balance with the Eastern States for 30 years running into upwards of £6,000,000 a year. Is it not time we dealt with that? Mr. Scullin said it was time we stopped the adverse balance in the overseas trade. If an adverse trade balance is not good for Australia as a whole, it is not good for Western Australia, and we should not continue year after year paying out upwards of £6,000,000 a year to the Eastern States.

Hon. A. McCallum: What if we applied that doctrine locally, and set the goldfields against the coast? Why limit it to different States?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I do not see the point.

Hon. A. McCallum: Where will you stop if you pursue that policy?

Mr. H. W. MANN: I wish to read a quotation from a speech made by one of the big men of the Empire in London at the close of the war, (General Jan Smuts. Speaking at a meeting of leaders of Empire, he said—

All the empires that we have known in the past and that exist to-day are founded on the idea of assimilation, of trying to force different human material through one mould so as to form one nation. Your whole idea and basis is entirely different. You do not want to standardise the nations of the British Empire. You want to develop them into greater nationhood. These younger communities, the offspring of the Mother Country, or territories like that of my own people, which have been annexed after various vicissitudes of war—all these you want, not to mould on any common pattern, but you want them to develop according to the principles of self-government and freedom and liberty. Therefore, your whole basic idea is different from anything that has ever existed before, either in the empires of the past or even in the United States.

These amounts have been calculated and supplied by the Secretary to the Commonwealth Treasury.

That is the position as it affects Western Australia. The policy of high protection is suitable for the closely settled cities of Melbourne and Sydney.

Mr. Sampson: Let them have it to themselves.

Mr. H. W. MANN: After 30 years of experimenting it is unsuitable for Western Australia. Yet they are trying to force us to live under conditions that suit them, to buy the goods they manufacture, to live under legislation favourable to the big cities and unfavourable to us. If I were living in Melbourne or Sydney and my interests were centred there, I would favour a continuation of Federation, but I am speaking from the point of view of Western Australia, and after 30 years' experience I say the disabilities are too great for us to continue as a partner of the Commonwealth. Are we to continue for another 30 years under the present disabilities or should we endeavour to free ourselves in order to develop this State as it should be developed?

Hon. J. Cunningham: Of course, you are woefully ignorant of the true facts.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Let me quote from a speech by one of the most able members of the House made 25 years ago. It was applicable then and it is a thousand times more applicable to-day. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) said—

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why 25 years ago? Why not to-day?

Mr. H. W. MANN: It applies now more so than it did then. Speaking on a similar motion in 1906, Mr. Walker said—

To the present this State has obtained no benefit perceivable in a material sense from joining Federation. On the contrary, she has sacrificed much. She has given up not only her right to the management of the institutions which should be in immediate touch with the people, but also in regard to her revenue, a most important thing and a vital matter to a young State that requires every possible resource in order to develop its industries and its material promises of prosperity. We require all the money we can raise amongst ourselves for that purpose; and not only are we now sacrificing the taxes we were privileged to enjoy prior to Federation, but there is the constant menace over us that, as the Federal power grows in strength and gathers to itself, as all great powers will, more privileges, we shall from time to time be more exploited and more and more placed under burdens, and we cannot protect ourselves. Easterners want to keep us still as their dumping ground, as they

want to make us the market for their products of every kind; nay, to make us even more profitable to them in the transshipment of imports. After the Eastern States have got the benefit of the Customs fees in regard to goods imported from other countries, such goods are sent to us. We obtain no advantages whatever. They obtain these advantages, and they insist on our remaining in this isolated position. They still want to treat us as if we were a conquered State and not a partner in the Commonwealth, as if we were their Cinderella to do all the housework for them and receive no wages. Should they wonder if we complain? Should they wonder if there are cries about separation, about secession? And I am not too sure it would be such a harmful or heinous thing. For, from whom are we separating? Not from that great motherland which is our source of protection. We do not desire to sever those bonds which unite us historically with the greatest nation that has ever yet appeared in history. We want no interference from the outside. We want to live our own life, to develop our own patriotism, to make this State as great as any of the others; nay, greater. We want to feel as much a jewel in the Crown of Britain as are the other States which have preceded us and set an example before us. If possible, we want to surpass them. We do not want to be hooked to the same waggon, to move in the same march. We want to be able to run, if we have the strength and energy to do so. We do not want to be the appendage of the other States. With their example visible before us, we want to emulate and carry on the traditions of the great empire of which we are a portion, and of which we should not be less a portion if we were separated from the Commonwealth to-morrow.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What has that to do with it?

Mr. H. W. MANN: That able statement of the position was made by the member for Kanowna a quarter of a century ago, and since then the disadvantages have increased a thousandfold, the burdens have become the greater, and we have reached breaking point. We cannot longer bear the burden of the sugar agreement, of the iron monopoly, of high tariffs that are losing us our wheat and wool markets, and of taxes that are beyond our power to pay. I agree with every word uttered by the member for Kanowna on that occasion.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [9.27]: The Government do not intend to oppose the motion, which merely asks that a referendum be taken.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Who is going to pay for it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The motion does not require our making out a case for or against, but I ask the House to agree to an amendment. The motion makes it too mandatory on the Government to submit a proposal to the people, and I move an amendment—

That all the words after "withdrawing from the" be struck out, and the word "Federation" inserted in lieu.

The question will then read, "Are you in favour of Western Australia withdrawing from the Federation?"

Hon. J. Cunningham: Is the Treasurer prepared to find the money to pay for the referendum?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the House agrees to the motion, the Treasurer will find the money.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Where will he find it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Of course you do not.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Unless you can guarantee it will be effective, it will be a waste of money.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not intend to enter upon that phase of the question now.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What is your estimate of the cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There has been a very insistent demand for a referendum.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What is it going to cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no doubt that repeated efforts have been made by the State Government—

Hon. J. Cunningham: But what is it going to cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not want to discuss that.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But we must.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask hon. members to observe the rules of debate. The Deputy Premier has the floor. I can hear only one member at a time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Repeated efforts have been made by the Government to get a better deal from our friends in the East than we have so far received. So many people are dissatisfied with our

relationship with the Federal Government, that they are demanding at public meetings and in other ways that they should be given an opportunity to express their opinions.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Are the Government prepared to pay the cost of the referendum?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the House instructs the Government in that way, the instructions will be carried out.

Hon. J. Cunningham: How are we to get the money?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We need not argue that point. There is no demand in the motion that the referendum shall be held to-morrow.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Therefore the motion is meaningless rubbish.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If so why does the hon. member interject?

Hon. J. Cunningham: Will you give us an assurance you can find the money?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will give the hon. member no such assurance.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Why, you cannot feed the people now as it is.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Remain in the Federation and things will get worse.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the figures which have been submitted to the people by various speakers, as well as by my colleague the Chief Secretary, can be substantiated, and we can save to the people only £1,600,000 a year, we are justified in holding the referendum.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why say "if"? Can we do it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It has been proved on paper that we can. We recall that as a result of the Federal Royal Commission a disabilities grant was made to this State. That grant will cease on the 30th June next, and we do not know that we will get it any longer. I believe we are justified in obtaining an expression of opinion from the people as to whether or not they desire to remain in the Federation. The small amount of money that would be spent will not be the only money laid out in retiring from the Federation if that is what will ultimately happen.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You must know whether the referendum will be effective or not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Suppose it costs £10,000?

Mr. H. W. Mann: Nearer £4,000.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Provision can be made for work for the unemployed in the carrying out of the referendum. On what will the money be spent?

Mr. Wansbrough: Printing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is work.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is not reproductive work.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But little money will be spent on material.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Wonderful! Reproductive work!

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why not put your feet on the ground and talk sense?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The House has not yet authorised the holding of a referendum. The motion merely seeks to instruct the Government to take steps to enable the House to decide whether the Bill shall be brought down to provide for a referendum. When the Bill comes down the whole matter can be discussed.

Hon. J. Cunningham: A referendum means nothing.

Mr. Withers: Is it necessary for the Government to have a motion passed before taking a referendum?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government desire that members should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject. I do not expect any opposition to this motion. Some members opposite used to refer to a referendum dealing with the right of the people to initiate legislation.

Hon. A. McCallum: You mean the initiative and referendum?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It meant that the people should have the right to initiate legislation. A referendum would give them the opportunity to test themselves out on this point.

Hon. A. McCallum: How will this give them the right to initiate legislation?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will show whether they desire to remain in the Federation or not.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Do you object to that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think there is any more democratic method than of allowing the people to decide.

Mr. Corboy: They do not decide.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They express their opinion, and then will come the difficulty of carrying out their desire. Members of the Dominion League seem to think

that is an easy matter. The Government have no objection to the motion.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Are you going to spend the money?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That will be left to the House to decide.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Who will pay the cost of the referendum?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The people of the State, who are asking for it.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Through the Treasury.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows where the money comes from. It is not dug out of the backyards of hon. members, but comes from the pockets of the people.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You are pledging the Government to foot the cost of a referendum.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am doing nothing of the sort.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the member for Kalgoorlie to refrain from interjecting.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am neither directing nor dictating to the House. Provided the motion is amended I have no objection to it. When that is done the debate can be adjourned.

Amendment put and passed.

On motion by Mr. Corboy, debate adjourned.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

SUGAR AGREEMENT.

MR. H. W. MANN (Perth) [9.40]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should enter an emphatic protest against the re-enactment of the legislation extending the sugar agreement, and to point out to the Federal Government the gross injustice of it to Western Australia.

I desire to place before the House the history of the sugar agreement. When the Federal Government decided that sugar must be grown without indentured labour, there was a protective duty of £6 and an excise duty of £4 per ton upon sugar. When Parliament decided in accordance with the White Australia policy to terminate indentured labour it granted as compensation to growers an excise rebate of £3 per ton. When the war broke out, the duty was raised to £9 6s. 8d.

per ton, but immediately after that the Government took control of the distribution of sugar. In 1915 the price of sugar to the grower and miller was £18 per ton, the wholesale price of refined sugar was £25 per ton, and it was retailed at 3d. per lb. In 1916 the price to the grower and miller was £21 per ton, the wholesale price of refined sugar was £29 5s., and it was retailed at 3½d. From November, 1922, to June, 1923, the price to the grower and miller was £30 6s. 8d. per ton, the wholesale price of refined sugar was £42, and the retail price was 5d. per lb. From June, 1923, to October, 1923, the same prices prevailed. From October, 1923, to September, 1925, the price was reduced to £26 per ton to the grower and miller, the wholesale price for refined sugar was £37 11s. 4d., and the retail price was 4½d. per lb. From September, 1925, to September, 1931, the agreement provides that the price to the grower and miller shall be £26 10s. per ton, the price for refined sugar £37 per ton and the retail price 4½d. The terms and agreements of the sugar embargo read as follows:—

It is provided that the Queensland Government shall acquire all raw sugar manufactured from sugar cane grown in Queensland during the seasons 1928-29, 1929-30, and 1930-31, with the exception of a quantity not to exceed 1 per cent. of the total quantity of sugar manufactured during the season which a mill owner may desire to retain for local consumption. The Queensland Government also agrees to purchase all raw sugar manufactured from sugar cane grown in New South Wales during the same period and to make the sugar from both States available at all the capital cities. It undertakes to sell all grades of sugar and sugar products at the same price in the main distributing centres, provided that any variation in the selling price of any grade of sugar at the date of the agreement due to a difference in the quality of the sugar supplied shall be allowed to continue during its currency.

While there is provision in the agreement for a rebate on sugar used for the manufacture of jams shipped overseas, there is no such provision for the housewife who desires to make her year's supply of jam. There is no provision whatever for her to get her sugar at any cheaper rate. In 1920 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the sugar industry. The chairman of the Commission was Mr. A. B. Piddington, and no one can suggest that Mr. Piddington is a gentleman who fails to give the fullest consideration to the matter of good wages for

the worker and the best interests of all concerned. The Commission reported in favour of the price of sugar being fixed at £22 per ton to the grower; but before the report was tabled in the Federal Parliament, Mr. W. M. Hughes had a conference with those interested in the sugar industry, and for some reason he fixed the price to the grower at £30. That price continued during the currency of the agreement. The report of the Commission states—

The Colonial Sugar Refining Company refused to furnish the Commission with the information as to the cost of raw sugar manufacture, cost of refining, etc., in respect to its raw sugar mills and refineries, thus for a time at least depriving the Commission of data considered essential to the completion of its inquiry. This company's attitude has been consistent. In order to give an idea of the Company's position attention may be directed to the following condensed review of the half-yearly balance-sheet (to March 31, 1930), written by a leading accountant:—

"Profits shown by the latest half-yearly accounts have certainly declined to £445,337 compared with £507,149 for the March half of the 1929 financial year. But the smaller profit is still at the rate of more than 15 per cent. a year for £5,850,000 of capital.

"The course of profits for six half-years is shown by the figures that follow, and also the profits for each full year to March 31:—

Half-year.	1928	1929	1930
September ..	£476,516	£469,157	£465,493
March ..	490,111	507,149	445,337
Total ..	£966,627	£976,306	£910,830 "

I wish to point out how the original capital of the company, built up from reserves of all kinds, has grown from £2,189,000 in 1922 to roughly £6,000,000 at the present date. Notwithstanding the building-up of the capital to that extent, it is still paying dividends of 12½ per cent. Important financial provision has been made to meet all kinds of eventualities. There is provision for any losses made in Fiji. There are reserves which it is suggested represent a method of hiding profits. However, on the profits shown it is surely time that some consideration was extended to Australian consumers as well as to this huge combine. The general propaganda put about on behalf of the company is the maintenance of the white Australia policy. Of the many thousand miles of Australian coastline, however, the sugar industry covers only a few hundreds, and the greatest depth, I under-

stand, of the sugar-growing area is about 20 miles. Is it suggested that the sugar industry will save the position in case of invasion? Is it suggested that the industry must be preserved for the purpose of preventing invasion? Then, what of the many other thousands of miles of Australian coastline? If it is suggested that a heavy bonus must be paid to a company operating in sugar, what about the mining companies that have operated in the same district for years? What of the men working on the railways there? What of the pastoral employees in the same country? For decades there have been mines at Gympie, Charters Towers, Mt. Morgan, Herberton, and Chillagoe, where thousands of miners have worked under the same conditions as in Southern Queensland and other parts of Australia. Was any bonus given to preserve the existence of the mining companies? Of course not. Is there any bonus for the Kimberley pastoralists, who have been living on their holdings for 30 years and upwards? I suggest that the White Australia propaganda is put up merely to hoodwink the public so that the various sugar agreements might go through without challenge. Towns and cities have been built in Northern Queensland, and I will quote the population of some of them—Gympie 9,500, Charters Towers 9,000, Mackay 9,000, Maryborough 12,000, Rockhampton 30,000, Townsville 35,000, Cairns 9,500. All those people lived there under the same conditions, in the same atmosphere, as the sugar growers. There never has been any reasonable excuse put up why the sugar agreement should be renewed time after time. I make no excuse for any Government that made or renewed the agreement. The fact that the agreement was renewed by the previous Federal Government makes the blame no less. The blame is even greater, because the period was increased from three years to five, and because these are times of severe depression when the high price of sugar inflicts a greater hardship than ever. The agreement during its currency will cost the State of Western Australia £400,000 annually, or a total of £2,000,000. Every worker's wife who purchases 6 lbs. of sugar per week during the currency of the agreement will contribute £13 to the sugar combine. I feel sure that there is no member of this Chamber who legitimately feels able to defend the renewal of the sugar agreement. It has

been suggested in some Eastern papers that the sugar people endeavour to keep a balance of members, either Labour or National, in the Federal Parliament, so that they may have a call on whichever Government may be in power, and that there is a sufficient number of such members to maintain the balance of power. Whatever it may be, there is certainly some reason why time after time, since 1922, this agreement has been renewed.

Mr. Marshall: W. M. Hughes could give the facts about that.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I have sufficient information here. However, I do lay at the door of Mr. Hughes that he was the first cause of the trouble by raising the Commission's recommendation from £22 per ton to £30. The difference between the price paid to the sugar grower and the price charged to the consumer is as much as the world's price for sugar. The grower receives £27, and the company sell at £36 10s. Now, sugar is being sold in the Home market at £9 per ton, the amount charged by this company for refining. Moreover, the company are now selling sugar in New Zealand at £11 per ton.

Hon. M. F. Troy: It is quite possible that the sugar at £9 per ton is not refined sugar.

Hon. A. McCallum: Is this Australian-grown sugar or Fiji-grown sugar?

Mr. H. W. MANN: It is all sugar.

Hon. A. McCallum: Yes, but is it Fiji-grown or Australian-grown by the same company?

Mr. H. W. MANN: The Australian requirements of sugar are about 118 lbs. per adult, but the Australian production is 162 lbs. per adult. The result is that the balance has to be sold oversea, and Australian consumers have to pay for the loss on that. It will be suggested that the system is similar to the Paterson butter scheme. To some extent it is, but the difference is that the Paterson butter scheme confers an all-round benefit. In the case of sugar the benefit is to one State only, at the cost of all the other States.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Both systems are pernicious.

Mr. H. W. MANN: Both are pernicious; but the position as regards the sugar agreement is worse to this extent, that one State receives the whole of the benefit, to the detriment of the other States.

Hon. M. F. Troy: New South Wales gets some of the benefit.

Mr. H. W. MANN: A very small proportion of the benefit goes to New South Wales. Land used for sugar-growing, formerly worth about £20 per acre, has been bought at £200 per acre.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Oh no! That is all exaggeration. I hope those are not Mr. Murray's figures you are quoting.

Mr. H. W. MANN: These figures are taken from a leading article in the Melbourne "Herald." I do not think that paper would misrepresent the facts.

Mr. Sampson: The unimproved value of sugar lands has gone up tremendously.

Mr. H. W. MANN: I shall not labour the motion. I think I have proved the tremendous hardship which the sugar agreement inflicts on the consumers of Australia, and more particularly on Western Australian consumers. We receive no benefit from it. We are contributing upwards of £2,000,000 during the currency of the agreement, and I repeat that every workman or workman's wife who purchases six lbs. of sugar per week will contribute the excessive price of £13 during the currency of that agreement.

On motion by Hon. J. C. Willecock, debate adjourned.

PAPERS—FREMANTLE RAILWAY BRIDGE.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Mr. Sleeman:—

That all correspondence passing between the Government and firms desirous of building the Fremantle railway bridge on a system of payment in bonds, be laid on the Table of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [10.2]: I have all the papers available at the Public Works Department; there may be others that cannot be traced. The only correspondence that the Under Secretary has been able to find consists of a letter from the Royal Vice Consul for Italy, dated the 16th January, 1930. A copy of that letter, together with the endorsement by the then Minister for Works (the member for South Fremantle), has been laid on the Table of the House. I have the document here, but I want the House to understand that there may be other

correspondence, although the Under Secretary has not been able to find it. The letter from the Royal Vice Consul for Italy was addressed to the Minister for Works and was as follows:—

I would be obliged to know from your courtesy to what extent I could eventually take into consideration the proposition I received from a leading Italian firm, which would be prepared to build, on behalf of this State, but with its own financial directive and executive means, the new bridge across the Swan River of the Perth-Fremantle-road, connecting North Fremantle to Cantonment Hill. The said firm, which would be guaranteed by one of our most solid banks, could execute the work either in steel, reinforced concrete or stone of Botticino (under all respects similar to marble). I am at your disposal whenever Your Honour would confer with me on this matter and I should be obliged for the favour of your kind reply.

There is an endorsement at the bottom of the letter signed by the then Minister for Works reading as follows:—

I saw the Vice Consul. No further action is needed.

Last night the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), when moving the motion, said that the bridge would cost £1,000,000. The cost of the bridge, the designing of which Mr. Stileman was in charge, represented an outlay of £1,200,000.

Hon. A. McCallum: That was for the bridge and approaches.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. The resumption of land necessary for the approaches to the bridge for the railway accounted for another £225,000, making a total amount involved of £1,425,000. I may inform the House that just recently a gentleman in the city approached me on behalf of another firm that was prepared to build the bridge and accept payment in bonds. I discussed the matter with him and he informed me that the firm would require 7½ per cent. interest on the bonds. I do not think the matter is so urgent that it need receive attention now and I have not yet discussed it with Cabinet. So far the discussion has been merely verbal. The member for Fremantle referred to the safety of the traffic bridge. There has been a survey of the road bridge, and we have been advised that with the expenditure of £4,000 it can be made quite safe. The principal trouble was found in the navigation channels where it

was suggested that if a passing boat struck the piles, it might cause damage. The intention is to replace the piles with concrete and so resist the pressure of the boats passing up and down the river. I do not think we can deal with this question in relation to the unemployment trouble. The design contemplates a bridge built of steel which will have to be imported from England as was found necessary in connection with the Sydney bridge. That is because certain long girders are necessary. Of course a good deal of the steel work could be imported from Broken Hill. I have endeavoured to secure an estimate of the value of the labour required in connection with the bridge work, but hon. members will realise that it can represent but a small proportion of the cost. I have done my best to find out what the proportion of labour costs will be, but I have not been able to ascertain any details. I do not regard the bridge as an urgent necessity and in my opinion we can do without it for a few years to come. We have better use for money that is available or can be borrowed, although the amount is very small. We can use that money better in employing labour in other directions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would draw the Minister's attention to the fact that he is distinctly out of order. Standing Order 132 sets out that no member shall digress from the subject matter under discussion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am sorry that I have digressed. I had before me a report of the speech delivered by the member for Fremantle last night and I was endeavouring to reply to his remarks. I am prepared to move that the paper be laid on the Table of the House.

Hon. A. McCallum: That is the motion. You have no objection to it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

HON. A. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [10.8]: The letter read by the Minister may be the only official document relating to the subject that is in the possession of the Public Works Department. I am not sure how Mr. Stileman, who was then Engineer-in-Chief, treated the correspondence, but when I discussed the matter with him on the last occasion, he told me he was in touch with half a dozen firms in England,

each of which was prepared to submit a price for the construction of the bridge and to take payment in bonds. Mr. Stileman was on friendly terms with many of the big engineering firms in England, and he may have regarded the correspondence he received as private. He may not have treated it as official, and therefore may have taken the correspondence with him. The letter from the Italian Vice Consul was addressed to me and I endorsed it as indicated by the Minister. In addition to that, together with the then Premier, Mr. Collier, I saw the representatives of two other engineering firms. Dorman Long & Co., the people who constructed the North Sydney Bridge, informed me that they would be prepared to consider the building of the bridge and to take payment in bonds.

The Minister for Works: I think the gentleman I referred to, who discussed the matter with me a week or two ago, represented that particular firm.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: Another gentleman saw Mr. Collier when Premier, and indicated that his firm was prepared to undertake the work and to provide the necessary finance, representing anything from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000. The firm was also prepared to take payment in bonds. But of course there would be no record, except perhaps a note to the Premier's Department that those people had called and seen Mr. Collier. I do not suppose there would be any official documents. Mr. Stileman, I know, had a letter when he came down to discuss the question with me. He told me that on the progress he was making, by the time he had the plans ready those persons would be prepared to submit a price. He added that the plans and specifications would be ready in June or July. But we went out of office in April, and so I do not know of anything that may have happened later. But I certainly knew of the one letter that I myself endorsed, and of the others that Mr. Stileman had been dealing with direct, and of at least two other firms that interviewed Mr. Collier. So there was quite a number of them prepared to do the work. I am sorry that you, Sir, will not permit discussion on the issue itself, but I take it that will have to come up under another motion. As I say, I think the explanation of the lack of documents must be that Mr. Stileman treated that correspondence as being his own.

The Minister for Works: There has not been much time in which to make a search, but I know they have not succeeded in finding any further correspondence.

Hon. A. McCALLUM: It is probable that Mr. Stileman was looking to it himself. He told me he was positive that at least six English firms would be prepared to submit prices, do the work, and take payment in bonds. Then there was the Italian firm, and I know that Dorman Long's representative came up to see me after having seen Mr. Collier.

Question put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

As to Notice of Motion.

Mr. SLEEMAN: May I ask what happened to my other motion, dealing with the number of members of Parliament? I was momentarily out of the Chamber, and on my return I found the House dealing with the motion that has just been passed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under the Standing Orders, if a motion be called on and the mover is not in his seat, the motion lapses.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Shall I be in order in moving the motion again to-morrow?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes; the hon. member can give notice of it again to-morrow.

MOTION—MIGRANTS, REPATRIATION.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Mr. Sleeman—

That the Government be requested to make arrangements immediately to repatriate all migrants who are unable to obtain work here, hundreds of whom are going hungry and practically naked, and that they use all their influence to get the Federal Parliament to issue the necessary passports, and the Imperial Government to agree to these people being returned home.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [10.15]: Nobody could doubt the good intentions of the member for Fremantle in bringing forward this motion, nor can we deny that we have a very large number of migrants suffering acutely from unemployment. I agree that many of those migrants

have been persuaded to come to this country through misrepresentations. I remember that when I was at Home during the war period many prospective migrants used to question our soldiers as to the possibilities of this country and their chances of success if they were to come out here. Of course, our soldiers at that time were burning with patriotism, and they told the inquirers many wonderful tales of the possibilities of this State. Listening to them, I often wondered how on earth they could paint such glowing pictures. Still, those to whom the tales were told apparently believed them, and great numbers of them were fully convinced they had only to come out here and their fortunes were made. Apart from that, we have had in the Old Country official representatives who have exaggerated the position.

Mr. Marshall: We have had a few official misrepresentatives also.

Mr. McLARTY: That is so. I believe we had in England a Western Australian Government official who told the people that in some parts of Western Australia the soil was so rich that one could almost eat it—I am not sure he didn't say that one could eat it. While I agree that the motion has much to commend it, in view of the present state of things in the country I think it is too sweeping. I do not think it would be possible for the Commonwealth or the State to return to the Old Country all the migrants who wish to go. If we were to adopt the hon. member's suggestion we would have to charter a fleet of troopships to get those people back. I do not think it desirable that such a course should be taken. Surely the time will return when in a country like this which requires such great development, we shall need all the help we can get from able-bodied men. I am afraid if we were to get rid of those able-bodied men there would be considerable difficulty in securing the necessary help when the time comes. I cannot bring myself to think that this depression is going to be with us always, and I feel the time is not far distant when we shall require considerable labour. Of course, we have the work to do as it is; any amount of reproductive work is waiting, if only we could find the necessary money. In my own electorate I know of many reproductive works, and I have no doubt that other members could point to similar works in their respective electorates. Moreover, I am of

opinion that if we did send these people back to England by shiploads—and it would be by shiploads if we were to adopt the hon. member's suggestion—it would have a very grave effect in preventing us from restoring confidence at Home and abroad, as we are so anxious to do. I admit that at the present time our credit could not be very much worse. If anything was likely to make it worse, it would be the carrying of a plan such as this. At any rate I feel sure it would prolong the period for the restoration of confidence as we desire. I am afraid that the unemployment department and the camp at Blackboy Hill which we have created are likely to become permanent institutions in our midst, and that is anything but desirable. If the hon. member had suggested sending home migrants who were totally unsuitable for the conditions of this country, both physically and mentally, I should feel inclined to support him. There are migrants who are totally unfitted for the conditions of life here, and it is certain they must be a charge upon the State for all time. If it were possible to get them back to the country from which they came, I think we would be justified in sending them and I would favour the adoption of such a course. I listened with interest to the many cases of hardship amongst migrants quoted by the hon. member. We know they exist. Perhaps more cases exist amongst our own people. But I do not think he is justified in suggesting that the Government should send back to the Old Country every migrant who is out of work. There would be thousands of applications for passages, and the ultimate result would be that confidence in us would be less than exists at present. I regret that the motion should have been moved in its present form, because it is of such a sweeping nature, and I cannot give it my support.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.22]: I cordially support the motion. I do not know the Government's attitude towards it, as I was not in the House when the Minister spoke.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: None has spoken.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is a matter of great importance and one upon which the Government should not shirk expressing an opinion. We have been told by the Minister controlling unemployment that 90 per cent. of the inmates of Blackboy Hill camp are

migrants. We know that a great proportion of the unemployed in our cities are migrants, and that many of those people have been a charge on the State for the last five years. If in prosperous times they were unable to make good in Western Australia, there is no hope for them in the years to come. When Minister for Migration, I had much to do with migrants, and when Minister controlling group settlement I came into contact with great numbers of them. I think Sir James Mitchell used to say to those who criticised without possessing much knowledge of group settlement administration that the land was all right, the climate was all right, and the men were all right. True the land was all right, and the climate was all right, but I regret to say that many of the men were not all right. Consequently a lot of the expenditure on group settlement has been wasted because the human material was not of the type that would make successful settlers in this or in any other country. I have said this before, and I do not see any reason why I should not repeat the truth. Sir James Mitchell said the men were all right. He had his eye on their votes. Their votes may have been all right, but they should not influence us in this matter. We have always cherished the hope that this country would be settled by Britishers and that we would maintain the country 100 per cent. British. The migration schemes which have cost Australia such vast sums of money were organised to that end. We brought our great numbers of British migrants. I came into contact with many who migrated here before the war. Traverse the wheat belt and other portions of the State, and migrants of good type will be found. They may be met all over the State, and they are men who have succeeded. I am not going to say that great numbers of migrants are not good men; I am not going to say there is not a fair proportion of good migrants on the group settlements, but I am prepared to say that many of a type not suitable to assist in the development of Western Australia were brought here. It occurs to me that one of the real reasons for our troubles and for the heavy loan expenditure we have incurred is that we entered upon a migration policy without due regard to the class of men brought into the country. The result was that a great many men did not make good, and to-day they are on our hands and have been for the last five years, and probably will be so long as they remain in the State. It may be said that this is pretty

strong language, but from experience I know it is true. Who selected those people in the Old Country to come here. Members may be surprised to know that some of the settlers were mental cases. In one institution in this State are mental cases introduced from the Old Country. I forbear to name the institution because I have no wish to do it injury. But who had control of migration and permitted people of weak intellect to come here, adults as well as children? If we are going to get that type, what is going to happen to this community of 400,000 people? We cannot afford to introduce people who are not fit to assume their share of the burden. If these people want to go back, let them go back. They may succeed in the Old Country where they would not succeed here. If we induce migrants to come here and go on the land, we take upon ourselves a tremendous burden. They come here without a penny and we hold out the most glowing promises. I have in my possession a copy of a pamphlet issued by Sir James Mitchell regarding the Peel Estate. In it a settler is shown shovelling sovereigns.

Mr. Sampson: A Government artist prepared it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: It was issued under authority of the Premier.

Mr. Sampson: There was a picture of the Leader of the Opposition in it.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The migrants thought that all they had to do was to come here and, in a few years, they would have beautiful meadows like those of old England, and prosperity. The conditions of life here are altogether different from those in England. The migrant who has been brought here has in many cases been disinclined for the hard primitive toil that is associated with the development of this country, and has not been suitable for the work that lay ahead of him. In this country we cannot afford to spend thousands of pounds upon giving migrants the chance to make good on the land if they do not possess the necessary qualities. The only man we can welcome and help in his work of development is the man who can get down to hard primitive toil, and is willing to make sacrifices for the time being so that in the end he will have a comfortable home and a competence in his old age. The migrants I refer to have not been of that kind. They were told that in a few years they would be shovelling out sovereigns on the Peel Estate, when in

actual fact they found themselves only shovelling sand.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They may have thought they would be shovelling sovereigns out of the sand.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Amongst the settlers I found a great many who had but a vague appreciation of life in Western Australia. They did not propose to take on those early struggles that are requisite in order that they may earn a greater livelihood in after years. There were some fine people amongst them. I wish to bear witness to the fact, however, that the great majority were not of the requisite type. Too many of them wanted to have things made easy for them, and were not prepared to engage upon the real struggle for advancement. Great mistakes were made over the migration policy. When I met these people I asked myself who was responsible. We were told that a large number of people in the Old Country were of the same type as our forefathers who came here, and who, by living frugally and carefully, and paying their way built up homes for themselves and educated their children. In the last consignment of migrants who were brought out by the Premier, I venture to say not two-fifths were of the right type. If the development of the State depends upon that class of migrant this community will not remain 100 per cent. British, because we will never develop the country on those lines. We have given the migrant a wonderful opportunity. I have a very close knowledge of all we did for him. Although migrants may have been encouraged to come here by lurid promises, this community gave them a wonderful start off. We gave the migrant who joined the group settlements the best opportunity—apart from the mistakes that were made in the beginning by putting him on poor country—that any settlers in any other part of the world could have had. We nursed them and spent thousands of pounds upon the education of their children. We helped them to develop their properties, and with one stroke of the pen we wiped out thousands of pounds of indebtedness upon those properties and gave them a still further opportunity. When our parents went on the land they went on to virgin country. They did not know a Government existed except that they had to pay £1 per acre for their land. There were no railways and no educational facilities. They were 100 miles from the

nearest doctor and 50 from the nearest post office. In the virgin bush they carved out homes for their families. My mother has told me what she had to contend with when my father was out clearing his country. She was left in a hut that would be despised to-day, and with only an old musket in the corner for protection. The natives came out at night time, and we children used to cower with fear because the blacks were only half civilised and were dangerous. In the early days neither the grocer nor the baker called. In the State in which we lived we grew our own maize along the river banks and ground it every morning into flour. By frugal and careful living the old settlers paid their way and reared their families. They built up homes for themselves and bred the kind of men that have made Australia what it is to-day, and without whom it could not have been developed. If we have to spend thousands in bringing out people who will not face the future as they should, our prospects are hopeless. We want a type of man who will go upon the land and work hard, and who is not looking for a motor car. Many migrants bought a motor car before they could afford to buy bread, an entirely wrong outlook upon life. We have started at the wrong end. We have not got the type of man who is prepared to do as our forefathers did. What can we have better for the community than to set people out on the path of opportunity and enable them, by living frugally and carefully, and withal have supplies in abundance, ultimately to make a comfortable living? In the old days people had large families. My father died leaving 10 children alive, the eldest being 14 and the youngest 10 months old. My mother reared that family without getting a pennyworth of assistance from the Government. The old people prided themselves on bringing up their families frugally and carefully and on paying their debts. It is they who made the country. I have a great admiration for the old type of settlers. They may have been pretty primitive and not so up to date as people are to-day, but they possessed all the great qualities of frugality and honesty in industry which have made nations, and without which nations cannot prosper. We have to get the type of man who will be prepared for the real struggle of life with these objects in view. People have said to me, "You want to reduce the standard of living; you want people to

live on boiled wheat." My answer is that I want people to produce their own standard of living. I once had a talk with the Fontanini Brothers at Manjimup. If members go down there now they will see 100 varieties of primary production. One of the brothers said, "People talk about our standard of living being lower than yours. Your standard of living is judged by the things you pay for and ours by the things we produce for ourselves." We must have settlers who will produce for themselves, who will grow their own tucker, and who are not always looking to the Government for help. If we cannot get that type of settler migration will be a bad policy for this State. We have brought too many people to this country who do not possess the necessary qualities and we have this unfortunate result. Our best course is to send them back to their own homes, where they will be happier in their own environment, and where the conditions are more suitable to their mode of living. They can make good there but will never do so in Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon.

C. G. Latham—York) [10.39]: I raise no objection to the motion, but would point out it will be difficult to carry it into effect. The men referred to in the motion have come here by arrangement and under a three-party agreement between the Imperial Government, the Commonwealth Government and the State Government. The agreement cannot be broken by one party to it. That can only be done by an arrangement between the three parties, and it will not be an easy matter. I wish to reply to the statement of the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) that 90 per cent. of the migrants are at Blackboy. If such is the fact, it is quite natural. They are men who came out from the Old Country, men who have no homes here. Like many others, they are out of employment; and therefore they must go to Blackboy. I am not too sure, however, that a census, if taken, would not show that a great number of the men at Blackboy came here from the Eastern States. If it is agreed to send the migrants Home and the Government can find the money for the purpose, this State will have to furnish a considerable amount of finance for the repatriation of migrants who originally came not to this State, but to the Eastern States—men of a roving disposition who,

not being able to shovel gold from the soil of the Eastern States, came to Western Australia to see whether they could do so here.

Hon. M. F. Troy: There are settlers who left blocks with 15 cows on the Peel Estate.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I shall deal with those presently. However, I am not going to apologise for the migrants who came out here. I am not too sure, either, that the types of old settler to whom the member for Mt. Magnet referred has ceased to exist. We judge the migrants rather on the misfit than on the man who settled down to Australian life on conditions beneficial to the State. Let me also remind the House that it was not only Sir James Mitchell who brought migrants into Western Australia. During the last seven years a great many people have come here from Home. The falling-off has really been during the last 18 months. Now, however, migration has been closed down to such an extent that it is difficult even to nominate persons from the Old Country. I am inclined to believe that it is a wise step. I have already referred to the migration agreement. In 1923 an agreement was entered into between the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments; and that agreement represented an honest attempt, I think it will be admitted, to provide cheap money for land settlement purposes. Under the agreement Western Australia was to take a certain number of migrants, and in return this State was to get certain cheap moneys. The terms of the agreement were not found entirely satisfactory, and they were amended during the time when the member for Mt. Magnet was Minister for Mines. It was then provided that £6,000,000 should be made available conditionally on our taking 75,000 migrants, of whom 6,000 were to be placed on farms. Farms were to be allocated to families consisting of a man, his wife, and not fewer than two children. Western Australia took a great many migrants under those conditions, and if it were now proposed to repatriate a number of them the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments would probably call upon us to repay the money we borrowed under the agreement. There is the further consideration that for the first five years of the agreement we paid only one

per cent. interest on the money borrowed. During the next five years we were to pay one-third of the full rate, the remainder being borne by the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments in equal proportions. The migrants are here under an agreement which did not mean merely the absorption of a certain number of people from Home, but also the bringing of a great deal of fresh money into the State. That money has been invested in land settlement and public works. I shall not weary the House by repeating the conditions under which those public works were carried out. They are known, I believe, to most hon. members. However, for each £75 advanced for public works this State had to take one migrant. A great deal of money has been spent in public works under that scheme—railways, agricultural water supplies, roads and so forth. It would be highly unsatisfactory from the State's point of view if, upon repatriating the migrants, we were called upon to recoup the advances which have been made.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: But we have to repay them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but not at once as we may have to do if the agreement is cancelled. Again, the higher rate of interest does not start until after the lapse of 10 years. However, we would at once be called upon to repay the advances, or at least to pay the full rate of interest on them.

Hon. M. F. Troy: How many would you have to repatriate?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A very large number.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Some thousands?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: More than a thousand. No State has done more towards the establishment of migrants on farms than Western Australia has done, as the member for Mt. Magnet has said. While 2,899 migrants were settled on farms here, unfortunately the position to-day is that only 1,070 remain on those farms.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But we had 5,000 on group farms.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They were not all migrants.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The great majority were migrants.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. At the time of the Royal Commission on group settlement it was found that nearly 50 per

cent of the people on the farms were Australians.

Hon. M. F. Troy: But the migrants were always coming and going.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As the hon. member has pointed out, unfortunately some of those who went on the land were totally unsuited for it. Upon finding that their remuneration was much less than that of men employed on public works alongside them, they left the farm. I remember that at the time of the Royal Commission the main thought in my mind was that if the South-West was to be successfully settled as a dairying proposition, a dairying atmosphere must be provided. Side by side with these men on the land receiving 10s. per day, there were men on public works receiving much higher wages and working only 44 hours per week. That circumstance caused the settlers to think that they could secure for themselves much better positions by leaving their farms. Further, when sustenance ceased and they were put on dairying, which means exacting work for seven days per week, they thought their holdings quite a different proposition. Moreover, the remuneration for the work on the farms then became uncertain.

Hon. M. F. Troy: They got £22 10s. per month.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Let me also draw attention to the tremendous number of people who migrated here from the Eastern States. The amount of money involved in the migration scheme amounts to £1,369,000 for land settlement, and the total is £2,138,000. That is a fairly substantial amount of money. The debt represents part of the agreement just as much as do the migrants whom we brought to our shores. At the time the money became available, these people were absorbed; but when loan funds were suddenly cut off, and the extraordinarily liberal concessions and privileges granted to settlers ceased, our difficulties began.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The settlers were getting off all the time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but as they were going off, they were absorbed on public works. At that time we had money that enabled us to provide work that absorbed the men. To-day we have not that money, and many of these people are unemployed. It is not only Western Australia that is suffering; the whole of Australia is

suffering to-day. I doubt if there is any part of the world where the same disabilities with regard to unemployment are not in evidence. I do not know whether the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) thinks he would do these people a kindness if he were to send them back to Britain. The latest figures I have from the Old Country do not indicate that there is a Garden of Eden there at present. Unemployment is just as rampant and conditions are harder there than they are here, particularly for men who have not homes of their own. I have the latest figures I could obtain from the Minister for Labour's Gazette, and they were published on the 26th January last. The number of insured workers out of employment in England was 2,044,209. In addition, there were 600,000 uninsured men and women who were also out of work. The insured workers are those whose ages range from 16 to 65; the uninsured workers are those under 16 or over 65. Out of the total of 2,044,209 insured workers, 1,578,706 were males, and 465,503 were females. Those are the figures made available by the Minister for Labour in Great Britain. In the boroughs of England, Scotland and Wales, each with a population of over 100,000, there are over 580,577 out of employment. I looked up the particulars regarding the iron trades—I did not have time to look up any of the others—and I found that 46 per cent. of the trained men in that industry were out of employment.

Mr. Sleeman: There has been a considerable improvement since the time you refer to.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I wanted to be sure of the facts and I secured the latest figures available to me. There may have been an improvement since then, but the fact remains that the suggestion that we shall better the condition of the migrants if we return them to Britain will probably not prove to be correct.

Hon. M. F. Troy: At any rate, they would be in their own environment in their own country.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As a matter of fact, a great many of these people are proceeding Home and paying their own fares. During the past 10 months we have spent £318,968 in relief work. For much of that money we have secured some return in the form of labour done. While I admit it would be a better business proposition to

repatriate these people instead of making sustenance available to them, it must be remembered that we have obligations under the agreement we entered into with the Imperial and Federal Governments. When the migrants came out, each of those Governments contributed £11 towards the passage money and shared the remaining third on a fifty-fifty basis, the migrant himself accepting the responsibility for that portion of the passage money. I regret that there is a tremendous amount outstanding in connection with the advances made to migrants for fares. That money was merely a loan to them. Under the provisions of the agreement, if a migrant desired to leave Australia within two years, he had to pay the whole of the passage money. Repeated attempts have been made to repatriate people who have given an undertaking that they have work to go to when they reach Great Britain. In some instances the passage money has been paid by relatives. In every instance, however, great difficulty has been experienced in persuading the Commonwealth Government to grant passports to those people. Even if we desired to do so, the State Government could not repatriate the migrants because the control of the position is in the hands of the Federal Government. No one can leave the State without a passport, and certainly great difficulty is experienced in getting passports for migrants desirous of returning to England. I hope we shall not allow an atmosphere of despair to envelop us. I believe Western Australia, in common with the rest of the Commonwealth, will recover quickly from present-day conditions. I feel sure that when that time comes, industry will be able to absorb those now out of employment.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You do not believe that we have thrown up the sponge?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think some people have become slightly low-spirited. I am sure the member for Fremantle was in that condition when he moved his motion.

Mr. Sleeman: I do not think so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do.

Mr. Sleeman: If you mixed with the unemployed as I do, you would know.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think the hon. member mixes with the unemployed more than I do.

Mr. Sleeman: For every one you see, I meet thirty.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If that is so, I do not envy the hon. member.

Mr. Sleeman: I wish the Minister would meet them instead of me.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know why the hon. member should wish that.

Mr. Sleeman: There are some sorrowful cases.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And every Minister of the Crown has listened to them for the last 18 months. I do not think there is any member of Parliament who has not done so. The Government are desirous of relieving the position as far as possible with the money available. I do not think the idea that the migrants will secure relief when they return home is well founded. As a matter of fact, I often doubt, when these people come to me with an assurance that they have certain employment to go to when they return home whether they would be well advised to leave this State. Constantly letters are received from the Old Country urging us to impress upon the people locally that they should stay here because the conditions are worse in England. Those communications have come from responsible people, including Ministers of the Crown.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: We would say the same if we were advising them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I wish to give the House some information relating to the correspondence that has passed between the Commonwealth Government and myself regarding the repatriation of migrants who desire to return to the Old Country. On the 6th February last I wrote pointing out that from a Commonwealth point of view it would be wise to repatriate these individuals provided they could give an assurance that they had employment to go to when they reached England. The Prime Minister replied that he could not entertain the suggestion as the whole matter was bound up with the £34,000,000 agreement, under which certain moneys had been advanced to the States in consideration of the absorption of migrants and that even if funds were available to permit the Commonwealth Government to share with us in the provision of return passages for these people, it was certain that the British Government would not acquiesce unless action were taken to refund to that Government the equivalent of the amount contributed by them to the cost of the outward passages, plus a sum equivalent to the assistance granted to the States under the £34,000,000 agreement. The Prime

Minister added that the extent to which the Commonwealth Government could assist in respect of unemployment was limited to general co-operation with the States towards the alleviation of unemployment. It is a pity that although we entered into a three-party agreement, when it comes to the relief of distress and unemployment it becomes a one-party agreement. The Federal Government have not lived up to their responsibilities in providing relief for the unemployed. The amount made available has been very small indeed.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If they have made available any money at all, it is more than was done by their predecessors.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But it was not necessary before. Never previously has there been so many unemployed in Australia. As a matter of fact this has come on us like an avalanche. There was never any unemployment to speak of in the Bruce-Page period. There was never before such a demand on the exchequer for money for the unemployed as there is to-day. There was no necessity for it before.

Hon. A. McCallum: Yet you told the people of the State that there was.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows that I did nothing of the sort. If he does not know it, I tell him definitely that I did nothing of the sort. He must not blame me for the sins of others.

Hon. A. McCallum: I am not aware that you are the white lily of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not profess to be, but I am not going to be blamed for things for which I am not responsible. In any event I believe the remarks made, to which the hon. member must be alluding, were justified on the limited knowledge available.

Hon. M. F. Troy: We on this side know the position to-day. Do you mean to say that Sir James did not know the position then?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think that anybody outside the Government knew that the trust funds had all gone. I do not think the then Leader of the Opposition knew it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow any discussion of that nature under this motion.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very well, Sir. I think that in order to provide further relief for the unemployed migrants,

there ought to be a better spirit of co-operation between the Federal Government and the State. If the Federal Government would make available one-third more than we are spending from State funds, we could employ quite a lot of those people and so enable them to provide food and clothing for themselves. The total amount outstanding in passage money due by the people brought out is £120,980. That is owing to the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments and we have to collect it, although the Commonwealth Government now have an officer here trying to get it in. Since the 1st January of last year 1,390 migrants have returned to their home land from this State.

Mr. Sleeman: Were they returned by the State?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, they paid their own passage money. A little while ago I published a statement showing the numbers that were going out monthly. On general grounds we have no objection to the motion, but it cannot be carried out unless we could get the other two parties to agree. Much as the agreement may be distasteful to us, we shall have to honour it. When I was in the Eastern States last year, I took up the question with Commonwealth officers with a view to seeing if we could not make better arrangements to repatriate those migrants medically unfit. However we were unable to do anything with them.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Then you came back here and said you were going to start immigration again.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I never did. I will not allow such statements to go unchallenged. Possibly somebody else said it.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: No, you said it yourself.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I never made such a statement in my life. Do you think I have lost control of my senses?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You said it all right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, I may have expressed the hope.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You expressed the hope that shortly you would be able to restart immigration.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Do we not all hope for that time? At all events I do, for I know that no people will be brought out under any migration scheme until the State is prosperous enough to absorb them, and I hope absorb them more perman-

ently in industry than were the last lot brought out. To send these men Home it would cost £46 per head for passage money alone, and at least £14 per head would be required to give them necessary clothing, transport them to the seaboard, and give them some landing money. So it would mean £60 per head, or for a thousand of them, £60,000. The State cannot afford it, in addition to which it would be breaking an honourable agreement entered into between the Imperial Government, the Commonwealth Government and the Government of this State. I will not be one to break that agreement. I hope the House will give consideration to that before passing a motion asking the Government to repatriate those people.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 21st May, 1931.

Leave of absence	PAGE
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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Coverley (Kimberley) on the ground of urgent public business.

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th May.

HON. A. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [4.36]: When this subject was under discussion last week, the Attorney General, in a rather hysterical manner, issued a challenge to members on this side of the House. I could not quite understand the nature of the challenge, but it appeared to be that he was prepared to suffer some dire penalty if members on this side of the House were not prepared to support the second reading of the Bill. I wish to sum up the advantages and disadvantages of the Bill from our viewpoint, in order that it may be easy to decide what the attitude of members of the Opposition will be. From my reading of the Bill, the only possible improvement from the workers' viewpoint is that it makes insurance a State monopoly. On the other hand the disadvantages are that unless an accident disables the worker for 14 days, he will receive no compensation for the first four days. The Bill refers to the three days following the accident and does not include the day of the accident, and so, unless the disability continues over 14 days, the first four days will be at the worker's expense. The worker may be denied the right to have his own doctor; the medical allowance is to be reduced from £100 to 50 guineas; the age at which a worker's child shall be entitled to the 7s. 6d. a week is to be reduced from 16 to 14, and there is a further provision that the child must be wholly dependent upon the father or else it gets nothing. The worker may be directed to proceed to Perth for treatment and no provision is made for travelling expenses, for the expenses of an attendant if the worker is blind, or for expenses for attention if the injured man is a stretcher case and unable to look after himself. The worker may be compelled to submit to an operation against his will or forfeit all compensation. The worker is also to be compelled to make a choice between the First and Second Schedules before he knows the extent of his injuries, and he may be denied control of the expenditure of any lump sum payment awarded him and the right of objection to any lump sum settlement being registered in the court. The following reductions in the amounts payable under the Second Schedule are proposed by the Bill:—For