

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 22nd August, 1934.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill (No. 1) £2,200,000.

QUESTIONS (2)—TAXATION.

Government Contracts.

Hon. R. G. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is he aware that the Commissioner of Taxation is collecting financial emergency tax at the rate of 4d. in the pound and hospital tax at the rate of 1½d. in the pound on the gross amount of Government contracts? 2, Under what section of the Act or Acts is this being done? 3, If no provision is made in the Financial Emergency Tax Act or the Hospital Tax Act for collecting on the gross amount of Government contracts, what authority has the Commissioner for so doing?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Hospital Fund Act—Section 9, subsection 3, and Regulation 37; Financial Emergency Act—Section 9, subsections 2 and 3, and Regulation 35. 3, Answered by No. 2.

Mining Leases.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Where the sale of a mining lease is effected by a prospector, either for money or shares, do the Government tax the proceeds of such sale? 2, If so, on what basis is the income assessed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, Section 31, subsection (14) of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act provides:—Where a person derives income from a mining tenement, as defined by "The Min-

ing Act, 1904, or acquired under "The Mining Act Amendment Act, 1920," worked by him or on his behalf, he shall not be liable to pay income tax on such income until it has exceeded the total amount of his capital expenditure on such mining tenement incurred in producing his income, but such person shall be assessed for income tax on the income received in excess of such capital expenditure by the taxpayer. The definition of "Income" includes profits, gains, rents, interest, salaries, wages, allowances, pensions, stipends, charges and annuities. It matters not whether the income is received in cash or shares, but where shares are received their value is determined according to the then marketable value, that is, the value that the taxpayer may receive for them sold on the open market.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. GEORGE (Metropolitan) [4.37]: There is not much in the Speech to reply to. It seems that whatever Government are in power, there is always a good deal of stonewalling. If the Nationalists are in office, the stonewalling comes from the Labour side, and when Labour are in office, it comes from the Nationalist or the Country Party. The present Government have done their level best to meet the unemployment situation. They came into office about 18 months ago, when the outlook was particularly gloomy. I would pay a tribute to the Minister for Employment for the splendid work he has done. Prior to his taking Ministerial office, he was a private member, and I worked shoulder to shoulder with him for the unemployed. I can, therefore, speak with authority concerning the good work he has done. The thanks of the community are due to him. No man has done more to relieve the position than he has. I disagree with him on one point. Any man who applies for a job, whether as carpenter, bricklayer or in some other capacity, should belong to a union. It is in his interests to do so. I must, however, condemn the Government for their action in endeavouring to compel men to belong to unions, and to one in particular that is not registered in this State, when such action is taken for

political purposes. The Government would be wise to drop that policy. If the Nationalist Party were to do that sort of thing, Labour would be very much up in arms. I am with the Government in their desire to do everything possible for the working man, but they should allow him to have a mind of his own regarding the question of linking up with a union. The principle is wrong, and men should not have it rammed down their throats that they must join a union. No one thought when the Government took office that the gloomy state of affairs then existing would alter as quickly as it has done. I am optimistic about Western Australia, and can see a silver lining. I am positive that before many months have gone, there will be very few unemployed in this State.

Hon. R. G. Moore: We all hope so.

Hon. J. GEORGE: Things are looking better already. The Minister for Industries has done splendid work for Western Australia in his campaign on behalf of the purchase of local products. No doubt we can greatly improve the position ourselves if we can induce everyone in the community to buy the many local products that are available, instead of similar goods that are dumped here from the Eastern States. Manufacturers have had an uphill fight, and we should help them as much as we can. I am glad that the gold mining industry has progressed so satisfactorily, and I trust that its expansion will continue for many years. Its prosperity is not only of advantage to Western Australia but to Australia in general. While I recognise the importance of that industry, I unhesitatingly claim that agriculture is the backbone of the State to-day. Whatever we can do for the man on the land and, in fact, for all engaged in primary industries, will be of advantage to the State. I trust the present increased price of wheat will be maintained, and that prices will reach a still higher level. I hope the Federal Government will carry out their announced intention to extend reasonable assistance to the farmers, and the State Government, too, should see to it that they keep the farmers on their holdings. We cannot afford to allow farmers to go off the land. Mr. Thomson said he remembered when wheat prices were as high as 6s. 8d. per bushel. I remember wheat being sold in the railway station yard for 12s. a bushel, and

I was one of those who had to pay that price. If I had continued paying so much, I would soon have been in the Bankruptcy Court. I sold out the business, and have nothing to do with it now. We should always remember that whatever we do for the farmer, we do for ourselves. I do not know much about the bulk handling system but if it will mean the saving of 2d. or 3d. per bushel to the farmers, it behoves us to give our adherence to the system.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is the proper attitude.

Hon. J. GEORGE: Much has been said about the Agricultural Bank. If the statements I have heard are correct, and there has been too much political interference with the trustees, we should see to it that those officials receive justice. If a Government appointed the three trustees to carry out certain duties, but did not give them a free hand, successive Governments, because of their interference, should accept full responsibility. I stand for justice for all, and this House should see to it that the trustees receive a fair deal. I congratulate the Government upon their intention to instal a deep sewerage system for the metropolitan area. Four or five years prior to my joining the City Council 30 years ago, the Government of the day submitted three schemes to the council asking which scheme was considered best for the city. One scheme provided for an ocean outfall, a second for the installation of a deep sewerage system, and the other for the installation of septic tanks. The late Dr. Haynes was a member of the council at the time and was a strong advocate for the septic tank system. He told the council that it was the best scheme they could go in for, and that he had seen the system in operation in different countries in other parts of the world. He told them that the effluent from the tanks was perfectly clear and that he had himself drunk some of it.

Hon. J. Cornell: He should have been put on the prohibited list.

Hon. J. GEORGE: Dr. Haynes also said to the councillors, "I invite you to visit Government House, where a septic tank has been installed, and you can see the results for yourselves." The members of the council decided to go there. The late Councillor Stinton, remembering that Dr. Haynes had said he had drunk the water, thought he might do so again and put a glass in his

pocket for that purpose. When they inspected the installation at Government House, Dr. Haynes did not attempt to drink the water there and Councillor Stinton asked him about taking a glass of the effluent. Dr. Haynes replied that he had not a glass with him, but when Councillor Stinton produced the glass, Dr. Haynes did drink some of the effluent. Soon afterwards he left; the water did not agree with him.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He is dead.

Hon. J. GEORGE: The Government of the day decided to instal the septic tank system, but at the time I thought it was wrong to do so. The ocean outfall system, I considered, would be the best and though it might be more costly, it would be cheaper in the long run. It was pointed out, too, that Melbourne had the deep sewerage system and the suggestion was that it should be installed here as well. The contention was raised, however, that the system would prove a menace to public health. Personally, I believe in doing a thing properly or else I am better content to leave it alone. In the circumstances, I congratulate the Government upon what they intend to do in the interests of the metropolitan area. The intention of the Government to instal the deep sewerage system should appeal to every right-thinking man. I want to make it clear that, although I am a Nationalist, whatever Government may be in power will always have my support if I think they are acting properly. The people of the Metropolitan Province sent me to this Chamber to look after their interests, and I will carry out that duty to the best of my ability. We cannot expect everyone to be satisfied. The man who tries to do that is a jolly fool. I do not intend to attempt to satisfy everyone, but I will act in accordance with my conscience and vote as I think fit. I congratulate the Minister for Works upon the reclamation of the river foreshore. It has been Mr. McCallum's pet scheme and he has carried out a great undertaking. I differ from Mr. Baxter's view that the City Council should have carried out the work, because I consider it a national undertaking. The City Council have spent thousands on the reconstruction of Mount's Bay-road, and in beautifying the city generally. It may be news to Mr. Baxter that the City Council agreed to pay £500 a year for three years towards interest and sinking fund

costs provided the Government spent not less than £12,000 per annum. The council also agreed to review their contribution at the end of that period. Payments were made in 1929, 1930 and 1934 which totalled £1,500, as their contribution to interest and sinking fund charges on money that was expended on this work. The City Council are willing to continue those payments. While the Government are prepared to continue this national work, the City Council will help the Government because the results will be in the interests of the city. The Duke of Gloucester will visit Perth shortly and as the Royal Family are sporting people, I dare say His Royal Highness will be asked to visit one of the finest trotting grounds in the world. When he goes there he will see the river and will probably ask what we have across the water. Will he be told that we have installed septic tanks practically in the heart of the City? Another matter on which I would like to say a few words is that of secession. Without fear of contradiction I can declare that if we had not entered the Federation, Western Australia to-day would be a much bigger and more important State than it is. I trust that the delegation will soon be appointed to place the Case for Secession before the Imperial authorities, and if it is properly submitted I am sure it will be sympathetically received. I am not blaming the Government altogether for the delay, though they have been lukewarm and have dilly-dallied too long. If anything is worthwhile it should be worth doing well. In my opinion the delegation should consist of the Premier, or in his place the Minister for Works, as representing the Government, and also Mr. Latham and Mr. Keenan. The Crown solicitor should also accompany the delegates.

Hon. H. Seddon: What about Mr. Watson?

Hon. J. GEORGE: And Mr. Watson. It is all very well for people to say that this will cost a good deal of money, but as I have just said if there is anything worth having, it is worth paying for, and it will be a great thing if we could succeed in breaking away from the bonds we are in. If we had not entered Federation, we could have held our own with the Eastern States. We might by this time have had a population of about a million people, and the State would have been occupying a position

on which its people would be proud. We must do our best to get out of the Federation if it is at all possible. If we cannot, then we shall continue to be under the thumb of the Federal Government who, at all times, will be able to do just what they like with us. Why should we hand over the reins of government to people who are thousands of miles away when we have many here quite capable of carrying out the destiny of the State? I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in-reply.

HON. E. H. ANGELO (North) [5.5]: Although I did not have the honour of sitting in this House under your presidency, Sir, in the earlier part of the year, I should like to join with other members in expressing my pleasure at seeing you back in the State in the very best of health. Long may it continue. As a North-West member, I specially desire to thank you for the great interest you have always taken in the North, and for the contributions you have made in the Press in the Old Country regarding the North. It shows that in this Chamber we have a sympathiser right at the head of affairs. This has emboldened me to address most of my remarks this evening to the North-West, but there are two matters of current interest about which I should like to say a word or two. The first is that just touched upon by Mr. George, namely the delegation that is to be appointed to present the Case for Secession to the Imperial authorities. I trust the Government will urge the Premier to accompany the delegation. It is said that the Premier is not in sympathy with secession. I do not care. I consider this is the opportunity of getting our wrongs righted. Whether we shall get Secession or not, I do not know, but here is a glorious opportunity of presenting our disabilities right at the fountain head of the Empire, and we want the best men it is possible to send Home to place our Case before the Imperial Government. Is there anybody in the State that knows Western Australia better than does Mr. Collier? Is there anyone in the State who knows our finances better? And is there anyone who can debate the question better? Therefore, the Government should do their utmost to persuade Mr. Collier to go Home so that if secession is not granted to us he will be there to try to get for us the next best thing.

Hon. H. Seddon: Do you think he could do it?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: He could go closer to it than anyone else.

Hon. H. Seddon: But he and his party are pledged to unification.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I do not care to what his party are pledged. I consider that his personal opinions and his love for Western Australia would override all party considerations. At any rate, it would be a big relief to me and to many other people in the State if it were known that Mr. Collier had consented to go Home. He went to England a few years ago on a far less important mission. On this occasion he should be accompanied by Mr. Latham, the Leader of the Opposition. As to other members of the delegation, I am not going to express an opinion. Certainly the Premier and Mr. Latham should be two of the members. The Government have a mandate to try and get secession. If they cannot get us exactly what the State wants, they can try to get for us the next best thing. The second matter on which I should like to say a word or two is to me distressing. I join issue with the members who have referred to the attitude of the State school teachers. The words of a sub-leader in the "West Australian" a few mornings ago filled the bill exactly. They were—

It will be difficult to imagine any action more futile or irritating to public opinion and more childish and more calculated to defeat its own purpose.

In my young days I was brought up to honour and respect school teachers. How can we expect the children of to-day to do that when the teachers have taken up the attitude to which reference has been made? We were told last night by Mr. Hall that one of their grievances was that the teachers were not paid their tram fares when taking the children about. Mr. Parker will bear me out when I say that in our school days the teachers used to take us to many functions and out of their own pockets pay for oranges and lemonade for us. They would never have thought of grumbling at having to pay a twopenny fare when called upon to do so when they had children under their control. On the subject of the North, I regret there is nothing in the Speech which gives any indication of the Government's policy regard-

ing the serious development of that part of the State. Certainly the reference to the North-West is a little longer than usual, but what we in the North and what every member of this Chamber, as well as every member of Parliament, wants to know is, what is going to be the ultimate policy regarding the North? Something must be done because the position as it is at the present time cannot be permitted to continue. It is too serious a menace to the future welfare of Australia. It is not a matter that should affect Mr. Miles or Mr. Holmes or myself as North-West members; it affects every member of this House, because if the North is open to invasion what will be the result to the South? It is only by population and development that we can hope to retain the North. I am not going to blame the present or any other Government because all have shown the same want of interest in the North. The fault lies with every Government, but something will have to be done. Sixteen years ago I heard a Cabinet Minister in another place say, "We will attend to the North in 25 years time; it will be time enough when we have developed the South to develop the North." That may be a policy that a good many may consider sufficient if we had Australia to ourselves without any big nations close handy and ready to grab anything we did not want in the way of land. But can we afford to wait? Every year it is becoming more and more a menace, and more and more serious. Nothing can prove facts like figures and I should like to quote a few which have been supplied by the Government Statistician in compliance with a verbal request from me. He points out that north of the 26th parallel, which would be just below Shark Bay, the population in 1910 was 6,320 and on the 30th June, 1933, it was 6,336. The latter figures, however, were taken whilst the Wyndham Meat Works were operating and that fact would account for perhaps 300 people. This shows that the population of the whole of the North has gone down in the last 23 years. The statistician's note adds that the population figures recorded at the census taken last year show a decline of 980 compared with those of 1911 in the districts of Hall's Creek, West Kimberley, Broome, Roebourne, Port Hedland and Nullagine, and an increase of 996 in the districts of Wyndham, Marble Bar, Ashburton, Table Land, Carnarvon and

Upper Gascoyne. But it is not in population only that decreases are shown. In 1910 there were 27,000 horses there and now we have only 18,000. In 1910 there were 653,000 cattle and now the total is 546,000. A little brighter figure is that relating to sheep which show an increase from 2,271,000 to 3,137,000. This is due to the amount of money spent in the importation of good rams, and the effect has been also to improve the quality and quantity of the wool. We can show an increase of over 100 per cent. in the weight of wool. Whereas in 1910 we shipped 12,593,000 lbs. weight of wool, last year we shipped 24,769,000 lbs. But unfortunately that is the only industry which has shown any improvement. Of pearls, for example, we produced £68,000 worth in 1910; but the value fell to £6,171 last year. Of pearl shell we sent away 1,227 tons in 1910, as against only 733 tons last year; and the comparative values show even worse, the value in 1910 having been £206,000, as against £97,000 last year. I am sorry to have so distressing a tale to tell; but it will, I hope, make hon. members agree that Mr. Holmes was right when saying last night that the North has good cause for complaint against the Governments of Western Australia. It was asserted last night that Mr. Holmes had been retailing some new complaints to the Council. One hon. member asked him, "Why did you not tell us about these things before?" Although I have not been in this Chamber long, I can safely say that for the past 20 years I have known from "Hansard" and the Press that Mr. Holmes has been voicing the complaints of the North-West in this House. I do not think any member representing a Northern constituency in another place has neglected any opportunity to lodge complaints and to ask the Government of the day for more consideration. The year before last the then Government considered that some action must be taken; and Mr. Davy, who was then Attorney General and Minister for the North-West, was most anxious to do what he could. At the same time he acknowledged that he knew very little of the North-West, and accordingly he appointed an advisory committee to meet and consider everything bearing on North-West questions and then put forward to the Government concrete suggestions as to how the North-West might be developed. The committee consisted of the three members

representing the North in this Chamber and of the four members representing North-West constituencies in another place—and let me say here that out of the four Assembly members two were supporters of the present Government—of three representatives of the Pastoralists' Association, namely Mr. John Forrest, Mr. J. W. Durack, and Mr. J. L. Stewart, gentlemen with knowledge of the far North, the middle North, and the southern portion of the North; of the then president of the Perth Chamber of Commerce, Mr. De Rose; of Mr. B. Rosenstamm and Mr. J. Charles. Mr. Davy held the opinion that a little business knowledge might help the committee in their deliberations. The committee sat for about three months—I suppose on two or three days a week. They went through all the reports obtainable from the Government's expert advisers, and took a considerable amount of evidence on every subject pertaining to the North. Eventually they submitted their report; and a copy of that document was laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly and, I presume, on the Table of this House. But unfortunately, soon after the report had been made available, the then Government went out of office. I do not know who may possibly be to blame for it, but the report was never printed. It is not a large document, and would not have cost much to print, assuming that the evidence was not printed. I certainly consider that the report itself, which contains about a hundred different recommendations, with notes setting out how the recommendations have been arrived at, should be printed if only to afford members of Parliament an opportunity of knowing a little more about the North. Just before the biennial election I had 1,000 copies of the report printed and sent a copy to every elector. I have a few copies left, and may be able to look them up for any hon. member interested to read the report. I am glad to be able to say that some of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee have been carried out; but effect has not yet been given to other recommendations, almost as important, if not more so. I strongly recommend to the various members of the Ministry a perusal of the report. Now I should like to tell hon. members briefly of my own personal observations during two or three trips which I made to the North during the biennial elec-

tion and since. Perhaps I may be able to suggest to the Chief Secretary some matters which admit of improvement. Last night Mr. Holmes took hon. members on a trip from the northern part of the North-West to the southern part. I should like to take them on the return journey. The first port of call in the province will be Shark Bay. Unfortunately, Shark Bay has been dependent for many years on pearling, and the pearling industry is at a low ebb. The price of shell has fallen considerably, and pearls are practically unsaleable. However, the Shark Bay people are self-contained and help each other. To eke out an existence—and that is all they are getting at the present time—they have gone in for fishing. I would like members of the Ministry to see some of the excellent work which is being done in a small way at Shark Bay. One of the pearlers there has a cold store with a capacity of about ten tons, and he is giving employment to about half the pearlers at Shark Bay. In addition to the consignment of fish to the metropolitan market, a new little industry has been started. The pearlers in question are smoking some of the local fish, and the product is excellent. It can be purchased in the metropolitan area, and I consider it equal to, if not better than, some of the imported smoked fish. In addition, there is beautiful whiting in the North; and these men are putting up fresh whiting in attractive deal boxes and sending them to Melbourne, where good prices are being obtained. If this can be done in a small way, why cannot it be done in a big way? Owing to the contour of the land at Shark Bay, there is something like 400 miles of beach within a radius of 70 miles of any given point. Surely nothing better could be found in the way of a site for a fish or canning factory, or other means for putting up fish. All I want to say to the Government is that every encouragement should be given to these people.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Private enterprise is doing this.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes; but the Government can help in a way that will not involve any expenditure of money. This is the recommendation made by the North-West Advisory Committee on that point—

It is suggested that the Government should make every effort to give publicity, in the right quarters, of the great opportunities which exist of developing an industry which

should mean a great deal to the State, and that the Fisheries Department should prepare a carefully-worded brochure, illustrated where possible, for distribution. It would perhaps be wise if the Agent General were requested to give full publicity to the contents of such a pamphlet and get in touch with persons having the necessary knowledge and capital, who might be induced to develop this industry. It is understood that such people may be found on the east coasts of Scotland and England, where the fishing industry is carried on to a great extent. Every inducement should be offered to persons willing to establish fisheries on our coasts, such as long tenure of leases and concessions, nominal license fees, and the provision of cheap transport, where possible.

Some time ago I wrote to a South African fish company which is doing wonderfully well, some of its products being sold here. Unfortunately, however, I was just too late. A reply came to the effect that the company's accumulated profits, amounting to £160,000, had been expended on a new whaling industry in the Antarctic. The letter went on to say, however, that when a little more profit had been accumulated, the company would certainly come along to Western Australia with a view to operating here. I am sorry that so far we have not heard anything further from the company. However, there is an industry worth developing. The waters of the North are teeming with fish, and here we are importing tens of thousands of pounds worth of tinned and preserved fish for our own consumption.

Hon. T Moore: Inferior stuff, too.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: We will set sail again. The next port is Carnarvon. Here, I am glad to say, we have arrived at a bright spot of the North-West. The town of Carnarvon is quite buoyant. I have to add that it is the only northern port buoyant at the present time. Its buoyancy is the result largely of the introduction, and the successful development on a commercial basis, of the tropical fruit industry; and this is due to the fact that the Government some years ago gave us an expert. I give that expert every credit for the good work that he did, and I am glad to be able to say that we have another good tropical expert at the present time. The report tells us that we shipped down 3,613 cases of bananas during last year. I am not exaggerating when I say that we shall have 20,000 cases during the coming year, and within the next three or four

years, 50,000 cases. Unfortunately, the marketing of our products has not been satisfactory, owing to want of knowledge, but that of course is only a temporary handicap, and before long we shall be able to market as good bananas as we have been getting from Java, but they will be retailed in Perth at 9d. or 1s. a dozen, instead of 2s. and 2s. 6d. To show how quickly this industry can be made to pay, I may say I regret that when, years ago, I implored Sir James Mitchell to let us have one or two groups of settlers up there, he refused. Had he agreed, what a different tale there would have been to tell! I am interested in a little plantation started in July of last year. It took until October to get the wells down, the windmills and tanks erected, and the land ploughed up. The partner in charge put in 1,200 suckers, and six weeks ago they were all nine feet high, while 1,000 bunches of fruit were hanging down. The expert tells us we shall have 1,200 bunches for sale this year, and he thinks he can guarantee 4,000 bunches next year. Mr. Miles has just reminded me of Mr. Kent, who started with six suckers five years ago. He followed expert advice and has brought up his plantation to a most profitable proposition to-day. He has thousands and thousands of banana palms, and he is sending away 700 or 800 cases a year. At present a bunch is worth 13s. or 14s., but later on we shall be quite satisfied if we get 5s. or 6s. Then pineapples will be even more profitable, because they can be canned, and so one can grow as much as he likes. Two or three years ago I met an American business man in Sydney. He told me he had been sent to Queensland to order 300,000 cases of tinned pineapples, but that he could not get them. He declared the Queensland tinned pineapples were far superior to those of Honolulu. Amongst our growers at Carnarvon we have several Queenslanders, and they assure me that in Queensland a certain amount of sugar is grown under irrigation. If that be so, why cannot we grow it here? I should like the Government to suggest to our tropical expert that experiments might be made in this direction. It may mean that some day we shall be sending sugar to Queensland. Australia is importing every year £12,000,000 worth of products than we can grow in the North-West. That is the opinion of our ex-

perts. I ask, is it not worth while to develop those industries? The good land on the Gascoyne River goes for 90 miles on both sides of the stream, so it will be seen that our present development may be only a preliminary canter compared with what we shall have later on. Of course, we have not sufficient water for complete development of the whole area, but if the river—it is 600 miles in length—were to be dammed, the land could be irrigated on each side for 90 miles. Years ago Mr. Moody, the Fruit Commissioner, came to Carnarvon and, on his return, reported to the Government that some day a quarter of a million people would be found living on the Gascoyne. My own idea is that some day we shall be sending fat lambs from the Gascoyne. Mr. Hampshire paid a visit there some years ago, and recommended to the Government of the day that 600 dairy farms should be established there and a butter factory erected. But before we develop the dairying industry any further, we must have a proper market, whereas there is always a market for fat lambs.

Hon. L. Craig: You must change the breed of the lambs.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, I agree with that.

Hon. L. Craig: You had better stick to wool.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, while wool will stick to us, but when it falls down in price we have to think of other things, and fat lambs are selling all over the world.

Hon. J. Nicholson: If you keep on, you will beat the secessionists.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: One possible benefit from secession would be that we might get another State up there, under the administration of the Dominion of Western Australia. I have a request for the Chief Secretary: there is big work to be done in my province in experiments with fodders. We have an excellent man as tropical adviser in Carnarvon, but he has not anywhere in which to carry out experiments. The Government have a very good 50-acre block of land, and I recommend that they let the tropical adviser establish an experimental farm there. It would cost but little, only the erection of a house and one windmill, and it would give the officer an opportunity to experiment with many products that might be of benefit to the North. At present he is experimenting by the goodwill of

some of the farmers, but that is not fair to the other planters, and in any case the planters cannot be expected to take as keen an interest in the experiments as the tropical adviser would do if they were under his eye all the time. It would not cost more than about £1,500 to establish this experimental farm, and it would provide a place where the tropical adviser could give lectures to the planters. The next place I come to on this journey is Maud's Landing. Here at one time we had a very fine whaling enterprise carried out by Norwegians, but at present the big factory is lying idle and seriously depreciating. Still, there are whales there, and I saw a good many the other day as we came down the coast. After the failure of the Western Australian company, a committee went into the subject, and in 1925 the Norwegians recommenced operations, and carried on profitably. At the end of the 1928 season, the Government apparently conceived the idea that the time was ripe to levy a royalty of £1 per whale.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That was the Collier Government. Mr. Kitson introduced the legislation which frightened those people away.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: That levy was equal to £1,000 per annum. A further imposition placed on the company was the putting of Government inspectors on the whaling vessels. In consequence of this and other restrictions the company closed down the works and transported their ships to the Antarctic. No whaling has been done on the North-West coast since then. The committee recommended that in view of the benefits derived by the State in the way of taxation, the employment of men and the purchase of goods, every encouragement should be given to this industry, including the reduction of the license fee, and that no legislation likely to hamper the industry should be introduced.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I think they have reduced the license fee.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: At all events, the whaling station is still idle. The next port we touch at is Onslow. I am glad the Government are replacing the jetty, for without it the position is hopeless, since unless the pastoralists can get rid of their surplus stock, big losses will be involved. The next port is Cossack. I went to Cossack in 1887. At that time there were 2,000 or 3,000 people making their homes there during the

lay-up season. Seven miles away is Roebourne, where there were once a thousand permanent residents. To-day the population of Cossack could be counted on two hands, while Roebourne has not more than 150 or 160 people. I counted the sites of 37 houses which I had seen when I was up there previously, but there is no sign of them to-day. Where there were five hotels, there is to-day but one. The Government buildings are going to wrack and ruin, and the Residency has been propped up by some bush timber.

Hon. T. Moore: What would you suggest be done there?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Give them the jetty. I am not talking about the stations which were there 47 years ago and have since been greatly improved; but there is no outlet for their stock now. That is the trouble. Unless the surplus stock can be shipped from Cossack, it will be a poor lookout for the industry.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The pastoralists in that part have been eight years without a jetty.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I need not mention Port Hedland to any extent beyond saying that I am delighted that there is a good deal of activity in the mining industry. I hope my colleague Mr. Miles will be able to tell us a little of that later on. The next port of call going north is Broome. Here, again, the effects of the depression are seen. Whereas a few years ago there were something like 300 or 400 pearling boats operating from Broome, I do not think there are more than 50 now. The price of shell has decreased considerably, and, as I said of Shark Bay, pearls are practically unsaleable. The question arises, what can be done? The Government should urge the Commonwealth to cut out all duties on the commodities those people require.

Hon. A. Thomson: Make the ports of the North free.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am speaking particularly of Broome. The Commonwealth imposed a duty on rice, which is the staple food of the Japanese and the Malays engaged on the pearling boats. That will probably mean £5 or £6 a year to each boat.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I think it works out at £3 per ton of shell.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I was wondering whether we could do without Japanese div-

ers. A big question to Broome is what is to be done with the half-castes? I should like to see experiments made to ascertain whether we cannot teach half-castes to do the diving. The aborigines were excellent for the native diving practised years ago. They did not seem to feel the pressure of the water at depth as do Europeans, and I do not know whether they might not also be made useful. At any rate, if we could use the half-castes, we would be killing two birds with one stone. What is needed is someone to teach them the art of diving. It would not be fair to ask any pearler to do it, but perhaps the Government could assist someone who could teach them. If we once got the scheme started, it might have a big effect.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Who teaches the Japanese?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I think diving comes to them naturally. Within about 16 hours' run of Broome is the port of Derby. West Kimberley is also in a depressed condition owing to the low price for cattle. The committee investigated this matter exhaustively, took quite a lot of evidence, and made the following recommendation—

In the opinion of this committee it is very essential that chilling and freezing works should be erected at Derby, and that the Government should negotiate with the West Kimberley pastoralists with a view to the establishment of such works.

We do not suggest that the Government should undertake the construction of meat works; we ask them to negotiate with the pastoralists to work out some comprehensive scheme. Two notes attached to the recommendation were as follows:—

From the consensus of opinions placed before your committee, it would appear that considerable relief to the pastoralists of West Kimberley would be given by the erection of chilling and freezing works at the port of Derby. It is claimed that such works would not only assist the industry in that portion of the Kimberleys, but would also ensure a more satisfactory supply of beef to the metropolitan area.

Stress was laid on the saving that such works would mean in the present loss through mortality, wastage of condition and deterioration through bruising, caused by shipping cattle on the hoof.

Yesterday the "West Australian" reported that 80 out of a shipment of 400 head of cattle had died on the way from Derby to Fremantle. That was due to no fault of the

owner or of the ship. The stock had had to travel through a tick-infested area. Had there been works at Derby, the bullocks would have been rushed over the infected area and killed on the spot, and there would have been practically no loss.

Suggestions were made by some of the representatives of cattle stations in the West Kimberleys, who gave evidence, that if a sufficiently long tenure of their leases were granted, it might be possible to arrange the necessary finance to establish and operate meat works, and your committee strongly urges the Government to make investigations and give every encouragement to any such proposal.

I was glad to read in the "West Australian" that a small party, including Mr. Davis, a cattle owner, and Captain Andrew Mills, who knows King's Sound very well, are selecting a site for such works. They propose to get into touch with the Government. I urge the Government on behalf of those people, and for the sake of the future of the North, to give them every encouragement. If any help can be afforded by granting land or financial assistance, I hope it will be forthcoming. The last port on the coast is Wyndham. There again the cattle industry is in a very bad way. We were told last night that owners are getting £2 16s. per head for their cattle. They are better off than those sending to Darwin, who are getting only 30s. per head. However, £2 16s. is too little. I think, however, there is a good future ahead of Wyndham and the East Kimberley. From the time we were satisfied that chilled beef could be landed in satisfactory condition in the Home markets, the signs appeared more hopeful.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That has been proved.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, and it is the only ray of hope we have for the cattle industry. The Government should assist in every way by getting the beef, on its arrival Home, sold to the best advantage. It is all nonsense to say that people will not eat chilled beef. A good percentage of the beef consumed in Perth is chilled, because it is kept in cold storage in butchers' establishments for two or three weeks. Chilling, in fact, improves the meat. I feel sure that chilled beef will give Wyndham a big future. I should like to remind the Government that the State Grants Commission announced that they were allowing £600,000 to Western Australia including a sort of allocation of £200,000 for the development of the North.

I do not know that we in the North have seen any of the £200,000 in the past, but the Government of the day might take the hint given by the Commission and see if they cannot set aside that sum as a special grant to aid the development of the North. I do not agree with the findings of the State Grants Commission, but I thought the one bright spot in it was the mention of £200,000 as a fair sum to be allocated to the North. As to mining generally, the committee made several recommendations, of which members should be informed, as follows:—

Your committee is of the opinion that a thoroughly organised campaign of prospecting the various auriferous areas of the North should be entered upon under the following conditions:—

Prospecting assistance to the extent of at least 20s. per week should be made available to approved prospectors for the purpose of purchasing provisions. Assistance is of no use unless granted in advance for from one month to six months, according to the locality to be prospected.

A full-time geologist should be appointed for the North-West and Kimberley district.

The provision of suitable batteries for the Hall's Creek and Nullagine district.

The carting subsidy for gold bearing ore to be continued and, where advisable, increased.

The Government should not lose sight of the development of the Yampi Sound iron ore deposit, and, in the interests of national development, the great possibilities should again be brought under the notice of the Imperial Government.

On application special attention should be given to supplying pumping plants for mines now lying idle through the rise of water.

Pumping plants would make it possible for certain payable leases to be brought immediately into a state of productivity.

The report sets out the recommendations of a former State Mining Engineer (Mr. Montgomery) regarding the mining lease conditions, and I ask members interested in mining to consider them. Many recommendations were made, but it is impossible for me to deal with any more except the last, which I regard as the most important recommendation placed before the Government by the committee. It read—

That the Government should do its utmost to induce the Imperial Government to assist in the development of that portion of the Western Australian territory north of the 26th parallel of latitude until such time as it was brought up to such a state of efficiency that it would be advisable to create a new State. It is believed that the Imperial Government could, with the aid of chartered com-

panies or other means, bring about such conditions as would enable it to people and develop the territory.

We did not recommend that the North should be handed over to the Commonwealth Government.

Hon. J. Cornell: That would be the logical outcome.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: No.

Hon. V. Hamersley: To be dealt with as they have dealt with the Northern Territory!

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Let us keep right away from that. We have the experience of the Northern Territory to guide us. A Commonwealth official told me two months ago that Darwin was costing £600,000 a year to maintain, and that the income of the Territory was £100,000. We do not want to see that state of affairs in our North-West. There is a big future before the North-West now that we have established the feasibility of shipping our beef to England in a chilled condition. Some years ago I had a long talk with Mr. J. B. Cramsie, of Sydney, chairman of the New South Wales Meat Commission. He was put in charge of the Sydney abattoirs and made a great success of them. That gentleman travelled the world and visited every freezing and chilling works known. He gave me some astonishing figures to show that in the Argentine the number of cattle was being reduced owing to the development of closer settlement. At the same time he pointed out that the population of the United States and of Canada was increasing rapidly, and he was of opinion that before many years the United States, with its great purchasing power, would be buying all the beef that the Argentine could produce. Of course there were other South American countries coming into production, but he felt certain that in a few decades Great Britain would have to look to her own Dominions for her beef supply. Thus a grand opportunity presents itself to us. Now is the time for our leaders to bring this matter forcibly before the Imperial Government. We could give as much land and as long a tenure as was desired, provided money was spent in developing the territory. Of course the present owners would require some compensation or share in the capital of the new companies. Without outside capital the Kimberleys will never go ahead.

It is necessary to dam rivers, and establish fattening and holding paddocks so that cattle may be tided over a period of at least five months when conditions are dry. It will take a lot of money to dam the rivers and open up the necessary ports. More chilling works would be required. This is a job which can only be carried out by English capital. I hope the Government will give consideration to the final recommendations of the committee, and will do what they can to bring them before those English people who are interested in the disposal and distribution of meat. Those people could be informed that every facility would be given to them to acquire a knowledge of the possibilities of the North for cattle raising. I should like the Government to get a man like Mr. Cramsie over here. It would pay them to do so. He is recognised as one of the greatest authorities on freezing and chilling and cattle raising. He made a huge success of the Homebush abattoirs, Sydney, which are regarded as the greatest single killing unit in the world. Something must be done with the North. Western Australia has not the money with which to develop it. The Commonwealth may have money with which to do it, but the authorities do not seem to possess the necessary ability. If we could get English capital interested in that part of the State it would be possible to do something with it. We are not taking advantage of our geographical position. Western Australia is favourably situated, especially the northern part, to supply the Near East with beef and mutton. At present all the requirements of that part of the world are coming from the Eastern States. The loss of trade could be prevented if the matter were taken seriously in hand, and I urge the Government to do this without delay. That is another reason why I should like to see the Premier go to England. He might be able to interest British capital, and give the necessary assurances as to security of tenure and the size of holdings. Some years ago, when it was pointed out that the holdings were too small and the tenures too short, the Premier cabled to the Agent General to inform the people interested that if they wished to develop the North, neither of those points would constitute a handicap. The recommendations of the committee are two years old, but if the Government would take them into consideration I feel they

might lead to a further investigation. It is their bounden duty, not only to the people of the North, but to the State and Australia as a whole, to adopt some definite policy that will mean the peopling and developing of our empty North.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [6.5]: Recently the people of the State suffered an awakening through the publication of the report of the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission. Facts have been brought forward as a result of that inquiry which ought to have been known to the public for many years. The bank has been referred to as a banking institution. It is not a bank in any way, and was never intended to be one within the ordinary acceptance of the term. It was designed to assist people to open up their holdings, their wheat and grazing areas, and for the development of the country generally. It was not intended to be a profit making concern. It was always anticipated that considerable losses would be incurred by the State as a result of the establishment of that institution, but people had no idea of the extent to which those losses might rise. The Royal Commission did a considerable amount of good in making the people aware of the position generally, and making them realise that the opening up of our wheat lands has cost a considerable sum of money. Something must be done for the primary producers; at the same time our accounts must be put in order so that we may see where we stand. The Agricultural Bank is a Government institution, established to assist farmers. If there is any blame attachable to the position as we know it to-day, it falls on the electors as a whole. Anyone who has thought about the matter must realise that this was not a profit making institution, and that the State must foot the bill for its establishment. It is suggested there has been political influence. Of course that is so, and everyone knows it. The Agricultural Bank followed the policy of the Government of the day, and was obliged to do so. I am sorry the trustees have been singled out for blame, and do not consider they are blameworthy. The managing trustee has had a difficult time for many years to make ends meet, and at the same time carry out the policy laid down for him by the Government of the day. No doubt the report will do a great deal of good. A similar inquiry

should be made into the expenditure of public moneys generally, especially that incurred by the Public Works Department.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By all departments.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I would also include the Education Department.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And the Taxation Department.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I agree, as to their receipts. We have an agreement with the Commonwealth Government regarding the administration of the taxation laws in this State. Our public moneys have for many years been wasted. No proper system has been adopted. Governments come and go and the policy is constantly changing. The taxpayer pays all the time. Of course the taxpayers bring about the changes in Governments, and the position may be due to the way they have expressed themselves at the ballot box. It is our duty in this House to protect them as far as we can. If an inquiry were held into the expenditure of the Public Works Department, I suspect that the disclosures would be more important than has been the case with the Agricultural Bank. We all know that. Very few people realise the extent to which we are committed over the water, sewerage and drainage schemes. Even to-day some local governing bodies are charging lower rates for water and sewerage services than the Government are charging. They are also able to maintain their roads at cheaper rates than the Government maintain their essential services.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And there is no payment of members in their case.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No, and in some cases no three per cents. According to the Press the Minister for Works stated that the Peppermint Grove area is to be sewered. Surely the money involved could be far better used on expediting the big Canning water scheme. One hundred per cent. of the houses in Peppermint Grove are already connected with the septic tank system, and I do not think one person has condemned it. And yet the Minister says that this work must go on. It will mean that the residents concerned and the taxpayers generally will have to pay for an additional work which at present is unnecessary.

Hon. J. Nicholson. The houses are already sewered there.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: One hundred per cent. of them have their own septic tanks.

Hon. A. Thomson: All built according to Government instructions.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would that not point to the desirability of having a Public Works committee to make recommendations for the expenditure of money?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes. If an inquiry were held it would probably lead to the making of many valuable suggestions.

Hon. J. Cornell: Public works committees exist in other States.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: A great deal of money has been spent which could have been laid out to greater advantage. Unfortunately, Governments and members of Parliament are always attempting to placate their constituents. They want to have work done in their own districts. They also desire to placate the people living in the most densely populated areas. They overlook the fact that there would be no industrialists if there were no farmers. We in the city are living on the primary producer, whether he be interested in gold or wheat production, or in dairy products. The industrialist is called upon to work certain hours under certain conditions, none of which could appertain in the country if the primary producers are to exist. The problem is a difficult one, and I am not going to suggest a solution. It is a matter for the consideration of the Government. If men are not kept on the land there will be no people left in the factories, because they can only exist so long as our people in the country are producing.

Hon. R. G. Moore: What would the primary producer do without the industrialist?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Farms existed long before there were any industrialists. The history of the world shows that. None of us would be here if farms had not existed before industries came into being.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I was mentioning the necessity for watching our primary industries, and I feel sure the Government have made a careful survey of what we

are able to do regarding relief works. We cannot go on borrowing for the purpose of providing work for those who, unfortunately, are unemployed. If we attempted to do that, we would come to the end of our borrowing capacity and would then be worse off than ever. It is essential before embarking upon elaborate schemes for relief work to ascertain where the money is to be procured, not only for the work undertaken, but for the payment of interest and other charges. That money can come only from primary production, whether of wheat, gold, wool, or any other commodity. No doubt the Government have looked into that phase and will bear the brunt, if need be, of having to curtail some of the expenditure that has been embarked upon now. The Education Department is one branch respecting which I feel sure greater value could be obtained for the money spent. Improvement may be effected by savings or it may be that, after a full inquiry into the whole of the education system and its administration, more and perhaps better schools could be opened and better conditions provided for the children. It is a matter of common knowledge that many schools are overcrowded to-day, which is unavoidable owing to the lack of funds. Unfortunately trouble exists at present with the teachers. For the moment I am not concerned about the rights or wrongs of the difficulty. The teachers, through the Press, tell us that they will do all in their power to assist the children, and that what they are really fighting for is the welfare of the rising generation. We may take the teachers at their word and gain their assistance in connection with the inquiry I have suggested. One of the matters that should be inquired into concerns the pay and conditions of the school teachers. Regulation 32 under the Education Act reads—

When a school is raised to a higher class, the position shall be considered vacant, and the teacher in charge shall have no claim to remain there if other teachers who, by reason of efficiency and seniority, have prior claims to promotion. When a school is reduced to a lower class the teacher shall, if his service is satisfactory, retain his salary until he is offered a school in accordance with it. Should he be permitted to decline the transfer, his salary shall be reduced to that prescribed for the lower class.

I have reason to believe that there are a number of teachers who receive higher salaries than the schools, of which they are in charge, really warrant. That means we have many teachers who are too highly classified. If that be so, that phase should be inquired into and the difficulty adjusted. In all walks of life that sort of thing means that the man either has to accept a reduced classification or must be regarded as a surplus officer and be dealt with accordingly. I fear, in the administration of the department, instances exist where small schools have the services of teachers who are highly paid, which means a tremendous expense to the Education Vote. That should undoubtedly be inquired into and adjusted.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: Money can be found for baths and other things for city schools, but there is no money for the country schools.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There was a notification in the Press that it was proposed to establish baths in Perth where there is water surrounding a great part of the city! I do not know if that work is to be undertaken, but there, as right throughout, we must see what money we have before we spend it. We should not live in a fool's paradise and gratify the desires of everyone—by means of borrowed money. There must be an end to that sort of thing. We must solve the problem. If we can afford to do all these things, so much the better. Then there is the question of long service leave for the teachers. It is said that the task of the school teacher is very onerous. It may be, but I do not think the teachers hold a monopoly in that respect. Moreover, the teacher enjoys extraordinarily good hours. If a teacher's health will not permit him to teach children during the week, enjoy holidays on Saturdays and Sundays and the ordinary term holidays as well, there must be something wrong. I believe the holidays amount to about three months in the year, although I may not be quite accurate on that point.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They represent about 10 weeks in all.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If the teacher's health will not permit him to carry out his duties with the advantage of those holidays, in addition to practically every evening off under existing conditions, there must be something radically wrong either with the system, with the children or with the indi-

vidual. For my part, I feel quite certain there is nothing wrong with the children, and that every normal teacher can survive and enjoy recreation, without requiring the additional benefit of long-service leave. I know of no business man who can afford long-service leave. I know very few who are able to take their annual leave. I do not know of any employees who are entitled outside the Government service, to a fortnight's annual leave and to long service leave in addition. I do not know of any employer who can take his holidays with regularity. Certainly very few firms are in a position to provide their employees with even regular annual holidays. It is not a question whether they desire to do so, but whether they can afford the expense. Is not the position of the State the same? I have always understood leave to be granted for the purpose of recuperation, not for the purpose of merely knocking off work to have a change. No one is in a better position than school teachers to have a change. It has always appeared to me that school teachers are extremely fortunate regarding their hours of labour.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: Some do a lot of work after hours.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: But, generally speaking, they are extremely fortunate.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Was not long service leave part of the conditions of their employment?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That may be so, but we often have to forego many things for which we cannot afford to pay.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The question is whether the Government should have allowed that concession to be inserted in the terms of the appointment of the teacher.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am not in favour of breaking a contract, but, given extraordinary circumstances, contracts have to be broken. In my opinion, there is no hardship involved in depriving the school teachers of their long service leave. There may be times when, owing to extraordinary conditions, a teacher may require long service leave.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Would not sick leave provide for that?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, I should think so. I cannot see there is any grouching that should come from the school teachers in respect of long service leave. There may

or may not be something in the dispute regarding the salaries paid, but if there be something in it, that matter can be adjusted. For the moment I am talking about long service leave. What has struck me regarding the attitude adopted by the teachers is that they desire to have long service leave and enjoy their annual holidays, but at the same time they are not to do a stroke of work after the pupils leave the school. In fact, according to them, they are so hardly done by that they must have so much recreation. It suggests they wish to drift back to the life of a South Sea islander or of the aboriginal. If the teachers wish to lead such a life, they cannot expect to enjoy their present standard of living. They cannot have it both ways. If we could afford to allow teachers the privilege of long service leave and, at the same time, maintain a number of teachers who would fill the gaps when their more fortunate fellows went away on their long leave, well and good. It would be an excellent thing if all could afford to keep up the standard of living and at the same time work less. I can assure the House that no one would be better pleased than I if that were possible.

Hon. R. G. Moore: But we cannot expect that nowadays.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No. We cannot keep chopping and changing, and we must realise that our children will probably have to put up with harder conditions of life than we have enjoyed in the past. I do not know how we can expect to maintain the present standard of living if we are to increase holidays, grant long service leave and so on.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Do you consider the Education Department is too expensive?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I believe we could secure far greater value for the money expended. Considering the impecunious state of our finances we are extremely liberal in the education of the youth of the State. Take the University. Any boy or girl who passes the necessary qualifying examination can get free instruction at the University irrespective of whether it is ever intended to make use of the knowledge acquired there, or whether it is intended to take a degree. Why should we provide free university education for a person whose parents are quite able to pay, or merely because the student desires to obtain a de-

gree, or to spend so many years of his or her life for the purpose, perhaps, of indulging in university sports? I agree that sport is necessary for the building up of the physical as well as the mental character, but I cannot see why we should provide all this for nothing. I believe in every opportunity being given to any promising youth to acquire a university education. Far greater benefits would follow if we had a more liberal system of scholarships. We could spend the same amount of money as is spent on the University in providing scholarships.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: It has repeatedly been suggested that there should be fees for University education.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: In addition to the provision of liberal scholarships, any student could enter the University by paying, and provided, of course, that the student possessed the necessary entrance qualifications.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Somebody suggested that to a previous Labour Government but they would not have it.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It may be that until we can afford it we may have to cut down the amount we spend on the University. One section of this community is taxed annually to the extent of £6 per head for the purpose of providing a most essential Chair at the University, namely, the Chair of Law. To my mind especially with a free University, every student should take a course of study in law. There is nothing more important or more likely to make for better citizenship. Nothing would better equip a man to take part in the government of his country than a knowledge of the laws of his country. If there had to be a free subject, it should be the study of law, and I cannot understand why lawyers should be the only class specially taxed to provide that Chair at a free University. Many practitioners in recent years have found that tax a considerable burden. When it was first imposed, everything was flourishing. Now it could well be suspended. Another matter to which I wish to refer and which is of considerable importance is the revision of the statutes. The cost would be comparatively small. It is not generally known that we have 42 volumes of statutes and, if it is desired to look up the law on any particular subject, you might have to look at three or half a dozen of those vol-

umes to find that subject. If you are fortunate enough to have a complete set which is written up-to-date, you will find it in perhaps six volumes or four. The whole of this work of compilation and bringing the statutes up to date has, I understand, been practically done, and it is only a matter of submitting the compilation to Parliament. Mr. W. F. Sayer, the ex-Solicitor General, has, since his retirement, devoted his time and attention to this important work. He has all the statutes now up-to-date. There is an Act on our statute book known as the Acts Compilation Act, but that does not give quite sufficient power to do what is required because, under that Act, it is only possible to reprint an original Act with its amendments. Many of the statutes are amending Acts and in those amending Acts there are new sections which are not amendments. They have to be read with Act so-and-so. It is not possible to compile these statutes under the Acts Compilation Act. I will give an instance—the Bills of Sale Act. It takes a very good lawyer to determine from that Act what the law is because a great many of the sections are put in by way of a note. These are all right, and I suggest to the Government that while we have the services of Mr. Sayer, than whom there is no man in the State with a keener knowledge, nor more able to compile these statutes—

Hon. J. Cornell: And if there is one man in the State who is worthy of a decoration, it is Mr. Sayer.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Exactly. He has all these Acts up-to-date, but when one looks at the index for a particular statute, one forgets the fact that it is compiled in the last volume, and if you are not careful you get into a hopeless mess. Some of our statutes, in the first three volumes, were compiled, in 1895, by the late Mr. J. C. H. James. Their language is not modern; they are reprints of English statutes and they contain references to the House of Lords and the Lord Chancellor. The Supreme Court Act, for instance, is in many volumes and it is difficult to find what one wants. The statutes require to be compiled in proper language and then they could formally be put through the House. I am not suggesting that in the compilation there should be included any statute of a contentious or party nature: I am simply asking that the laws be brought up to date, with recent de-

cisions of cases. A statute like the Electoral Act, about which there might be some controversy, and the Licensing Act, could be brought up as ordinary compilations. Mr. Sayer is no longer a young man, and it is important that we should have these statutes compiled and submitted to Parliament while we are able to avail ourselves of his services. It would redound to the credit of the Government if they did that and nothing else. With regard to the Bills of Sale Act, there is considerable divergence of opinion on the question of debentures. There we have an Act which says that under all bills of sale, notice of intention to register must be given. Some lawyers think that debentures come within that provision and that notice should be given; other lawyers think otherwise. The fact is that a few give notice and if someone else did not, it might mean that the debenture was no good. Perhaps one day the question will be fought out in the courts.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is certainly a very important question.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It is a matter which requires urgent attention, and it could receive that attention in connection with the various other statutes. There are also flaws which could be rectified. If we could have just the non-contentious Acts compiled, members would no doubt be satisfied to pass them formally. Our 41 volumes could be reduced to four volumes. In New South Wales the work of compilation has been done, and in Victoria their statutes have been reduced to four volumes and re-enacted. It might have been noticed in the Press that the Commonwealth are again revising their statutes and cutting out the obsolete ones. The Electoral Act is a different matter altogether. That to my mind wants re-casting and of course it would bring forward a lot of contentious questions. There is, however, one matter that the Government could take up, and that is the question of the provisions of the Electoral Act as regards postal voting. For years scandals have been rife with regard to postal voting. There is no doubt about it that the postal vote provisions of the Act are abused at every election. It is not always the candidate who offends, but the misguided supporter, and we never know when that misguided supporter may get a candidate into trouble: therefore the sooner we

eliminate that possibility the better. I suggest that we either eliminate the postal vote altogether or carry out the postal voting somewhat on the lines contained in the Commonwealth Act.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is a farce.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That may be a farce, but our own provisions are a scandal. Let us avoid scandals. If necessary, let us do away with the provisions. However, let us do something. A matter which I had not intended to touch on when I first decided to speak to this motion is one which has arisen only to-day—a matter which I regard as of grave importance and as most unfortunate. That is the question of a pardon recently given by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor. A pardon is usually given—as the books of law, if looked up, will show—as the King's pardon, to pardon an offender of his infamy. No one has suggested that there was infamy, in that sense of the word, in this case; but that is where a pardon is usually due. We know that the Governor cannot give a pardon without the advice of a Minister. It is laid down in the Governor's instructions that the Governor cannot grant a pardon except on the advice of at least one of his Ministers. In this particular case every effort was made before the court to avoid any conviction or punishment of the offender. A section of the Criminal Code was quoted during the argument. That section, of which the magistrate was asked to take notice, reads—

Regard being had to the youth, character, and antecedents of the offender, or the trivial nature of the offence, or any extenuating circumstances under which the offence was committed.

If the magistrate can find any of those things, he is at perfect liberty to exercise his discretion and not record a conviction. That aspect was argued out, and the case was adjourned in order that the magistrate might give the argument due consideration. He did so, and came to the conclusion that he should not exercise his discretion under that section of the Criminal Code. But yet we find that after our courts—which we are always called on to respect, and which I sincerely trust we always shall respect—have decided, for no apparent reason, so far as we know, a pardon has been granted. The only reason which seems to be alleged is that the offender happened to be an hon. member of this House—to enable him to retain his

sent as an hon. member of this House. I have not seen the pardon, except for the references to it in the Press; and it may be that the pardon only remits the fine and lets the conviction stand. If that is not so, then the only object can be to enable the defendant to remain a member of this Chamber. The electors of the province which I have the honour to represent number approximately one-third of the Legislative Council electors of Western Australia. Throughout my election campaign I pointed out that one of the planks of my platform was that I believed in the Upper House, and not in its abolition. I pointed out also that if Labour obtained control of this Chamber, it would, in accordance with a plank of the Labour platform, proceed to abolish the House. I understand that the abolition of the Legislative Council is still a plank of the Labour platform. As to this matter I was never contradicted either on the hustings or elsewhere. The electors apparently decided that they did not want this House to be abolished, and there is no immediate prospect of its abolition by virtue of those in favour of abolishing it being in a majority in this Chamber. But there is one other way in which the abolition of this House can be brought about; I may say, the only way in which the House can be abolished and that is by bringing this Chamber into disrepute with the electors at large. If this House is brought into disrepute with the electors at large, it will be only a very short time before it will contain a majority of members in favour of its abolition. To my mind, there is no way in which Parliament can be brought into disrepute more quickly than by relieving a member of Parliament—of all people in the community—of the penalty for his wrongdoing. We know now, and we have known all along, that members of Parliament are not held in high esteem by the public generally. That is regrettable and unfortunate, and very wrong; and I think we ought to do all we can to encourage people to look up to members of Parliament, so that we may in future have persons well qualified to make good laws and govern our country well. But we shall never get the right class and type of person from any walk in life so long as members of Parliament are held up to ridicule. Undoubtedly we are held up to ridicule. I was not altogether surprised to read in this morning's newspaper a report of the follow-

ing remarks made by the Bishop of Wangaratta, the Right Rev. J. S. Hart:—

Through the whole of history we are accustomed to trace the development of Parliament into the great organ of democracy that it has become. Yet, for Parliament as we know it to-day, our respect is diminishing or is even a vanishing quantity. To be a member of Parliament has become, as we say, a whole-time job. Whatever means of livelihood a member before had, he must neglect or even abandon, and for the time being must be a professional politician. This is the most insecure of professions, and yet the longer he holds it, the more urgent is his need to hold it longer. Since his old business has dwindled, re-election becomes a member's necessity, and his temptation to seek it by unworthy means is hard to resist. From another side, his party organisation makes demands on him in return for continuing its support. It extorts pledges and monetary contributions. The Labour Party has just proposed to demand his whole salary, of which he is to receive back as much as the Party thinks he is worth. His degradation to servile status bids fair to become complete.

One might almost think those remarks had been made here in Western Australia. It is the sort of thing people here could say, and it would be very hard to refute. That such an occurrence should have happened is most unfortunate. We bring the House into disrepute, we bring every member of Parliament into disrepute—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who brings Parliament into disrepute?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The Government, by virtue of their action; and we do so unless we voice our opinions squarely on the matter. Undoubtedly it is dreadful. If an ordinary, private member of Parliament is to be granted a pardon when he commits a breach of the Electoral Act—the one Act of all Acts in those 42 volumes that he ought to know—if he is to be given a free pardon for a flagrant breach of that Act, on the same basis a Minister of the Crown may be able to do something far worse. What is going to be the effect on any election in the future? A man may come along and do anything he likes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Say anything he likes.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, and do anything he likes as a breach of the Electoral Act, and then this Government must recommend to the Governor a free pardon.

Hon. J. Cornell: It all depends upon which side the man is on.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It does not matter which side he is on. If there is one law which members of Parlia-

ment ought to respect, it is the Electoral Act. We should do all we can to keep our politics as clean as possible. In Western Australia we are fortunate in that we hear very little indeed of graft. Recently, apropos of a big contract here, a rumour came to me of some graft. I expelled it immediately from my mind—immediately. But if the same rumour came along to-morrow, how could I pacify a person who said, "If the Government will do what they have done, what will not they do?" It brings the whole State into disrepute. I am not saying anything about the hon. member personally. I am only dealing with the action of the Government. I do not want in any way to defend the law. I only say that the law as it stands must be upheld by the Government. If the Government will not uphold one law, why do they uphold another? If they are game to allow a member of Parliament to commit a breach of a law, why should not Bill Sikes go down the street and commit a breach of another law? Bill Sikes is probably more ignorant. The idea of a pardon is to pardon a man who does something through ignorance—not a man who is highly qualified, who knows the law well; if he does not know it well, he should not be here.

Hon. J. Cornell: A pardon is for a guiltless man who has been found guilty.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The magistrate had a most unpleasant task to perform. He performed it as by virtue of his calling he had to do—without fear or favour; and he had no axe to grind. In conclusion, I sincerely trust, in order that we may rehabilitate ourselves in the eyes of the public, we shall voice in no unmeasured terms our opinions as to the way in which one of our members has been singled out for special treatment.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.12 p.m.