

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th September, 1919.

	PAGE.
Questions: Repatriation, land North of Mingenew	559
Quarry Employees' wages	559
Esperance—Northwards Railway, completion	559
Leave of absence	559
Papers: Explosives Act, amended regulations	559
Illness of Chairman of Committees	560
Bills: General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act	
Amendment, 3r.	560
Crown Suits Act Amendment, 3r.	560
Justices Act Amendment, report	560
State Children Act Amendment, Assembly's	
Amendments	560
Adjournment, Special, Inspection of Wheat Belt	564

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

QUESTION—REPATRIATION, LAND NORTH OF MINGENEW.

Hon. H. CARSON asked the Minister for Education: If the Government are not able to get land for repatriating returned soldiers north of Mingenew, will they use their statutory powers to secure suitable land for this purpose?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Yes.

QUESTION—QUARRY EMPLOYEES' WAGES.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it a fact that about six months ago the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union (Mr. Watts) presented to the Minister for Public Works a schedule of rates of wages for stone quarry employees, and that the Minister suggested to Mr. Watts that he should get into touch with other quarry proprietors with a view of a general agreement being arrived at by all employers, including the Government? 2, Is it a fact that acting on this suggestion, an agreement was come to with all the quarry owners, including the Minister's representative, for a minimum wage of 11s. 8d. per day? 3, If this is the position, will the Minister now fall into line with the other quarry owners, and pay this rate? If not, what action does the Minister propose to take in the matter in order to prevent industrial trouble in the immediate future?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes, but the minimum is 11s. 6d., not 11s. 8d. 3, The Minister's representative attended to ascertain views and report to Minister. The whole question of wages of employees controlled by the Minister for Works and Water Supply is under consideration, and the Minister expects to arrive at a decision this week, and will date any alteration retrospective to August 1st, 1919.

QUESTION—ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY, COMPLETION.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Minister for Education: 1, Subsequent to the appointment of the Esperance Lands Royal Commission, did the then Premier, the late Mr. Frank Wilson, promise in Parliament on 19th September, 1919 ("Hansard," page 66), with reference to the Esperance-Northwards Railway, that work would be resumed if the report was favourable? 2, Did the Royal Commission on the 11th July, 1917, recommend in their report that the construction of the line authorised by Parliament be proceeded with as early as practicable? 3, When the report of the Royal Commission was issued, did the then Premier, Mr. (now Sir Henry) Lefroy, inform a Kalgoorlie deputation that in accordance with the practice of all Governments he would, of course, honour the undertaking of the previous Government, and resume the construction of the Esperance-Northwards Railway as soon as rails were available? 4, Do the present Government intend to honour the pledges made to the Esperance people by two previous Governments, or do they intend to treat them as a scrap of paper?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The Government does not know whether or not this statement was made, but rails have not since been available. 4, It is the intention of the Government to construct the Esperance Railway when practicable in the interests of the State.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR EDUCATION leave of absence for three consecutive sittings granted to the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. F. Baxter) on the ground of absence from the State on public business.

On motion by Hon. J. W. HICKEY leave of absence for three consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. Cunningham (North-East) on the ground of ill-health.

PAPERS—EXPLOSIVES ACT, AMENDED REGULATIONS.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [4.40]: I move—

That all papers in connection with the amended regulations under the Explosives Act, 1895, laid on the Table of the House by the Minister for Education on the 2nd September, 1919, be laid on the Table of the House.

The regulations have already been laid on the Table but one cannot see just the nature of those regulations, and therefore I would like all the other papers made available so as to learn exactly what the position is.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment.

2, Crown Suits Act Amendment.

BILL—JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

ILLNESS OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The PRESIDENT: I regret to have to announce to hon. members that the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Allen, is unavoidably absent this afternoon through illness. I purpose as provided by the Standing Orders to take his place as Chairman of Committees. Should he continue to be absent from future sittings, which I hope will not be the case, it will be optional for the House to elect an acting Chairman.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's amendments.

Consideration resumed from the previous day of 19 amendments made by the Assembly.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on amendment No. 2 which is as follows:—Clause 4, insert after the words "a special magistrate" the words "or any member of the Children's Court authorised in that behalf by the Governor."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

At the present time the officers of the State Children's Department have the right to enter, visit and inspect any institution and when the Bill was before this Chamber the question of giving the right to all members of the Children's Court to visit institutions was raised, but it was thought desirable to limit it to a special magistrate in addition to the officers of the department who still have the right. In another place, the same question was raised, and a compromise, which I think is equitable, was arrived at. The amendment is desirable because, particularly in Perth the special resident magistrate who is head of the Children's Court is occupied with so many other matters that it is impossible for him to take a close interest in these questions, and the amendment will empower him to authorise any other suitable member of the court to exercise the right at any time to enter, visit or inspect any of these institutions.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: How are magistrates appointed exclusively for this court?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They are appointed by the Governor-in-Council, and they may be removed in the same way.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 9.—Strike out the words "from recording such conviction or," in lines seven and eight, and add to the clause the following words:—"or without proceeding to conviction dismiss the complaint."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is quite unimportant. The meaning is the same as the meaning in the clause as it at present stands, and I think the amendment makes the position clear. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 10.—Insert the word "or" before paragraph (c); strike out the word "he," in line three of the paragraph, and insert "such child" in lieu thereof.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The former portion of the amendment is immaterial. As to the second part, there is really no need for it as the definition in the Interpretation Act would be sufficient. Still we might accept it.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 10.—Add to the paragraph the following words:—"or during such shorter period as the Court may think sufficient."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There are quite a number of amendments in the same terms as this. The Act provides that the court may order a child to be subject to the supervision of the department until he attains the age of 18 years. It has been the practice of the court to impose a shorter period at times, but there was no authority for this. The amendment will legalise what has been done and give the court discretion. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 10.—Strike out paragraph (d):

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This paragraph was inserted at the suggestion of the select committee. It was the only recommendation of the select committee with which I did not agree. The insertion of that paragraph seemed to conflict with Section 38. The department always carry out the orders of the court but exercise the powers under Section 38. If it is thought wise to release a child before the age of 18, a recommendation is made to the Min-

ister who, in turn, forwards a recommendation to the Governor-in-Council. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: This is not the clause to which the leader of the House took exception. This clause was the outcome of information tendered to the select committee in regard to certain actions of the department, contrary to the wishes of the members of the Children's Court when the sentence was imposed. In certain cases, where the court had committed children to an institution, the orders of the court were varied by the department. The select committee thought the matter could be best decided by the court, and therefore made this recommendation. I oppose the Assembly's amendment.

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

Ayes	8
Noes	7

Majority for	..	1
--------------	----	---

AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. J. J. Holmes
	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 7. Clause 11.—Strike out this clause:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Amendment No. 19 made by the Assembly proposes to reinsert this clause, only in a different way. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 8. Clause 17.—Insert at the beginning of paragraph (c) the following words:—“except with the license in writing of the Minister, and subject to such restrictions and conditions as may be therein expressed”:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This clause deals with the employment of child labour. The object of the amendment is to enable the Minister, if he feels justified, to give a written permit imposing such restrictions and conditions as he, in his discretion, may deem desirable. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: This amendment should also apply to the preceding paragraph (b). The age of 16 is quite young enough for a child to appear on the stage. We are all well aware that young people are very much attracted by theatri-

cal displays, particularly when they are offered principal parts, where they earn adulation and flattery, with the result that they lose their heads. Therefore I think the restriction would be advantageous. I only wish it could be applied to boys connected with racing stables, so that they should be required to have a license in writing from the Minister.

Hon. J. MILLS: Would it be necessary in outlying districts to obtain permission from the Minister before children could take part in any entertainment?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Only if they were taking part for profit or reward to themselves or their parents.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The clause makes exception in regard to occasional entertainments for patriotic and charitable purposes. Quite a number of children sing on behalf of churches. Surely we are stretching it to say that those children should not sing for a church entertainment.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It would only apply if the children were paid for their services.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Hardly that, because it says “profit or reward to the child or to any other person.”

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: It is very clear that this provision shall not apply to an occasional entertainment, the proceeds of which are to go to any school, charitable or patriotic object.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 9. Clause 21.—Strike out the word “three” in line six of the proposed new section 107 (b), and insert the word “seven” in lieu thereof:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think it is a reasonable amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 10. Clause 23.—Strike out this clause:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was the desire of the department to retain this clause. It finds a place in the South Australian Act, and it was thought by having this right a good deal of advice and assistance might be given to persons in charge of illegitimate children. On the other hand, it may be open to objection. It was debated at considerable length in the Assembly and was there rejected. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: It is true that the provision is open to abuse. But there are instances where it would be a benefit to the child, a fact which appealed to the department. I feel, however, that there are serious objections to the provision, and so I will not offer opposition to the motion.

Hon. J. MILLS: I am opposed to the deletion of the provision: I should like to see it retained.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The provision is too drastic. If the State is desirous of taking care of an illegitimate child the proper thing to do is to take over the child altogether. The clause is both iniquitous and ridiculous.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Here is another phase of the question: The mother of an illegitimate child may go out to service, and her employers may allow her to take her child with her; but those employers would have the strongest possible objection to any visiting by the authorities.

Hon. J. MILLS: The clause would operate as a deterrent to the handing over of children ostensibly for adoption, but in reality for destruction.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We have had all sorts of alarms raised in the House on the passing of reformatory legislation. In this case I presume the visiting officer must first go to the secretary of the department and convince him of the necessity for paying a visit to a certain house. Under that safeguard there should be no abuse whatever.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I was opposed to this clause when it came before the Chamber originally, and I am still opposed to it. To give anybody the right of entering at any hour a house is a most unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the person—especially in the case of a girl who has an illegitimate child. Elderly spinsters are not always the most kind or most sympathetic in dealing with cases of that kind; and unfortunately our lady inspectors will, I suppose, for a long time to come be elderly spinsters. To-day we are making gods of the various administrative officers. Almost a third of the females brought up for examination under the Health Act were proved to be free from contamination. Let hon. members realise what that means. We are apt to tolerate almost any abuse in the name of the good of the community. I am with those who seek to protect the illegitimate child and the adopted child, but I would not go so far as to support such a clause as this.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Does the clause refer only to an illegitimate child in the home of its mother, or to cases where the illegitimate child is put out to some other person? If the clause is deleted, will not the inspectors have the power of supervising the welfare of the illegitimate child when it is put out by the mother?

Hon. V. Hamersley: No. Look at proposed new Section 117d.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: We must all recognise that the mortality of illegitimate children under 12 months of age is something appalling. How many illegitimate children grow up in comparison with legitimate children. There was an instance some years ago in which a woman murdered something like 20 illegitimate children. If this clause refers only to the illegitimate child living

under the care of its mother, I am quite prepared to see the clause deleted.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: This specially refers to illegitimate children.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: If the child is under the care of the mother she will probably look after it, though I am not always too sure of that. But the illegitimate child under the care of other people is frequently not looked after, and the inspector should certainly have the power to visit at any time.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: At the present time supervision is permitted in all cases where payment is received. But the reason why this clause was inserted is that sometimes it is difficult to prove that payment is received. The intention of the department is to cover such cases by this clause.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: But the inspector need not go into a house where an illegitimate child is being cared for by its own mother.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was the intention that supervision should be relaxed when the department had been satisfied that the child was being properly cared for. During the year ended on the 30th June last the State Children Department supervised 274 children under three years of age placed out with licensed foster-mothers. Among them there were only four deaths. As a great many of the children—who were practically all illegitimate—were delicate, the officers of the department consider that the result of their supervision is very satisfactory indeed. They still have the right of supervision in all cases where payment is received. The object of the clause is to give them the same right of supervision in every case. Personally I believe it would have a good effect, but I do recognise that there is some room for objection on the part of those who say that the departmental officers should not have the absolute right to come in and supervise in the case of an illegitimate child living with its own mother.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am in favour of deleting the clause unless there be added to proposed new Section 117d words which will exempt the home of the mother of the child. Where an illegitimate child is being cared for by its own mother, the home should not be subject to this inspection. I take it hon. members are desirous of protecting the feelings of a decent mother who has been unfortunate enough to have an illegitimate child. Assuming that a child is being neglected by its mother, then under the powers of the principal Act and under the provisions of this measure there will be full opportunity to deal with it as a neglected child, and to have it handed over to the State, and to secure the punishment of the party neglecting the child. The main argument surrounding this clause has been as to the cases in which women have received premiums for taking over the responsibility of children, and then have neglected the children. There

is the extreme instance mentioned by Dr. Saw. It is fortunate indeed that Clause 21 of this Bill provides a safeguard in that connection. That clause will prevent the traffic in children through the medium of advertisements. What has been an abuse and a grave danger will no longer be possible under the provisions of this measure.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Where the illegitimate child is in the mother's possession, maternal affection can be trusted in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. 'It would be a cruel thing for a State officer to come between the mother and the child in such circumstances. Outside of that, however, we must all admit that illegitimate children are marked by everyone except the mother as "not wanted." The tendency is to get rid of them anywhere, into some institution or home, to get them out of sight. Therefore I urge the retention of this provision.

Hon. H. STEWART: There seems to be a great desire to protect the feelings of the mother and to maintain the liberty of the subject. But I am not yet satisfied that if this clause is deleted the interests of the child will be sufficiently safeguarded.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Subclause 4 of Clause 21 will answer the objection of Dr. Saw. That deals with any child that may be adopted, and it deals with anyone who may assume charge of a child.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I will withdraw my motion, in order that Mr. Nicholson may submit his.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That as an alternative amendment to Amendment No. 10 of the Assembly, the word "illegitimate" in line 4 of the clause be struck out.

If the clause is to be retained it should be general and not specific. As it stands, where there is an illegitimate child, a representative of the State Children's Department can enter the house at any time. If that is the principle it is better to extend it and make it general. I would have no objection to an officer of the department paying a visit to my house.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No more would any of us.

Hon. J. CORNELL: We should inflict no indignity on others where we would not like it inflicted on us.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: I am in favour of striking out the clause altogether.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That as an alternative amendment to the amendment proposed by the Assembly the following words be added to Clause 3, "or whether the illegitimate child is living with or cared for by its mother."

Question put and passed; the alternative amendment agreed to.

No. 11. Clause 24.—Insert after the word "neglect," in line two, the words "or by

any wrongful or immoral act or omission encouraged or."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

To my mind it only adds emphasis to the clause.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 12. Clause 25.—Strike out this clause.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not intend to ask the House to insist on this clause. It is another of those clauses which, if put into force, might possibly do good or might be liable to be abused. In one respect it is contrary to the intention of the Act because the intention is to keep it away from the police as far as possible. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 13. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 23:—The title of Part VIII. of the Principal Act is hereby altered by the addition of the words "and the care and adoption of children."

No. 14. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 12:—Section twenty-four of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting in Subsection (6), in last line, after "eighteen years," the following words:—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient."

No. 15. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 13:—Section twenty-six of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting in Subsection (a), after "eighteen years," the words:—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient"; Subsection (c), after the words "eighteen years," the words:—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient."

No. 16. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 14:—Section twenty-eight of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting in Subsection (a), after the words "eighteen years," the words:—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient"; Subsection (d), after "eighteen years," the words:—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient."

On motions by the Minister for Education, the foregoing four amendments made by the Assembly were agreed to.

No. 17. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 18:—Section fifty-eight of the principal Act is hereby amended by striking out the words, in the third line, "until he shall attain the age of fourteen years."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Under Section 58 of the Act, the Minister may pay such sums as may be prescribed, but it is sometimes necessary, on account of the delicate nature of children, or for other

reasons, to continue assistance after the age of 14. This assistance has been granted in the past. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 18.—Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 21:—Section eighty-three of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting the following words in line five, after the words "eighteen years"—"or during such shorter period as the court may think sufficient."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

No. 19.—Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 11:—"The Court, on application made by the Department or by the parent or guardian of any child against whom an order has been made under this Act, may rehear the case and may make such recommendation to the Minister thereon as may in its opinion meet the circumstances."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is the alternative to Clause 11, and is couched in almost the same words. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported.

Recommittal.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the Message be recommitted to further consider Amendment No. 8.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

No. 8, Clause 17.—Insert at the beginning of paragraph (c) the following words:—"except with the license in writing of the Minister, and subject to such restrictions and conditions as may be therein expressed";

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the amendment be amended by adding the following words:—"and before the word 'school' in paragraph (c) insert the word 'church.'"

The exemption will then apply to any entertainment for the benefit of any church, school or charitable or patriotic object.

Amendment on Assembly's amendment put and passed; the Assembly's amendment as amended, agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

The PRESIDENT: It will be necessary to draw up reasons for disagreeing with amendment No. 10 and amending amendment No. 8.

On motion by the Minister for Education, Hon. J. Duffell, Hon. J. Nicholson, and the

mover were appointed a committee to draw up reasons.

Reasons for disagreeing with No. 10 and amending No. 8 of the Assembly's amendments adopted, and a Message accordingly transmitted to the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT, SPECIAL—INSPECTION OF WHEAT BELT.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [6.7]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 23rd September.

The Premier has issued an invitation to members of both Houses to accompany members of the Government on a trip through the agricultural districts during next week. Consequently the Assembly will not be sitting, and as there will be very little business for this House, and as in addition it is earnestly desired that as many as possible of the members of this House should make that tour, it is proposed that we should adjourn over the week.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [6.8]: Whilst not desiring to interfere with any arrangements made, I should like to suggest for the favourable consideration of the leader of the House that he see his way clear to make an extension of the adjournment to the 30th inst. He has stated that all next week another House will not be sitting and that there will be very little work then to go on with. There are several very important agricultural shows up country during the week after next, and if we assemble again on the 30th we shall have a few days before the Royal Show. Under those circumstances it would be a very great convenience to country members if we could adjourn over the longer period, and I think it would interfere to but very little extent with the work of the House, although, of course, the leader is the best judge of that. However, I ask him whether he could not agree to adjourn till the 30th inst.

Hon. J. MILLS (Central) [6.9]: I fear that if the House were to adjourn to the 30th September the Northern members would go home and so would not take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the Premier to have a look at the Eastern districts.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [6.10]: I recognise that we have a lot of work before us, but in the interests of the country it would be wise to adjourn until the 30th September. I hope the members of both Houses will endeavour to get up to the Northern portion of the State, at any rate as far as Geraldton, for the annual show. It is good for members to visit the country and see its possibilities. I pleaded with Mr. Sanderson that he should make the tour of

the Eastern wheat belt, principally because that hon. member has decried the possibilities of that dry area. If he went he would realise that while perhaps those districts have cost the country a good deal of money, yet in the near future the outlay will be well repaid. It would be wise to adjourn to the 30th, to let hon. members avail themselves of the opportunity of visiting Geraldton to see the show.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
(Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply)
[6.11]: I am always anxious to meet the wishes of hon. members. I am a good deal impressed with the remarks made by Mr. Mills. I do not want to agree to so long an adjournment that members will go away for a holiday instead of taking part in a trip, which has been arranged strictly in the interests of the country. However, on considering the condition of the Notice Paper, and with the knowledge I have of the position of legislation in another place, it is possible that if we met again on the 23rd we should not have a great deal to occupy our time. Therefore, if members prefer the longer adjournment, on the understanding that when we do meet again we shall have to sit in the evenings to get through the work, I am agreeable to amending my motion to read "30th September."

Question, as amended, put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 11th September, 1919.

	PAGE
Urgency Motion: Royal Commission on Nationalist Workers	565
Questions: Railway Freights, pyritic ore	591
Maimed Soldiers, rail and tram passes	591
State Sawmills, projected sale	591
Public Servants accrued holidays and A.I.F. enlistments	592
Railway project, Narrambeen-Bruce Rock	592
Repatriation, Pastoral holdings and Midland Co.'s lands	592
Peace Loan and State Revenue	592
Mallee Lands Development	592
Railways fire breaks	593
Agricultural Water Supply	593
Adjournment, Special	593

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

URGENCY MOTION—ROYAL COMMISSION ON NATIONALIST WORKERS.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the member for Boulder—

I desire to give notice that it is my intention to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing the question of the appointment of the Royal Commission to inquire into the case of the Nationalist workers on the Fremantle wharf, and the methods of conducting that inquiry.

Under the Standing Orders, it will be necessary for seven members to rise in their places before the hon. member can proceed.

Seven members having risen,

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.35]: I move this motion for the adjournment for the purpose of discussing the appointment of the Royal Commission that is now sitting to inquire into the claims of what are known as the Nationalist workers, and also for the purpose of discussing the methods by which that inquiry is being conducted. It will be within the recollection of members that the origin of this business dates back to August, 1917, when the lumpers engaged on the Fremantle wharf refused to load on the s.s. "Minderoo" a cargo of flour consigned to Java. The wharf labourers refused to load that flour because they contended that there was a possibility of its eventually finding its way into the hands of the enemy. I am not going to discuss that phase of the question. It will be sufficient for me to say that, on the authority of no less a person than the Prime Minister of Great Britain, in a statement made in the House of Commons in reply to a question, it was admitted that large quantities of food stuffs did find their way to Germany through Dutch territory. As a result of that, cessation of work the Government of the day, acting at the request of the Federal Government, called for volunteers to carry on the work on the wharves. Incidentally let me say that although at that time it was, and ever since has been, freely stated in the Press and elsewhere that the workers on the Fremantle wharves refused to load all ships, including troopships, there is no foundation whatever to that statement. It is only due to the Fremantle lumpers to say that throughout the prolonged strike, or cessation of work, they were ready at all times to load troopships or ships carrying supplies to our armies.

The Minister for Works: It did not appear so at the time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But it did. The hon. member is quite wrong. He is like so many thousands of people in this State who have accepted the biased half-truths that have appeared in the Press from time to time in regard to the matter. There is abundant evidence to prove it was officially stated on behalf of the lumpers that they were not