

ment with the Government. Are they going to attend that meeting?

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for Mines will make an hour's speech.

Hon. T. WALKER: Is the Minister for Mines going to attend it? Is the Minister for Agriculture going to attend? They raise no voice whatsoever against it. I say it is a degradation of our public life. No wonder that we are mocked at every street corner. No wonder that the Press may scout and snout at us. No wonder they can lie concerning us and the public generally. We have no protection. This institution, which should be the guardian of our liberty, which should be the judicial height and corner stone of all that the public treasure and hold dear in their pursuit of happiness in this world, the general public regard as worthless, and take every opportunity they can to insult us, to classify us as loafers, to designate us as wasters. This is because we have abandoned those high principles that have made England great, and have made kings and peoples great. It is because we have abandoned what our fathers have bled for, what our nation has struggled for through every species of cloud and oppression. We have forgotten all that. It is time we re-called ourselves to our duty. Have the Government within them that fine sense that will resent this intrusion upon responsible Government, or will it supinely sit indifferent to these sniggers and these stealthy attacks upon—

Mr. Teesdale: Why indict a Ministry because of what the member for Gascoyne said?

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not for what the hon. member said. Apparently the member for Roebourne has been asleep. I am referring to the resolution carried by the general body, and the resolution convening the meeting to again consider it. What the hon. member said at that meeting is of little account. He is only one individual. It is that executive, with powers given to it under Clause 51 and Clauses 51a and 53, which give power under Clause 51 to convene a meeting. That meeting is to decide the working arrangements with the Government.

Mr. Teesdale: So far as they are concerned.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And it will tie you if you support it.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is what was carried by resolution. I ask if the hon. member supports it. Does he stand by it or repudiate it?

Mr. Teesdale: There have to be two parties to that.

Hon. T. WALKER: If he is a member of the association he must abide by it. He must either desert the Government or—

Mr. Teesdale: I am not a member of it.

Hon. T. WALKER: As the hon. member is not a member of that association and has not heard all of my speech he does not understand what he is talking about. Do the Government intend to take up a stand in this matter? Are our rights, the rights of this House, to be protected. Are we to have responsible Government or a cowardly sur-

render to the executive of an irresponsible association? Let us know which we are to have. In order that I may see how members stand and that the public may judge for themselves, I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion on the Address-in-reply:—"But this Assembly regrets to have to inform Your Excellency that certain of your advisers have by association with and membership of a political organisation declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisation, have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government."

Mr. CHESON (Cue): I second the amendment.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [9.20]: I accept the motion as one of no-confidence in the Government and move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 16th August, 1922.*

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

### QUESTION—OIL PROSPECTING, AUSTRALIAN PETROLEUM CO.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Mines: 1, How many separate areas of Crown lands are held under license to prospect for mineral oil by the Australian Petroleum Company or by persons representing that company? 2, What is the total area embraced by such licenses? 3, When were

these prospecting rights first granted? 4, On what date was work first commenced, and what amount of labour has been carried on these areas? 5, Have any applications been made for forfeiture of the whole or any portion of this company's area, and, if so, with what result?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Three; viz., (a) Oil Area 1H; (b) Oil Area No. 19H; (c) Oil Area No. 29H. 2, Approximately 87,889 square miles. 3, (a) A license to prospect Oil Area No. 1H was issued to J. L. Strevens on 13-9-21, and was transferred to the company on 6-1-22; (b) a license to prospect Oil Area No. 19H was issued to F. C. Coles and others on 1-6-1921, and was transferred to the company 2-12-1921; (c) a license to prospect Oil Area No. 29H was issued to W. J. Reside on 26-9-21, and transferred to the company on 2-12-1921. 4, Reports show that Mr. J. L. Strevens, the company's technical adviser, arrived at Wyndham on 10-7-21, and made a geological inspection of the areas, returning to Perth in September, 1921. Following this, Area No. 1H was examined by Thomas Esdaile, O.A.S.M., and party from 17-1-22 until April, 1922. Since then surface prospecting has been continued on this area and also Area 19H. Area No. 29H was examined by a party under Messrs. W. G. Allen and Rosser in March and April, 1922. Since then surface prospecting has been continued. 5, (a) Three applications for the forfeiture of portions of Area No. 1H were made by Messrs. A. Goss, A. F. King, and A. E. Caesar, and the W.A. Mining and Agency Company, Limited, jointly; (b) application for forfeiture of Area No. 19H was made by J. S. Allen, and was refused; (c) application for forfeiture of Area No. 29H was made by A. J. Levy and A. M. Main, and was refused. In each case the applications were refused upon evidence taken by a magistrate, as provided by the Act.

#### QUESTION — UNEMPLOYED, PAINTERS' AWARD.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is he aware that men employed painting the fences and seats of King's Park and the Government Gardens were paid only 10s. per day—a rate 7s. under the amount awarded by the State Arbitration Court? 2, If so, do the Government approve of advantage being taken of the unemployed to have Government work done at under the prescribed arbitration award rates?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, It is understood that some work of a miscellaneous nature, which would not otherwise have been done, was provided by the King's Park and State Gardens Boards in response to a request by the War and Unemployment Distress Fund, for the purpose of providing a measure of relief to some men otherwise unemployed.

#### QUESTION—FRUIT KIOSKS, RAILWAY STATIONS.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the success achieved by the establishment of a fruit kiosk or stall at the Perth central railway station, and in order to further encourage the fruit industry and provide a needed convenience, will he take the necessary steps to establish similar stalls or kiosks on the Fremantle and other stations where refreshments are obtainable?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The matter will have consideration.

#### QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME, HALL.

Mr. J. THOMSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it his intention to have a sum placed on the Estimates this year for a hall at the Old Men's Home? 2, Is he aware that the old men have nowhere to go during wet weather, unless they return to their bed apartments?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No; because while a recreation hall is recognised as desirable, it is not regarded as an absolute necessity. 2, The extensive verandahs and other sheltered places are utilised by inmates in wet weather, as well as the wards.

#### QUESTION—PERTH PUBLIC HOSPITAL, A DEATH.

Mr. J. THOMSON asked the Colonial Secretary: Is it his intention to lay on the Table all the papers in connection with the death of Gordon Bowen in the Perth hospital?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: If the production of the papers is desired the hon. member should move accordingly.

#### QUESTION—BEDSTEADS PURCHASED BY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Mr. MANN asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Was a number of iron bedsteads recently purchased by the Health Department? 2, What was the price paid per bedstead? 3, Is he aware that similar iron bedsteads are being manufactured locally? 4, Were the local manufacturers given an opportunity to quote? 5, If not, why not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No. 2, 3, 4, and 5, Answered by No. 1.

#### QUESTION—SADDLERY PURCHASE, WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Was a quantity of saddlery recently purchased for the Government for use at the Wyndham Meat Works? 2, Was it purchased in this State, and were local manufacturers or firms given an opportunity to quote for the supply? 3, If so, what are the names of the manufacturers or firms? 4, If it was not purchased in this State, in what

State was it purchased, and from what firm? 5, By whom was the purchase made? 6, What was the price paid per article?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, No. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, Answered by No. 1.

# ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Eighth day—Amendment, no confidence—withdrawn.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, and on the amendment moved by Hon. T. Walker—.

That the following words be added to the Address-in-reply:—"But this Assembly regrets to have to inform Your Excellency that certain of your advisers have, by association with and membership of a political organisation, declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisation have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government."

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—on amendment) [4.40]: If hon. members read the amendment carefully they will see that in it Ministers are charged with being unfit, for certain reasons, any longer to advise His Excellency. The mover of the amendment has not shown, and has not endeavoured to show, that any member of this Cabinet has failed in his duty to His Majesty the King. No member of the Cabinet has failed in his allegiance to the King, or in his oath. The day may come when a Minister will have to decide between his duty to the King and retirement from office. I hope it will never come. There has never been such a case in the history of Western Australia. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) asserts, but I think I may say that he has not proved, any charge against any Minister. There is no definite allegation made by the hon. member except as regards immigration. The people of this country were within their rights in extending to me a welcome on my return from the Old Country. It was surely competent for them to show such appreciation as has been shown. I confess that the people have been all too good to me since I came back, and I can say the same of hon. members opposite as well as of hon. members on this side of the House. I am very grateful to the public and to hon. members for that welcome, not because it affects me, but because it does at least show the people of Australia and the people of the British Empire that Western Australia believes the time has come when there ought to be active development here with regard to immigration. I think

the hon. and learned gentleman who moved the amendment will admit so much. I have always been on the most friendly terms with the hon. gentleman, and I desire to remain on such terms with him. We have much in common, and the association, which has extended over many years, has been not only a pleasant one but also of advantage to me. The hon. member says that I have changed. He almost suggested that I had come back with a swelled head. He did not quite say that, but in his own particular way he implied it. I cannot use the same sort of language as the hon. member; I have not the gift; and so I say in plain terms that the hon. member inferred that I had come back with swelled head. But I think the hon. member and all other people who know me are fully aware that anything of that sort is absolutely impossible. I have not changed. But the hon. member has changed. Of course he has grown in stature and dignity since he joined the legal profession. We ordinary members of this House were delighted and proud when one of our members, though no longer young, showed his ability to pass that very stiff examination which leads to the Bar. We have been proud, too, that he has done so well since being admitted to practice. We are proud to be associated with a man who can do so well.

Hon. T. Walker: I shall lose my head presently.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman has changed, and I think he has had some good reason to change. His outlook has changed too in many ways. There was the attack on the Press. He called newspapers deceivers, especially as regards the subject-matter of his amendment. He waxed eloquent on the duty of the Press. He told us what the duty of the Press is, how the newspapers are to inform the public in plain, straightforward, simple terms. I agree that that is the duty of the Press. He told us also about the dignity of the Press, and with that too I agree. The Press holds a very important position, and we like to look up to and respect it. He talked too about the honour of the Press, and again I agree with him. Honour should be shown by the people connected with the Press, he said; and I agree. We should be able to honour the Press. The hon. gentleman accused me of swelled head again, and he told us of his connection with the Press, a dignified and honourable Press of former days. Every man connected with the Press in those days was a superman. But those times have changed. From the Press the hon. gentleman went to the Bar, and so the Press sank a little in our estimation. He referred to his connection with the "Sunday Times." As the proprietor of the "Sunday Times" is a member of this House, it will hardly be expected of me that I should defend that journal. I think the language of that paper is sometimes not as dignified as it might be.

Mr. Corboy: It has smooched to you since you came back.

The PREMIER: Particularly when it refers to me by anything except my name. However, I daresay the "Sunday Times" has played a useful part in connection with the State. The point is that the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) contends that since his day it has degenerated. He did not exactly say how, but he knows more about that section of the Press than I do. I can say, however, that in past days when I held a very insignificant place in this country, I did occasionally get a bit of a rub from the "Sunday Times." In those days, I did not get so many as I have received lately; I admit to that extent the "Sunday Times" has degenerated. I freely admit that. I do not know which part of the "Sunday Times" the member for Kanowna was responsible for when he was associated with that journal, but I am pretty certain that he was not responsible for the "They Say" column. I can leave the Press to defend itself. I have said that the only attack made by the member for Kanowna was regarding immigration.

Hon. T. Walker: No.

The PREMIER: Yes. Before I carry out my obligation to reply in that regard, I wish to refer to the motions and amendments which the member for Kanowna dealt with. He quoted Mr. Sutcliffe, the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association. The hon. member might have quoted a still greater authority had he referred to the "Primary Producer," the official organ of the association.

Hon. W. C. Angwin. That is only a copy of the "West Australian."

The PREMIER: No, it is not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, it is.

Mr. Pickering: Certainly, it is not.

The PREMIER: The "West Australian" said that the motion it quoted was substantially correct. The "Primary Producer" shows that it was correct. Hon. members will remember that the "Primary Producer" is the official organ of the association, and I quote from the issue dated the 11th August. The "Primary Producer" says that this resolution was carried with only one dissentient voice. It reads as follows:—

In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may, at the request of the Parliamentary Party, or at its own discretion, convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary Party, and the decision of such conference, based on equal voting power shall be recorded as a recommendation to next conference.

Mr. Underwood: What is the definition of "equal voting power"?

The PREMIER: I recommend the hon. member to refer his question to the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is a part left out.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is, according to you.  
Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, according to Sutcliffe.

The PREMIER: I have left out nothing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, not you.

The PREMIER: The "West Australian" stated that the resolution as reported was substantially correct. It was, apparently, quite correct. Members of the Country Party who were there will no doubt deal with this question, but the resolution put up by Mr. Sutcliffe is not quite the resolution that I have read.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But who is Sutcliffe?

The Minister for Mines: He is the secretary of the association.

Member: He is the boss.

Mr. Simons: No, he is Lord Chamberlain to the boss.

The PREMIER: When the member for Kanowna placed the resolution before members, he read the first part of the motion as submitted by Mr. Sutcliffe. Then he continued his remarks for a while and subsequently read the final words. These are the words he left out when he read it at the outset:—

All decisions so recorded shall be reported to the next conference of delegates.

I am not defending the resolution, but I think it should be properly placed before members. If this resolution means anything, it means that after a meeting of the two sections and after they come to a decision, that decision will be reported to the next conference, and, if adopted by delegates at the conference, the decision will be added to their list of resolutions.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a very artful explanation.

The PREMIER: No, that is the correct one.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not at all.

Mr. Angelo: What have you against Sutcliffe?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is your official secretary.

The PREMIER: I am sure members of the Opposition, and particularly the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), are never tired of waving the "Primary Producer" at those sitting on the Government side of the House. I was not at this particular conference, but some of the Ministers were, and they can deal with the matter later. I wish to say emphatically that Ministers have been true to their oath. I have been associated with Country Party Ministers since 1919. They have always acted in a perfectly constitutional way. I have never been conscious that any outside influence has been brought to bear upon them regarding matters to be discussed and considered by Cabinet.

Mr. A. Thomson: Or upon members either.

The PREMIER: I have sat in many Cabinets and I can honestly say that the Cabinet with which I have sat during the last three years has carried on the work of gov-

ernment in precisely the same way that Cabinets did with which I was associated in earlier days, when Cabinets were drawn from one party. When I say that, hon. members will surely realise that there can be no foundation for the charge levelled at Ministers by the member for Kanowna. Ministers have done their duty honestly and fearlessly. Do hon. members think that I could sit with Ministers year after year, who were unable, because of outside influence and outside obstruction, to deal with matters brought before Cabinet in a proper and constitutional manner? I firmly believe that members sitting on the front bench of the Opposition side of the House, whoever they may be, are incapable of being influenced by any outside organisation in their duty as Cabinet Ministers. As I say of them, so I say of the Ministers who are with me.

Mr. Underwood: Don't you assert that too strongly, because I know!

The PREMIER: The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is very, very wise! He acquired his wisdom through being associated with a Cabinet for two or three years! If he contends that Ministers have been influenced, he can tell the House just what he knows. I have never sat in Cabinet with him, so I do not know. I can quite understand, however, that the hon. member would be difficult to control in any Cabinet.

Mr. Underwood: That is what the Country Party is finding out.

The PREMIER: If Ministers have done their duty—I assert they have, and I am in the position to know—how have they done it? Has it been in the best interests of the people and of the State as a whole? Has it been in the interests of the farmers of this country? We have been called a Government of farmers! Have we not done our duty by the workers of this State, by the business people and by all sections of the community, showing favour to no one section, unless it be the soldiers? Ministers have done their duty fearlessly and well. I know, of course, as well as anyone else that our system of electing members is not perfect. If there be any one thing that may interfere with the proper government of the country in a constitutional way, there is one to which I shall refer. I assert emphatically that undoubtedly certain methods have been grafted on to our political and public life. I know the practice, to which I shall refer specifically, to be wrong. I refer to the system of selection ballots. I believe that if there is a system that can interfere with the personnel of this Chamber and with the working of government, it is this method of selecting candidates by a few people.

Mr. Munsie: Your party select them by four or five individuals.

The PREMIER: The party to which I belong cannot make anyone stand out.

Mr. Munsie: They do though.

The PREMIER: Why should not the electors have a free choice? Why should there be a selection ballot? By the operation of these ballots, men who could never get into

Parliament otherwise are able to secure seats in this Chamber. By these ballots, others who could be elected are kept out of the way.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is going outside the terms of the amendment.

The PREMIER: I think I am right in discussing methods by which outside organisations can secure control over members. It seems to me that the adoption of selection ballots affords a measure of control over members of this Chamber, and I regard that as objectionable.

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not affect the amendment in any way.

The PREMIER: The amendment asserts that by association with and membership of a political organisation, some advisers of His Excellency are endangering responsible and constitutional government. This political organisation conducts selection ballots in the way I have mentioned. To that extent, I agree with the member for Kanowna that some influence may be exercised over members of this Chamber. No one approves of disciplinary control over members by any outside body; I agree with the member for Kanowna on that point. We have preferential voting at the triennial elections, and surely that should be enough. I agree with the member for Kanowna that we cannot get away from the party system. We must have that system. For 200 years the British Parliament has been endeavouring to get away from that system, but apparently members of that Legislature have not been able to do so.

Mr. Money: They went for a long time without it and did well.

The PREMIER: Yes, but in those days they dealt with small things and simple issues. In those days, members of Parliament were really a small committee holding similar views, a very different matter from the election of the British Parliament at the present time. It is difficult to get away from the party system.

Mr. Money: We always abolish it when important matters come along.

The PREMIER: I would be glad if we could get away from the system altogether for the next few years and work as best we might in the interests of the State. I admit that members of the Opposition have been of great assistance to me during the three years I have been in office, and the speech by the Leader of the Opposition the other day was a very useful and helpful one. I freely acknowledge that.

Mr. Underwood: That is the stuff to give them.

The PREMIER: But we have the party system and I do not see how we can avoid it. We are told that Ministers are unable to "independently advise His Excellency the Governor." Are we incapable of advising His Excellency, and if so why, and on what questions? If it comes to the release of some unfortunate man under sentence, are we not capable of advising His Excellency? If it comes to a question of dealing with

the lands of the State, are we not capable of advising His Excellency because some of our members belong to the Primary Producers' Association and so are more or less closely affected by the question?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is nothing in the amendment about the Government being incapable of advising.

The PREMIER: Oh yes, there is. "Have made it impossible for them to independently advise." If anything makes it impossible for them to advise His Excellency, surely it makes them incapable of advising His Excellency. If my friend does not like "incapable" I will withdraw it in favour of the "impossible" of the amendment. The hon. member has not shown that it is impossible for us to advise His Excellency. On which of the many matters we are handling from day to day is it impossible for us to advise His Excellency? The Country Party will speak for themselves; I am speaking for my colleagues who have sat with me during the past three years. I should like to show that Ministers are capable of advising His Excellency as to the expenditure necessary for the development of the State. It seems to me that, largely, this amendment is hurled at us because we have in hand an immigration scheme.

Hon. T. Walker: Nothing of the kind. I assure the hon. member that is not so.

The PREMIER: Well, I think the people believe that to be the reason.

Hon. P. Collier: You soon ascertained the views of the people.

The PREMIER: Yes, I am in touch with every section of the people.

Hon. T. Walker: I assure you no such motive was behind the amendment.

The PREMIER: Well, is it really meant that we are not able to advise His Excellency on the affairs of the State? I say we are. Money has to be expended on this immigration policy which hon. members opposite say they know nothing about. They say they have never heard of this scheme. Yet here it is, published in January last for all to read. The member for Kanowna said it had never been published.

Hon. T. Walker: No, I said that even after reading it one cannot tell what the scheme is.

The PREMIER: I bet the hon. member has never read it.

Hon. T. Walker: I bet I have.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I can allow no betting here.

The PREMIER: We require money for this policy which I have put forward. I can only discuss the policy upon which we shall ask His Excellency to spend money, a policy approved by the people. My friend says it is an Imperial scheme, and should be paid for by the Imperial Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The "Primary Producer" says it is Mr. Pickering's scheme.

The PREMIER: Well, that hon. member or any other hon. member can have all the credit for it, so long as we get on with the

work. But why complain if it is an Imperial scheme? Is it not something to be proud of that the Imperial Government are helping in the work? We can advise His Excellency that the money which would have been necessary for the scheme is not now required, or at all events not to anything like the same extent. The hon. member says we are incapable of advising His Excellency, because there is nothing original in the scheme. He says he suggested the preparation of farms by the Government a number of years ago. I have not claimed originality.

Mr. Underwood: Then what do you claim?

The PREMIER: I claim to be as far removed from the hon. member as it is possible for one man to be removed from another. I have shown that the member for Kanowna has not read the scheme, and so did not know that we should be advising His Excellency in this matter. I should like to explain that the group settlement scheme provides for the preparation of farms by the people who are to occupy the farms. But we must go to His Excellency for money with which to carry out the work, and we are the proper people to advise him just what ought to be done. We know that this work will be assisted by the men and money coming from overseas, men who are investing their money here. We know we shall be assisted by many activities, and so I hope it will be unnecessary to advise His Excellency to spend so large a sum of money as I once thought would be required. Whatever this House may think of the scheme, the public at any rate is satisfied with it. Of course, if we were to go to the Governor for authority to spend money without first giving the fullest publicity to a proposal of such magnitude and which will take a very long time to carry out, we should prove ourselves incapable of advising His Excellency. Every move that has been taken in connection with this proposed expenditure has been made perfectly clear to the people. The House may ask for fuller details, and I think the hon. member may have had it in his mind that because the House does not know just every small detail of the scheme we have proved incapable of advising His Excellency. But, surely, it is realised that immigration is the accepted policy of the State. It is necessary to keep Australia white and to keep it safe. The member for Kanowna has said, not that the State is poor, but that it is rich in possibilities. Yet he would have the people believe that it is impossible for us rightly and properly to make recommendations to His Excellency for the development of those great possibilities. Of course, it is usually agreed that the policy of the Opposition is to oppose. I have nothing to complain of in that respect. The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kanowna, and others on that side of the House have made it abundantly clear to me and to other hon. members

that their policy is not to oppose unnecessarily or to cause any avoidable trouble. I repeat that their suggestions have been helpful. Because of that, I was surprised when my friend launched his no-confidence motion. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) says there should be continuity of the immigration policy, that what we do to-day in advising His Excellency, others should be able to do to-morrow.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to discuss the policy under this amendment. The policy is not in question.

The PREMIER: There can be no policy unless it involves recommendations properly made to His Excellency, made by a constitutional Cabinet in a constitutional way. So I thought I might point out that, just as we to-day are making recommendations in connection with the immigration policy, so my friends, when they come over here, will go on making recommendations on the same subject. I welcome the hon. member's idea of continuity. It is entirely right. If the Leader of the Opposition or his deputy will agree to look into every detail of the scheme and acquire all information in connection therewith, I shall welcome it. The only stipulation I make is that they shall be perfectly free to act in a constitutional way. So much being granted, let them do their duty and criticise the scheme, oppose it, object to it, correct it, applaud it—anything they please. The continuity suggestion is a perfectly right and good one.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is what we want.

The PREMIER: And that is what I want.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then you had better come over here.

The PREMIER: It will be very much easier for the Opposition to transfer themselves to these benches than for so many over here to have the trouble of a trip over there. I invite the hon. member to come over here.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But you have so mixed a party.

Mr. Harrison: Would it not then be even more mixed?

The PREMIER: I should like, and I think it would be right if I were allowed to deal with the immigration question, because after all it is referred to in the amendment moved by the hon. member so far as any recommendations are concerned. The member for Kanowna said the scheme had been agreed to by the Imperial Government and the Federal Government. We are still free, absolutely free. We control every detail of the work. All that has happened is that we are helped financially. Members need not fear we are acting unconstitutionally or giving away any right at all. Every acre of land sold must be sold by the State, and every detail of the work must be controlled by the State. It would be quite unconstitutional if I said that a man coming here had no right to take up land the day after his arrival in

the State. I have not said anything of the sort. What I have said is that, if a new arrival wants assistance, he must spend 12 months in this country before he can get it. I am only administering the law which allows a man to take up land. I am only doing my duty by the country when I say we cannot allow a man to have money unless we know something about him. When we know something about him, when the proof is satisfactory, when a man can make a farmer, we will help him to become a farmer. The hon. member said that men, after coming to this State, were leaving it for the Eastern States. The position is just the reverse. Men are coming from the Eastern States to Western Australia.

Mr. Munsie: Figures given in the Speech do not indicate that.

The PREMIER: That is due to the fact that the goldfields are not what they were. Many men have gone from the goldfields.

Mr. Munsie: And gone East from the city, too.

The PREMIER: Yes, because factories have been transferred with all the people connected with them. That is no fault of ours. The member for Kanowna said we were not doing our duty by the country in not fighting or approaching the Federal Government in the matter of taxation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not wish to pull the Premier up, but he is getting beyond the terms of the amendment. He is not in order in replying to remarks made by another hon. member. The Premier must confine himself to the scope of the amendment.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Governor's Speech is all on immigration.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Governor's Speech is not under review at the present time. The only thing before the Chamber is the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna, and the debate should be conducted within the scope of the amendment. I cannot allow the debate to drift at this stage, or there is no telling where we shall get to before it is finished.

The PREMIER: It seems to me we might discuss, under this amendment, anything that has reference to the taking of responsibility by Ministers.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is confusing responsibility with administration.

The PREMIER: We are responsible for the administration.

Mr. SPEAKER: The amendment refers to certain of His Excellency's advisers being associated with an outside body.

The PREMIER: And incapable of advising His Majesty's representative. It seems that we might discuss anything about which Ministers might be called upon to advise His Excellency. If you rule otherwise, however, I have no objection to offer. I shall have another opportunity to discuss such matters in detail. If the charge of the member for Kanowna is that hon. gentlemen sitting on this side of the House are incapable because

they are subject to the control of an outside organisation, then I think there is very little to answer. I maintain that they are capable of advising His Excellency on all the great questions of the moment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite in order in alluding to that.

The PREMIER: We have to advise His Excellency on so many matters. The advice we shall tender to His Excellency regarding immigration will be good advice. If I may not speak on that—I have no wish to question your ruling—

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier can do that by way of illustration, but he cannot discuss the policy of immigration and settlement generally.

The PREMIER: It would be quite useless, unless I could show the House in detail just what we propose to do and just how members will be expected to approach the question.

Hon. P. Collier: It will be much easier to dispel.

The PREMIER: Yes, easier for the hon. member who has spoken on the question, but not so easy for me. The hon. member made certain assertions which I have endeavoured to dispel.

The Minister for Mines: He discussed the Address-in-reply before the amendment was moved.

The PREMIER: I am willing to deal with the amendment as it stands and leave those other matters, if I must do so. I have endeavoured to show the House that Ministers are capable of advising His Excellency. I wish again to inform the people that there is not an atom of truth in the suggestion that Ministers are not absolutely free and independent to give the advice they ought to give. I wish to say positively they have not been influenced in the slightest degree on any matter brought up at any meeting. I think I can leave the question of the organisation which has been mentioned to be dealt with by members belonging to it. It is not good for the Government that these charges should be made. It is not good that the people of this country should believe that outside organisations can exercise a discipline over members who sit in this House, no matter where they sit. I do not know of any outside organisation that can apply any such methods to any Minister here. The hon. member should be careful in making a charge of this sort. It is true that, according to the Press, the secretary of the organisation did say one thing and that the official organ of the organisation produced another thing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But they came out on the same day. That paper was distributed on the Friday.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member reads both reports, he will find that Mr. Sutcliffe's version of the motion carried does not vary much from the one that members say was carried. However, I am not concerned with what happened. All I am concerned about is to see that the government is carried on

in a constitutional manner. I assert that it is carried on in a perfectly constitutional way. We have sat together and worked together for this State during the past few years, and I defy the member who moved the amendment, or anyone else, to produce one tittle of evidence to the contrary on any single question which has come before us for consideration. I defy him to prove that any influence has been brought to bear or used. I regret that the hon. gentleman moved the amendment. I hope that when the discussion has proceeded a little further, he will see the error of his ways and will, perhaps, withdraw the amendment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle—on amendment) [5.25]: I have listened very carefully to the Premier in his attempt to put up an excuse for some of those associated with him on his side of the House. As on the occasion when the Premier was dealing with the Supply Bill recently, he to-day has experienced one of the hardest jobs of his life, because in his own heart he does not agree with the action taken by a certain political organisation.

Mr. Harrison: How do you know?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am sure of it.

Mr. Harrison: What has that to do with the Supply Bill?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not dealing with the Supply Bill; I merely referred to it. I can also say that half the members on the Government side of the House do not agree with that action. I might go a little further and say that half the members on the cross benches do not agree with it.

The Minister for Mines: Then we are all in disagreement. Why worry?

Mr. Angelo: There is harmony in discord.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Gascoyne would agree to anything. First he would not and then he would. If members wanted an authentic statement of anything that took place at a conference, from whom would they expect to get it?

The Minister for Mines: Not from the representative of the "Call," I suggest.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Does it not always devolve upon the paid officer to give the statement? I put this question: Do members think for one moment that the paid official would give to the Press an incorrect statement which members of his party did not wish to be published?

Mr. Wilson: No.

Mr. Pickering: There is only one negative.

Mr. Wilson: It is a good negative.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I may be wrong, but I believe some person connected with the Country Party endeavoured to cover up what took place at the conference.

Mr. Harrison: Nonsense!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And I believe that someone informed a representative of the "West Australian" that certain resolutions were carried.

Mr. Pickering: Why pick out the Country Party?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because they were the only ones allowed inside.

Mr. Pickering: No, there were 300 or 400 delegates.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I said some person; I did not say some member of the party here. I believe some person gave that information to a representative of the "West Australian" and that the "West Australian" took the information as authentic.

The Minister for Works: They should not do things like that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Press are very careful in using matter for their leading articles. Anyone who holds a responsible position on a paper like the "West Australian," in my opinion, would not wilfully leave out words when writing a leading article on such a question. The leader writer had nothing to gain or to lose in any shape or form by doing that. Only a few days previously he had written an article condemning the proposal.

Mr. Pickering: The editor of the "Primary Producer" was at the conference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He may have been. The "Primary Producer" is issued on Friday, but is printed before that day. This was in the "West Australian" on Friday morning.

Mr. Pickering: It is printed on Friday afternoon.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the resolution had been carried on Friday afternoon, it could not have appeared on Friday morning.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The primary producers are not under discussion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let us consider the exact words—

Yesterday, the general secretary, Mr. W. Sutcliffe,—

Mr. Pickering: A good man.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He was a good man some years ago when he was in a Government position.

Mr. Simons: Mr. "Subtlecliffe."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It goes on—declared that the resolutions had been published in a garbled form. He stated that its precise terms were as under—He is the paid official of this organisation.

"In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may at the request of the parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a conference comprising members of the council and the parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference based on equal voting power shall be recorded as the decision of the association."

Mr. Pickering: Well! Suppose it were so. What of that?

Mr. Harrison: How do you connect up?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It goes on—

"All decisions so recorded shall be reported to next conference of delegates."

Mr. Harrison: And that is where it ends.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Hon. members want us to believe that these words were not included in the motion.

Mr. Pickering: We have not spoken on the matter.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: "Shall be recorded as the decision of the association." The hon. member says he has not yet spoken. When the Premier quoted from another paper, he said "That is right."

Mr. Harrison: So it is.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But he said he had not yet spoken. Mr. Sutcliffe said the newspaper was wrong, that the account was garbled, and that the resolution was not the one it was intended that members should work under.

Mr. Sampson: The experts appear to differ.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no differing about this.

Mr. Sampson: There is the "Primary Producer" on the one hand, and the general secretary on the other.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There are no experts in this matter. In the first place we had a statement made in the Press by someone—no one knows whom—and in the other case we have a statement made in the Press by the secretary of the conference, the paid official of the association. What more do we want? Is it not clear that the official would not make an incorrect statement, and would not tell the Press that a resolution was carried that was entirely different from the one that was actually carried?

Mr. Sampson: Was it not equally wrong to doubt the official organ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member knows that weekly papers are not published on the day when they are printed.

Mr. Pickering: This is printed on Friday afternoon.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Sometimes. The words there are identical with those which appeared in the "West Australian," but which the secretary says are not correct.

Hon. P. Collier: I think it is a matter which might well come within the scope of the Forestry Commission.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am afraid the Commission may take it as one of their subjects.

Hon. P. Collier: They will do that tomorrow.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Here is the position as it stands, according to the official of the association. The Premier says "My Ministers in the past have worked with me in such a way that they have worked independently of any association. I have no complaint to make, and I know they have done their best in the interests of the State. Members of the Ministry are not incapable of advising His Excellency the Governor, neither has it been impossible for them to advise. The public have every confidence in us. Do they think we are not capable of advising the Governor?" Up to last week

the Ministry were in a position of independence, at all events to a large extent.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. Pickering: And so they still are.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Up to last week they could do very much as they pleased, but for a certain amount of political pressure that might be brought to bear in connection with the administration of their departments. God knows that has been the case in the past.

Mr. Harrison: Give an instance of that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I could give many instances.

Mr. Harrison: You cannot do so.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Instances of where political influence has been used have been given in this Chamber.

Mr. A. Thomson: They are not necessarily true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When I have made statements here I have known that they are true.

Mr. A. Thomson: Not always.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would not say what is not true.

Mr. Pickering: You may have believed it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not make garbled statements to deceive members or the public. When I have made statements in connection with political influence I have known that they are true.

Mr. A. Thomson: You may believe them to be correct, but they are not necessarily true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member has made statements which he knows are not correct.

Mr. A. Thomson: You have made statements in this House which are not correct.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have never done so.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members must confine themselves to the business before the Chair.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If at any time I have made a mistake in anything I have said, I have always apologised the next day for doing so.

Mr. A. Thomson: Then you admit having made mistakes?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I did make one statement, which was said to have been made in error, but it was afterwards found to be true.

Mr. A. Thomson: You do make mistakes occasionally.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Can a Minister, whoever he may be, attend the meetings of an outside party, discuss there questions of policy, that policy being laid down by those present at the conference and agreed to on a voting power greater than that in this House, and conscientiously advise His Excellency the Governor to carry that policy into effect? It may be that members of the Ministry have said to the association, "We are not going to abide by the decision of

conference; we do not intend to discuss with you any part of our policy, but are going to carry out that policy which we think is in the best interests of the State." If they would take up that attitude, which would be the proper one, they would at all events be backed up by members on this side of the House, and probably by some members on the cross-benches, for we on this side of the House, at all events, would know that they had no more time for that particular organisation.

Mr. Pickering: To what do you refer?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. A. Thomson: What would happen to you if you voted against your executive?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When we were in office we did not reduce the freight on manures to farmers; we would not take off 1s. per ton on district railways.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is beside the question. What would happen if you voted against your executive?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We would not pay the primary producers so much a week in preference to sticking to those people who had assisted them. If we had been prepared to sacrifice the country in the interests of the farmers, the Labour Party would not have gone out of office, but we would not do that.

Mr. Harrison: You were the very sort of people who would.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member knows that when taxation was refused by the House, the rates were raised and not reduced. Because we would not reduce the rates, the hon. member's party entered into an arrangement with the other party in the House and put the Labour Party out of office.

Mr. Harrison: But you were speaking about the farmers and the storekeepers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We did not give the farmers an allowance, but we paid the accounts of the storekeepers for the goods they supplied to farmers. We stuck to these who stuck to the farmers. We assisted those who had been willing to help the settlers in distress. Because we could not carry out the dictates of that party, arrangements were made to turn us out of office. Then came the salaries and the big positions for those who are trying to rule hon. members to-day. This state of things did not come into existence until then. Can a man serve two masters? Can he serve the executive of the primary producers on the one hand, and the people of the State on the other?

Mr. Sampson: Their interests are identical.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Are they? Even if the interests of all the people are identical, why is it that some people have the right to supply certain goods, and that the tenders of others are not accepted when there is a difference of 2s. per ton?

Mr. Sampson: I know nothing of that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member does not want to know anything of it. He knows that the interests are not identical.

He is unwilling to see all persons treated in the same way. Members on the cross benches do not want to see a tradesman served in the same way as the wheatgrower.

Mr. Harrison: The tradesman is served through the wheatgrower.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: What would the hon. member's party say if a number of tradesmen banded together, being desirous of entering into a contract for building, and asked the Government to advance them the money necessary to enable them to carry out the contract?

Mr. Sampson: We must depend upon primary production.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know what they would say; they would say the Government should turn down such a proposal. This, however, is what is being done every day. All the people of the State are not upon an equal footing. The executive of the primary producers controls the affairs of Parliament. Suppose the Premier desired to run a wheat pool for the ensuing harvest.

The Premier: You would oppose it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. I have never opposed such a thing.

Hon. T. Walker: The State ought to run it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not permitted to follow up the interjection, or I would do so.

Mr. Harrison: The Government have already made a pronouncement upon that subject.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Mr. Moran a few days ago backed up the statement that I made in this House last year.

The Premier: All good men stand together.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Suppose the Premier intended to have a wheat pool.

The Premier: What would happen?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Primary Producers' Association said long ago there should be no compulsory wheat pool.

Mr. Harrison: They made preparations for carrying on a voluntary pool.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Mr. Moran told them definitely at the conference that Monger and Murray were responsible for bringing in private trading again so far as the wheat pool was concerned; he told them they were responsible for the whole position. If I were permitted to do so, I would go into the whole question, but I am compelled to confine my remarks to the amendment. The Premier says that in the interests of this State it is necessary to have a wheat pool. But it is not the Premier who has to say whether there is to be a wheat pool or not; it is Monger and company.

The Premier: You are very much mistaken.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Try it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are not discussing the wheat pool.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not wish to discuss the wheat pool. I am merely show-

ing that under this decision it is not the Premier of the State who is in control, it is the primary producers, because of the pressure they have brought to bear. I will give another instance. We have men who are on the Industries Assistance Board and who at the present time should not be given any further help from the State; they are men whom we have done our best to help and we cannot afford to waste any more State funds on them. We know that the secretary of the Primary Producers Association is up against the proposal. Conference meets, and the proposal of the Premier is turned down. What is there left for the Premier to do? He can tell them to go to blazes and that he intends to do what he likes. If he told them that once, I assure him that that day would be the happiest of his life, and it would do that party more good than anything else could possibly do. If we on this side ever applied to the Government for something and were told that what we were asking for was not warranted, and our application was turned down, we would not go to an outside executive and ask them to push it on. I am showing that the power of the Government has entirely gone.

Mr. A. Thomson: You have a wonderful imagination.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I only wish I had. If the Labour Party had passed a resolution such as the one to which I have referred, no one could have kept the hon. member quiet in his seat. He would have been like a jack-in-a-box, and he would have abused us up hill and down dale, and told us that we were trying to run the country with the aid of others outside. Yet he himself is following silently and submissively those principles which he has condemned in this House, knowing at the time that what he was accusing us of was not true. I said the other night, and I repeat it now, that any Parliament that allows itself to be controlled by an outside body is dead.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Members who will allow themselves to be controlled by an outside body, have no right to go before their electors.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I say further that in my belief a great majority of the electors of this State, and I include those who are in the country, will oppose any action in connection with the government of the State unless that action be taken by those who represent them in Parliament. That being the case, I repeat that the resolution which has been carried is one of extreme danger to the future of the State. Suppose we all took the same line of action. What would be the result? Talk about revolution!

Hon. T. Walker: Chaos.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Chaos would not be in it. We would have revolvers and guns at every street corner. We on this side of the House represent the biggest numbers, and we represent those who are workers.

The Premier: I represent 350,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It makes no difference how many the Premier represents. He may represent in this Chamber 350,000 people, but Monger and company will want to represent 350,001. Monger will certainly want to go one higher. Monger's desire is to direct the affairs of this State, to declare whether there is to be an immigration policy or not, to determine whether the Government shall bring down wages or keep them at their present level, to say what the price of land shall be, and to handle the property of this State.

Mr. A. Thomson: I thought you always made correct statements in this House.

Hon. P. Collier: How much longer will that magpie be allowed to interrupt?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Katanning must keep order; he will have his opportunity later on.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I can forgive the hon. member because he has only just returned from England. Let me repeat that whatever was agreed to at the conference is the decision of the Primary Producers' Association; it had not merely to be recorded and reported to the next conference. This conference is to be called together within the next few days, and what is decided then amongst the members of the party—and that party includes three members of the Ministry—will have to be the policy of the Premier.

The Premier: No, I assure you it will not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It will have to be the policy of the Premier if he wishes to continue to lead his party as it is constituted to-day.

The Premier: Don't you make any mistake about that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is there in black and white. What will the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) do, and what about the members for Guildford, Bunbury, and North Perth? I declare that under this resolution constitutional government is prostituted. We have no right to be here. Those who believe in the people of the country ruling have no right to sit here under such conditions. Parliament is of no use at all while Monger and company can do everything.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister's sneers do not affect me in the least. He has interjected in that way several times within the last few minutes, and I have taken no notice of him. I would, however, remind him that not long ago he would have adopted precisely the same attitude as I am taking now. I shall not say any more about it.

The Minister for Mines: I am trying to endorse your views, but you will not allow me.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: While the Minister for Mines was with our party he received loyal support. He cannot say that he is receiving it at the present time.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We know that his constituents were bought with a bribe.

The Premier: You have no right to say that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Anyhow, that is by the way.

The Premier: What about the other Parliaments outside this Chamber?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Only one has attempted to dictate to this House.

Mr. A. Thomson: The Trades Hall.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, the Primary Producers' Association. I will defy the hon. member or any other member in this Chamber to point to one occasion when the executive of the Labour Party dictated to the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Hon. P. Collier: Or even attempted.

Mr. A. Thomson: What about New South Wales?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: New South Wales can do what it likes, I am in Western Australia now.

Mr. Teesdale: Did your executive not dictate to you on the question of conscription?

Opposition members: No.

Hon. P. Collier: We have conscriptionists and anti-conscriptionists on these benches.

Mr. Teesdale: You know that they emptied some of you out.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This discussion must cease.

Hon. P. Collier: These interjections should cease.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know about New South Wales, but I know about Western Australia where I have lived for many more years than the hon. member. What I have said is correct. I am sorry that the Premier went out when I wanted to draw his attention to the facts which have been published on the authority of the secretary of the association. The Premier, I regret, puts faith in a statement published for the purpose of misleading the people.

The Premier: The "Primary Producer" is your favourite organ.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not a bad paper at times, but it is strange that it should publish word for word what the "West Australian" had and what the secretary said was a garbled report. It was corrected on Friday, the 11th August. I desire to see the Premier exert himself in this House, and I want him to say to members on the cross benches, "If you wish to follow a secret conclave, if you prefer that those outside this Chamber shall control affairs, then get the leader of that party into Parliament and let him take the position I occupy if he can secure the confidence of the people." The party would know very well that that man would never get here as Premier of the State. They know also that two-thirds of them who are here to-day would never be here were it not for the Premier's policy. In spite of that, they have never done anything but kick him since the elections.

Mr. A. Thomson: That statement is in correct.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The party fought the last election in support of the Premier's policy.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A gentleman drew my attention to that fact the other day, and said, "When those people get into Parliament, they have not a policy of their own."

Mr. Pickering: Of course we have.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But only a policy made for them from day to day.

Mr. Pickering: That is not true.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Only a policy that is made for them at the joint conference between the two bodies, the outside body having the bigger voting power.

Mr. Pickering: That is not true, and you know it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I can tell the hon. member what the majority of the other party is. Since one or two members of the Country Party agree with the resolution, however, the majority will be a little larger. Shall we allow an outside body to rule Parliament, or do members of the Country Party intend to sit here as representatives of the people? The member for Leederville (Mr. Carter), I know, would not agree to let the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association fix his policy for him.

Mr. Carter: I am no more fond of that association than I am of the Trades Hall.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The members on the back Government benches would not agree to it either. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Gibson) would not agree to it. Those hon. members would want to know from the Premier what was going to be done. They would not agree to anything coming in through the back door. They would insist on everything coming in through the front door, which is this Parliament. I trust hon. members will assert their independence, assert that they represent the electors who sent them here, and not any conclave or junta such as that conference. And so I hope the House will carry the amendment.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon—on amendment) [6.4]: We have heard a good deal in the course of the discussion on the amendment, but it does not seem as though we were debating a motion of want of confidence. The debate sounds more like irresponsible chatter after the farmers' annual gathering, by people who want to get something into the Press against the Country Party. We have had it from the Premier that there has been no pressure from this party as regards his policy. There has been no outside pressure. On the other hand, we hear from the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that we are compelling him to do this and to do that. He says there could not be a compulsory wheat pool if we tried to get one.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are not dealing with the wheat pool.

Mr. HARRISON: The member for North-East Fremantle dealt with that subject.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: And I stopped him.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. HARRISON: Surely I should have the same license as was accorded the member for North-East Fremantle. I want to show that two persons are stating utterly different positions, and I want to show which is right. I know which is right, because I know there has been no outside pressure as regards constitutional government.

Mr. Wilson: Has it been attempted?

Mr. HARRISON: No. The executive, and the delegates who are appointed annually to attend conferences, have the interests of the State as much at heart as has any other group of individuals in Western Australia. What is the resolution that was carried? The Country Party said that it would be against the interests of the party if a certain resolution were carried. The resolution was not carried. We have two statements as to what the resolution was. The member for North-East Fremantle has given one version, and the Premier has given the other.

Mr. Munsie: The secretary of the organisation gave one.

Mr. HARRISON: I have nothing to do with what the secretary said. I am now dealing with what the member for North-East Fremantle said. The fact remains that the man who gave the resolution to the "Primary Producer" was at the conference. He sat there, and would he not be likely to take the resolution down in shorthand? Would not the secretary be engaged with a lot of other business at the time?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The editor of the "Primary Producer" is not a shorthand writer.

Mr. HARRISON: He may not be, but he gave what appeared in the "West Australian."

The Minister for Mines: The editor is the whole staff.

Mr. Munsie: The paper is run with one man.

Mr. HARRISON: Was it not in the interests of the State and of the organisation that the latter part of the motion submitted to conference should be deleted? It was deleted. The Country Party and the Primary Producers' Association are both out for one thing—the advancement of Western Australia. They have stood for constitutional government for years. I am rather surprised that the motion ever appeared on the agenda paper. It read as follows:—

That Clause 51 as at present appearing be deleted, and the following be inserted in lieu thereof:—"In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may, at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a political conference comprising the members of the council and the Par-

liamentary party, and the decision of such conference shall bind the Parliamentary party."

That motion was amended. Part of it was thrown out.

Mr. Simons: The body was thrown out, but the poison was kept.

Mr. HARRISON: No; the poison was extracted. Here is what was given to the Press by the secretary as having been carried, and what the member for North-East Fremantle admits to be correct:—

In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference, based on equal voting power, shall be recorded as the decision of the association. All decisions so recorded shall be reported to the next conference of delegates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is what I read out.

Mr. HARRISON: I know it. Do not members of Parliament generally discuss matters with their organisations and executives? It is done from day to day by the members of the Opposition.

Hon. P. Collier: No, it is not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No votes are taken.

Mr. A. Thomson: I will accept your word for that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not care a snap of the fingers for that hon. member's word.

Mr. HARRISON: When men combine for the purpose of benefiting the primary producers, the result of the benefit must be reflected upon every industry in the State. The greater the production of primary wealth, the more wealth there is to be distributed throughout the State. What possible harm can be done? We have never attempted to interfere with constitutional government. I think the discussion is a waste of time. We have no right to spend time on a want of confidence motion of this character. The charge has no basis in fact. Outside pressure has not been applied, and is not being applied. The mover of the amendment is assuming that it may be applied.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder—on amendment) [7.30]: Although it is a fact that the amendment before the Chamber affects every member of the House and, indeed, concerns the very existence of constitutional and responsible government of the State, it does in a very special degree affect the members of the Country Party who form one section here. I may, therefore, take it for granted that the member for Avon (Mr. Harrison), who, as the leader of the Country Party, was their spokesman, made the best possible defence of the position. I ask any member whether he honestly believes that the leader of that party has justified

the action of the conference in connection with the proposals which have been under discussion. The member for Avon was not even frank nor was he even honest. He did not quote, nor did he refer to the several important matters which come within the scope of the amendment, but he did quote, as also did the Premier, from the "Primary Producer," the official organ of the Primary Producers' Association. With what purpose? Apparently, it was to confuse not only the minds of members of the House, but the public as well, as to the terms of the resolution carried at conference. The member for Avon would have us believe that he does not know whether the amendment in question was carried in the form published in the "West Australian" or in the form as officially announced by the secretary of the organisation. In common with other members sitting on the cross benches, the member for Avon knows the precise terms of that resolution. Why was the hon. member not frank with the House and why did he not inform us whether the terms of the resolution indicated in the paper, or the terms as announced by the secretary of the association, were correct. The member for Avon had no desire to place the facts before the House. Although I was not present at the conference, I say that the motion carried was the one announced by the paid official of the organisation.

Mr. Harrison: Were you there?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Will the hon. member deny the statement by the secretary of his organisation?

Mr. Harrison: That was not what I heard, anyway.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member knows perfectly well that the resolution carried was the one given to the Press by the secretary.

Mr. Harrison: I was quite frank and straightforward.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the very few sentences that constituted his speech, the member for Avon repeated over and over again that the members of his party were free to act as they thought fit in any matters relating to public questions before this House or otherwise. The Premier was not more explicit than the member for Avon. I can quite understand why the Premier failed to touch the issue; he did not deal in any degree whatever with the principles involved in the amendment. The Premier sought refuge in the garbled—I use the words of the secretary of the organisation—resolution published in the "West Australian" and attempted to make out that it meant nothing. He did not refer to other important alterations to the constitution which were adopted by conference. He failed entirely to touch the real issue but he repeated many times that his Ministers who belonged to the Country Party, in common with his other Ministers, were free and that during the past three years they had exercised absolute freedom in the con-

sideration of matters affecting the administration of their departments. The amendment does not deal in any way with anything that has taken place in the past. It does not refer to any of the actions of Ministers or members of the Country Party.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is only regarding something that is supposed to happen in the future?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Exactly. And that is the position we have to face. The Minister for Agriculture has to face that position too. Let us deal with the position as it has been before the public during the past two or three weeks. From the day when the recommendations of the executive were published, there has been—will any member deny it?—considerable agitation not only among members of the Government and of the House but by the public generally, as to the possibility of certain action being taken at conference. We find that the recommendations of the executive formed the subject of leading articles in the newspapers. Were we not told that those powers which it was sought to place in the hands of the executive of the Primary Producers' Association, would strike at the very foundations of constitutional and responsible Government? Were we not told in eloquent language in the columns of these newspapers that if these amendments to the Association's constitution were carried, members of the Country Party would be mere automatons? Were we not told that they would have surrendered their individual liberty, that there would come between them and their constituents an irresponsible body, and that the granting of such power would be subversive of constitutional government, if the amendments were agreed to by conference? Were we not told that all these things would depend upon the decision of delegates? Were these recommendations to be carried, then, of course, constitutional government would have been attacked at its very foundation; were the recommendations of the executive not adopted, all would be well. The issue was a very simple and narrow one. Having arrived at the point where all, Ministers, members of Parliament, and the public alike, were agreed, namely, that the powers sought by the executive should not be granted as they would be inimical to the continuance of responsible government, let us examine the result. The question narrows itself down to this: Have the executive obtained the power they sought to secure in their recommendations?

Mr. Clydesdale: Of course they have.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is the position, nothing more and nothing less. If I can show that the executive have been successful, then I shall have proved all that has been contended by the newspapers during the past few weeks regarding the passing of responsible government. I contend that the executive have carried every one of the recommendations. As a result, the

executive have absolute control over members of the Country Party and Ministers who are members of that party. The executive are in a position to dictate, not only as regards the legislation of this State, but they are in a position to dictate as to the personnel of the Government. They have obtained by means of the resolutions carried at the conference, the power to dissolve the present Government.

Mr. Teesdale: What, with 50 per cent. representation?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have obtained that power unless Country Party members in this Chamber take a stand and defy conference and ignore its decisions. That is the position. Either members have to abide by those resolutions or take a stand to retain their individual and political liberty. If they acquiesce in the decisions of conference, and so far we have not had any intimation from any member that they intend to ignore those decisions, what is the position? This matter may be regarded in some quarters as comparatively unimportant. I regard it as of the utmost importance. Ever since the Labour Party became a factor in the political life of Australia, our opponents in and out of the House, on public platforms and through the columns of the newspapers, have always held up to the electors by misrepresentations, the view that labour members were controlled in their political actions by an outside executive or junta. Therefore I say the question has been of sufficient importance to justify, in the minds of our political opponents, the waging of an incessant campaign against us on that score. The constitution adopted by the Primary Producers' Association at last week's conference means that for the first time they have taken to themselves the power to control the political actions of Parliamentary members of their party to a degree that has never been attempted, let alone accomplished, by any other political organisation in Australia. It has never been accomplished by any political organisation in any part of the British Empire. Can we be expected to sit silently and take no action when, for the first time in our history, an outside organisation has arrogated to itself the right to make and unmake Ministries in this House? Is that a matter of no concern to the people of the country, or one which will have no effect upon Responsible Government in this State? It is of the utmost importance, and there rests upon members of the Country Party the responsibility to demonstrate to the House, not by a few feeble inconsequential platitudes, such as were uttered by their leader the other day, but by analysis and examination, that they still retain the freedom which they were in a position to exercise prior to the meeting of that conference. The responsibility devolves upon them either to repudiate the resolutions of their conference, or to say they accept the position and are ready to submit to the dictation and control of that organisation. I hope to be able to show that the executive has won in that contest, that the

resolutions carried have given to that outside body absolute control of the political lives and actions of their members of Parliament. Let us examine the executive's recommendations. No. 1 resolution was as follows:—

In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may, at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a political conference comprised of members of the council and of the Parliamentary party, and the decision shall bind the Parliamentary party.

The resolution was not carried in that form; the last two lines of it were amended. Because of that amendment, members on the cross benches claim that the power has not been obtained by the executive. Let us examine that point. The words "the decision shall bind the Parliamentary party" were struck out. The amendment which struck out those words was moved by the same gentleman who moved the original motion, the president of the conference.

Mr. Pickering: He did not move it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He stood sponsor for it. He was the chairman of the executive who recommended it, and he stood sponsor for that motion which was to bind the Parliamentary party. Later he moved the amendment. Are we to believe that the man responsible for the framing of the original motion moved an amendment which would materially alter his first recommendation and deprive him or his executive of the power which it was sought to obtain? Is it not asking too much to ask us to believe that the man responsible for the motion moved the amendment which they now say does not bind the party? This was the form in which the resolution was carried: Instead of providing that the decision should bind the Parliamentary party, it provides for the calling of a conference, either by the Parliamentary party or by the executive of its own volition, to deal with any matter whatever. And what is to be the result? Based on equal voting, the decision shall be recorded as the decision of the association. Will members of that organisation contend that if they sit in conference with the executive, and discuss important legislation to be introduced in this House, or any other matters affecting administration or legislation, and if a vote be taken, it shall be recorded and the decision shall be the decision of the association, notwithstanding which it is not binding on members of the Parliamentary party? Is that the contention of those hon. members? Will they say that, notwithstanding the resolution and the consequent conference, and the decision arrived at, they are still free to walk out and ignore that decision? If that were so, the whole of Clause 51 would be farcical. Why go to the trouble of calling a conference between the Parliamentary members and the executive if, after all, members are still free to please themselves whether

they abide by the decision arrived at or ignore it?

Mr. Pickering: Why not read the last few words?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They do not affect the position, for it is set down in black and white that the decision shall be the decision of the association. It goes on to say that the decision shall be reported to the next conference. But in the meantime the decision is the decision of the association; that is the point. I suppose the direction that they shall report to the next conference is merely so that the next conference shall be informed as to the questions discussed and the decisions arrived at. But there can be no quibbling with the language. It says the decision shall be the decision of the association. It does not say "shall be the decision of the association if endorsed by the next conference."

Mr. Pickering: It implies it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does not imply it. It says the decision shall be the decision of the association, and so in plain English the members stand bound by that decision.

The Minister for Works: Is that decision to be acted upon at once?

Mr. Munsie: They have called a conference already.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Would they adopt the futility of calling a conference if the decision to be arrived at is to be of no effect? Are we asked to believe that it will have no bearing on the attitude of Parliamentary members? It is absurd to suggest it. The decision is to be the decision of the association, and honourable men taking part in that conference are bound to abide by it. The only escape they have is to say they will not attend, will not be bound by the conference. If they attend the conference, they are in honour bound, in the terms of Clause 51, to abide by its decision. The phraseology of resolution No. 1 was altered. I have read somewhere. I think in the "Primary Producer," that the amendment was made because it was thought the wording of the original, the expressed binding of the Parliamentary party, would do them harm in the country. The phraseology has been altered, and to the casual mind it will appear to be less binding. But in substance and fact the amendment is just as binding as if the original recommendation had been carried. When in garbled form that resolution was obtained by the Press, a leading article was written which proclaimed a victory for Responsible Government. But that article was a little premature, because during the next two days other amendments to the constitution were brought forward by the executive and were made, amendments of equal binding force with resolution No. 1, which I have read. It was too early to say they were out of the wood when the first resolution was dealt with and published in garbled form. I say that resolution No. 1 absolutely binds members to the decision of that conference. Coming to resolution No. 2, I here quote the "West Australian" when it was commenting

on the recommendations of the executive some days before the conference met—

Judgment was practically issued before the pleas were heard, for the executive had prepared a series of resolutions which, by demanding that the Parliamentary members should surrender their opinions to this outside body, by implication condemned them for their works.

It was recognised by the writer of that article that the question of freedom or liberty, outside dictation or no outside dictation, did not depend upon the first motion but depended upon a series of resolutions. What is the nature of the other resolutions which were carried after the first one was dealt with? Let me quote the plank dealing with an important matter as it existed prior to the conference of last week. It read—

The Country Party in both Houses shall, upon all party measures outlined in the political platform, vote solid and as a majority of the party dictates at a properly constituted party meeting. Any member or members voting against the decision shall be deemed to be no longer a member or members of the party.

That is quite in conformity with the methods adopted by nearly every political party.

Mr. Munsie: Except that they call ours a caucus

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is precisely on all fours with the methods adopted by our party. On matters affecting their platform and policy, the party in Parliament shall meet and shall vote solid according to the decision of that conference. That is the plank as it appeared in the constitution of the Country Party prior to the meeting of the conference. How does it read to-day?

The Country Party in both Houses shall endeavour to secure the adoption of the policy as expressed in the political platform and on such measures shall vote solidly. In regard to these matters the party shall endeavour to have initiated and shall solidly support measures in accordance with the general policy of the association and as may be decided at a conference held in accordance with Clause 51.

Members will see the difference. As it stood in the old platform, no outside body or set of men were brought into consultation at all with members of the Country Party. They had no voice, say or vote in the decisions of the party. The party were free to meet as other parties meet in order to discuss and decide questions affecting their platform, and were bound to vote accordingly. That was the position originally. To-day it states that on these matters, not that the party shall decide, but that the party shall be called into conference with the outside executive and shall vote solidly in accordance with Clause 51, which means that it shall be the decision of the association. This is the second resolution, which is of equal importance with the first one upon which the whole of the supposed triumph of the party was based.

Mr. Lutley: The key to the arch.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is resolution No. 2—"They shall vote as may be decided at a conference held in accordance with Clause 51." That is to say, they shall go down and meet the executive and vote in accordance with the decision of the conference. Is that not bringing into the deliberations of the party this outside and irresponsible executive, and giving them a voice in the affairs of the party? On any matter whatsoever, not only with regard to their platform, but it might be with matters of legislation, administration or anything else which might come up for discussion by this House, the executive have the power to demand a conference.

Mr. A. Thomson: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I say it has.

Mr. A. Thomson: It has not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I say it has, and the very fact that this resolution and the other resolutions were entirely evaded by the hon. member's leader shows that it is so. The party are compelled to go into conference with this executive. Again I say that the only relief from that position, the only escape members have from accepting the decision of the conference is to refuse to attend the conference and to say they decline to be bound by the decisions arrived at last week at the Primary Producers' Conference. That is the only escape. If members join in a conference to discuss with the outside executive Bills or any public matter whatsoever coming before this House, they are bound by the vote and the decision of the conference.

Mr. Denton: Not this Parliament.

Mr. Corboy: According to the decision, you are.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether the decisions are binding on present members, or whether they are to be binding on members to be elected in future.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is your pledge? Is it on the platform on which you are elected?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, on the platform on which we are elected. That applies during the period of the Parliament. A Labour conference was held during the present year, but the decisions of that conference will have effect as from the next elections. They will not be binding on members sitting in the present Parliament. I do not know whether that is similar to the Country Party.

The Minister for Agriculture: Absolutely.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If it is similar, what is the conference for?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I accept the Minister's statement that present members are not bound by the conference decisions of last week, but if that is so, why provide machinery for calling them to a conference? It would clear the whole situation if members would answer that. I would not take up the time of the House further if members would say. Members of the Country Party exhibited no keen desire to speak at

all. They sat silent and allowed their leader to speak, and he told us nothing. They were quite willing that the amendment should be put. In fact, it was being put by Mr. Speaker when I stood up. There was no desire on the part of members to explain their position.

The Minister for Agriculture: We are only following the usual order of debate.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Will the Minister say that his leader took part in the debate at all?

The Minister for Agriculture: The debate in this House?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. The Minister means one speaker from each side of the House.

The Minister for Agriculture: You followed the Premier.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) followed the Premier and the leader of the Country Party followed my colleague. Does the Minister say that his leader took part at all in the debate?

Mr. Lutey: He would not like to say.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If members of the Country Party say that these resolutions are not binding upon them—

Mr. Heron: They know they are.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And that these resolutions will be binding only upon members who submit themselves to election under their constitution at the next general election, and that they do not consider these resolutions applicable to them at all, and that they do not propose to join in any conference should an attempt be made by the executive to call a conference, then of course the whole force of the amendment passes away.

The Minister for Agriculture: Did you ever do it yourself?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have never been placed in a similar position to that in which the Minister finds himself. In spite of calculated, systematic misrepresentation which has been carried on continuously in the country and in the Press of the country, I say now—and it cannot be repeated too often—that during an experience of 17 years in Parliament, nearly five of which were spent as a member of the Government, never once have I been called to an executive meeting of the Labour Party, and there are members in this House who have been associated with me during the greater portion of that time and can bear out what I have stated. Not once have they ever attempted to dictate to me or to any member of the party, and I have never once been called to an executive meeting either to explain my actions, or to accept instructions, or to discuss with the executive any matter of legislation or administration.

Mr. Heron: Some of the Country Party will not be able to say that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If Ministers and members associated with the Country Party will

say, as they were whispering pretty freely in the corridors last week to the accompaniment of much head shaking, like men going to execution, "If these recommendations of the executive be carried, I for one will pull out," the position will be made much clearer. They made no secret in the corridors of what they would do. They were not going to be bound by any of these decisions. The time is here and now when they should be frank and honest with their electors and take them into their confidence. Let them make the statement here that they propose to ignore the decisions of the conference and do not propose to comply with the resolutions carried last week. If they do this they will absolve themselves from any charge of being subservient to this outside junta. If, when the next elections come around, other men are willing to submit themselves as candidates for Parliament with these hobbles and shackles upon them, and if they find constituencies which will return them to Parliament, the position will be different. They will have at least some authority and justification for falling into line with the executive's decision if they have first of all secured the endorsement of the electors. I have quoted two of the resolutions passed by the conference both of which absolutely bind members to join in conference with the executive and accept the decision. There was a third resolution affecting the Country Party's participation in the present Government. The executive pressed the following motion, the executive who had been defeated two days previously:—

"That the second sentence of Clause 53, reading as follows, be deleted, namely, 'That the whole party may coalesce with any other party, and that in the event of such coalition, members of the party may take portfolios.'"

That was the old constitution. It was left entirely to the judgment of Parliamentary members to decide whether they should join any coalition with any other party, or would support any other party. No outside executive had any say whatsoever until last week. The executive of the association had no voice upon the question of coalition with any other party in this House. Members here were responsible to their constituents. That, however, was all struck out, and the deletion was pressed, we are informed, by the executive. This is what was inserted instead—

"and that the following words be added in lieu thereof, 'That in the event of it being considered desirable for the party to enter into a working arrangement or a coalition with any other party, the whole matter shall be in the hands of a joint committee, consisting of the executive council and the Country Party.'"

The report goes on to say—

This provided the chief debate of the day, since seven branches had given notices of motion breaking the coalition. In the end the executive's proposal won.

This is the executive which was wiped out and suffered an ignominious defeat. This was

the executive which was stretching out for power over Parliamentary members, and which received a well-deserved rap over the knuckles, so the people were told. What power does the carrying of the motion confer upon the executive? In pursuance of the power given by that motion another resolution was carried instructing the executive to call the necessary conference to deal with the question of the present coalition. Under that motion they have power to call a conference next week of Parliamentary representatives, the executive to decide as to their relationship with the coalition, and they have been instructed so to do. This is to be called for the purpose of deciding whether they shall continue to participate in the government of the country, and as to their attitude generally towards the coalition. If these resolutions are binding only upon members elected to the next Parliament, and not upon those in the present Parliament, why was this further motion carried—

That this conference entrusts to the executive the calling of a conference in the terms of amended Clause 51 of the constitution for the purpose of examining the present working arrangement between the Country Party and the Government, and for devising means whereby the platform of the association shall be more adequately given effect to.

They have instructed the executive to call this necessary conference to decide as to the attitude of the party towards the coalition. Has there ever been, in any British governing country, an instance of an outside executive, which has not secured the suffrages of the electors of any constituency in the country, which has not received the vote of any elector in the State, which is entirely, so far as this House is concerned, an extraneous body, having had handed to it the power to compel Parliamentary members to meet it in conference, and to decide the question as to their relationship towards the party or the coalition? There can be no shirking such plain language. And yet, in the face of the definite and specific resolutions I have just read we are told that the position is otherwise. Here we have an outside body saying to its members, "You withdraw to-morrow from the present Government." It is for members to say whether they propose to attend such conference—I take it the executive will carry out the instructions of conference—should the executive proceed to give effect to the resolutions. Do members and Ministers intend to go to that conference and participate in its deliberations, or do they intend to ignore it? These are plain and straightforward questions that have arisen as a result of the decision of conference last week. They demand not a mere glossing over in the columns of the Press, or garbled resolutions, but a plain and straightforward answer. When that answer is supplied by the members affected by these decisions it will then be, and not until then, for the people to say whether there was a victory last week for responsible government,

or a defeat, the consequence of which will be so far reaching in the political and public life of the country that no man can say where it will end. These are questions which the leader of the Country Party did not touch upon, and did not make the slightest attempt to deal with. Neither did the Premier touch upon them. I can excuse the Premier for not doing so, and can understand why he did not.

Mr. Davies: He is not a member of the party and could not be expected to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I can understand the difficult position in which the Premier finds himself. When he was prevented, in accordance with the Standing Orders, from dealing with the general policy of land settlement he immediately collapsed. He did not deal with the resolutions. He was not present at the conference. No doubt, in his busy hours and days during the past week or so he scarcely found time to follow closely the decisions of the conference, or to analyse the wording of the different resolutions. No explanation has been offered and no defence has been put forward either to-night in this House, in the columns of the Press, or elsewhere. Some settlement of the question should be arrived at before it is finally disposed of. It demands a clear statement from members concerned as to what action they will take in pursuance of the resolution carried last week. We have reached a critical stage in the Parliamentary government of this country. If we, meeting such a position for the first time in our history, under which an outside executive has by resolution taken control over the actions of members elected to this House, do not take action to clear up the matter, we shall be recreant to the best traditions of responsible British government. The amendment moved by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) was not only warranted, but his case was proved up to the hilt. He proved that an outside body had taken power unto itself, and that it had won in the contest, if there was a contest, all along the line. This outside body won, notwithstanding the valiant fight put up by the modern Horatius from Gascoyne, who held the bridge, almost alone, supported only, we are told, by the member for Kimberley and one or two others. There was one who stood on his right hand and another who stood on his left hand and held the bridge with him. So valiant was the fight that even the ranks—not of Tuscan—of Tammany could scarce forbear to cheer. I care not whether members submit to the resolutions or defy them. At least the conscience of members will be clear upon the matter. At least we shall have done our utmost to prevent this arrogant and impudent attempt on the part of an outside body to control the representatives in this House. I hope the result will be that we shall be able to say in very truth, based upon a declaration made by members, and not upon the garbled statements that have appeared, there was a victory for responsible government at that conference last week.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany—on amendment) [8.27]: After listening carefully to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition I was almost persuaded this matter was a serious one, until I again looked at the amendment of the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), and came back to the situation as I thought I had discovered it when I first read the amendment. It is serious if it has the effect of making inroads into our system of constituted authority and constitutional government. Having had about 18 years experience in politics, I have learned that all parties that have ever come into existence, and particularly when they have had executive bodies to deal with, once having felt that they possess some power are not slow to exercise it. I suppose the primary producers are not any more backward than any other organisation. It is only human nature that this should be so. If an individual feels that he has unlimited power he will endeavour to exercise it, and may exercise it in a direction opposed to the public interest. I suppose it is only what might be expected as the outcome of the rapid growth of a party that has made some headway in political affairs in Western Australia. The member for Kanowna in his speech, and the Leader of the Opposition by his utterances, have asked quite a number of questions. Do we propose to do this or that? The member for Kanowna, however, did not submit any question before moving his amendment. He took too much for granted. He said Ministers had acquiesced in the position. He did not ask a question and await an answer.

Hon. P. Collier: It is the only method we have of getting an answer.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He has asked this House to carry an amendment to the Address-in-reply because he has concluded, before asking a question and awaiting an answer, that a certain course of action is being followed by Ministers of the Crown and will be followed in the future. I venture to say that in connection with the amendment the wish was father to the thought. Unquestionably, the desire of the mover was to place certain Ministers in a false position relatively to other Ministers, and in a false position from the point of view of the outside public. I suppose the hon. member, in his capacity as an adherent of the Opposition, is entitled to take that course of action. But he should at least have waited for an answer before submitting such an amendment to the Address-in-reply, an amendment so definite in its purpose. It says—

Certain of your advisers have, by association with and membership of a political organisation, declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisations have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government.

Then the hon. member attempted to make a case. But the hon. member knows quite well that all political bodies which have regular conferences for the purposes of deciding on their political course of action must meet at certain intervals, and that they are not always in a position to decide that such a conference shall be held at such a time as will not result in placing some of their existing members in a false position. He knows quite well that the party to which he is attached hold from time to time political conferences, draw up platforms, and extract promises from all standing for the party that they will adhere to the platform.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How can they do that when they hold conferences only once in three years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member knows quite well that the party hold conferences oftener than once in three years.

Mr. Munsie: For special purposes.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, special purposes affecting their political course of action.

Mr. Munsie: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That has not been so in my time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When there was recently a political disturbance, the party called a political conference in Melbourne.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was not the Labour Party.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, the Labour Party.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why do not you speak of Western Australia? Why do you go to Melbourne? Why do not you go to England?

Mr. Munsie: They did not call a special conference. They have not held a special conference.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member knows quite well that those who are attached to the party to which he himself belongs here in Western Australia are equally concerned with the political course of action that affects the party's Federal members.

Mr. Munsie: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Therefore, if I can show that the party have held political conferences in Melbourne during the period of an elected Federal House—

Mr. Munsie: They have not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES:—political conferences to decide on political courses of action, they cannot complain if any other political organisation follows their example.

Mr. Munsie: They have never done as you suggest.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They have, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. Simons: The Minister has always denied it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I say that the political Labour Party have never called upon the members of that party, once pledged to a platform, to reverse their attitude on even a single plank until they had again faced their constituents. I want to tell my

friends opposite that there is no power on earth can make me change my platform until I have again faced my electors.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is what we want.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As a matter of fact, it is not what hon. members opposite want.

Mr. Corboy: Was the conference necessary?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Am I to accept the attitude of hon. members opposite? If so, let the hon. member withdraw his amendment.

Mr. Teesdale: They want to damn you right through the State.

Mr. Munsie: The amendment has gone a good way to do that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Members sitting on the cross benches, and I myself, have attached our names to a pledge that we will obtain, if we can, the carrying out of our platform by Parliament, and that we will fully support the platform which we submitted to our constituents when we were elected in 1921. I have not guaranteed to anyone, and I do not propose to guarantee to anyone, that I will submit to any conference or executive my pledge to adhere to that platform, because that pledge is given, not to a political body, but to my electors. The hon. member cannot tell me that he has not been reading the newspapers.

Mr. Underwood: You too have been reading them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member has been asleep for the last half hour. Hon. members opposite, if they have been reading the Press, will be aware that I said publicly in my own constituency that I pledged myself to a certain course of action as a member of the Mitchell Administration, as a part of that Administration which had accepted a very important section of the platform of the party to which I belong. I asked for my constituents' endorsement of my attitude. I obtained it. I said to my constituents that there was no power on earth that would cause me to waver in my adherence to the Mitchell Administration so long as the Administration adhered to the platform which I had submitted to my constituents. If any variation takes place, it will take place by the direction of my constituents, and not otherwise.

Mr. Lutey: They have called a conference for next week; will you go along?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There are hundreds of individuals in the community who are entitled to come along and discuss matters with me and submit advice. I reserve to myself the right to accept their advice if I choose to do so. I have discussed matters with the executive of my party, and am prepared to do so again; but I say that the executive shall not direct me in contravention of that to which I pledge myself before my constituents. However, the executive body have the right to discuss

matters affecting the party's welfare, in the same way as any other executive body have the right to do.

Mr. Munsie: Exactly. We are not disputing that.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not a question of discussing, but of taking the executive in and letting them vote.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know what resolution was carried at the latter end of the conference, and I do not care. What I know is that all that is binding upon me is the platform to which I pledged myself, the things to which I pledged myself, when before my constituents. If there is a difference of opinion existing amongst our members, I cannot help it.

Mr. Underwood: You have been down debating this with them, have you not?

Mr. Simons: No; browbeating.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I may have been debating the matter with them, and I said there what I am saying here. I now declare that this executive, like any other executive, can maintain their existence in the interests of those whom they are attempting to serve, only by taking a definite interest in the welfare of all those in the country districts. Our friends opposite do not object to their executive meeting every night in the week.

Mr. Lambert: But they do not want to make their decisions mandatory.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. On the one hand, if our executive declare that they have the right to say whether the party shall coalesce with another party or not, they can do so, but, on the other hand, they cannot do it as regards an existing Parliament. It cannot be made mandatory upon us, for the reason that we have subscribed only to a definite platform, a platform which has been submitted to our constituents and adopted by them. True, we may have differences of opinion in regard to details of that platform, just as our friends opposite may. Take the plank of the maintenance of a white Australia. We can go on discussing that plank, and have different ideas as to how a white Australia should be secured and maintained. My idea is that we can keep Australia white only by peopling it. Our friends opposite may have the idea that we can maintain a white Australia only by adopting an attitude of hostility towards immigration to Western Australia.

Mr. Corboy: That is not fair; that is drawing the long bow.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We do not want to bring down wages.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I knew exception would be taken to that remark. I am only explaining how wide a platform may be, and how there may arise with regard to it differences of opinion which would be detrimental to the objects of those who had the platform in mind. Our friends opposite are authorised to meet in caucus as we do, and to discuss what is meant by a plank of their platform, and to

come to a decision binding their members, although there may have been differences of opinion amongst them as to how they should vote in this House.

Mr. Munsie: That is right. We do not object to that. But we do not give votes to our executive.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is only a matter of degree.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. One arrives at the same position. The hon. member knows perfectly well that he is continually influenced, perhaps indirectly, but yet continually, in his political actions by discussions which take place at the executive meetings of the organisation to which he is attached.

Mr. Munsie: One gets a lot of useful information there sometimes.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No doubt. Very frequently hon. members opposite are influenced in their course of action by the decisions reached at executive meetings.

Mr. Corboy: But our constitution does not provide that the executive shall sit with us and vote in coming to a decision.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is only a matter of degree.

Mr. Simons: Yours is the third degree.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I passed the third degree long ago.

Hon. P. Collier: But that was only in relation to Como.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not going to discuss this matter at great length, because our friends opposite admit that they have got all they asked for. So there is no need to go on with the amendment. I cannot speak for the rest of my friends on the cross benches, although I venture to say that the interpretation which I have placed upon the matter is the correct one. They have definitely pledged themselves to a platform which is available to anyone for the asking, a platform which has been accepted by their constituents, and in respect of which they pledged themselves to their constituents. I think we are entitled to say that that is the position we are in to-day. Let us take the fence when we come to it. Let the member for Kanowna, if he knows of any action taken by members on the Treasury bench or on the cross benches in the direction which his amendment indicates, seize the earliest opportunity of moving a motion which will bring the matter prominently before the House, so that the House may, if it feels disposed, take some steps. But I do venture to say that the hon. member, at the time when he drafted his amendment and submitted it here, was not very anxious to obtain the answer which he has obtained, but was rather desirous of bringing about some difference of opinion and perhaps some difference of attitude between members sitting on the cross benches and Ministers on the one hand, and members known as National Labour and Nationalists, on the other hand.

Hon. T. Walker: That never entered my thoughts. It was to draw strict attention

to a current fact, to the attempt to muzzle you and others at the instance of King Monger.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will be generous and magnanimous and accept the hon. member's statement and his assurance. I appreciate his keenness to assist me out of my political difficulty. It is more generous than I anticipated because, judging by recent happenings, I imagined that he and others would be more concerned with putting a muzzle on me than with assisting me. I want to impress upon him, however, that he could have obtained what he desired by way of a simple question to the Premier, instead of moving an amendment to the Address-in-reply.

Hon. T. Walker: No.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) could have asked the Premier this question: "Is it a fact that certain of His Excellency's advisers have, by association with and membership of a political organisation, declared themselves obedient and subservient to an extraneous political body, and thus made it impossible for them to independently advise His Excellency?"

Hon. T. Walker: And the answer would be: "This matter is receiving consideration."

Hon. MINISTER FOR MINES: Never mind what the answer might be!

Mr. Teesdale: It is hard to take.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Had the member for Kanowna adopted that course, the Premier could have spoken to me and my other two Country Party colleagues in the Ministry, and he could have asked us if the statements contained in the question enabled him to reply in the negative or in the affirmative. If the answer were in the negative, that would be an end to the matter, just as I hope, when I say "No" to-night that will end it. Should ever the occasion arise when it is otherwise, I invite the member for Kanowna to take the earliest opportunity to submit a motion to this Chamber dealing with the matter, and should he do so, he will get a good deal more support than he imagines at the moment. What I am concerned about more than anything else is the assurance that the hon. member has given that he is keenly desirous of making a constitutional move forward so as to give me some political protection along the road. I accept it and appreciate his generous motives. His assistance may be required. At the moment, however, I am not in much need of it. The hon. member can take my assurance that, after having sat at the head of a Government for five years, I know what it is to have the loyal support of my colleagues. When I am not prepared to give full loyalty to my leader, it will not require direction from any executive to tell me that I cannot continue under that leadership. I have not quite arrived at that stage yet and there is no evidence that I will arrive at that stage even in the near future, notwithstanding all the resolutions carried at the primary producers' conference or elsewhere.

Mr. Underwood: Why carry them, if they are of no use?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I did not carry them. I went down there. I had a hearty reception. I spoke to them and then I left the building.

Mr. Willcock: I came, I saw, I conquered.

Mr. Simons: What did they say after you left?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Perhaps the less said, the better. I want to make it clear, however, that I will not tolerate direction from any organisation that will mean a departure from my pledges when I was before my constituents. I say that on my own behalf and I think I can speak, too, for my friends on the cross benches.

Mr. SIMONS (East Perth—on amendment) [8.50]: I support the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna. We believe that a direct assault has been made upon privileges which we enjoy as members of a House boasting the rights of responsible government. We have heard the case for the prosecution very ably stated by the member for Kanowna. We have not yet heard the main points of the charge properly repudiated by any speakers for the defence.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. SIMONS: It is an opinion that will be endorsed from one end of the State to the other. The Minister for Mines has endeavoured to establish the point that, no matter what the primary producers' conference may order or suggest, no influence on earth can come between himself and his electors at Albany. He has endeavoured to show us that during 18 years of political life, he has learned a great deal of the doings of all political parties.

Mr. Corboy: He has had a wide experience.

Mr. SIMONS: I believe he will have to learn the tricks of all parties to get out of the mesh woven for himself and other members of his party during the past week or two. If the resolutions were not loaded but are ineffective, and if, as the Minister for Mines represents, they will have no bearing on his relationship with his electors, and nothing can be done to disturb his opinions or ideals until the next election, may we ask for an explanation of the statement appearing in the "West Australian" on Friday morning last regarding Clause 51 of the constitution, wherein it was ordered that, in the event of it being desirable that a working arrangement or coalition should be arrived at between the Country Party and the Government, the devising of means by which the policy of the association will more adequately be given effect to shall be considered by a joint meeting of the executive of the Primary Producers' Association and the members of the Parliamentary party? Therein it is indicated that they will not wait for the next election to take definite

action but that steps have already been taken to that end. A point arises as to the organising of the conference between the executive and the members of the Country Party. Who is to control this conference? Who originates it? Who convenes it? Who, but the members of the primary producers' executive?

Mr. Pickering: Why not?

Mr. SIMONS: Yet the Minister for Mines would have us believe that the executive have no control over members of the Country Party. The more we read about this matter, and the more we peruse the reports in the "Primary Producer" and the daily Press relating to the proceedings at the conference, the more definite are our conclusions that Ministers and Country Party members have emerged from the conference in an emasculated condition, bereft of creative powers and rendered impotent to originate legislation except with the consent of the primary producers' executive. Let us briefly review the circumstances in which this king of the primary producers' executive came into the political arena. He came in with an endeavour to override the wisdom of no less a person than the late Lord Forrest. His introduction into the arena was associated with an impertinent act. Since that time the whole of his relationship with the political arena has been based on impertinence.

Mr. A. Thomson: Will you not permit him the right to think?

Mr. SIMONS: Yes, but not the right of the executive of this organisation to dictate to Ministers who should be responsible to this House and to their electors alone. We do not question his right as a citizen to do as he likes, but as members of Parliament we have the right to pronounce judgment on a citizen who desires to dictate to members of this Chamber from without, who desires to have power without responsibility. In every great struggle in countries throughout the world, there has always been that type of citizen who will look on while the battle rages, who will criticise the way the battle is being fought but never enter upon the field of hostilities. It is the same as the spectacle of a farmers' conference led by a farmer who never farms, by a man who indulges his agricultural activities in St. George's-terrace. If we view this spectacle of the joint meetings between Ministers, members and representatives of the primary producers' executive, it is as though members of this Chamber become mere shop assistants in another department located at a warehouse in Wellington-street. They are summoned to the manufacturing department, in which political ideas are turned out and given to Ministers.

Mr. Pickering: Is that the only place where political ideas are manufactured?

Mr. SIMONS: It is the only place where that brand is manufactured.

Mr. Pickering: That brand is as good as any other sort that is manufactured.

Mr. SIMONS: We heard the Minister for Mines say that he had made a declaration of loyalty to the Mitchell Government at Albany. That is quite true. It is also quite true, according to the "West Australian" that, after coming down from a stormy conference in one of the rooms of Parliament House the Minister made a statement that the Country Party only had to disapprove of his acts and he would resign from the Ministry straight away. That has never been repudiated. Does that indicate that the Minister is willing to bend his will to that of his fellow Ministers, or is he willing to conform to their wishes in order to suit the whim of an extraneous body.

The Minister for Mines: That was a meeting of our own party. It had nothing to do with the executive.

Mr. SIMONS: The statement has never been repudiated. If we trace the conception that the primary producers' executive have of the functions of members of Parliament, and more particularly of Ministers, we will find they imagine them to be things of cotton wool and wire, capable of being bent to any shape created in the minds of the executive. That is not my conception of a member of Parliament.

Mr. A. Thomson: Were you not taken to task because you did not get what was desired for a man named Murphy?

Mr. SIMONS: At any rate, I would not be held responsible for the actions of the member for Katanning. If the member for Katanning adopts that view, and goes so red in the face, he reminds me of the fruit that was thrown at one of my colleagues when he spoke against conscription some time ago. When I consider the way members of the primary producers' executive have tried to enter upon the field of politics and control Parliament, I am constrained to read the testimony of the Minister for Works a few years ago. Because the Minister would not bend to their will, we had the spectacle of the executive attempting to assume power to control members of Parliament and pursuing the Minister down to the Murray electorate, chasing him with all the blood-thirstiness of Turks seeking the lives of Christians in Armenia.

Mr. A. Thomson: Just as your party has been chasing the Minister for Mines.

Mr. SIMONS: I have never chased him. I regard him as one of the best men we have in the House. He is open to correction, however, and the amendment furnishes that correction.

Mr. A. Thomson: What about the 25 spruikers at Albany?

Mr. SIMONS: Had the member for Katanning been there, the jaw bone of an ass would have been introduced into the controversy. We are called upon to express an opinion as to whether we are going to stand for the presumptuous efforts made by an extraneous executive to control the affairs of this House. If that executive were possessed of creative genius, one might excuse them. But what do we find? The greatest

effort of will force which that executive could bring to bear was incapable of getting sufficient support for the establishment of abattoirs at Fremantle; the only time they ever launched out on a real business enterprise they had to go whining to the Government for assistance.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot proceed on those lines.

Mr. SIMONS: I am sorry, Sir, for I have something good to say. Had you not forbidden me, I should have remarked that this extraneous body to which we are asked to hand over the making and unmaking of Governments, did not have sufficient ability to organise a common slaughterhouse. We are called upon to register our votes to-night in one of two directions: we are going to place it on record either that we stand for control by an outside executive, or that we stand true to the best traditions of Parliamentary government. Any executive which attempts to use members of Parliament as so many heaps of potter's clay to be moulded at will, should be put where it belongs. It is the function of Parliament to register in emphatic manner a protest against any executive attempting to usurp powers which it is the privilege of members of Parliament exclusively to exercise.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex—on amendment) [9.5]: I congratulate the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), the Leader of the Opposition, and the member for East Perth (Mr. Simons) on the propaganda they have put up to deter their own executive from imposing on them what they say our executive has attempted to put on us. This want of confidence motion and its accompanying tirade are directed, not at the Government, but at the Country Party. Never since I have been a member has an opportunity been missed by the Opposition to abuse the Country Party. The reason is that the Opposition realise that the Country Party is one of the straightest that ever existed in any House, and is out solely for the advancement of the State. They attack us because they fear the progress we have made in the confidence of the people. If the Leader of the Opposition had read our constitution, he would have read Clause 49 when dealing with the resolutions.

Mr. A. Thomson: He did not want to read that.

Mr. PICKERING: I will read it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has it any bearing on the question before the House?

Hon. P. Collier: I know that clause. It has no bearing whatever on the question before the House.

Mr. PICKERING: Clause 49 reads as follows:—

The party representing the association in the State and Federal Parliaments shall be designated the "Country Party." Each member of the party shall be bound absolutely in principle and detail to the platform established for the life of the Parliament for which he is elected.

I will read also the platform to which we are pledged, as follows:—

1. The maintenance of the principle of freehold tenure of land.
2. An organised system of assisted immigration with a view to a vigorous policy of land settlement.
3. Construction of railways to already settled areas, and further extensions to precede settlement.
4. Bulk handling of grain.
5. Improvement of accommodation and facilities for the handling and disposal of produce.
6. Decentralisation and the utilisation of all natural ports for shipping local produce.
7. Vigorous and comprehensive policy of water conservation, and irrigation and drainage, with due regard to existing rights.
8. Extension of agricultural education.
9. Abolition of protection in favour of a revenue tariff.
10. Compulsory preferential voting, and voting by post with proper safeguards.
11. Economical administration of Government departments and expenditure of public funds.
12. Maintenance of a White Australia.
13. Women's hospital.
14. Local option.
15. Parliamentary salaries to be altered by referendum only.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what this has to do with the amendment.

Mr. PICKERING: There is only one other plank which, by your leave, Sir, I should like to read in order to complete the platform, namely, the encouragement of the spirit of nationhood amongst the Australian people, the maintenance of constitutional government and the integrity of the Empire. If there is anything in the policy of the Country Party to which anybody can take exception, I should like to hear it. The Leader of the Opposition introduced certain resolutions dealt with at the conference, including the following:—

In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason the council may at the request of the Parliamentary party or at its own discretion convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party and based on equal voting the decision shall be recorded as the decision of the association and shall be reported to the next conference.

It must have been evident to everybody at the conference that in view of Clause 49 of our constitution no procedure which might be instituted under that new clause could be given effect to during the life of the present Parliament. It was necessary, therefore, that the experience obtained at the conference which might be held should be recorded and submitted to the next succeeding annual conference; for the next succeeding annual conference would take place before the next election, and it would be open to that conference to decide whether it would be wise to perpetuate such amendments as might have been introduced. Members of the party cannot be expected to observe anything passed at the conference which is contrary to the platform we have all signed. There is no reason why members of the party

should not consult with the executive on any matters of importance. Our executive is equal to any executive in Australia in its determination to do only what is best for the State. Since I have been a member of the Country Party we have never suffered any indignity at the hands of the executive, nor has any attempt been made by the executive to override or harshly deal with members of Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: What about "my most painful duty"?

The Minister for Works: Please explain the carpeting of Mr. Willmott.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think that has anything to do with the amendment before the House. When in regard to any of the amendments made to our constitution I say we are not bound by them, I say also that if it applies in one case it applies in all. They have no weight with members of the Country Party to-day. While I think the propaganda put forward under this amendment has for its object the deterring of the executive behind the Labour Party from adopting tactics inimical to that party, I feel sure the remarks of the member for Kanowna and of the Leader of the Opposition will go far to awaken amongst our conference delegates a sense of responsibility.

Hon. P. Collier: That is what we had in view.

Mr. PICKERING: But since the whole of this fuss has been made on constitutional grounds, I suggest there was a motion for which the Leader of the Opposition could have successfully claimed considerable support, namely one based on the construction of the Como tramway.

Mr. Lambert: You move it.

Mr. PICKERING: It is the privilege of the Leader of the Opposition to move it on constitutional grounds. If he had desired to move a vote of no-confidence with any chance of success, he could have taken the Como tramway for his text.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Como tramway is not under discussion.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to deal with the question of the "Primary Producer" and the resolution which first appeared in the "West Australian." I was one of the members who stayed till the last to hear the fate of the motion. From memory, I say that the resolution read out to us was on the lines of that which appeared in the "West Australian."

Hon. P. Collier: Do you say that the secretary's statement was incorrect?

Mr. PICKERING: From memory I say the motion read out was on the lines of that published in the "West Australian."

Hon. P. Collier: Would you pit your memory against Mr. Sutcliffe's statement?

Mr. PICKERING: I simply say that is my recollection of the motion. When I tell you that Mr. Sutcliffe and Mr. E. B. Johnston are both on the editorial committee of the "Primary Producer," you can be quite sure that it fairly well expresses the opinion of the Country Party. Seeing that the reso-

lution was carried on the Wednesday, and the paper issued on the Friday afternoon, if there was a mistake, I am surprised that Mr. Sutcliffe did not know of it.

Hon. P. Collier: You must have known if it was the correct resolution. Why did not you say so?

Mr. A. Thomson interjected.

Hon. P. Collier: Oh, shut up!

Mr. PICKERING: It was only read at that meeting and, so far as my memory serves, it was the resolution subsequently published.

The Minister for Works: Surely the resolution was officially recorded!

Mr. PICKERING: The editor of the "Primary Producer" was present, and no doubt had an opportunity to see the motion as it was passed. This no-confidence motion is intended, not for the Government, but for the Country Party.

Hon. P. Collier: It was aimed straight at you.

Mr. PICKERING: This attack is the usual thing after every conference. If there is anything the Country Party stands for and tries to get through, it is opposed by the Opposition. On the other hand, if the Opposition tries to get something through with which we do not agree, the Government sweeps us into the background. Thus the two parties are being used to defeat each other. That is the position in which we find ourselves.

Mr. Clydesdale: A very bad alliance.

Mr. Corboy: You ought to help us to get your Ministers out.

Mr. PICKERING: I was on the executive when the constitution was framed and we took the constitution of the A.L.P. as a model.

Hon. P. Collier: You did not; you kept well away from it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The constitution of the A.L.P. or Country Party is not under discussion.

Mr. PICKERING: The sole thing discussed by the Leader of the Opposition, by the member for North-East Fremantle and by the member for East Perth has been our constitution and its amendments.

Hon. P. Collier: But you are dealing with it in a very irrelevant way.

Mr. SPEAKER: The debate has hinged on the conference which sat last week.

Mr. PICKERING: Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. We realised that the Labour Party's constitution was the best of its kind. We saw how their organisation had led to success and decided to adopt their policy in this respect, and the result which has attended our efforts has proved the wisdom of the step.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must keep to the amendment.

Hon. P. Collier: A direct mis-statement is not argument.

Mr. PICKERING: Whilst I am anxious to keep to the amendment, it is impossible to do so when there are so many interruptions.

Hon. P. Collier: When you are sitting on the Forests Commission, you can cover the whole ground.

Mr. Clydesdale: You are sticking well to that job.

Mr. PICKERING: The remarks of members regarding the Commission do not worry me.

Hon. P. Collier: You have no standing orders there.

Mr. PICKERING: The Forests Commission was appointed by this House and should be supported by members of this House. If members hold it up to ridicule they are really belittling a decision of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep to the question.

Mr. PICKERING: I was about to explain that when our constitution was framed other parties, with the exception of the Labour Party, had no organisation worth speaking of and their constitutions were never amended. I would like to read a paragraph which appeared in the "West Australian" of Thursday, 10th August—

Sydney, 9th August. The members of the A.L.P. executive regard as a vote of censure the decision of the Parliamentary Labour Caucus demanding an inquiry—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That has nothing to do with the question.

Mr. PICKERING: If I am not permitted to read that paragraph, I would commend it to the notice of members of the Labour Party. They will find it in Thursday's issue of the "West Australian" immediately beneath the report from which they have been quoting so copiously. As a member of the Country Party I hope to be loyal to my tenets, to my faith, and to my executive. I have always found the executive a body anxious to help members of the party.

Member: The same declaration of faith as the Minister for Railways.

Mr. PICKERING: The Minister for Railways is a member of our party and we can deal it out to him as we like. My attitude towards the Minister for Railways has not been hidden but has been pretty apparent.

The Minister for Works: What about your constituents?

Mr. PICKERING: My constituents would not have returned me a second time if they had not been satisfied. When I went before my constituents I went before them on this platform and, as a member of the Country Party and of the Primary Producers' Association, and I was returned by a much bigger majority than on the former occasion.

Mr. Willcock: It had necessarily to be a bigger majority. It could not have been smaller.

Mr. PICKERING: If the hon. member had been opposing the same member, he would not have been in the running.

Mr. Clydesdale: Your constituents have been sorry ever since.

Mr. PICKERING: I had a very worthy opponent and I was proud at having beaten him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Your opponent has nothing to do with the question. If the hon. member does not keep to the amendment, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. Lambert: The hon. member is floundering a bit.

Hon. P. Collier: He has a lot of material before him.

Mr. PICKERING: After having heard two or three representatives of my party take from me matter which I had prepared it is very hard—

Hon. P. Collier: Your leader took most of it from you.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes. The amendment in no way affects the Government and it in no way affects the Country Party. Members of the Country Party are entirely free from any of the resolutions passed at the recent conference and therefore there is no reason why the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna should be carried by the House.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies—on amendment) [9.20]: The amendment to the Address-in-reply moved by the member for Kanowna may do a considerable amount of good at this juncture, inasmuch as it will forcibly direct attention to the methods adopted by parties in this State. If I for one moment thought that the resolutions passed at the primary producers' conference held last week would have the effect indicated by the member for Kanowna, I would not have the slightest hesitation in supporting the amendment. We are now faced with this position: We have Ministers of the Crown who have taken the oath of allegiance to serve His Majesty the King to the best of their capacity and ability.

Hon. P. Collier: Which king?

Mr. MULLANY: If those gentlemen are going to be led so far from the path of duty as has been suggested, they are not fit to act as Ministers and advisers to His Excellency the Governor as representative of His Majesty the King. The Leader of the Opposition was frank enough to admit that nothing of the sort had occurred in the past, but he was afraid that the resolutions passed last week would prevent Ministers from giving true service as they are bound by their oath of allegiance to do. I am pleased to have the assurance of the Minister for Railways—a member of the Country Party—and of other members of the Country Party that they are not going to be bound by the resolutions passed at the conference. We have the word of these gentlemen that they are free to act according to the dictates of their consciences in carrying out their duties as members of this Assembly in accordance with the pledges given to their constituents at the time of their election. I have heard it stated in many quarters to-day that a motion of this nature, emanating from the party from which it has emanated, savours

somewhat of the pot calling the kettle black. From my knowledge of political parties there may be a substratum of truth in that statement, but if the Country Party were bound by the resolutions of this outside executive, they would be many shades blacker than the Labour Party ever were. There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether political parties serve any good purpose. Political parties are absolutely legitimate organisations if conducted in a proper manner. Citizens who band themselves together to form a political platform which they consider to be in the interests of the State are quite within their rights in doing so, but the history of political parties in Australia points to the fact that these organisations have within themselves the elements of disintegration and decay. These elements appear to take effect when a party attain a certain amount of success. There can be no doubt that this was the experience of the Labour Party of Australia. I do not intend to make any charge against that political organisation but I believe that many men left the Labour Party because of the pin-pricks from outside organisations and executives. Exactly the same experience seems to be befalling the Country Party. One member stated to-night that the platform of the Country Party had been formulated on that of the Australian Labour Party. That was certainly a compliment to the methods and organisation of the Labour Party, but in the opinion of many people the Country Party to-day are approaching the point at which the Labour struck definite and serious trouble. If any party of Parliamentarians thought for one moment of bowing to the resolutions which have been published—irrespective of which is the correct one; either would be bad enough—they would not be fit to represent any of the constituencies.

The Minister for Works: They ought to be deported from Australia.

Mr. MULLANY: British people will not tolerate any outside organisation or executive attempting to dictate to members of Parliament as to how they shall meet any situation or vote on any question outside of the platform to which they are pledged. Any political party attempting to do that will not live, and it would be bad indeed for the State if political parties who attempted to do this sort of thing could live. I am speaking frankly and not with any desire of injuring the Country Party when I say that it is our duty to prevent any such party from living. I do not intend to support the amendment. Nothing has been said which leads me to believe that Ministers or members of the Country Party will accept the position of being dictated to by an outside executive. If the executive desires to have the powers indicated by the resolutions passed by the conference, the least they could do would be to request to be sworn in and take the oath of allegiance which members of

Parliament are called upon to do. The position may be serious from this aspect. If these people are going to attempt to usurp the functions of Parliament it is clearly a case for the Loyalty League to inquire into. The member for Leederville (Mr. Carter) and the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) a little time ago introduced a deputation to the Acting Premier asking him to bring in legislation to force every school teacher in the State to take the oath of allegiance. We may discuss that legislation when it comes here, but if private persons are going to claim such powers as they are asking under these resolutions the Loyalty League must see that they take the oath of allegiance.

Mr. Carter: Are they not all British subjects?

Mr. MULLANY: If the League will not do this it is time they went permanently into recess. I do not know whether members of the executive of the Farmers and Settlers' Association are all British subjects. That is a matter for the League to inquire into. They may be all British subjects to-day, but later on new members may be appointed, some of whom may be Bolsheviks.

Mr. Carter: I am not a Bolshevik.

Mr. MULLANY: If I thought members and Ministers were prepared to accept the dictates of the executive I would have no hesitation in supporting the amendment, but as I hold a contrary opinion my intention is not to support it.

Mr. Teesdale: And many others would join you if that were the case.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans—on amendment) [9.33]: Irrespective of the result of the amendment I contend that it has served a useful purpose so far as the people of the State are concerned.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. MUNSIE: As a direct result of the amendment we have a declaration from a Minister of the Crown and from a private member of the Country Party that otherwise we would not have had.

Mr. A. Thomson: That does not alter the conditions.

Mr. MUNSIE: Had the amendment not been moved I am positive that in compliance with the request of the executive, as published in the Press, every member of the Country Party, including Ministers, would have tramped down and sat cheek by jowl with the executive to confer as to whether Ministers had the right to continue to hold office or not.

Hon. T. Walker: And next week too.

Mr. MUNSIE: Why was the resolution carried at the last sitting of the conference if it was not intended to give effect to it? It is common talk amongst primary producers that this conference will be held. It is not yet definitely decided whether the three representatives of the party in Cabinet will retain office or not. I am pleased we have had a definite declaration from one of the Ministers that he, at all events, does not intend to be bound by the resolution. Many statements from the speech delivered by Mr. Monger

at the opening of the conference have been referred to in the course of the debate. Members of the Country Party tried to lead the House to believe that there was nothing in the resolutions. One statement was made by Mr. Monger concerning legislation that is to come forward during this session, legislation that was referred to in the Speech, and which members of the Country Party knew the Government would introduce. Mr. Monger said that in his opinion every landholder should have the right to re-assess his land, on a basis different from the assessment of the Taxation Department, before the Government were given the right under that legislation to resume such land for closer settlement purposes.

Hon. P. Collier: That will be in the Bill too.

Mr. MUNSIE: Members of the executive will sit with members of the Parliamentary party, each side having equal voting powers, to deal with this question. I have never heard of any Parliamentary party, or of any party, attempting anything in the direction outlined by these resolutions. For ten years I have been a member of this House, and for five years sat behind Labour Government. I have repeatedly heard members, who are still sitting in this Chamber, say that the Labour Party were governed by the very means that we object to seeing the Country Party governed by.

The Minister for Works: I have heard the same statement myself.

Mr. MUNSIE: I heard the Minister make it times without number when he sat on this side of the House. The Press published the statement so often that many people began to believe it.

Mr. Harrison: Why follow that example?

Mr. MUNSIE: Even the head joss of the Country Party has come to believe it, but he himself has now suggested that he should take this power, and by the resolution which was carried he obtained it. After the discussion to-night I cannot conceive that one member of the Country Party will allow himself to be made use of in the way indicated. The amendment that has been moved has served a useful purpose, if only for the admission we have had from a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan—on amendment) [9.40]: No lengthy reply is needed on the amendment, for the details have already been traversed at great length. A jealous regard has been shown by the member for Kanowna towards the Country Party. I fully appreciate the display of words we have had from him. He delighted the House, and I enjoyed his remarks. He and other members must know that no organisation could hope to bring in a clause which would operate during the life of this Parliament.

Mr. Munsie: The conference has been called already.

Mr. SAMPSON: Under Clause 49 each member of the party is bound absolutely in principle and in detail to the platform established for the life of the Parliament to which

he is elected. That is the platform under which all members of the Country Party were elected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that the platform we have heard read ten or twelve times?

Mr. SAMPSON: There is one plank which you, Sir, did not allow to be read even once.

Mr. SPEAKER: It has been read and re-read. At any rate, it has no bearing upon the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: A full reply has been made to the amendment. It has been clearly shown that members are elected on a definite platform, that it is impossible for any organisation to come between them and their electors. It should be impossible for any executive associated with the mover of the amendment to come between him and the electors of Kanowna. I am astonished indeed that he thought it possible such a happening could come to pass in connection with the Country Party.

Mr. Munsie: It would have come to pass but for the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am not inclined to express any gratitude to the mover. A mountain has been made out of a molehill, and the mountain has laboured and brought forth this amendment.

Mr. DAVIES (Guildford—on amendment) [9.43]: Members will agree that the amendment has been shown by the debate to have been justified.

Mr. Lutey: It has brought forth repudiation.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. DAVIES: It has brought forth an admission that, whilst the resolution is not binding upon present members of the Country Party, it may be binding upon those who enter the next Parliament.

Mr. A. Thomson: You do not know that.

Mr. DAVIES: I accept that position from the remarks of the Minister for Railways, and the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering). We have but to recall the words of the President, uttered prior to the meeting of the Primary Producers' Conference. A conference was held by that party last year. After the present Ministry was formed, Mr. Monger announced that for the first time since the inception of the party it had a half representation in Cabinet, and that for the first time in their existence they were going to accept half the responsibility of Government. If the motion carried by conference does not mean that it will bind members, it certainly means that the screw has been put upon those members who belong to Cabinet. If it does mean that, the debate to-night has been justified, because it has pointed out to the country the danger that lies ahead. I hope that the debate which has followed the moving of the amendment will act as a beacon to the members of the Country Party, showing them clearly the rocks which lie ahead of their ship in the direction in which it is being steered to-day. Reference has been made to other parties, and I can subscribe

to what members have expressed concerning a most important party in Australia. An attempt was made between elections to endeavour to get members to submit themselves to resolutions carried by an executive before those resolutions were referred to the electors of Australia.

Mr. Lutey: That party represents the sturdiest ship in Australian political waters to-day.

Mr. DAVIES: I do not hold that opinion, but this is not the time to debate that matter.

Mr. Lutey: Why refer to it then?

Mr. DAVIES: Because it has been denied by the Minister for Mines, a man who should have known better. The Minister denied that an attempt has been made, even by the opposite party—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not see that that has anything to do with the amendment.

Mr. DAVIES: It may not have anything to do with the amendment, but I just refer to it because—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot proceed on those lines. He must keep to the amendment.

Mr. DAVIES: The time is not opportune now, and therefore I will leave that aspect. However, I am prepared at any time, elsewhere, to show that my remarks in that connection would be perfectly justified. It has been admitted by the Minister for Mines, and by the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), that whatever may be in the resolution, it does not bind present members. That, in my opinion, is an admission that the resolution may bind members who come to another Parliament after this one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The amendment does not deal with any other Parliament, but with the present Government, His Majesty's present advisers.

Mr. DAVIES: For that reason I should like to say that there can be only one fate meted out to the amendment which has been moved. Notwithstanding that, however, the member for Kanowna need not be loth to see his amendment defeated. He has justified himself, inasmuch as he has pointed out to the country the dangers which it is likely to incur. I dare to say, too, that if the resolution had not been carried, then, but for this debate, possibly an attempt would have been made to bring members into line with the views held by the executive of the Primary Producers' Association during the life of the present Parliament. I shall record my vote against the amendment when it is submitted to the House.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning—on amendment) [9.50]: As a member of the Country Party I deeply appreciate the sentiments which have been expressed by the Opposition. I appreciate the sincerity of their desire to save unsophisticated members sitting on the cross benches from the pitfalls which hon. members opposite

are themselves anxious to avoid. I have had the privilege of being a member of the Country Party for 4½ years; and I say, knowing it to be perfectly true and correct, that never once has an attempt been made by the executive of the Primary Producers' Association to coerce any member of the Country Party into any action which he had no desire to take, or into any action which would be contrary to the policy of his platform. The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) states that the amendment proposed by the member for Kanowna has been justified. I personally think it has been a waste of time. It has become the custom of the Opposition to attack on every possible occasion the party sitting on the cross benches.

Mr. SPEAKER: The party sitting on the cross benches, I may remind the hon. member, is not under discussion.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I understand that possible actions of the party sitting on the cross benches have been under discussion.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. It is an action by some body outside this Parliament that has been under discussion.

Mr. A. THOMSON: With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, action which will have influence upon the members sitting on the cross benches under the name of the Country Party in this Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: The amendment deals with the Government, with Ministers, with His Excellency's advisers.

Mr. A. THOMSON: And the amendment has been replied to by the Minister for Mines as one of those at whom it is aimed.

Mr. SPEAKER: As a Minister.

Mr. A. THOMSON: As a Minister, and also because of an insinuation that we as members of the Country Party are also—

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no insinuation. The hon. member must keep to the amendment.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I am endeavouring to keep to the amendment, Sir, and to statements made by hon. members sitting in opposition. The member for East Perth (Mr. Simons) challenged the right of a gentleman, by name Mr. Monger, who has the honour of being president of the Primary Producer's Association executive, to interfere in politics. With all due respect to the hon. member, I say that it is the province of every man in this State to take an interest in politics.

The Minister for Works: But not to interfere with politicians.

Mr. A. THOMSON: To take an interest in politics, and to see that the government of the country is carried on upon proper lines. The electors of this State will have their opportunity when the next general election comes along. It is amusing to note the keen desire of members of the Opposition to see that we do not fall into the traps which they themselves endeavour to escape from. I can assure those hon. members of our gratitude for their solicitude. But I think members of the Country Party, and the organisation to which we have the honour to belong—

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that the Country Party is not under discussion.

Mr. A. THOMSON: No, Sir; but the organisation to which I have the honour to belong, and which brought us into existence as a party—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must draw the hon. member's attention to the amendment, which reads—

But this Assembly regrets to have to inform Your Excellency that certain of your advisers have, by association with and membership of a political organisation, declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisation have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is just exactly what I am endeavouring to deal with. You were kind enough, Mr. Speaker, to draw my attention to the fact that the amendment states that certain of His Excellency's advisers have association with and membership in a political organisation. The political organisation which to-night has been charged with endeavouring to subvert constitutional government is the political organisation to which I have the honour to belong.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the hon. member does not happen to be advising the Governor. When the hon. member becomes an adviser of His Excellency, and an amendment like this is before the House, he will then be included.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Hon. members in Opposition who spoke on this amendment took every opportunity of traducing the Primary Producers' Association. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) made use of these words, "The primary producers are controlling this Parliament."

Mr. Simons: Are you a primary producer?

Mr. A. THOMSON: Yes.

Mr. Simons: What do you produce?

Mr. A. THOMSON: More than the hon. member does, anyhow.

Mr. Simons: It is never a marketable commodity. What price do you get for it?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. A. THOMSON: It is time hon. members opposite accepted the position, that we as an organisation are entitled to voice our opinions in this House. While we have heard a great deal about outside organisations controlling, if I may be permitted to read this pledge, which we as members of the Country Party—

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that the Country Party is not under discussion. It is the advisers of His Excellency.

Mr. A. THOMSON: And the amendment deals with the Constitution.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must keep to the amendment.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is so, and this is a pledge which the Ministers under discussion have signed. The pledge has not been quoted to-night, and I would like to read it for the benefit of those hon. members who are so solicitous for our welfare.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If you were more solicitous, you would not have anything to do with it. You only joined the Country Party because you were afraid of being defeated.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is a deliberate misstatement and a lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not make a statement like that to another hon. member. The hon. member must withdraw the statement.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I will withdraw the statement that it is a lie, and I will say that it is—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw without qualification.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The member for North-East Fremantle has no right to make such a charge as he has levelled at me. May I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member be requested to withdraw the statement which he has just made?

Mr. SPEAKER: What statement?

Mr. A. THOMSON: That I joined the Country Party because I was afraid of losing my seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member take that statement as a reflection?

Mr. A. THOMSON: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask the member for North-East Fremantle to withdraw the statement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I withdraw it. I will do anything for the sake of the hon. member's peace of mind.

Mr. A. THOMSON: There are some hon. members of whom one does not need to take much notice.

Mr. Lutcy: You are one of them.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The pledge which the Ministers have signed reads—

I hereby undertake, if elected, to adhere absolutely to the principles and details of the party platform established for the life of the Parliament to which I am elected, and also to conform with the policy and the constitution of the Primary Producers' Association.

Is there anything dishonourable in signing a pledge such as that? Any honourable man who has come in as a Liberal, without any platform to sign, but conforms to the platform of the party which he is desirous of representing in Parliament, may sign the platform of the Country Party. I cannot see that in signing that platform he does any harm. Whilst appreciating the kindness of hon. members opposite, I wish to remark that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. As a matter of fact, at the very meeting at which the amendment was probably framed yesterday, there was present a gentleman who is not a member of Parliament, and who belongs to another political organisation. I will not mention

names, but I will repeat that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. If the politics of Western Australia are left in the hands of the Country Party, the people of the State can rest assured that they will have clean, good politics.

Mr. Wilson: In that case, God help the people of Western Australia.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna—in reply) [10.0]: May I be permitted, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words in withdrawing my amendment and giving my reasons for doing so. All I desired and all that those who conferred with me sought, has been achieved. We never imagined that the small number sitting on the Opposition side of the House could turn out a united coalition party sitting on the Ministerial side.

The Minister for Mines: Your imagination takes flights at times.

Hon. T. WALKER: There was no such imagination as that; we are a sensible body. I deemed it necessary to draw public attention to the enormity of those resolutions which have been read so often during the course of the debate. I also deemed it necessary to obtain a declaration from Ministers as to whether they would be governed by those resolutions or take up an independent stand. We have had a declaration by the Minister for Mines, speaking on behalf of himself and his colleagues, that the resolutions passed by the primary producers' conference do not affect them. They are not bound by them, and we have been told that they will stand to their position, as it was when they were elected. That is all I wanted. We have had similar declarations from other members and from the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) in particular. It is therefore clear that the amendment was justified. The harm that was hatching has been averted, and a lesson, I trust, has been taught to the Primary Producers' Association which will never be departed from.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to proceed along those lines.

Hon. T. WALKER: That was my object, and the purpose of the amendment having been served, with the permission of the House I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On motion by Mr. Munsie, debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address, adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.4 p.m.*