

lump sum settlement. When the amount is exhausted, at the rate he was receiving, the man is entitled to go on the relief fund, but if a man elects to take a lump sum settlement, he cannot go on the fund. I wish to give him the right to appeal for a lump sum settlement and then go on the fund when he has exhausted the full £750 at the rate of £3 10s. a week, or whatever amount he was receiving. The 50 per cent. settlement cannot happen under this measure. It could happen under the Workers' Compensation Act. A case was brought to my notice at Kalgoorlie recently. A man was certified by the laboratory authorities to be suffering from silicosis early, and that is not compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act. He became so ill that he could not work. He revisited the laboratory recently and his complaint was still certified as silicosis early. He could not work, and decided to appeal to the court for workers' compensation. The insurance company took the laboratory decision that he was suffering from silicosis early and desired to have the man's disability assessed before they would pay. He went before a board of doctors who unanimously agreed that the man was totally incapacitated by silicosis. On the board's decision, he is entitled to the full £750, but he does not come under this measure. He will be paid under the Workers' Compensation Act in the ordinary way. That was an extraordinary case. I do not know whether the laboratory authorities would still say he was suffering from silicosis early. I was asked why that man could not come under the Mine Workers' Relief Act. The answer is that I cannot serve him with a prohibition notice. The only people who can be brought under the Act are those suffering from T.B., T.B. with silicosis early or advanced, and advanced silicosis. The rest come under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned 8.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 30th August, 1933.

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

QUESTION—BULK HANDLING.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE asked the Chief Secretary: Will he be good enough to lay on the Table the report concerning bulk handling, compiled and presented by the departmental committee?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: This request will receive early consideration and decision by the Government.

QUESTION—STATE EMPLOYEES.

As to financial emergency reductions.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, When is it anticipated that the Government will fulfil its promise to State employees to restore all or any portion of the 18 per cent. to 22½ per cent. of financial emergency reduction in wages and/or salaries? 2, How much of the money proposed to be collected by the passage of the Financial Emergency Assessment and Emergency Tax Bills, now before Parliament, will be utilised to relieve those employees?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, No such promise was ever made. 2, The money received from the Financial Emergency Tax will be paid into Consolidated Revenue, and will be utilised by the Government in the directions which they consider to be the most important in the interests of the State.

QUESTIONS (2)—NECESSITOUS FARMERS.

As to Commonwealth Financial Relief Act.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: If it can be done, will the Chief Secretary be good enough to furnish the

House with the process of reasoning adopted by the authority administering the Commonwealth Financial Relief Act, 1932, in arriving at a decision that because farmers who have applied for assistance under the said Act possess very antiquated Ford motor cars—generally used in connection with farming operations—they are ineligible for assistance as necessitous farmers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: For the purpose of the Commonwealth grant the Trustees of the Agricultural Bank do not regard a settler as necessitous who is able to maintain a car.

As to State land tax.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: In view of repeated statements made by the present and the previous State Government that the land tax has been abolished, and that the collection of arrears of tax due before such abolition was not being pressed, why are impecunious farmers being threatened with prosecution, both for arrears of tax and for current tax, by the Crown Law Department?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: I am not aware that any such statement has been made by the present Government.

RESOLUTION—SECESSION.

To effectuate.

A message having been received from the Assembly requesting concurrence of the Council in the following resolution, the message was now considered:—

That in view of the result of the referendum taken under the provisions of the Secession Referendum Act, 1932, this House is of the opinion that it is the indispensable duty of the Parliament on behalf of the people of Western Australia to endeavour by a dutiful address to His Majesty and humble applications of both Houses of the Imperial Parliament to procure such legislation by the said Imperial Parliament as may be necessary to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of the State of Western Australia from the Federal Commonwealth, established under and by virtue of the provisions of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (Imperial), and that a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to consider and recommend what action shall be taken in relation to the preparation, completion, and presentation of the said address, and the said applications in order to give effect to this resolution.

The Legislative Assembly has appointed a Committee of five members, and requests the Legislative Council to appoint a Committee with a similar number of members with power to confer with the Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.37]: I move—

That in view of the result of the referendum taken under the provisions of the Secession Referendum Act, 1932, this House is of the opinion that it is the indispensable duty of the Parliament on behalf of the people of Western Australia to endeavour by a dutiful address to His Majesty and humble applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament to procure such legislation by the said Imperial Parliament as may be necessary to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of the State of Western Australia from the Federal Commonwealth, established under and by virtue of the provisions of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (Imperial), and that a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to consider and recommend what action shall be taken in relation to the preparation, completion, and presentation of the said address, and the said applications in order to give effect to this resolution.

This motion, which I have to move, calls for little explanation. It speaks for itself. The Government desire to respect the will of the people in connection with the referendum on secession taken at the last general election, and recognise that the method of presenting the case to the Imperial authorities should be beyond suspicion. The Government feel that the State Parliament should be consulted on such a momentous question, and that a joint committee of both Houses should meet to consider and recommend what action ought to be taken in regard to the preparation and presentation of the case which has to be made out in support of the decision of the people. This is not a party question, and I feel sure that fact will be recognised. There may be some hon. members who are not in accord with the vote of the people. Despite the majority decision of the electors, there are still views to the contrary. This, however, is no time to express those views. The issue is a simple one: "Should, or should not, Parliament implement the course of action necessary as a result of the referendum?" I cannot conceive a negative reply to that question. In my opinion, no other body could be expected to give so much satisfaction. There is no other body, it seems to me, which could direct the work so well. If members of both Houses

meet—as I feel sure they will—with an earnest determination to do their best with the task entrusted to them, there should be little ground for criticism. Of course it is not expected of the members of the proposed committee that they should engage themselves in the preparation of the case for secession. Their duty will be to name the men, either in Parliament or out of it, who they consider should do the important work and exercise control generally. The Government will respect the recommendations, and fulfil their part of the duty imposed on Parliament and Ministers.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [4.43]: I cannot let the motion go through as a mere formal motion. If any member has anything to say on the question, this, I consider, is the time and here is the place to say it. It has been bruited abroad that because of the majority in favour of secession those of us who opposed secession should sit down quietly and say no more. However, I am not one of those who are going to sit down silently and say no more. Probably that hostility can be traced to various ingredients in my make-up. I take this line of reasoning, that there is something to be said on the rights of minorities as well as on the rights of majorities. It has been urged that because of a certain vote—without taking into account any of the circumstances attendant on that vote—it is the bounden duty of Parliament to implement that vote and send it along to another authority for consideration and action. I have every sympathy with the present Government, into whose hands an unwanted child has fallen; a child which I said would fall into the hands of the secessionists if a secession referendum were carried. I said that then the secessionists would not know what to do with the child. That is the exact position in which the present Government find themselves. As so often happens to the Child Welfare Department, the Government have had foisted on them an infant which they had no hand in fathering and have no desire to nurse. The task imposed on them is to try to implement the result of the referendum. When we make a retrospect of the whole of the circumstances surrounding the necessity for this motion, I venture to say that never before in the history of the public life of Western Australia have we had a position so marked with paradoxes and contradictions. In the first place

the machinery that resulted in the vote was foisted on Parliament, without having been before the electors. To the credit of the present Government it can be said they fought the bringing into being of this unwanted child, and definitely demonstrated that as a political party they were opposed to secession. On the eve of a general election the question was again foisted on Parliament, and again without its having been before the electors. So the party that opposed the putting of the futility to the people are now put into a false position, where they can be fired at from all around. They took the only logical course they could take when, as a political party going on the hustings, they said they would wash their hands of the whole thing and leave it to the electors. With one or two exceptions, those who were responsible for giving an opportunity to have the vote recorded endeavoured by every means, legitimate or otherwise, by voice, pen and gesture, to get the vote carried. Then in the carrying of the vote we had the extraordinary paradox that the electors who voted for secession did not honour those who gave them the opportunity to record their votes by keeping them on the Treasury benches to carry the vote a stage further. When the question went before the electors, it was only a half-baked measure; I mean that in all my reading and recollection, in every proposal put to a referendum provision has always been made as to what was to be done in the event of an affirmative vote. That was so in the conscription referendum, and in all other referendums in Australia; the machinery under which they were taken provided for what was to be done in the event of an affirmative vote. But this secession question was merely a half-baked measure to ascertain the opinion of the people without pointing to the way in which their decision would be carried into effect. And it may be said that every member who was elected to another place in support of the Government, when asked the question on the hustings, declared that he did not favour secession.

Point of Order.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: On a point of order. I understand the position is that we are asked to vote on the motion before us to carry out the wishes of the people.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Of a part of the people.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Of the great majority of the people. I noticed in this morning's paper that no opportunity was given in another place for members to say whether or not they objected to secession. The motion before us is to give authority to those who are to carry out the wishes of the people. I respectfully ask you, Sir, whether the hon. member is in order in bringing forward certain ideas as to why we should not vote for the motion.

The President: The hon. member is perfectly in order in giving reasons for or against the motion, and as to whether a committee should be appointed by the House in accordance with the request made by the Assembly. I rule that the hon. member is in order.

Debate Resumed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am only endeavouring—

Hon. H. J. Yelland interjected.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member is known to have blindly followed a certain leader. He will have an opportunity later to make a speech.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: All this is right out of place.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am sure Mr. Cornell will withdraw the remark that another member blindly followed a certain leader.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In deference to you, Sir, and to the House, I will withdraw. I have a twofold object in speaking here to-day; one object is to further enlighten a section of the community as to the false position in which the Government find themselves, while the other is to hearten a goodly section of the community in the reasoning they have given since the secession vote was taken, namely, that they were not only sold one pup, but were sold a litter of pups, that they voted wrongly, and that if the question were again put to them the result would show a totally different aspect. As for the Bourbons of secession, the Dominion League, I am sure there is no chance of reformation there; but there is an obligation on anybody who openly opposed secession—and I am one of the few members of Parliament who had the guts to do it—I say the further duty devolves on me to stand up and defend, at this stage and at all stages, the minority right of the community. It is nonsense to suggest that I should blindly agree

to a resolution such as this when, as I say, the vote was taken under false pretences and in an atmosphere of fallacy.

Hon. E. H. Harris: There were no false pretences on the part of the Government.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Owing to all the claptrap that went on, I say—

Hon. H. J. Yelland: It was not equal to the claptrap we are listening to now.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr. Yelland will withdraw that remark.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: I withdraw.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is no necessity for Mr. Yelland to remain in the Chamber if he does not desire to hear me. I will exonerate Mr. Franklin, but I will not exonerate Mr. Yelland, for I say his tactics here to-day are akin to the tactics used by the Dominion League. I hope he will later take the floor and dispute what I have said. I have already indicated the false position in which the present Government have been placed, and I want now to come to the paradoxes and inconsistencies that characterised the vote. I congratulate the Chief Secretary on the very brief speech in which he moved the motion, because it was about all that he or anybody else could have said. One would assume by the trend of events and the arguments put forward that only a vote on secession was taken. I do not dispute the figures recorded as to the vote on secession, but in reading in the newspaper this morning the remarks made by the Premier in moving the motion in another place, one would assume that the only question was the vote taken on secession. However, side by side with that vote, every elector had a ballot paper on the question of a convention. We cannot dissociate the two questions in any argument put forward.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Again I want to raise a point of order. This is a question—

Hon. J. CORNELL: A question we want to get through without any sentiment.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: This is a question of a vote by Parliament as to whether the decision of the people should be given effect to.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is the hon. member in order in making a speech when raising a point of order?

The PRESIDENT: I am waiting for the point of order.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I think Mr. Cornell is out of order in discussing the ques-

tion of secession or no secession. The question before the House is whether we should carry the motion.

The PRESIDENT: I have already ruled that Mr. Cornell is in order. If the hon. member does not agree with my ruling, there is a course for him to follow.

Hon. J. CORNELL: As I was saying, it is not possible to dissociate one vote from the other. It has been inferred that the vote was taken only on secession, but there was also the question of a convention. One would naturally assume that those in favour of secession had no time for a convention. One would also assume that a party that was pledged to unification would vote for the convention. One would further assume that the political party responsible for the introduction of the Bill would vote all out for secession and would not be bothered about the convention. Here is where the inconsistency lies, and it is shown that when the electors went to vote, in many cases they had as much idea of the question as a pig knows about a musket. The electors just voted and they listened to neither rhyme nor reason. For the first time in the history of Australia—even during the war on the part of the antis, there was no parallel—the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth was refused a hearing in Western Australia, and he was unable to state the case which it was his right to do on behalf of the people of the rest of the Commonwealth. The anti-conscriptionists and Sinn Feiners during the war were mild as compared with the action of the crowd that refused to give the Prime Minister a hearing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He brought it on himself.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They did not have the decency to listen to the Prime Minister.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He never had time to come near us before.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Prime Minister had every right to demand a hearing from the people of this State. The hon. member asks why he did not come before. Because there was no need to address the people of the State before; the Bill did not pass until the 7th December. There were cast in favour of secession 138,653 votes, and against it 70,706. Thus there was a majority for secession of 67,947. When we come to the alternative question of the convention, we find that 119,031 voted against it, and 83,275 voted for it. Therefore we have a discrep-

ancy of somewhere in the vicinity of 30,000 electors voting both for a convention and for secession. That serves to show the tragic amount of ignorance that prevailed during the course of the regrettable and at times very lamentable campaign. In the electorate of Collie there was a majority for secession and a majority for a convention. The South Fremantle electorate, which is represented in another place by the Minister for Works, recorded a majority of 3,234 for secession and a majority of 1,850 for a convention. These figures serve to show something that I have always had in mind, that when we trust the people with a referendum we trust them with something they know nothing about, and we provide ways and means for Parliamentarians to shelve their responsibility on to the people who are less able to judge the facts. Strange to say, the largest vote for secession in the metropolitan area is recorded in the Fremantle districts, where no one but Labour can hold a seat, whether it be in the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly. There we have a paradox that a locality represented by a party that stands for unification returned an overwhelmingly large vote in favour of secession. Then turn to North Perth. If there be an electorate in this State that can be said to be 100 per cent. non-Labour, it is North Perth. The majority there for secession was 1,360 and the majority against a convention 587. Now the sponsors of secession want to ram down my throat about the will of the people. If we are logically to carry out the will of the people, I want to know why we are debating at such length the emergency tax. The will of the people is well expressed in another place on that question, and the intention of the people was unmistakably expressed at election time. Still, we are evading the will of the people, and to sit down and say that because there is a big majority for seceding we close our eyes to the futility of taking the whole thing as gospel. I for one will not do so. What are we now being asked to do? If members will go to the trouble of getting from the Electoral Department a return of the votes polled, and work it out for themselves they will find that with very few exceptions throughout the State, even in country electorates, the ratio of the majority of votes against secession was 50 per cent. less in the case of the convention than for secession. It all goes to prove, in my opinion, that the elector was bulldozed,

and did not know where he stood. A section of the electors will admit that the sole reason for voting for secession was that they were desirous of voicing a protest because of what they considered was lack of considerate treatment of this State by the Eastern States, and not with the idea of breaking away from the union.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You would get the same vote again to-morrow.

Hon. J. CORNELL: You think so?

Hon. V. Hamersley: Yes, and a bigger majority.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In my opinion, the majority was not arrived at because of any fault that was to be found with the Constitution; the chief factor was the human fault in that machinery. The human factor, from the State point of view, would be about fifty-fifty because of errors and discrepancies. Now we are asked to join another place in the appointment of a committee. What for?

Hon. C. B. Williams: To bulldoze the people again.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Chief Secretary, when introducing the resolution, said that the committee would not be expected to go into the pros and cons of secession, but would prepare the case to be presented in an endeavour to carry out the vote of the people, and to name the men, whether in Parliament or out of Parliament, to do the work. I want publicly to protest against any lavish expenditure on this question because I submit it is not justified. The motion says that it will be the duty of these men to prepare on behalf of the people of Western Australia and endeavour—I am very glad that that word was used—to prepare a dutiful address to His Majesty and humble applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament to procure such legislation as may be necessary to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of Western Australia from the Federal Commonwealth. I do not know whether any action has been taken in that direction. I desire to know whether these men, be they drawn from inside Parliament or outside this institution, who are to make out the case for presentation to His Majesty the King and to the Imperial Parliament are, at the same time, to provide ways and means or advance suggestions as to how Western Australia shall discharge its financial obligations to the rest of the Commonwealth. Mr. Franklin is, I understand, the Treasurer of this Bourbon Society to

which I have referred—the Dominion League.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I am a secessionist and I am proud of it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have already indicated that the hon. member is one of that fraternity.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I am proud of it because secession will be for the good of Western Australia.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is the bounden duty of every Western Australian citizen who is desirous of breaking away from the Commonwealth of Australia, to consider the concrete proposition of fulfilling the obligations that we undertook when we became part of the Federation so many years ago. That is a phase of the secession problem that many influential men of Western Australia who have invested money in Commonwealth bonds and securities, should gravely consider. We should face that issue now and not be wise after the event. As Australian citizens, we have an equal duty to the people of the rest of Australia as we have to Western Australia itself. The citizens of Western Australia, when they agreed to join the Federation, undertook to shoulder certain obligations and to wield certain powers. Those responsibilities still stand and cannot for one moment be shed until and unless the people are prepared to say that they will, notwithstanding that they desire to leave the Federation, continue to accept the obligations they incurred up to the time they secured relief from the Federal bond. There are many phases of the question. For instance, it has been said that the British Parliament has never failed, but has always handed out justice so that the will of the people shall prevail. To those who make such a suggestion, I would remind them of Irish history. There is another matter concerning which I feel in duty bound to touch upon for a few moments. I refer to the position of the people residing in the Eastern Goldfields areas. They have expressed their desire to remain within the Federation. I ignore altogether, for the moment, the votes of the people in other parts of the State that were cast against secession. I will deal with the goldfields section of the State only. For geographical and many other reasons, the people of the Eastern Goldfields areas have little or nothing in common with those residing in other parts of the State. I could include the north and north-western por-

tions of the State in that assertion as well. If members bear in mind the aggregate vote of the people in the eight goldfields constituencies and the North-West seats, they will realise that a majority of the people there desire to remain within the Federation.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: A very small majority of them.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If the hon. member's party had a majority of two, they would still desire to carry on.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Why don't you honour the vote of the people?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have never yet been afraid to stand up in Parliament and tell members, and even my constituents, that they were wrong.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They have not always believed you.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Not at the time, but generally afterwards.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: They will believe you when you are dead.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I cannot see the slightest chance of Western Australia being released from the Federal bond, but if I thought there were the slightest possibility, and I could get a sufficient following, which I think I could get, and I am still above ground and can articulate—

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: While you are above ground, you will always articulate!

Hon. J. CORNELL: If I thought there was the slightest chance of what I have indicated, I would urge the people of the Eastern Goldfields, who voted to remain within the Commonwealth, to be up and doing as they did 30 years ago, and to dissociate themselves from the secession movement altogether. That is not a threat nor yet a promise. It is my considered opinion that secession is impossible of attainment but if there should be the slightest indication of its accomplishment, I would urge the goldfields people to revolt against it. I claim that whatever the aggregate vote of the people may be, every Australian has the duty and the right, if he considers a United Australia is best for Australia, to stand out against any move that would disrupt the Commonwealth. I regret that the secession movement has drifted into what might be regarded as a general election aftermath. Because the vote was taken on secession, we are told we must abide by the decision of the people because we abide by their decision at a parliamentary election. If any

hon. member gave even the most casual glance through the history of parliamentary and constitutional government, he must appreciate the fact that the two matters are as far apart as the poles. From the parliamentary standpoint the decision of the electors may be reversed in three years' time, but a vote on the question of secession means that the decision stands for ever.

Hon. V. Hamersley: We will have given Federation a trial extending over 33 years instead of 30 years.

Hon. J. CORNELL: By no process of reasoning can the two differing votes be regarded from the same viewpoint. If the secessionists' contentions were logical, it would mean that if in 10 years' time they discover that they have taken the wrong step, all that will be necessary will be another referendum to return to the Federation.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Western Australia will never return to the Commonwealth if once the State is released from the Federal bond.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Neither Mr. Franklin nor I have long to remain here, but it will not be in our time.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Speak for yourself.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Franklin and I have a much better chance of getting to heaven than Western Australia has of being released from the Federal bond.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: You have a very slender chance.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Hon. members can estimate that for themselves.

Hon. C. B. Williams: We have already done so.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I never want to get out of Western Australia because it is God's own country.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think the hon. member would be glad to gain admission to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I am afraid I shall not see you there.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Perhaps Mr. Cornell will tell us about his blue-shirt brigade on the goldfields.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have already said that people who resort to the trombone and prate about the British Parliament deserving well of the people, should consider for a moment the history of Ireland. In the newspapers every day we read about General O'Duffy and his blue shirts. What are

they doing? Are they standing by the decision of the people and upholding De Valera in power?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What will General Cornell and his blue shirts do?

Hon. J. CORNELL: They will adopt the line of reasoning I am pursuing. The Irish people put De Valera in power to run the job.

The PRESIDENT: Order! We are not discussing the Irish question.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was drawn into it. The daily newspapers contain condemnations of Hitlerism in Germany, but Hitler is just carrying out the will of the German people, as some say we should carry out the decision of the people regarding secession. Hitler represents practically 100 per cent. of the German people's opinion.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What will the gold-fields army do when we cut off the water supply?

Hon. J. CORNELL: We generally drink beer there as it is.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Mostly imported beer.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And we get our beer and meat cheaper by doing so.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am voicing my protest and though I may not make any friends here by so doing, I can assure members there are many outside who agree with my views. At any rate, I am consistent in my attitude. Even the most ardent secessionist in Western Australia will give me credit for having opposed consistently any attempt, by way of referendum or otherwise, to break away from the Federal bond. I have not on any occasion hit below the belt. When the report is presented, I shall again return to the charge.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about your helping to put up the case?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not think there is any chance of that, but there may be a possibility, when the committee are constituted—

Hon. E. H. Harris: Of your being on it?

Hon. J. T. Franklin: I hope not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I trust that, if the resolution is concurred in and if a majority of the committee recommend that certain individuals be authorised to present the case, others will be appointed to represent the minority side. The Labour members will be out of the difficulty when the recommendation is made, but I cannot see that any case can be made out for presentation to the

Imperial Parliament. If there is a recommendation, it should not be accepted by this House unless there has been active representation of the minority on the committee, because the minority have as much right to present their side of the question as have the majority. Even if Parliament eventually agrees to what is proposed in the direction of approaching the Imperial Parliament, that should not be the last word from the minority. The majority have a right to carry the fight to the last ditch, and whatever case is made out, whatever may be the conditions of withdrawal, if they do not suit the minority, it is their bounden duty to prepare a counter petition to the King and to the Imperial Parliament praying that Western Australia remain in the Commonwealth. I apologise to members for having spoken so long, but I could not remain silent when consistency demanded of me to try to smother the proposal at its birth.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.33]: I feel that Mr. Cornell has carried his consistency against secession to the last ditch.

Hon. J. Cornell: This is the first ditch.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Parliament agreed to submit the question of secession to a referendum of the people, and the electors who make and unmake Governments have decided in no uncertain voice in favour of secession. No matter what may be our views on secession, the question does not now arise. The only thing for us to do is to agree or disagree to the appointment of a committee to collaborate with a committee of another place to decide what form of petition should be presented to the King and to the British Houses of Parliament.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you think it would be of any value?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am not discussing that at the present juncture. There is a motion before us and we have to decide, not a question of values, but the question of meeting the desires of another place. I intend to support the motion. Beyond that I cannot see any use in discussing the question of secession.

HON. SIR CHARLES NATHAN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.35]: I also feel that this proposal should not be allowed to pass in silence, either by those who may have been in favour of secession or those against it. This is a proposal to consider by a joint

committee representing both Houses the best step to be taken to present the request of the people of Western Australia to the British Parliament. I quite realise, as all must do, that the result of the referendum leaves no course open to the Government other than to endeavour to give effect, so far as they can, to the will of the people as expressed at the referendum. I wish to congratulate the Government upon the action that they have taken; I congratulate them on having passed the baby over to someone else.

Hon. J. Cornell: It was not their baby.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: No. The Government as a body and the individual members of the Cabinet have been particularly careful—as they had a right to be—to safeguard their position and not express their independent views on secession. The time for that is past.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: Perhaps it is just as well that that is so. Consequently there is no necessity for them to express their views whether such a petition as it is proposed to present will have any effect. Frankly, I do not think it will. I believe that the presentation of a petition, through the channels by which it is proposed to be presented, will be utterly futile, and, without seeking to search the inside of their minds, I would not be at all surprised if some members of the Government are of the same opinion. If Western Australia seriously desire to be relieved from the Commonwealth yoke, as it has been termed, it does not seem to me that we are going quite the right way to end it. Consequently, I suppose, I ought to be satisfied, but over the futility of the proposed course of action, I cannot pass in silence. Western Australia desires to terminate a partnership and we should endeavour to ascertain the best course to adopt in order to determine it. The course suggested does not appeal to me as being the proper one because there are obligations between the partners that have to be settled before a court of law would adjudge that the partnership should be dissolved. It seems to me to be the bounden duty of the Government of the day, possessed of all the data, all the responsibilities and all the details of the financial position to present the case, and not pass the baby to some committee, however great may be the capacity they possess. Apparently the Government consider that such a com-

mittee possess capacity greater than theirs; otherwise they would have prepared the case themselves. I do not intend to oppose the resolution, but, like Mr. Cornell and others, I feel that this is not the last word. I feel a certain resentment, shall I say, against the Government owing to their not having shouldered the responsibility themselves. However, if they are prepared to pass it on to someone else, let them do so.

Hon. J. Cornell: The other people would grab it with both hands.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: Yes. Permit me to thank members for not having interjected while I have been speaking. I do not want to draw their comments now, but I have been a little surprised at their forbearance because the running fire of interjections with which Mr. Cornell was assailed reminded me so much of the tactics of some of those secession enthusiasts—

Hon. E. H. Harris: At the Town Hall?

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: —when responsible members of the Commonwealth Government were not permitted to voice their views on this important subject.

HON. J. T. FRANKLIN (Metropolitan) [5.41]: I wish to state distinctly that I am in thorough accord with the resolution sent from another place. The message conveying the resolution bears the number 13. It is said that 13 is an unlucky number. It is for the Commonwealth, but it is a lucky number for Western Australia.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You may awake to a sad disappointment.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: During last session we passed a Bill to authorise the taking of a referendum of the people on secession. The people expressed themselves in no uncertain voice. Their decision was a two to one majority in favour of secession. I maintain that that vote having been taken by the consent of both Houses of Parliament, there should be no discussion as to the advisableness or otherwise of forwarding the result of the referendum to the Imperial authorities.

Hon. J. Cornell: You can forward it in a telegram.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: Western Australia is a State of the British Empire, and we have a right to petition the Home authorities regarding the wishes of the people. The referendum decided that we should do so. Another place has resolved that the wishes

of the people should be acceded to and has asked us to co-operate with it. I hope this House will co-operate by agreeing to appoint a committee to confer with the committee of another place. This afternoon we have listened to a speech against secession. I bow to your ruling, Mr. President, that the speaker was in order, but I certainly consider that, as the electors decided that we should petition for secession, we should give effect to their wishes. I support this motion wholeheartedly, and congratulate the Premier and his Ministers upon the manner in which they have acceded to the wishes of the electors.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And dodged the issue themselves.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: The people are not prepared to dodge the issue, but to take the matter to the Imperial Government and ask them to give this State a fair deal.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Government are helping them, are they not?

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I compliment them upon the manner in which they are carrying out the wishes of the people. This House should follow the example set by another place. We are asked to appoint a committee to work in conjunction with the other committee.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Standing Orders provide for that. You cannot have it otherwise.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I am not greatly concerned as to the composition of the committee, and whether it consists of Labour members or others. What we want is justice for Western Australia. I really believe the Labour Party have the same object in view that we, who are not of that party, also have. I am rather surprised that any member should object to the request of another place, seeing that a two-to-one majority of electors voted for secession.

Hon. J. Cornell: My constituents voted against it.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I am sorry the hon. member should have made that interjection. The residents of his province objected to our going in for Federation unless the whole State entered into it. They stated 33 years ago that if we did not federate down here—

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in discussing responsible Government and Federation?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member would be in order in connecting his remarks with the motion before the Chair.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I will connect them up in the end. Some 33 years ago the electors on the goldfields said that, if Western Australia did not join in the Federation as a whole, they would secede from this State.

Hon. J. Cornell: They said they would themselves federate.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: We should put up a united front for the benefit and advancement of Western Australia. It has been stated in the Press that the ballot over the various parts of the State should be made known. I voted against Federation 33 years ago, and I am still opposed to it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are sticking hard.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: By sticking hard I am carrying out the wishes of the majority of the people.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are backing up the opinion you held 30 odd years ago.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: Yes, at a time when possibly the hon. member had no opinion at all.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: He has altered a lot since.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: I cannot see why there should be any objection to this motion. We have been asked by another place to assist in formulating a scheme to carry out the wishes of the electors.

Hon. G. W. Miles: There is no opposition to the motion.

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: No, but members have debated the other side of the question. I for one am prepared to accede to the request that has been made to us that we should assist in framing a workable proposition to put before the Imperial authorities.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [5.52]: I was a member of the State Government at the time when the question of Federation first came before the people of this State. We had to bring down a Bill to empower members of Parliament to attend a convention or a conference to discuss the provisions that the people would accept in the event of Federation being brought about. This occurred in 1898. The referendum was submitted to the people in 1900. I was then in London, and had not the opportunity to oppose it. I am a seces-

sionist, but I could not support a Bill for secession. The fact is that several Governments have made such a mess of the government of Western Australia, and have accumulated such debts and liabilities, that I very much question whether we could get out of those debts and liabilities without the assistance of the Federal Government. I agree with Sir Charles Nathan that if the present Government were sincere in putting this forward they would have brought down figures to show that the move was likely to be a successful one. We have to bring into account the interest on the debt of 83 millions, the cost of the post office and other services, and numerous other things, such as the maintenance of the unemployed and so forth. I very much question whether we could make a success of things as a separate State. On the other hand, I am certain that if we were able to govern Western Australia ourselves, without any liabilities, we could do it very well and with great success. I know that Sir John Forrest would have been shot if he had had a deficit in his day. Our loans amounted only to five or six millions then. I do not think they exceeded that figure. The State was in such good heart that we could have carried on and made a success of things. The reason why there was such an agitation for Federation was that we had a splendid market on the goldfields at the time, and the manufacturers of Victoria and New South Wales were jealous because they could not get their goods into that market without Federation.

Hon. T. Moore: You had a tariff then?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And long after we federated, too.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It was a heavy one in some respects.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: We had a revenue tariff. In those days our object was to put a duty on everything we could produce, and let in free that which we could not produce, such as sugar, kerosene, etc.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You were protectionists in those days.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: The people were urged to produce those things we could profitably produce. Victoria put an import duty on wheat, with the result that in a few years they were exporters of that product. We wanted to do the same thing. At present every avenue

is taxed. I feel that more than every avenue would be taxed if we had separation. Notwithstanding that, I am a secessionist, and would work for secession were it not for the disabilities I think we would suffer as a consequence. I am not opposing the motion. It was the wish of the majority of the people that this petition should be presented to the Parliament in England. It is quite right that we should do that. I share the matured opinion of Sir Charles Nathan, however, when I say I am afraid it will all be futile. Whilst I hold these secessionist views, I voted for a convention. I am not going to raise any objection to the motion. I only desire to put it on record that my sole reason for opposing it is that I do not think we could make a success of secession from the financial point of view. That is why I voted for a convention. As we are not going to have a convention, I shall remain quiet and see what the result of the present move will be.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.57]: Despite the remarks of Mr. Franklin, I have not heard anyone speak in opposition to the motion. Those remarks which have been made are something in the nature of a backwash of the secession vote, and are the outcome of the strong views of those who desire to have secession and those others who wish to remain in the federation. We all knew that, as a result of the vote, something of this nature was bound to come before the House. We are all agreed that we must pass this motion. That, however, represents only one stage. The Government have submitted their ideas of how we should set about carrying out the wishes of the people. I am prepared to give the motion my full support. I only rose to say that as one of the very considerable minority I hope the Committee that will be appointed will be fully capable of presenting the case as well for the minority as for the majority. Both sides have to be fully represented in the petition to be sent to the Imperial Parliament. I feel it does not matter how the metropolitan area is arranged, who represents that section, or who represents the agricultural section, but I do think a member representing the goldfields should be appointed to the committee, so that there may be a full expression of all views, such as should be expressed when a petition of this nature is going before the

Imperial Parliament. I repeat that while the vote was a satisfactory one from the secessionist point of view, yet a considerable minority remains to be heard when the question goes before the final tribunal. I have seen no evidence of a counter-petition, but it is quite on the cards that such a petition may be presented. I favour the motion: but I want the committee drawing up the case to represent all sections of the community, and not only one section.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [6.1]: I am drawn into this discussion by the fact that there is a misconception in the minds of hon. members as to the procedure which should have been adopted. Sir Charles Nathan appeared to infer that the Government were seeking to remove the responsibility from their shoulders, and Mr. Holmes interjected that they were dodging the issue. I wish hon. members to realise that the Government have a responsibility in this matter. The referendum having been taken, it became the duty of the Government to see that the wishes of the people were carried out. Only a bare-bald resolution was put before the people to vote upon. The next thing to be done by the Government was to secure the approval of Parliament for the further action to be taken, as without that approval nothing more could be done. That is the point. If the Government had taken the responsibility off their own bat, they would have done wrong, as they would have been acting without the consent of Parliament. After all, Parliament is the body which should decide this great issue; in fact, the only body which should decide it. No other procedure was possible than to bring the matter before Parliament in the form in which it has been brought here, with a view to obtaining the approval of Parliament.

Hon. Sir Charles Nathan: Nobody has said otherwise.

Hon. T. MOORE: Mr. Holmes suggested, by way of interjection, that the Government were dodging the issue. The placing of the matter before Parliament was the only step to take. If hon. members believe that there is any other way of proceeding, it is for them to get up and state that other way. If an hon. member believes that the present course is not the correct course, he should voice his objection and show where the Government have gone wrong. Then the hon. member could move in the direction of hav-

ing the matter dealt with on right lines. While I am against secession, I say that the course taken by the Government is, in my opinion, the correct course. I believe that the defeated Government, if faced with the same position, would have acted in the same way, since they could not have proceeded further without the consent of Parliament. The result of every referendum must come before Parliament eventually. Hon. members should be fair in this matter as they are in other respects. They err if they think the Government have not taken the right course in ascertaining the will of the people on a bald issue. Sir Edward Wittenoom's point should have been considered beforehand. The case put up by an experienced statesman should have been weighed by the secessionists, who would then have been able to tell us how we should proceed further in the event of the referendum being carried. It is too late to raise that aspect now. I believe in majority rule. The only rule democracy can know is majority rule. The will of the majority must be carried out. A great mistake has been made in not deciding what was to be set up in place of that which was to be removed. We may be called upon to decide that in the course of a year or two. The Government have done right in asking Parliament to decide what is the best possible course. I hope the joint select committee will do their best to put their view in concrete form, and send it to Parliament to have it carried out.

Personal Explanation.

Hon. Sir CHARLES NATHAN: If I may be permitted to make a personal explanation, I am sure Mr. T. Moore did not wilfully misconstrue what I said. I made no objection to the Government seeking authority from Parliament to take action. My sole criticism was that the means suggested were in my opinion not the correct means to adopt.

HON. R. G. MOORE (North-East) [6.9]: I have no intention of opposing the motion, because I believe it represents the only motion that could be brought forward by the Government in the circumstances. However, I sympathise with Mr. Cornell, because from my own knowledge I am aware that a great many people voted for secession not because they wanted secession but as a protest against the treatment of West-

ern Australia by the Commonwealth Government. Those people thought they could get a better deal for Western Australia in that way than in any other way. However, seeing that we are still within the Commonwealth, I see no reason why the Federal Government should not put up their case to the Imperial Parliament at the same time as the Western Australian case is put up. I have enough faith in the Imperial Parliament to believe that Western Australia will be given a fair deal, though when it is all over I suppose we shall be as we were.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [6.10]: It will be acknowledged that the speech in which the Leader of the House introduced this motion was commendably abbreviated, and I am sure no hon. member was more surprised than the Chief Secretary when that brief speech evoked so spirited a response from Mr. Cornell. We are all aware how loyal Mr. Cornell is to any cause which he espouses. He has shown that he still retains that spirit of loyalty towards his ideas of anti-secession: but I was pleased to recognise his appreciation of the fact that, obviously, there was no other course which the Government could have taken in the circumstances. I agree with Mr. Cornell that it would have been better if the Secession Referendum Act had provided some direction as to the course to be adopted by the Government in the event of an affirmative vote being given.

Hon. J. Cornell: That would have been logical.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The only regret I have, after listening to Mr. Cornell's vigorous address, is that the hon. member did not take the opportunity, when that measure was before the House, to suggest the insertion of such a provision, which would have met the difficulty by which the present Government are confronted.

Hon. J. Cornell: I wanted the Bill thrown out altogether.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I understand that; but, seeing that the Bill was passed, it would have been well to make some provision to meet the position to which Mr. Cornell now draws attention. I agree with the Leader of the House that the matter was one with which he could deal in a brief speech. We are asked, as a House, to fill a gap which was left when the Secession Referendum Act was before Parliament.

That gap is going to be filled by the method embodied in the motion, and all that is really desired now is to appoint the suggested committee. That is the duty now devolving upon the House. I maintain that whether we are in favour of secession or against it, there is only one course for us to adopt, and that is to give some means of expressing to the Home authorities the will of the people as declared on the referendum. That being the case, I intend to vote for the motion.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [6.13]: Before the vote is taken I wish to make a quotation or two. Those quotations may guide some hon. members as to the effect of the framing of any such resolution as that suggested in the message received from the Legislative Assembly. But first let me point out that we are asked to select five members to represent this Chamber on the committee. That means a total committee of ten members, which I regard as an unwieldy number in the circumstances. Ten members would not be too many on a committee to take evidence regarding some intricate proposition, but I do regard the number as too large for a committee to collaborate in determining the value of words to be embodied in a resolution which is to be sent to the Imperial authorities. I am about to quote an eminent authority on the question of this House, for instance, being called upon to support such a resolution as that which has been submitted. I want to take hon. members back to the 26th September, 1906, when the following motion was moved in the Assembly by Mr. F. C. Monger:—

That the union of Western Australia with the other States in the Commonwealth of Australia has proved detrimental to the best interests of this State, and that the time has arrived for placing before the people the question of withdrawing from such union.

The debate which took place in the Legislative Assembly on that motion is notable for the fact that it shows the Attorney General of that period did not consider that a resolution carried in the other Chamber should be submitted to this House for its concurrence.

Hon. J. Cornell: Who was Attorney General then?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Attorney General concluded with these words—

I submit it is absolutely unnecessary, because if the Upper House is possessed of the same sentiment as this House has expressed

itself possessed of, it would take action without action being taken on our part.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Before tea I was pointing out that a precedent was established when a resolution dealing with secession was brought down in 1906, and that apparently that has been followed in the procedure we are adopting with the message we have before us to-day. Authorities differ as to whether there is a real prospect of our getting from the Imperial Parliament any relief from our difficulties and troubles. On the occasion when, in 1906, this was discussed in another place a constitutional authority declared he did not think there was a possible chance of the Western Australian Parliament doing anything along those lines. Let me quote that hon. member—

It has been said here by many members that there is a certain provision in the Constitution of the Commonwealth which may be invoked for the purpose of dissolving the union of any one of the States with the Commonwealth. However, I venture to differ from that. The Constitution Act does not make any provision whatever for the withdrawal of any of the States from the union they entered into. In fact, I may call the attention of members to the wording in the recital of the Act. It is recited that the sovereign States therein named and the people of those States have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth; in one that cannot be dissolved; and therefore it is impossible to invoke any provision in the Constitution Act on which it would be open for any State to withdraw from the union it then entered into.

This is language that should be understood by all those hardy secessionists throughout Western Australia, and I think if it had been quoted to them before they voted on the referendum—

Hon. J. Nicholson: Whom have you been quoting.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Hon. Norbert Keenan, the head and front of the Dominion League of Western Australia. I assume that Mr. Keenan, in 1906, spoke with a sense of responsibility as the Attorney General of the State, realising that it was part of his duty as Attorney General to guide the people of Western Australia along the right path when they wanted to try to get out of the Commonwealth of Australia. What I am quoting is a portion of the advice he tendered when speaking in another place on the 26th September, 1906.

Of course, if he had been speaking subsequently as a member of the Dominion League, he would not have been speaking with the authority of the Attorney General, but purely as a private citizen. At the point at which I left the quotation, Mr. Foulkes, then a member of another place, interjected, "The British Parliament can amend that Act." Mr. Keenan, amongst other things, said this—

Surely the hon. member must know that if we were to ask the Imperial Parliament by petition to act in that direction, we should be absolutely certain of a refusal on their part. Their reply would certainly be this, "Of your own free will you entered into a union only a few years ago, and we are not going to dissolve that union merely because, acting under some temporary stress of difficulties, you come and ask us to do so."

When, a good many years ago, Mr. Ewing accepted office, Mr. Cornell said that after listening to the trouncing the Minister had had from Mr. Holmes, he thought "Hansard" should be burnt at the end of every session. Perhaps Mr. Keenan will now say the same. In view of the resolution in which we are asked to concur, namely, that a committee be appointed to consider and recommend what action should be taken in regard to the presentation of a petition to the Imperial Parliament, I think it would be appropriate to make a further quotation from Mr. Keenan's speech on that occasion in 1906. He said—

It would become necessary to consider, not namby-pamby resolutions expressing disgust or dissent, or anything else, but whether the price we were paying for Federation as it then existed, the unification of the whole of the Commonwealth in one centre, as it might be if the Constitution were abused, was not too great, and whether it would not be better to face the risk of a direct attempt to break away by physical force rather than continue to belong to it.

May I just here ask the Minister, when replying to the debate, to say whether if they cannot secede by some of these, shall I say, namby-pamby resolutions, it could not be suggested to the secessionists that they might adopt some physical force. Mr. Keenan went on to say—

That can only arrive when as men we have come to the conclusion it is worth the acceptance of the risk to adopt physical force, because if we wish to break the bond of Federation we can only do so by absolutely setting our own physical force against any force the Commonwealth can bring to bear.

Those are very definite words, spoken by one deemed to be a constitutional authority. At that stage Mr. Walker interjected, "We could present our case to the British Parliament." Mr. Keenan retorted—

The hon. member talks of presenting a case to the Imperial Parliament. Who, does he think, would have the big end of the stick if we presented our case, this State or the Commonwealth?

Is not that applicable to-day? Mr. Keenan continued—

Does he imagine that his voice would reach all the way to the Parliament at Westminster?

I presume he thinks to-day that if his voice will not reach there from here, it might at all events be heard if he were there in the body. During the tea hour I heard that there are five or six members of the Parliament of Western Australia flattering themselves with the possibility of being sent Home.

Hon. C. B. Williams: At their own expense?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Nothing was said about the expense. By that time Mr. Keenan was approaching the end of his speech in opposition to the resolution then before the House. He said—

I admit that this State particularly has cause to complain of the results of Federation; but I am prepared, just as we all would be prepared in our private lives, to allow a sufficient time to elapse that the machine may get into proper working order; and then, if after we have given it a fair trial, it proves a failure, let us make up our minds, not as movers and seconders of resolutions which look very mighty on paper but really amount to nothing, rather let us act to the fullest extent of our manhood in asserting the rights which we believe require assertion by physical force. It would be disgraceful on my part, holding an official position, to advocate physical force.

Now, Mr. Keenan, while he is not in such a responsible position as he was then, is still the leader of a party in another place, and I think it is appropriate that we should consider his opinion as given on that earlier occasion.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: After 27 years' further experience of Federation he has now altered his opinion.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: But this is a matter of constitutional law in its bearing on our relationship with the Imperial authorities, and that has not altered since that date. I am not going into the rights and wrongs of

Federation, any more than to say that in a welter of words during the recent elections, Federation was blamed for all the ills and troubles that confront the people of Western Australia. I think that had a good deal of influence on the electors in the vote they gave. However, we passed a Bill for the taking of the referendum, and when we passed that measure I sincerely believed it was never contemplated by members of either House that anything further should be done than to get an expression of opinion from the electors. I know a number of responsible persons, some of them then Ministers of the Crown, who definitely said they would vote for secession, not because they desired it, but because they desired to voice their protests against the treatment of Western Australia. What will happen if we carry this resolution and confer with another place? We shall then have ten of the legislators called upon to frame the necessary resolutions to be presented to the Imperial Parliament. I consider that in selecting members to go on that committee there should not be so much searching around for representatives of various parts of the State, as apparently has been done in another place, but that we should pick out the men most capable of framing the addresses in the best possible manner. I feel we shall have an opportunity presently to record our votes in that direction—personally I think it is futile—and if we are going to do it, let us select the men most competent to draw up something to be sent Home to the authorities.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [7.45]: I have no desire to prolong the debate because if it is possible to get out of Federation, the sooner we get out of it, the better it will be. I have never been satisfied yet as to a way out. I would not have spoken at all but for Mr. R. G. Moore's references to me when I remarked that it was the Government's job to attend to this question and not side track it as they are doing. I submit it is the Government's job to carry out the wishes of the majority of the people of the State, for the reason that on the eve of the general election Mr. Collier said in no uncertain terms that if he was returned, whatever decision the majority of the people arrived at, he would see that it was given effect to. I call upon Mr. Collier now to carry out that promise and not to side-track it on to a committee of 10 members of Parliament as

it is proposed to do. I opposed Federation 30 odd years ago. I was then the member for East Fremantle and I might claim to have been one of the big four of that time. There were the late Mr. George Leake, Mr. (now Sir,) Walter James—probably he received his knighthood because he brought about Federation—the late Mr. James Gardiner and myself.

Hon. J. Cornell: A sort of four-in-hand.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I pulled out from that party on the question of Federation, only because I could never see that we would be anything except a junior partner, and that the Eastern States would be the senior partners. I even said on the platform that the Eastern States would be the dog and we would be the tail. I explained also that as the senior partners, the Eastern States would get all the profits and take all the kudos, and that we as a junior partner would do all the work and receive all the kicks and knocks. That is what has happened to Western Australia ever since we Federated. Then for 30 years I remained silent: I abided by the decision of the majority. You, Sir, have complimented me on many occasions for having observed 30 years of silence when we were being bled white by the Eastern States. We had the highest authority, outside politicians or statesmen in the person of an independent expert who said before the last Commission that Federation was costing Western Australia a million and a half a year and had been doing so for years past. I thought it was time to wake up and I voted for secession and advised others to vote for it. At the same time I never once suggested that I could see a way out. My attitude cost me my seat at East Fremantle. I could not at the time be led away by the cry, "One Flag, One People, One Destiny." On one occasion I had to get out by the back door to escape with my life. Now if we wish to retire from the Federation we must do so in a constitutional manner; I shall not be a party to breaking any agreement. I explained at the time that once in, always in. If the committee is appointed I trust the members of it will find a way out through the Constitution. My point is that the Government have all the figures and facts and therefore should do the job themselves and not pass it on to a committee. Reference has been made to what Mr. Keenan said 27 years ago. At that time Mr. Keenan

represented a goldfields constituency. Mr. Keenan is an able K.C. and he put up a case as his profession demanded he should do for his constituents. Now as a member for Nedlands he puts up an entirely different case. It can be said to his credit that he carried out his duty just as he did when he advanced our cause before the Disabilities Commission without fee or reward. We have to remember that 27 years ago Mr. Keenan represented a goldfields community and that that community was made up of dissatisfied people from all parts of the world who went to Kalgoorlie to get rich and to clear out quickly. Those people have remained and have been dissatisfied ever since. They ran us into Federation and they should now have the common decency to help us out of it. Mr. Cornell says they are going to form an army to assist them to stay in the Federation. Well let them do it! A famous general once said that an army fought on its stomach. The first thing we should do to the goldfields army would be to cut off the water supply and see whether they could march without water. We have done everything we could for the goldfields and even built them a railway to Esperance.

Hon. R. G. Moore: Has not the water scheme been paid for?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes, and it cost the people of this State £100,000 a year for about 25 years. Compound that and see what the goldfields owe us. What I complain about is not the Federal Constitution, but party politics that have been introduced into the Senate. The framers of the Constitution provided representation for the House of Representatives on the per capita basis, and when it came to the Senate, each State was given equal representation, so that the four smaller States should have 24 members against 12 to represent the bigger States. What takes place now? Our members come over here, some once, and some twice a year, and make all sorts of complaints about the treatment of Western Australia by the Eastern States. Then they return and walk straight into the party room and take their instructions from the majority. It is the making of the Senate a party House that has left the smaller States where they are, and by the trend of things in this House, if we make it a party House it will be a bad thing for Western Australia. Let me give an instance: There is a Bill for the construction

of a railway before this House at present. One section declares it is pledged to support every railway that is put up, whether justified or not, the understanding being "If you vote for my railway, I will vote for yours." That is what has been causing trouble in Western Australia, and if that has been the reason, with respect to the Senate, we can understand how the smaller States have been victimised under the Federal Constitution. I do not place too much importance on what was said by Mr. Keenan 27 years ago. We all grow wiser as we grow older—at least we think we do. We must remember that it is Mr. Keenan's job to put up one side of the case to-day and perhaps the other side to-morrow, and in pretty strong terms. Twenty-seven years ago Mr. Keenan represented a community of dissatisfied people. I think he takes a different view of the position to-day. I urge Mr. Cornell to remember that it is the goldfields people who ran us into Federation, and common decency demands that if we are to secede we should do so constitutionally and that they should help us out. I do not ask anything further. I repeat that on the eve of the general election the present Premier said he would see that the decision of the majority of the people was carried out, not that he would get a committee appointed to do the job. Consequently I look to him and his Ministers to carry out the undertaking he gave.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [7.57]: I wish to say merely a few words if only to stick up for those interlopers who came to this State many years ago and helped to bring it out of the uncivilised state of the blackfellow into the civilised position of the white man in which we find ourselves to-day. I am an Eastern-Stater and I am not sorry for it. I reside on the goldfields which have always been the backbone of Western Australia, more so than ever to-day. Without the goldfields there would be no talk of secession. As a matter of fact, the burden would be too great.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They know if we secede they cannot get along without our gold.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: We know that. But on the goldfields to-day practically everything that is required is being produced. There are cattle and sheep in great numbers and wheat is being grown successfully. In

addition, there is the port of Esperance on which I notice the Government propose to spend £100,000. After all, secession was not a plank of the Labour Party's platform. The Labour Party did not advocate it; they only said they would carry out the wishes of the people, whatever those wishes might be. The intention is to do this. As a Labour Party we do not believe in secession. We know that it will be useless. It frightens one when the effects of secession are contemplated. Let me instance the gold-mining industry. The Commonwealth Government made available a bonus of £1 per ounce in the event of the price of gold dropping below £5 per ounce. The result was that the gold-mining industry prospered; that was prior to the depression. Could Western Australia afford to provide a bonus of £1 per ounce for gold if we got secession? Could Western Australia have afforded to pay the amount of money that has been made available by the Commonwealth to the farmers during the past two years? Of course, it could not. As a matter of fact, the goldfields get very little out of Western Australia. On the other hand, the State has starved the industry. It is amazing to think that even now the goldfields draw their beef supplies from an area north of Broken Hill. The meat can be imported from there with three changes of trains en route, and yet be landed at Kalgoorlie cheaper than beef can be taken to Kalgoorlie from Perth. In those circumstances is it not a shame to suggest secession? What would happen to the people on the fields if Western Australia were to secede? We can get our pigs from Adelaide in three days and it takes three days to get pigs from Trayning, the other side of Merredin. We get our cauliflowers from Adelaide. It is a cruel shame to think that our money goes to a neighbouring State, but that is the position. It is an insult to the management of the railways of Western Australia, and an insult to the brains of those who control the destinies of this State. Yet we are asked to secede! These are facts that I have quoted. Fancy being able to import pigs from more than a thousand miles away as quickly and more cheaply than we can procure them from a centre 250 miles or so from Kalgoorlie. It is many years since our forebears came from the East, but they came from lively States and enlivened Western Australia. The descendants of those people are our citizens to-day, and they voted solidly

against secession on the goldfields. We have the right to-day to do as the people did many years ago, as you, Mr. President, are aware, and we should see to it that the people of the goldfields have the right to remain in the Federation if they so desire, and if the rest of Western Australia is determined to secede, then the goldfields people should have the right to be established as a separate State within the Commonwealth. The people there came to this State to stay for good. Some came in the early days to get rich quickly, but thousands of them lost their lives and their remains are buried in cemeteries throughout the goldfields. Some of them had no desire to return to their home towns, for Western Australia is all right. I have indicated the way that people on the goldfields have been treated by State Governments. One can only view the position with disgust, and one resents the methods that have had to be resorted to by the goldfields people in order to have their wrongs righted. What would government from Perth mean for the goldfields? It would mean that that part of the State would be starved at a time, as we have known from experience, when the rest of the State was prosperous, when there was plenty of loan money for expenditure, and when the prices of wheat and wool were high. At that time, the goldfields were left to starve and the mining industry was hampered. It practically died. To-day, because of the advanced price of gold, even derelict backblock towns are commencing to show signs of life again. That has not been due to anything done by the State Government. That development has arisen because of the price of gold and the payment of the Commonwealth gold bonus. It could not be done by Western Australia because the State population is too small to carry the burden. I shall not say any more, except to express the hope that the rights of the goldfields people will be preserved to-day as they saw to it 30 years ago that they were preserved then. My father voted for Federation in Victoria, and I have followed in his footsteps. I believe Federation is best for Australia generally and for Western Australia in particular. I agree with what Mr. Holmes said, when he pointed out that at the inception, the Federal Constitution provided that the Senate should consist of an equal number of representatives from the several States in order that the rights of the States should be preserved. Although I belong to a party that is definitely,

unificationist, I will admit that over a period of years, little by little, the State's position has been whittled away, principally because of political jealousies, and in a desire to bolster up the powers of the Commonwealth Government, irrespective of what their political opinions may have been. The result is that to-day the Senate, instead of standing as the defender of the State rights, is as much a part of the political machine as is the House of Representatives. There are enough senators representing South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia, if they were but honest in their political actions, to safeguard the rights of the smaller States by holding up the business of the Commonwealth. By that means the requirements of Western Australia and the other small States would receive the consideration that they deserve. I admit that I voted against secession, for I did not want this State to be held up to ridicule. It has been ridiculed because of the nature of a vote that has no chance of being given effect to. We know that all this represents so much waste time. When our representations are received in the Old Country, they will be pigeon-holed, which is as it should be. As long as that is done, I shall be satisfied. So long as the rights of the minority are preserved, particularly those of the people on the goldfields who have suffered so much in the past, I shall be content. Like Mr. Holmes, there have been many men who spent a lot of money on the goldfields and have received nothing back in return. However, had it not been for the expenditure of their money, in days gone by, particularly in the provision of water supplies and the goldfields railway, this State would to-day be a bleak waste.

Question put and passed.

Committee Appointed.

Ballot taken, and a committee appointed as follows:—Hons. J. M. Drew, C. F. Baxter, W. J. Mann, J. T. Franklin and A. M. Clydesdale.

On motions by the Chief Secretary, resolved—

That the committee have power to call for persons, papers, and records, and confer with a committee of the Legislative Assembly and report on Tuesday, the 12th September.

That a message be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly acquainting it with the fact that the Legislative Council concurs in the resolution set out in message No. 13 from the As-

sembly, has appointed five members of the Legislative Council to act on the committee referred to therein, and has fixed Friday, the 1st September, at 11 o'clock in the President's room as the time and place for the first meeting.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Mining Act Amendment.
- 2, Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL — FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [8.40]: There are some further phases of this matter that I think should receive consideration. One of these I have not yet heard mentioned but it has a considerable bearing on the question of emergency taxation. In view of the attitude of the Premier when introducing the Bill, and of the scant courtesy he meted out to his hearers, as evidenced by the little information he vouchsafed to them concerning the Bill, we may be forgiven if we adopt a somewhat cautious attitude. In the absence of definite knowledge of the financial proposals of the Government, I do not think any body of men could fairly assess the necessity for a measure of this kind. I doubt the necessity for re-enacting any financial emergency taxation.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You are optimistic.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. The Government are to receive something like £700,000 from the Loan Council this year more than was received by the State last year. That is a large sum, and should go most of the way towards financing unemployment works and provide a balance over and above the expenditure on such works. I am going to endeavour to show that the Government will receive a considerable amount from other sources, and that such extra money can also be applied to their programme. The pre-

vious Government did a very fair thing in regard to unemployment relief work. Perhaps they did not go as far as they might have done, but I do not think anyone could reasonably cavil at the assistance afforded in the majority of cases to the unfortunate people concerned. If what we are given to understand is a fact, the Government apparently are out to spend quite a lot more money than was spent by their predecessors. I do not know that they will greatly improve the position.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It will mean the absorption of many of the unemployed.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Most of the unemployed were given some kind of work by the previous Government, though perhaps not as much as some of us would have liked; but I am inclined to think that the present Government have an idea that they are about to reap a considerable financial harvest by taxation and in other directions. This makes me also inclined to think that the Government propose to spend money much more freely than is at present desirable, more especially as portion of that money is loan money, which will have to be repaid. I believe that as the result of the splendid increase in the gold yield and the appreciation in the price of wool, there will be a considerable increase in the amount of income taxation, for one thing. Already there are signs that the activity displayed in gold mining will bring a considerable amount of money to Western Australia almost right away. I might illustrate that by something which was told me this morning regarding the flotation and the financing of what was the Lancefield mine. I was informed definitely that operations on the mine, which are to commence immediately, will give work to about 450 men. If that is correct—and I am assured that it is—it is only one of many such advances we shall see before long in Western Australia. It will mean additional full-time work for 450 men and the springing-up of a new township in that locality.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The development will support a population of another 1,500 men, women and children.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes; and the same thing will be repeated in various parts of the State. Taking those things into consideration, if there is to be any financial emergency taxation, it should be reduced instead of being increased as proposed by these twin measures. Whilst I have not the

slightest wish to cast any vote which may embarrass the Government, I must say that I believe the people of Western Australia are taxed heavily enough, taxed much more than is good for the general welfare. I may be met with the reply that people in the Eastern States are taxed more heavily still, but I do not think that affects the position. People in Western Australia are bearing an equal burden with people in the Eastern States, all things considered. If I were to make a suggestion at all with regard to increased taxation, I should say that if the Government received a couple of hundred thousand pounds by way of emergency taxation, that amount, with the increased income tax, which I feel sure will be received—

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Government must receive over £300,000 from emergency taxation.

Hon. W. J. MANN: From statements made during the debate in this House I am inclined to think the amount will be considerably higher than the estimate, which is £378,000. That is suggested to my mind by the belief that at the next quarterly assessment of the basic wage the index figures will show a sufficient increase to raise the basic wage above £3 10s. per week. Such a rise would bring a considerable number of workmen within the taxable range. The rising prosperity, may I say, which is ahead of this State is such that instead of increasing taxation we should aim in the other direction. If we are to have increased taxation, then at the very most it should not exceed 5d. or 6d. in the pound. For my own edification I have worked out a scale which I believe would bring in about £200,000. I suggest a scale or schedule commencing with 1d. in the pound on incomes between £100 and £200, and proceeding to 3d. in the pound on incomes between £200 and £300, to 4d. on incomes between £300 and £500, and to 5d. on all incomes over £500. That scale, on the figures supplied, would bring in about £200,000, an amount I regard as ample. Undoubtedly the Government will receive increases in many directions. The gold yield has increased, and is increasing. Last year there was an increase of nearly 95,000 ounces over the previous year. That increase alone, at the present price of gold, represents £750,000, all of which will be taxable. This year, I believe, we shall have even a greater increase in the gold yield, because the first six months of 1933 show a

very satisfactory increase over the corresponding period of last year. Each year from 1928 the gold yield of this State has been increasing, and for that reason there is more money and will be more money expended amongst us. The same happy position applies to the wool industry. Within the last few weeks, and particularly within the last few days, there has been an appreciable increase in that regard; and all that money will be taxable, too.

Member: Not until the following year.

Hon. W. J. MANN: It will be taxable eventually. As regards the duration of this emergency taxation, I feel that I cannot support anything more than 12 months. It would be quite a reasonable period if the tax were made to operate for 12 months from the date of the passing of the Bill. Then the tax would expire within what would be, in ordinary circumstances, the next session of Parliament, when we should be here and able to review the position. Therefore, I do not clearly understand the Government's object in asking for a period of 18 months. In my opinion, a period of 12 months would be wiser. As regards the retrospective clauses, I feel the Government will be well advised not to press them. The position is not so urgent as to make retrospective operation an absolute necessity. None of us likes retrospective legislation, especially when it comes to paying money that should have been paid during an earlier period. With these reservations I support the second reading, also reserving my right to support amendments in Committee.

HON. SIR CHARLES NATHAN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.58]: I have no desire to add to the length of this debate, which has already been of a protracted nature; but I do feel the need for saying a few words to justify the vote I propose to cast. One realises that though perhaps better times are ahead, and though, as the Leader of the House has admitted, we are now perhaps turning the corner, there is still a bounden duty on the Government of the day to provide as far as possible for those who are unable to find work through the ordinary industrial channels. Further, it is necessary that the Government should be placed in a position enabling them so to do. Consequently, to me, the necessity for a measure of this description is evident. I wish to say frankly that the present Bill is, in my

opinion, much more equitable than that which we were called upon to pass last year. It is difficult for members of this Chamber to have incorporated their individual views in a measure such as this without also shouldering the responsibilities of the Government. I do not propose to adopt that course this year any more than I was inclined to do last year, although, as I have said, that measure was not one which I would have agreed to under normal conditions. With the principles of the Bill I am entirely in agreement. I am also entirely in agreement with the Minister, who expressed the opinion that we were justified in taxing the people of Western Australia to the same extent as the people of the Eastern States are taxed. I was never able to follow the opinion of the ex-Premier when he said the people of Western Australia lived in circumstances so different from those of the Eastern States that they could not be taxed to the same extent as the people in the Eastern States; or to put it in another way, they could not stand such high taxes. I fail to see how a man on £8 a week cannot afford to pay a tax similar to that paid by a man who is drawing £8 a week in one of the other States. The only difference I can see is the existing difference in the cost of living. I cannot see why a man on £1,000 a year, if he is earning that money, is not entitled to be taxed the same as the man on £1,000 a year in one of the other States. But I can see the force of the argument that if we are to look to the more wealthy States—wealthy through their manufacturing and other activities—if we can logically support a claim for some measure of assistance we must see to it that we ourselves share the burden. Therefore, as one of those who comes within the classes affected, I have no personal feeling about the additional taxation imposed on me and others, always provided we are perfectly satisfied that the amount to be realised is to be used for the legitimate purpose of finding work for the unemployed. It is on that point that I have just a little doubt. I feel that the Government perhaps have not fully justified the Bill, not fully made out their case. We know they are getting something like £600,000 or £700,000 from loan account more than the late Government had to spend on public works. The Minister has advised us that this particular tax will bring in a cer-

tain amount. Mr. Baxter, I think, said that in his opinion the amount would be considerably more than that mentioned by the Minister, but I am confident that the Minister can justify his own figures. If I remember aright, the number of unemployed during the regime of the late Government was approximately 14,000 or 15,000 men, about the same number as are out of work to-day. We have not been told whether the Government will, by the additional amount they are receiving, be able to absorb all those men during the next 12 months. The lingering fear in my mind is that while some men will be paid an increased rate—and I agree with the Government that that is justifiable—there will be a considerable number who may not be given an opportunity to work; in other words that in giving some a greater amount of remuneration per week, the Government, by their generosity in that direction, may be precluding others from obtaining work at all. Certain amendments have been proposed, and so long as they do not jeopardise the passing of the measure, I should like to see the Government give favourable consideration to at least several of them. While I propose to vote for the second reading, I will support some of those amendments in the hope that the Government may accept them. Those amendments I have in mind are not in any way vital to the principle involved in the measure. I will support the second reading.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.5]: I feel that the Government are not at all gratified at having to bring down the Bill, that they would have preferred that the necessity for it had not arisen. But we found such a measure necessary last year, and I am confident the conditions have not so far improved as to allow the Government to carry on without this taxation. It is an emergency tax, and my view is that the flat rate of last year was the best rate that could be applied. The Government have seen fit to put up the Bill in another form, and as I am trying to be helpful I hope the Bill may become effective at as early a date as possible. But I do hold that, this being an emergency tax, everybody in the community should be called upon to meet the emergency condition. I do not agree that the single men ought to be exempt, because I feel they should be grounded in their responsibilities to the State, should not be

exempt from those responsibilities. If we do not infuse into them a sense of their responsibilities, then as time goes on they will feel they should be relieved from taxation in many other forms, some of which put a burden on a class which in turn affects the labour market. So I propose to support the amendment dealing with single men. Also I feel that the Government have not taken the House sufficiently into their confidence, have not supplied information as to what the different classes of tax will yield. I understand that even the Taxation Department cannot supply those figures. So it is evident that before the Act is in operation for a year, it will be found that the Government are extracting a good deal more than is necessary. Because of that, I hope the operation of the Act will be restricted to one year. I am going to oppose the retrospective provision, because I have always opposed retrospection in any form, whether in taxation or in the awards of the court. Now the tide has turned and the worker is threatened with retrospection, he himself can see how hard it will deal with him. I suppose the Minister will say it is not fair to interfere with the retrospective provision, because that would affect his returns. I do not wish to affect the returns, but I think perhaps the position could be balanced by extending the term of the operation of the Act in lieu of passing the retrospective provision. I do not like the Bill, and I am sure the Government do not like it, and so I trust it will last no longer than 12 months.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [9.10]: The necessity for the continuance of this emergency taxation is unfortunately only too well known. But it is difficult to understand why the Premier did not call Parliament together early in June, so that an amended taxation Bill might have been considered and passed by the 30th June to make provision for the continuity of the receipt of money so necessary to the finding of work for a large number of unemployed, and so avoid the necessity of Parliament being asked to make the present Bill retrospective. Failure to maintain this continuity means the loss of £25,000 per month under the old Act, and perhaps more under the Bill. This retrospective legislation is only justified when circumstances make its imposition unavoidable. The retrospective provision, if carried, will

result in hardship on many people and injustice on some. During the last session Ministers of to-day frequently referred to the broken promises of the then Government. What do we find to-day? Indignation meetings held in many parts of the State, not by opponents of the present Government, but by those who have supported them. Is it any wonder that Mr. Williams, a Labour supporter, charges the Labour Government with hypocrisy? The charge is levelled against the Government that under the Bill certain people will be exempt from taxation which otherwise would go into the State fund, and at the same time the Government are insisting upon those people paying union fees before being able to obtain work on a Government job. That, I think, has been proved conclusively. If the funds of the unions were used to provide sick or accident benefits it would be had enough, but when it is known that those funds are used for political party purposes it is a scandalous state of affairs, and makes one wish for a Mussolini. It is high time all such unions and associations were compelled to account to the Registrar, as the friendly societies do, showing how their funds are used. I believe in unions and associations, and have been a member of one for many years. When a Government officer I have always joined up with the association for which I was eligible. But there was never any compulsion about it, and certain well-thought-out schemes were initiated for members. The Commonwealth public officers have an association which, in addition to doing what trade unions do, has a substantial fund to its credit for the benefit of its members. If something on those lines were attempted by the unions, I feel sure there would be no necessity for compulsion. I repeat that the need for this or some other taxing measure is unfortunately only too apparent. I was surprised to hear from Mr. Mann tonight that in his opinion there is some doubt about the necessity for the Bill. I am quite willing to accept the opinion of the hon. member, but I do not know whether there is a great difference between the conditions obtaining in the South-West and in my district. I am aware, however, as I said before, that there is necessity to raise funds to provide work for the vast number of unemployed people. I have seen more than enough to convince me in far too many cases, great and undeserved hardship has had to be endured by both unemployed and farmers.

I ask members to bear with me for a couple of minutes whilst I read this letter, which is typical of hundreds of cases throughout the State—

I am a married man with five children, all of whom are at school. Their ages are 14, 13, 11, 9, and 7 years. I applied for sustenance work on the 21st June, and yesterday, the 5th instant, I received a reply from the police that I was not entitled to maintenance work. My application having been refused on the ground that I had earned more than I would have earned if I had been on sustenance work, that is, since finishing up on sustenance work about the 5th December last. As you know, my work on the wharf is very intermittent, and I earned £96 from the 5th December last to the 14th June this year, and because I earned more than I would have had from the State as bare sustenance, I am refused the right to a job to earn enough to buy food and other necessities for my wife and children, and this notwithstanding the promises made by the present Government at the last elections. Is this action taken with the consent and approval of the Minister for Employment? I do not think he would stand for a man with the family responsibilities that I have being treated in such a way. Will you please place these facts before him and endeavour to get me a start?

This man is a member of the Waterside Workers' Union at Geraldton. I did not like to mention his case, but I consider it my duty to do so. The man applied for sustenance on the 21st June and did not receive a reply until the 5th August. He was kept in suspense all that time. I called at the unemployment office to-day and was informed that the sergeant at Geraldton had been requested to make inquiries. The man in question is an honest, sober, hard working person with five children. He was on sustenance in December last when the wheat was coming in, and knowing he could earn more money working on the wharf, he pulled out of sustenance. That is the type of man we want in the community to-day. He was able to secure six months' intermittent work, and during that time earned £96. When the wharf work was finished, he applied again for sustenance. He was asked to submit a statement showing the amount of money he had earned, and he did so. Of course he earned more money than he would have received had he remained on sustenance, but after he sent in his application for sustenance again, he was told to stand down until the amount he had earned above the sustenance rate had worked itself out. The sustenance rate was £2 9s., and in the period in which he worked he earned £3 10s. I

cannot say that the Government whose sympathies are with this class of man are following this procedure to make themselves unpopular; I do not believe that for a moment. The member for Geraldton himself was in Geraldton last Friday, and had to face a hostile crowd there. I am told that similar meetings have been held in Perth, and judging from what Mr. Williams has told the House, I should imagine that meetings have also been held on the gold-fields. The members of the Government I know are not deliberately refusing to grant sustenance in cases such as that I have described; it must be because there is not the money available.

The Honorary Minister: Is the case you have mentioned one of being unable to get sustenance, or unable to get work?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The man cannot get either work or money.

The Honorary Minister: I assume he is drawing sustenance now.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: He is not getting anything, and it is for that reason I have brought the matter under the notice of the department. The man is out of work, and is unable to draw either rations or sustenance money, and he has frequently called at my house to inquire what I have been able to do. Only to-day was I informed that the sergeant of police at Geraldton had been requested to make inquiries. How, therefore, can members say there is not much necessity for this taxation to be imposed? Last night Mr. Miles made the statement that he had been unable to engage a boy to do certain work. The hon. member would have no object in relating that to the House if something of the kind had not happened; but I am convinced that if he had applied to the Boys' Employment League he would have met with success. In common with other residents in Geraldton, I have been besieged by men calling at my home, and a big proportion of them young men, from all parts of the State, in search of work. As far as I have been able to gather, all are desirous of obtaining employment, though I admit some are not too anxious. It is our duty to provide employment. Another matter of importance to which reference has already been made is that of the reduction of interest. The Governments, State and Commonwealth, owe it as a duty to the people to endeavour to get a reduction in the rates of interest. We are continually being congratulated

lated by men from the Old Country about the splendid performance we have put up, but while that may please us it does not provide work for our unemployed. It would be far better to secure a reduction of interest which would render us so much assistance at the present time. I was very interested last night in listening to Mr. Hamersley's statement showing details of taxation. It was noticeable that the Commonwealth took by far the lion's share of that direct taxation. Remembering the enormous amount extracted from us by the Commonwealth through indirect taxation such as Customs and Excise, is it any wonder that we find ourselves up against it? The cost of the Commonwealth departments is £37,631,261 per annum, or £6 per head of the population. When we realise our helplessness to effect any reduction in Federal expenditure, we almost feel inclined to declare that the sooner we let the Commonwealth take the lot, the better. However, that is a policy of despair. Consequently we have to make an effort to put our house in order. Mr. Miles has stolen some of my thunder in suggesting a reduction of members of Parliament and also a reduction in the amount of the Parliamentary allowance. Such action would, under existing conditions, show the people that we were really trying to meet the needs of the situation. As the party in power favour the referendum, it is suggested that they arrange to put the questions before the people. If they were put before the people at the next general election, I believe the people would record a bigger affirmative vote for them than they did for secession; and that applies to reduction both in the number of members and in the allowance. Mr. Miles referred to the Licenses Reduction Board. I agree that the board have done good work, but the necessity for the continuance of the board cannot be maintained. Police and magistrates throughout the State might well be expected to ensure that the present satisfactory hotel accommodation and arrangements are continued. The statement that the cost of the board does not come out of Consolidated Revenue is altogether beside the point. The cost comes out of the pockets of the hotel-keepers directly and the general public indirectly. Whilst, perhaps, the hotel-keepers, like other business people, must look after themselves, still they have as much right to fair and just treatment as has any other section of the people. There is absolutely

no appeal from the decisions of the board, and in the past, I fear, there have been cases of hardship. Whilst not objecting to the recent appointees, I do object to the practice adopted by the previous and now followed by the present Government of appointing prominent supporters. I think it would be much better to leave the appointments in the hands of the Public Service Commissioner. The reason given for the retirements from the board is that of age, and I suggest that the Government might well continue their good work in that direction when we have so many young men waiting for a chance. It is hard, I know, to stand down a man who is fit to carry on; but it is far harder, and fraught with much more danger, to keep young men with nothing to do. I approve of the appointment of an Economic Council, which is a step in the right direction; and I feel sure Mr. Miles is right in his claim that three business men could make such suggestions to the Government as would result in the saving of many thousands of pounds annually. I agree with hon. members who consider that this Bill requires amending. I am not in favour of taxing mutual life assurance companies. Such taxation I regard as a tax on thrift. I shall vote for the second reading, trusting that in Committee such amendments will be effected as will make the measure acceptable to a majority of the House. Before concluding, I wish to touch upon something I have not heard mentioned during this debate. Quite rightly we are concerned about raising money to find employment for the vast number of people who, as I have said, are tramping about the country looking for work, and those married people who I believe are suffering in keeping up appearances for themselves and their children. But we have been told over and over again during the last couple of years that it is absolutely essential that the wheat industry of the State be carried on. Now, it cannot be carried on if the wheatgrower is to receive the prices that he has been receiving during the last couple of years. We have every right to expect that the Federal Government will do something in this matter; but I maintain that the old proverb, "Heaven helps those who help themselves," will stand us in good stead. When we hear, as we have heard to-night, that there is plenty of money for the unemployed, we should not forget this essential industry of wheatgrowing. It is the duty of every Western Australian to

put his hand in his pocket and help to keep that industry going. If there is any money to spare, I trust the wheatgrower will not be forgotten. Let us be grateful that the price of wool has improved. I hope that will continue. The outlook for wheat, however, is very dismal indeed. It is quite proper for us to look for a Federal bounty on wheat, but I think the State would be well advised to take some action in that direction. In addition to caring for the unemployed, the State should come to the financial assistance of the wheatgrower.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: If the State does anything, the Commonwealth will not.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [9.40]: I regret that I omitted to take an earlier opportunity of conveying my congratulations to Mr. Drew and Mr. Kitson on their re-assumption of the offices which they now hold. I feel sure that the ability which marked their occupancy of their respective offices during the tenure of the former Collier Government will be continued; and I believe I re-echo the sentiment of other members when I express my confident assurance that Mr. Drew and Mr. Kitson will retain amongst us the same position of high esteem which they held formerly. I am sorry, and I am sure the Leader of the House must regret, that the occasion on which I offer these congratulations is when the House is considering a Bill of this nature, a Bill which has met, so far as I can see, with a somewhat mixed reception and a fair amount of disapproval. In connection with the present measure, I recall that the Leader of the House, while holding a similar position under a former Government, was able to record a very happy circumstance indeed when he announced that the Government of the day intended to effect a reduction in income tax from certain moneys which had come to them from the Federal Government. I think it will be admitted that as a result of that reduction not only the country but also the Government of the day benefited. But now we find that a somewhat opposite course is proposed by the introduction of the present assessment Bill and its companion tax Bill, two Bills which, as has been admitted, really require to be considered together. I feel satisfied that the views expressed by hon. members in opposition to the Bill which we are actually considering at this moment have been uttered with a sincere desire to help the

Government and to impress upon Ministers the grave danger, in the present abnormal conditions, of adding to the burden of taxation on those who are trying to build up the State and its industries. The views expressed by many members who are opposed to the Bill are views which may appeal even to many members of the Government or those associated with the Government. Indeed, we found that exemplified when Mr. Williams pointed out how the Bill would affect his constituents. It may be that the Government will come to recognise, if they do not now recognise, that the Legislative Council may be an aid to them in, shall I say, placing on the statute-book legislation of a wiser and better character than this Bill is calculated to confer. Various members have pointed out that the present Bill is premature in its appearance, and I quite agree that when considering the measure we should have the Estimates before us. Mr. Holmes, in the excellent speech which he delivered, correctly explained the position with reference to the existing Act, which this Bill proposes to amend: and I think that Mr. Holmes' suggestion to continue the existing legislation would be more beneficial to the Government and to those associated with them, as well as being more helpful in the re-establishment of industry. The Bill proposes to effect certain radical alterations in the principles contained in the parent Act. The original Act was, if I remember aright, introduced with the explanation that it followed upon the Premiers' Plan and the object of it was to provide means to relieve unemployment. That Act embodied the principle of a flat rate of taxation. It was recognised that we were all sharing in what can be described as a common calamity. On the contrary, the legislation now before Parliament departs from the principle of a flat rate and substitutes a graduated tax. There are objections to the latter method. Provision is made for taxation at the source and that principle is undoubtedly objectionable and raises many difficulties. The principles embodied in the Act and the present legislation therefore differ materially. We are asked to vary the principle by which the financial emergency tax is levied, without having before us the information that we are undoubtedly entitled to. If the Estimates were before us, we would be in a better position to review the financial needs of the Gov-

ernment and to determine whether we were justified in passing this legislation. I am anxious to assist the Government—no one desires to hinder them in carrying out their duty—but we are entitled to necessary information before giving the authority of this House to the passage of the Bill now before us. In the House of Commons, I understand, there is a standing committee known as the Estimates Committee. The duty of that body is to inquire into the Estimates as submitted by the Government and to make recommendations from time to time regarding economies to be effected. That is done for the general welfare of the country and for the guidance of Parliament. If we had such a committee, it might be helpful to us in considering such a measure as that now under discussion. We have been told that the Bill is necessary because of certain extra expenditure, amounting to approximately £105,000, that has to be met because of borrowings and commitments from last year. It will be remembered that the passage of last year's Act was much delayed and the ex-Government had the benefit of six or seven months' revenue only as a result of its retarded passage. The result, according to the figures submitted by the Leader of the House, was that about £202,000 was obtained during the six or seven months the tax was collectable. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to suppose that the amount that could be raised from a similar tax, if authorised by this House, would approach nearer to the amount estimated to be derived from the Government's proposal, namely, £380,000. Mr. Mann has already pointed out that there are great prospects of increased revenue from various channels, and he instanced the gold mining industry and the increased gold yield last year compared with that of the previous 12 months. From that standpoint alone one can readily see that there will be greatly increased revenue from various sources. I admit that the revenue to be derived must be more or less estimated, but it can be done approximately. The Leader of the House furnished a table showing the comparative taxation collected in the several States, no doubt with the object of placing before members the contention raised at the Premiers' Conference that our taxation was lower than that operating in other States. The mere fact that our taxation is lower is apparently regarded as cause for complaint on the part of the Loan Council, whereas it should be regarded from the

opposite point of view. Rather than that Western Australia should be charged with under-taxing, the State should be applauded for keeping taxation within a reasonable limit.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And then going to the East and asking the Commonwealth Government to finance our deficit.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am not asking that.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But that is what the ex-Government had to do.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not want that. There has been excessive borrowing on the part of all Governments, and to that is due the trouble we are experiencing at present. That does not apply to the State Governments alone but to the Federal Government as well. It proceeded until at last the Federal Government were pulled up with a round turn, and they then had to face the situation. It was recognised long before that stage was reached that the system could not continue. It must be recognised that Western Australia has much more to do from the standpoint of development than the other States, which have indulged in extravagant expenditure. From that aspect we can claim that we have not altogether copied them and we can seek to avoid committing the mistakes of which the other States have been guilty. I submit that the argument regarding the contention of the Loan Council furnishes no reason why we should support the Bill before us. The lower our taxation is, the greater will be our credit, for credit is built up on careful borrowing and the maintenance of taxation at as low a rate as possible. Borrowing has been indulged in to an extent too great for our success and benefit. While I admit Governments cannot continue without borrowing some money, I appeal to the present Government to display wisdom by borrowing money only so far as is necessary for reproductive purposes. By that means we will lessen the burden of taxation instead of increasing it year by year. If we pursue the same course as in years gone by in continuing to add to the loan indebtedness without requiring the money to be expended on reproductive works, the burden of taxation will be increased and it will be doubtful when, if ever, we shall find ourselves in the better position we desire. Another advantage of having our credit created by the evidence of low taxation is that our stocks naturally are improved as a marketable security. That

was evidenced particularly before the Loan Council took over their present function with regard to State loans. Prior to the passing of the Financial Agreement Act this State's loans ranked as high, if not higher than, the loans of several of the other States. That was due to the policy of keeping down taxation, and I urge that that policy should still be pursued by the Government, for it will redound to their credit and will help towards the restoration of industry and the relief of unemployment. I understand that within the next ten years over £345,000,000 will fall due in loans raised within Australia and abroad. That fact should make us realise the necessity for economising in loan raising, and also for keeping down as low as possible our rate of taxation. From what sources do we get our greatest support in subscriptions for loans when they come before the public? The sources are chiefly many of our financial institutions, insurance companies, banks and other bodies. They are the main subscribers to loans as they come forward. By increased taxation we are drying up the sources of supply for those loans, and for that reason I think it well for any Government to consider keeping taxation low. Some reference has been made to interest rates and the contention that those rates should be reduced. If we strike an average of the whole of the loans of our State it comes out at a very reasonable sum, but we know there are some high priced loans, going up to $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The comment is made with regard to the reduction of interest, and notice is drawn to it as though it were possible for any Government to reduce the rate of interest on those loans by a simple application. Members must realise that these moneys are held by hundreds of thousands of persons scattered all over the country, whether in Australia or in England, and sometimes they are held in small amounts. There is only one way in which such loans can properly be dealt with and a rearrangement of interest made, and that is by a conversion loan. There are still in existence higher rated stock and I had an opportunity, as I know you, Mr. President, also had, when recently in London to discuss that very matter with those who are identified with these financial affairs. It was pointed out that there is a proper time and season for dealing with such conversions, and that if the wrong time were taken to attempt a conver-

sion it would react with most detrimental effect on the credit of Australia. Furthermore, I was assured that there was no lack of sympathy on the part of those interested to assist in these conversions, but that it could only be done at an opportune moment.

The Honorary Minister: It is a long time to wait.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is a long time, but one can appreciate how difficult it is to arrange such matters, with the world in its present topsy-turvy condition.

The Honorary Minister: Every country in the world can have consideration, except this country.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I wish the hon. member could journey there and find out by personal investigation exactly what the position is. He would then be just as impressed as I am with everything that is being done by Mr. Bruce to try to achieve the conversion of the higher rated stock as early as possible. Fortunately for us in Australia, Mr. Bruce is held in the highest esteem in London and I feel certain that when the moment does arrive some good will result from his efforts. Mr. Bruce has already effected the conversion of certain big sums.

The Honorary Minister: A mere bagatelle.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I would remind the hon. member that there is a very large proportion of the loans of Australia held at comparatively low rates. What we really want to do is to deal with the conversion of the higher rated stock, for if these are converted the others can remain where they are until their due date. But we have falling due that large sum of over 345 millions within 10 years, and the arrangements required to be made for this conversion may cause delays, which the Honorary Minister seems to think a cause for complaint. I feel sure that if he could inquire into matters on the spot he would see that everything possible is being done. I have expressed those views with regard to keeping down taxation and borrowing to the lowest possible limits, not with any desire to speak against this measure or in opposition to the Government, but rather with a desire to help them. I trust sincerely that their management of the country will result in something once more being recorded such as the Minister was able to record on a previous occasion. Meanwhile I cannot see any way to support the Bill without the evidence that I say should have been furnished on the

Estimates to enable us to determine whether we would be justified in passing the measure.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [10.11]: I do not desire to delay the House, but it is imperative that some reply should be made to the grotesque exaggerations regarding union funds and compulsory unionism. During the last nine years and for six years of the regime of the previous Labour Government, this bogey was put up repeatedly, and as often knocked down. One would have thought that by this time members in opposition to the Government and their policy would have found some other argument. I cannot conceive that members are speaking sincerely when they make such statements about compulsory unionism and say that the money raised by the tax will be diverted into union funds.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What tax are you talking about, the union tax or the Government tax?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The policy of the Government as represented by the Bill before the House. Do not members know that some unions charge no contributions at all when members are unemployed?

Hon. E. H. Harris: Name a few of them.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: When the depression started, unions in Western Australia did remarkable work in keeping their members from starving by making available funds of their organisations. I belong to a union that charges 3d. per week and gives certain benefits under the rules to members who are unemployed, as well as giving them the rights of membership. There are numerous trade organisations that have done remarkable work in supplementing the efforts of the Government to care for the unemployed. If there is one union in the Commonwealth that deserves the praise of every member of the community, it is the one that members of this House are continually criticising, namely the A.W.U., because it comes into contact with more employees than any other registered trade union. As one who has been in close touch with the activities of that union during the last 33 years and was early brought into contact with them, I take it as an insult to the Australian Labour movement that responsible public representatives should indulge in criticism of the character that has been advanced against the Bill now before us. In my opinion, the chief charac-

teristics of the Australian worker are his fearlessness, physique and general conduct, and they have been developed chiefly by his industrial organisations insisting upon a good standard of living for him. When he left Australia's shores to fight in the great war, he was the admiration of the whole of the allied troops. Nothing has developed those characteristics in him so much as the good standard of living upon which the industrial organisations insisted. That, too, has produced citizens who have been the envy and pride of the civilised world. I think it is time that criticism of the kind hurled against unions should be dropped and some new line of argument found. Taxation at any time is obnoxious to everybody, and it is a sign of human nature that everyone tries to shift it on to the shoulders of somebody else. I wish to reply to a statement by Mr. Holmes that his ideas and mine on this measure were practically identical. He referred to my remarks on the Address-in-reply. On that occasion I was speaking of the necessity for citizens throughout the State assisting the Government by all means in their power to supplement the policy of providing work for the unemployed, apart from taxation. My remarks were confined to the necessity for citizens looking after the unemployed in their midst, because no one could reasonably expect an army of 12,000 unemployed to be the sole responsibility of the Government. Apart from the taxation Parliament imposed, an added responsibility, I urged, rested on everybody to assist the unemployed. That had nothing to do with the taxation proposals of the Government. The Government deserve the sympathy of the House, and I am surprised that relays of speakers have proposed to vote against the second reading, or have given notice of drastic amendments. The policy of the party was announced before the elections; the party were returned to power on that policy and, in accordance with that policy, they have introduced a taxation measure. It is fair to say that this Bill is as near to that policy as it was possible to be. No one could imagine any Government inflicting taxation on any section of the people unless it was absolutely necessary. Therefore the House will take a grave step if it alters the grading or rejects the Bill. If either course is followed, members must of necessity accept the responsibility. I consider that the policy of the Government,

in lifting the tax from the lower-paid wage-earners, is a sound one, because it would be difficult to ask large numbers of people on or under the basic wage to continue to bear the heavy burden of the last three years. A big majority of those who were lucky enough to be employed full time have had to support unemployed members of the family. There are young people in the community who have had to suffer materially in the last couple of years. We can well afford to give relief to that section of the people, indicated by the Bill, and those of us who are able to carry the taxation should willingly afford that relief.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do they get relief from the payment of union fees?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If the hon member had been in the House he would have heard my remarks on that subject. A professional man like Mr. Nicholson knows that lawyers would be put out of the profession if they did not conform to its rules. No engineer could exist at his occupation unless he joined the organisation associated with his profession.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Then the trade unions must come before the State.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The workers of the State owe a great deal to their industrial organisations. The obligation is such that as honourable men they can do nothing else but subscribe to the funds of their organisations. There is nothing that a worker pays out that he receives more from in the way of benefits than from what he pays in union fees. Not only does he receive protection in his work, but numerous other benefits besides, and in addition, of course, he receives the wages that are fixed as a result of the activities of his organisation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That is your opinion.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did you not join the Primary Producers' organisation to protect yourself?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Why should the organisations of the workers be held up to ridicule, because a majority of the workers had the brains to combine so that they might look after their own interests? The hon. member should be proud to think there are organisations of that character in the State. There is an organisation connected with his own party.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do you say the workers should contribute 6d. a week to their

unions, and not subscribe 2d. a week to the State?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The payment of union fees on the part of the workers carries with it many other benefits than those associated with the standard of living they enjoy. At the inception of the depression the unions provided a remarkable amount of assistance to the unemployed. Even the members of the Australian Workers' Union have received a splendid return for the fees they have paid to their organisation. All the workers derive innumerable benefits apart from protection in their actual work. That is the case in every phase of industrial organisations. Every member of a union is given the opportunity to express his ideas concerning the management of the affairs of the union, and to determine the policy of the organisation. This kind of organisation should be encouraged and not ridiculed. I support the Bill because I believe, although it is obnoxious to many, it is imperative under present conditions for the sake of all that we should pass it.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West [10.23]: I regret the necessity for taxation of this kind, and I also regret I cannot accept the point of view advanced by Mr. Mann. The hon. member was perhaps the most optimistic of any who have spoken on this Bill. I sincerely trust that some of the theories he advanced will become established facts. I cannot see, however, how his views are going to help the present Government during the current year. It is during this year that the money is required. Some members have described the taxation as unpopular. Mr. Gray has spoken of it as being obnoxious. Any form of taxation may be both of these things. In the words of a distinguished public man, all forms of taxation are repugnant to some section, if not every section, of the community. It would not matter who compiled the schedule of taxation, or for what purpose the money was being raised, some people or some sections of the people would be strongly opposed to it, particularly for the reason that it affected them in some especial way. No member of this House could compile a schedule of taxation that would not include many anomalies. No taxation measure has ever been brought down that did not contain anomalies in regard to its effect upon the people generally. On account of these anomalies criticism would

be bound to arise from certain people and organisations. We have reached the stage when we must sink our individual circumstances, and perhaps our individual opinions. We can accept the version of the Treasurer that it is absolutely necessary that the money should be raised by this means, especially during the present year. He has committed the State to the Loan Council, and has given an undertaking that his Government will endeavour to do certain things. In order that he may carry out his undertaking he must raise approximately £387,000, the estimated yield of the tax under review, and raise that money this year. It speaks well for the Treasurer that he was able to convince the Loan Council that the necessities of this State were such that it was essential we should have additional loan money this year, and that his Government and the State Parliament would not be backward in endeavouring to secure the necessary sum of money by means of additional taxation. Mr. Nicholson says we should not be guided by the taxation in force in the other States. In the past we have claimed that our taxation was the lowest in the Commonwealth. I believe, from the figures which were produced before the Loan Council, that this is perfectly true. If that be perfectly true, is it reasonable that this Chamber should take a stand that there is no necessity for a taxation measure of this kind when the Eastern States have higher taxation measures and have deficits just as we have almost every year? Is it reasonable that we should apply to the Eastern States to help us to finance deficits which will be created if we do not raise this amount of money by the present Bill or by some other means? That is the position as I see it, and we have to face the facts. The need for money at this juncture is just as urgent as it was at any time during the last two years. When it is pointed out that we are doing more for the unemployed in our State than is being done for unemployed in other States, I ask whether any member of this Chamber is satisfied that we have done as much as we should have done for our unemployed during the last two years. Is there one member of this Chamber who has not had occasion to approach either the last Government or the present Government on behalf of constituents with the plea that the Government were not doing as much as they should be doing for those particular individuals and others in the same position?

We have had an instance of that even tonight. Mr. Hall quoted a particular case. I know nothing of that particular case, but I do know that there have been hundreds of similar cases and that during the last two years, in particular, I have had to handle many scores of cases far worse than that mentioned by Mr. Hall. May I point out, too, that the letter quoted by Mr. Hall is dated about the middle of June, and that the present Government at that time simply had to carry on until it was possible for them to raise additional money. They had at least to carry on until the 30th June upon the same basis as the previous Government. The whole object of the present Minister for Employment is to get away from a state of affairs such as that suggested by Mr. Hall. We say that irrespective of how much full-time work a man may have had during a given period, in circumstances such as those quoted by Mr. Hall the man should have no difficulty in falling back upon sustenance as provided by the Government, and should not be debarred from relief work provided, as occasion arises, by the Government. In our efforts to get away from the state of things suggested by the case which Mr. Hall quoted, we are desirous of providing as much full-time work as we can for the unemployed, after which they shall come back on sustenance without having to stand down as they have had to do during the last two years. There can be no question whatever that during the last two years the standard of living of the great majority of Western Australian workers has simply been a standard of sustenance at a rate, prescribed by successive Governments, of 7s. per head per week. I agree with the Minister for Employment that the sooner we get away from that standard, the sooner will prosperity return to Western Australia. One has not to examine the matter very deeply to realise that that view is perfectly correct. If a man is receiving the basic wage all the year round, and more especially if he is in the position of Mr. Hall's constituent, supporting five children, there is no margin in any one week over and above his actual expenditure. It must also be borne in mind that the majority of men earning the basic wage are not employed all the year round even if employed by private enterprise. In many cases they have to stand down for a week or two at a time, and in some cases even for a month or two. Many of them are

seasonal workers. And yet we expect those men on the basic wage for the time they are employed to save sufficient out of the money received during that time to tide them over the period when no work is available. I wish to impress that point upon hon. members, for it has a bearing on the measures we are considering—in this way, that every pay the working man receives, particularly if he does not receive more than the basic wage, is actually spent on the bare necessities of life. Every penny he receives goes either in food, clothing, house rent, or something of a similar nature. But in the great majority of cases the man earning £500 or £600 a year will, even if taxed 3s. or 1s. in the pound, have something left over and above his actual living expenses. To that extent I say such a man should be perfectly satisfied to bear the burden of this taxation, so that the thousands of men who have not had the opportunity of getting even the bare necessities of life during the last two or three years, may at least be relieved of having to pay back in the form of taxation of this kind part of the few shillings that they do receive. We often talk about Governments having received a mandate to put a certain policy into effect. Has any Government ever received a mandate such as the present Government received in this particular matter?

Hon. J. Cornell: Yes. The Scullin Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Few Governments have been returned with such a majority as the present Government.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Labour Government were returned by a minority of the electors.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member can put it which way he likes.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is the proper way.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I say without hesitation that the history of this State shows that no Government was ever returned with a majority such as that of the present Government.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is so; but the last three Labour Governments were returned by a minority of the electors, and that can be proved.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member can put it which way he likes. I say the fact remains that the present Government have been returned with a bigger

majority than any previous Government in the history of Western Australia.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is not correct. The 1911 Government had a bigger majority; they were 36 in a House of 50.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Very well: we will say there is one exception. That does not invalidate my argument, which is that from every platform throughout Western Australia every candidate supporting the cause of Labour not only referred to the question of unemployment taxation but stated that the policy of the Labour Party, if returned to power, would be to effect an alteration in the method of taxing, and that we would endeavour to exempt the lower-paid worker, even up to the basic wage.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You know that they will all come in after September.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am not dealing with supposition, but with facts.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The facts will be apparent in September.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members will allow the Honorary Minister to proceed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am dealing with the present: the future will look after itself. There can be no denial of the statement I have made. The Government are endeavouring to live up to their pledges. If it were not so, there would be criticism on the part of members of this Chamber, who would point out that the Government were not giving effect to the pledges they made on the hustings. No one would have been a more keen critic than Mr. Harris who is so persistent in his interjections this evening. The policy of the Labour Government was endorsed by the people and in view of that fact, it ill becomes this House to endeavour to dictate to another place as to what form this taxation should take.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do not use the word "dictate."

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no question about it; let us face the facts even in that respect. Some hon. members have made their position perfectly clear.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They have voiced their protest.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Some members have stated in various terms what they would be prepared to allow the Government to do. I suggest to them that if they examine the matter from the point of view

I have stressed, they will recognise their attitude is not quite that which they should adopt. I have no objection at all to any criticism of policy, but let it be "fair dinkum" criticism, not criticism that is uttered with one's tongue in one's cheek. Let us have the actual facts and face the situation as we find it. I have endeavoured to describe it as it really is. I have pointed out that the policy of the Government has been endorsed by the electors in no uncertain manner. Unless the Government are able to obtain the money by means of the tax in the form proposed, the money will have to be found by means of some other tax or in some other form. We cannot escape that. The Premier has given an undertaking that his Government are prepared to carry out. In endeavouring to do so, we have placed before Parliament a taxation proposal that we believe, on the advice of people who are best able to inform us, will produce £380,000, provided the measure is in operation for 12 months. For every week that the Bill is delayed in its passage through Parliament, the Government will have to find some more funds to make up for the amount of money that will not be collected as the result of the delayed passage of the Bill. One member suggested that if we tacked on a month at the other end instead of at the beginning, no one would be any the worse off. It must be remembered that every week we lose is gone for ever and we cannot pick it up.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You lose it for this financial year only.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is so. I hope there will be no necessity for taxation of a similar character next year. If Mr. Mann is right in his contention, the probabilities are that there will be no need for taxation of this kind in future. I am sorry indeed that I cannot agree with his contention, because I believe that although we have already experienced some years of what we regard as the depression, it will not lift within the next 12 months. I am afraid we shall have an unemployment problem to contend with for a good many years to come. We must recognise that fact. While there may be some room for argument as to the particular rates of taxation that should apply, I cannot agree that there is any reasonable or logical argument why the exemptions proposed by the Government should not be agreed to. The schedule of taxation rates has not been arrived at with-

out a great deal of thought. It has not been put together in a haphazard manner. Naturally the Commissioner of Taxation is the one man in Western Australia who is able to give the Government an estimate of what certain taxation proposals will bring in. I understand the Premier, after close consultation with the Commissioner, is satisfied that provided we have the exemptions as embodied in the Bill, it is essential that the rates of taxation indicated in the taxing Bill shall be agreed to. I believe there are some members of this Chamber who would agree to a higher rate of tax on higher incomes. On the other hand, the Government agree with the contention that has been raised that one must be careful regarding taxation of this or any other description, in order that we shall not take away money that would otherwise be used in the interests of private enterprise.

Hon. J. Cornell: That cuts into the middle grades as well.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It certainly does, but the necessity remains for raising this particular amount of taxation and, in the circumstances, the taxation proposals advanced by the Government are the most equitable that can be designed. I regret very much that the debate on the Bill has been so prolonged and I sincerely hope that members of this House will not endeavour to embarrass the Government by moving amendments as some have suggested they are likely to do. I can leave the Leader of the House to deal with the criticism of members in detail. In conclusion, I suggest that if there were no necessity for raising this sum of money by the present proposed means, then the present Government would be the first to acknowledge the fact. The statement made by Mr. Nicholson tonight should be proof of that statement. He said that on a previous occasion when the Collier Government received money from the Federal Government, they reduced the income tax and, as a result of that action, the State, the Government and the people had benefited.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You have received an additional £750,000 from the Commonwealth this year.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not yet, but we shall in the course of the year. I can assure members that if, as the result of the receipt of that money, it had been possible for the Government to

have done without this taxation, we would have been only too pleased. But the position is very serious. We have thousands of men who have been unemployed for the better part of the last three years; if not totally unemployed, they have been employed only intermittently, and in most cases on relief work, which does not provide sufficient for their requirements. Those people are in a very bad condition, right down to bedrock, and as the result of their purchasing power having been so low during that period, many of the tradespeople are in almost a similar condition. We are hopeful that as the result of the policy of this Government in endeavouring to provide full-time work for a much larger number of men, the increase in the purchasing power of those people will be reflected right through trade and industry, and in that way additional employment will be found for other men. But it cannot be done if we have not the money to carry out that policy. Therefore I say that while the introduction of a taxation measure of this kind might be all that some members have described it—unpopular, repugnant, obnoxious and so on—nevertheless it is absolutely necessary; else the Government would not have brought it down. I hope the time is not far distant when things will be so improved in this State that we shall be able to come forward and say there is no longer any necessity for taxation of this kind and therefore this measure can lapse.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.54 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 30th August, 1933.

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

QUESTION—STATE SAW MILLS, ELECTRIC CURRENT.

Mr. LAMBERT asked the Minister for Railways: What is the price paid by the State Saw Mills to the Perth City Council for electric current?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Power: Up to 200 units, 2d. per unit; from 200 units and up to 2,500 units, 1½d. per unit; if beyond 2,500 units, then over 200 units upwards, 1d. per unit. Light: Up to 500 units, 3d. per unit; over 500 units, 2½d. per unit.

QUESTION—LIEUT.-GOVERNOR.

Method of Appointment.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Premier: In view of the statement made by the Chief Justice (Sir John Northmore) through the medium of the "West Australian" issued on the 19th August, 1933, explaining fully the appointment of the present Lieut.-Governor, does he still consider that the documents, relating to the appointment of the present Lieut.-Governor, should remain confidential?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Premier) replied: Certainly. Matters of this kind are stipulated to be confidential, and they are regarded and treated as such.