

Mr. Carson: What do you want a farm for?

Mr. JOHNSON: In order to increase my income. Then hon. gentleman, I feel sure, realises his position, and although he is going to vote for the Government, he will do so because he feels he has something to fall back on, and that the farm has been his friend and is better than politics. In conclusion I want to say that I have no confidence in the present administration. I am satisfied I am voicing the opinion of the majority of the people of this State that they are only representatives of a special class, and that they are sacrificing the health and prosperity of the general masses in the interests of a select few, that their consideration is for the big men, the men at the top, while the poor men at the bottom rung of the ladder are receiving little or no consideration. If you want proof of that you have only to look at the administration of those measures under the Colonial Secretary who cares not for the lives and happiness and welfare of these poor unfortunate women and children who are struggling and toiling in our shops and factories. When the Government disregard these people they will disregard any toiler. Apart altogether from what the Premier states that he represents the worker, and that he desires to do justice to the worker, we know that his nature will not permit him to do justice to the toiler, and that his own Ministry have no regard for this class. I did think that the hon. member for Subiaco had some regard for the strugglers at the bottom of the ladder, but even that hon. member is prepared to sacrifice those people in the interests of his own salary. The time will come, even though we may not be successful when a division is taken on this motion, when the people will have a voice and give this Government short shrift. If a vacancy is not created by this vote, the people will create it, and then we will have a Ministry who will do justice to every section, every industry, and every part of Western Australia.

On motion by Mr. Troy, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 12th October, 1910.

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

QUESTION — BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, MURRAY RIVER.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Works: 1. Has the sum of £30 been paid to a Mr. Dunn for constructing a bridge over the River Murray? 2. Did the road boards concerned recommend such payment? 3. Did any engineer or officer of the Public Works Department recommend such payment?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish) replied: 1, £30 has been paid to Mrs. Elizabeth Dunn. 2, The Drakesbrook road board recommend that "some consideration" should be made to Mrs. Dunn. The Murray road board did not approach the Department. 3, Yes.

QUESTION—ZAMIA PALM ERADICATION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is clearing of zamia palm on C.P. land counted as improvements, the same as York Road poison? 2, If not, why not?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Lands) replied: 1, Yes, on production of a certificate, signed by an inspector of lands, stating the cost of the work prior to eradicating this poison. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ON CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

Mr. ANGWIN asked the Attorney General: 1, Are all members of the Central

Board of Health paid the fee of £1 1s. per meeting by the Government? 2, Would a member of Parliament, by accepting an appointment on the Central Board of Health, be accepting an office of profit under the Crown? 3, If not, under what Act of Parliament are the members of the Central Board of Health exempt from the provisions of the Constitution Act?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1. Yes, except the president who is a public servant. 2, A member of the Central Board of Health, in my opinion, holds an office of profit under the Crown, and should a member of Parliament accept such office after his election, he would, in my opinion, vacate his seat. 3, There is no exception.

QUESTION—LAND SELECTION, A NEWSPAPER STATEMENT.

Mr. COLLIER (for Mr. Johnson) asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has he read the statement that appeared in the *Coolgardie Miner* on the 3rd October from a Perth correspondent which reads:—"Politics and Persons: Pars from Perth: (By "The Rover.") The land boom is bringing its land sharks, land scandals, and swindling. Hundreds of applicants cannot get land, but a personal friend told me this week that he had got a block. He paid a certain official £50 in cash, and that did the trick." 2, If so, has he made any inquiries into the statement? 3, If not, will he have the matter investigated?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Lands) replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, I am quite willing to make all inquiries in the matter if sufficient data are supplied, the paragraph being very vague.

QUESTION—MR. HOLMAN'S POLICE COURT FINE.

Mr. BROWN asked the Attorney General: Has the fine of £25, inflicted on the hon. member for Murchison for assisting in a strike, been paid? If not, why not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: No. Because the Attorney General re-

commended, and the Executive approved of the remission of the fine.

QUESTION—RAILWAY ELECTRICAL WORK, TIME SHEETS.

Mr. HEITMANN asked the Minister for Railways: Is each workman in the Electrical Engineer's branch called upon to fill in daily time sheets showing work done and time occupied?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Yes.

NOTICE—QUESTION, OR MOTION.

Mr. HEITMANN (Murchison) : I would like to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that yesterday I gave notice of certain questions and they have been put down on the Notice Paper as subject matters for motions. I would like to know to whom it is left to say whether they should be notices of motions or notices of questions.

Mr. SPEAKER: I decided that point, because they were in the nature of a return.

Mr. HEITMANN: It appears to me that Ministers have been consulted in the matter. I know there are sometimes questions asked which should be subjected to debate to see whether the information should be given; but I certainly do not think it should be left in the hands of Ministers to say whether they think a question notified to be asked is a matter for a question or a motion. The questions I asked yesterday were simple, and the information could have been given very clearly in replies to questions. Whether it is information that should be given to the public or not is, perhaps, open to question; but at the same time I do not think any business in connection with public tenders should be kept from the public or, at all events, from members of the House.

ORDER OF BUSINESS—NOTICES AFTER QUESTIONS.

Mr. HUDSON: Is it too late after questions have been answered to give notice of questions?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can give notice now.

MOTION—WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet): The debate so far as it has gone has ranged particularly round the charges made in connection with the maladministration of the Lands Department; and while we understand from the Premier that the charges made by the leader of the Opposition are only general charges, it remains for members on this side of the House to fill in the facts, if it is necessary that they should be repeated. These charges cannot be disposed of by the Premier with an airy wave of his hand and the remark that there is nothing in what the leader of the Opposition has said; neither can they be disposed of by any leading article in the Press saying that Mr. Scaddan has failed to prove his charges, and that the Premier has given a straightout denial—not only a straightout denial, but that he has proved to the hilt that the charges are unwarranted. I would not be wrong if I said that only two supporters of the Government have spoken in this debate. The Premier has spoken, and to-day the *West Australian* has spoken, accepting in full everything the Premier has said as absolutely correct, and declaring that everything said from the Opposition side is absolutely untrue. Not only has the newspaper said that, but it speaks as public opinion. In fact it says that all fair-minded men would acknowledge that the result of the Premier's careful and complete explanation of all the cases cited was to clear up these matters, and apparently to leave nothing concealed. It says furthermore—

To convince the member for Guildford, who spoke after Mr. Wilson, of anything that did not chime with his own prepossessions would seem to be a task comparable with that of rolling back the sea, but there is not only a court of public opinion, generally impartial and sensible, but one of Parliament to appeal to where facts and

arguments of overwhelming strength and certitude will have their due weight.

It is a most remarkable thing—and, after all, it is humorous to those who understand the position—that any newspaper should claim to be public opinion and give it out that it is speaking on behalf of the people when it says without having the facts at its disposal that any statements made by the Premier or any other party are absolutely correct, and that the statements made by other individuals are absolutely untrue. I intend to give some facts in connection with the charges made by the leader of the Opposition. Before going any further I want to say that even in this connection the Premier did not deny the existence of scandals in the Lands Department, did not deny the charges of maladministration, but he said that these after all were only errors and he did not deem it the business of the Ministry to interfere when slight errors of this kind occurred. We understand, therefore, from the Premier, that it is not the concern of the Ministry when errors of this kind occur, and we may take it that the Ministry do not intend to interfere, and that this sort of thing is going to continue. Reference was also made to Mr. Sommers' denial that he had anything to do with the selling of conditional purchase land. I need not touch upon that, although the *West Australian* has accepted that denial as being an absolute fact, because I know that the leader of the Opposition has in his possession facts that give the denial direct to Mr. Sommers, and I shall leave it to the leader of the Opposition to bring these facts before the House when he next speaks. I want to make reference to what I consider is the most degrading episode that has occurred in this House, namely, the Government's securing what may be termed *ex parte* statements from Messrs. Lovekin and Woods in order to justify them and to rebut the statements made by the leader of the Opposition. It is the first time in the history of this Parliament that such a thing has occurred. While newspaper men who are notoriously one-sided, and who are known to have always supported the policy of the present Government, and

who have always been opposed to members of the Opposition, are given access to the files when they require them, the same consideration is denied to the representatives of the people in this Chamber. If any members on this side of the House had gone to the Government and had asked to see the files, they would have received the answer they always get on such occasions, namely, "Ask for the file in the usual way and you may get it." A newspaper proprietor, who does not represent the people, but who is utilised to bolster up the Government and shield them from the effects of their own maladministration, can go to the department and get papers which are refused to the representatives of the people. I hope there will not be a repetition of the experience of having such a statement brought in and read to the House as was done last evening. I do not know if Mr. Lovekin inquired into the charges in connection with the maladministration of the Lands Department. We have it from his statement that he inquired into certain charges made in which the name of Mr. Gourley was connected, and he states that this was the very worst case, and it is on this case he rebuts the charges made against the Government. Mr. Woods, whom I do not think I know, follows up in the very same strain, but he goes out of his way and says, "Therefore, if the statement of Mr. Seaddan is a true reproduction of what Mr. Moor told him, there can be no words too strong to denounce his flagrant mendacity." That is a very nice thing to come from a person who belongs to a profession which claims that above all things they act according to instructions, and that what is written by them is written on the instruction of their employers. Can they justify themselves on that standpoint. When we recognise that the *Daily News*, the paper with which those persons are associated, is probably the greatest factor in this State in misrepresenting this party, we can attach little credence to their statements. I will give a few facts in regard to land maladministration. The Premier last night made no reference whatever to the case of Abraham Myers,

who to-day lives at Wongan Hills and holds an area at Dalwallinu. The particulars are these. On the 2nd December, 1907, Abraham Myers acquired by transfer 1,000 acres of residential land from H. S. Lambert at Wongan Hills; this was converted on the 28th October, 1908, under Section 64 of the Land Act, to non-residence conditions, but on the 20th July of the same year, three months previously, Abraham Myers applied for 1,000 acres at Dalwallinu under residential conditions. On that date, and for some time previously, it was necessary for an applicant for land under conditional purchase to supply a statutory declaration to the effect that he did not already hold land under the section on which he was applying, and which if he did that would debar him from making that particular application. When making the application, however, Mr. Myers, if I understand aright, apparently made a false declaration, as on that date he held 1,000 acres under Section 55 at Wongan Hills. If this be correct it could not have escaped the notice of the departmental officers, and the application should have been refused since no one selector may hold more than 1,000 acres under Section 55 of the Land Act. Since Mr. Myers held 1,000 acres at Wongan Hills under residence, when he applied for the 1,000 acres at Dalwallinu his application should not have been accepted and certainly the land should not have been granted to him. Anyhow, the department were not concerned regarding the breach of the Act. The Dalwallinu block was approved of on the 10th November, 1908, and it was surveyed on the 20th July, 1909. Mr. Myers, by the way, got in early and chose the very best land in the Dalwallinu district before survey. His survey was not approved of until July of last year. No conditions were complied with, and the land was forfeitable in January this year, and on the 20th of that month, following on the statement of the ex-Minister for Lands, Sir Newton Moore, that if the conditions were not complied with he would forfeit the land when a breach was brought under his notice, Mr. Stacy, of Stacy and Williams, wrote to the Lands Department and

asked for the forfeiture of this piece of land. If I may be allowed to depart from Mr. Stacy's letter for a moment, I desire to read a portion of a statement made by the late Premier when Minister for Lands in 1908. At that time a number of letters appeared in the *West Australian* condemning the land dummying which was in existence, and Sir Newton (then Mr.) Moore having these letters brought under his notice made a statement in the *West Australian* on the 18th August, when he said—

Why do they not give specific instances. If this is done I will see that the conditions are complied with or that forfeiture takes place very quickly, any glaring case of evasion brought to my notice will be inspected in the course of the inspectors' rounds. . . . Residence blocks should, of course, be occupied, but to my mind the greatest mischief lies in the fact of blocks being totally unimproved, and the Department can be helped in cases where it has not been possible for inspectors to visit isolated blocks by correspondents sending in to the Department specific instances of evasion. . . . Unless there is strong reason for clemency being shown and an extension of time warranted, they are thrown open for selection and the fact notified in the *Government Gazette*.

The Premier asks for instances; Mr. Stacy gives instances of the blocks held by Myers at Dalwallinu and on which the conditions had not been complied with. On the 24th January Mr. Stacy wrote on behalf of English immigrants, desiring to obtain land, as follows:—

I am instructed that the lessees of these blocks have not at any time resided thereon nor have they carried out any improvements. . . . The parties for whom I am acting are English farmers who have been induced to sell off their English properties at the instance of the Agent General and to settle in this State. They have frequently been brought face to face with the fact that land that would suit them is being held apparently for speculative purposes and they desire to get settled before

their capital is exhausted in searching for suitable land.

The Lands Department did not reply to Mr. Stacy's letter, and that gentleman, after allowing the matter to stand over for some time to see if action would be taken, wrote again on the 19th July, some six months later. He mentioned the application for the blocks held at Dalwallinu by Myers and his family, and said:—

We have the honour to again call your attention to our letter of 24th January applying for the forfeiture of the blocks. (The numbers follow here.) We would call your attention to a statement made by the hon. the Premier and published in the *West Australian* of 18th August, 1908, wherein the public is urged to bring cases of non-fulfilment of conditions before the department when prompt action would follow. You will admit, we think, that the Premier's statement has not been confirmed by any remarkable promptitude in this particular instance. It has been the occasional practice of the department to afford defaulters opportunities of avoiding forfeiture, for non-fulfilment of residential conditions by converting those holdings to Section 56. We must emphatically protest against that course being followed in this case for reasons we shall furnish at the proper time. Meantime we have to request that prompt action be taken in this matter. We desire to point out that up till a fortnight ago, no work, so far as we can learn, had been performed on any part of the blocks, and certainly no residential conditions had been fulfilled, although the date of survey is 12th June, 1901.

Mr. Stacy wrote on the 20th January and again on the 20th July. The department wrote in reply to the letter of the 20th July acknowledging the receipt of it and stating that the matter was under consideration and that Mr. Stacy would be advised later. I believe Mr. Stacy asked for further particulars later on. His letters are here on the file but I do not want to read them as it would take up too much time. He was informed that one of the Myers family was living on one

of the blocks. Leaving Mr. Stacy we come to Mr. Moor, whom the Premier with, I regret, some show of vindictiveness, referred to last evening.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Mr. TROY: In June of this year, finding that the conditions had not been complied with, Mr. Moor, on behalf of his son, applied for the forfeiture of the property. I understand the inspector inspected the properties and reported that the conditions of occupancy and improvement had not been complied with. It is stated in the district now that, in order to get the Myers family out of the trouble, the department have written to Mr. Myers advising him to bring the Dalwallinu area under Section 56, the non-residential clause, in order to protect himself against forfeiture. I would point out that if this is correct—as I am advised it is—the action of the department in writing to Mr. Myers advising him to bring his property under Section 56, is entirely wrong, because such a transfer, if adopted, would be altogether illegal. It must be remembered that the block at Wongan Hills was converted under Section 64 of the Land Act to a non-residential block on the 28th October, 1908, and if the block at Dalwallinu, which is now to be brought under the non-residential conditions, was also converted, Mr. Moor would hold more land under the Land Act than is allowed by the provisions of the clauses. He would hold 2,000 acres of land, which would be altogether illegal. Therefore, if the department have advised Mr. Myers to bring the Dalwallinu area under the non-residential conditions, as is the Wongan Hills area, they are asking him to commit a breach of their own Land Act. Again, under no circumstances could Mr. Myers hold two areas under residential conditions. This he did when the land was first applied for, because he held the land at Wongan Hills under residential conditions, and made application for the land at Dalwallinu under the same conditions. By holding land at both places under residential conditions he committed a breach of the Act, because he was holding 1,000 acres in

excess of that allowed under Section 55, which provides the residential conditions. Again, converting the Wongan Hills land to non-residential did not put Mr. Myers in any better position with regard to the two areas as he had made the one at Wongan Hills his place of residence and this is over 20 miles from the area of land he holds at Dalwallinu. In fact, the land at the latter place is 30 miles distant from the area at Wongan Hills and the Land Act provides for a distance of 20 miles; therefore, even under this provision, Mr. Myers could not hold these two properties and the department has allowed him to hold them, knowing that a breach of the Act was being committed. There is still another objection to Mr. Myers holding this land all this time. If he converts the Dalwallinu area, under Section 56, he undertakes to make double the improvements and these improvements have not been carried out. Therefore altogether the Government can be indicted for the failure of the department to take action when there was a false declaration, which I am told there was, in the first instance, when Mr. Myers swore he did not hold any other land on residence conditions when he applied for the Dalwallinu area. We have the failure of the department to refuse forfeiture when application was made recently and their refusal to demand that the conditions on which this land was held would be complied with. It appears to me that the Minister for Lands, and those responsible, wilfully allowed the law to be broken, and in this connection he caused a scandal which undoubtedly must react against the good name of the Government and the department. That the Minister was aware of this is proved by the fact that not only have these misdemeanours been reported to the department but Mr. Moor went to see the Minister himself, only to be met by the Minister with evasive replies and sometimes received with most abusive language. This is what I have been told by the person who saw the Minister. If that is not a glaring act of maladministration, I want to know what is, when for two years one man can hold acres of land in excess of

what is provided by the Land Act, and when he can hold it without fulfilling the conditions required by the Act, and this with the knowledge of the Minister and the department. The other areas held by the Myers family—and there are four altogether—are as follows:—Frederick Myers holds 1,000 acres inclusive of 160 acres homestead farm. There was no work done there nor were the residential conditions complied with. It was surveyed on the 12th July, 1909, and the conditions should have been complied with at least in January. The conditions were not complied with and forfeiture was demanded, but it was refused by the Minister. A. J. Myers holds 1,000 acres and 160 acres homestead farm. No work was done on these leases nor were the conditions complied with. Forfeiture was demanded in this case also, on the same grounds, but it was refused by the Minister. E. J. Myers holds 1,000 acres and 160 acres homestead farm, and the conditions are exactly similar, and in this case, too, forfeiture was refused. E. J. Myers also holds 300 acres under Section 56. This is one of the most striking instances of maladministration of the Lands Department, in which, as I have already said, no action has been taken, and in referring to it last night the Premier made only a very slight mention of it. He referred to the fact that Mr. Myers, who lives at Wongan Hills, had a large family, and I want to say that I understand that these people who hold the land are not actually members of his family, one of them his nephew.

The Premier: I said so last night.

Mr. TROY: It was pointed out that Mr. Moor has a large family also; he has four sons, and all of them are of the age at which they can take up land, but the Minister would give no consideration whatever to that fact. In fact, last night the Premier did his utmost to deprecate the action of that gentleman. Naturally he would deprecate the action of that gentleman, because, had it not been for the statements made by Mr. Moor, which brought this prominently before the public, we would not have heard of the instances which I have men-

tioned to-day and which of course the Ministry would like to conceal.

The Premier: Not at all.

Mr. TROY: I want to say a few words about another case which the Premier briefly referred to last night, and that is the case of Mr. Nielsen, who we understand is an officer in the Chinese Imperial Customs. The case of Mr. Nielsen, we can prove, is one in which the department has not shown a ready desire to carry out the provisions of the Land Act. We are told that Mr. Nielsen was a Danish settler and was going on the land because he was an expert in dairy farming, and as a result he was looked upon as a settler who would be of advantage to the country. There are some of the members of the Land Board whom I hold in the highest respect, but I cannot say very much for the intelligence of a board which gives a man land for dairy farming in a dry area like Dalwallinu. In the wettest parts of the State we have made no progress with regard to dairy farming, and here in Dalwallinu, where the records show that the crops must be cereals, we have a department giving a block of land to Mr. Nielsen because he is a dairy farmer. Could anything be more absurd or more ridiculous. Even if Mr. Nielsen was a Danish dairy farmer, and knew the conditions of Denmark, from which country he came in the first instance, where dairy farming is one of the chief occupations, he would have known of the unsuitability of the conditions at Dalwallinu for dairy farming. I myself come from a dairying district and I venture to say that if I undertook dairying at Dalwallinu, I would be laughed at for my pains; yet on this score, Mr. Nielsen is given this land in preference to other legitimate settlers. Other applicants had colonial experience and they had horses and cattle, and large families to maintain, and work the land. Within a few months of his securing the land, it was the 8th February when he secured it, Mr. Nielsen sold it to two Victorians named Beattie and Higgie, for £325, and he left the State with a laudatory notice in the *West Australian*, in order to take up his duties in China. It would be interesting

to read this statement given by Mr. Nielsen to a *West Australian* reporter, when this Danish settler was leaving the State. He had secured land here as a bona fide settler and he sold out his land and thereby committed a breach of the land laws, and yet the *West Australian* sent him off with its blessing and a long notice in its columns. On the 29th June last appeared an interview in the *West Australian* headed, "A Danish Settler—Enamoured of Western Australia," and it goes on—

After 12 years' service in the Imperial Maritime Customs of China, Mr. N. A. A. Nielsen decided to spend his furlough on a trip to Western Australia. He was accompanied by his wife and children, the change of air and general surroundings suiting them admirably. So greatly was Mr. Nielsen impressed with the agricultural prospects of the great Western State of Australia that he applied for two blocks of land, aggregating 1,300 acres, eastward of Watheroo. Mr. Nielsen obtained the land, and applied himself to its improvement with such diligence that he became the recognised leader of settlers in all parts of the district. A few days since he received intimation from the Chinese Government that his furlough was curtailed, and that he would have to either report himself at headquarters or relinquish his position. As he could not afford to sacrifice a highly lucrative appointment he was faced with the alternative of leaving the State or arranging for the development of his recently acquired estate by somebody else.

Did not Mr. Nielsen inform the land board that he was a bona fide settler? Did he not get the land on the understanding that he was to live on it and comply with the conditions of the Land Act? Despite that fact he told an absolute lie, otherwise the Land Board would not have given him the land in preference to other settlers. In this interview Mr. Nielsen makes a statement in cold blood, and it is accepted by the *West Australian*, that he cannot afford to sacrifice a highly lucrative appointment in China and must

therefore leave the State. The interview goes on to say—

His wife with two young children and a nurse-girl—all from Denmark—

He says here that his wife was from Denmark. She was not from Denmark, she was a high class Chinese lady—

formed quite a small settlement in themselves, but they were unequal to the requirements of the agricultural settlement conditions. Besides Mrs. Nielsen wished to be with her husband, and after due consideration it was decided that she should remain in the State, that her husband should run home to Denmark and meet his mother at Herning, proceeding to China afterwards by steamer, rail, aeroplane, or any other speedy means of locomotion.

This statement was given to the *West Australian* and their young and unsophisticated reporter took it in good faith. Mr. Nielsen goes on to say—

The foregoing incidents led to the publication of the following intimation in the *West Australian* of the 27th inst.:—"On account of unforeseen circumstances, I am obliged to return to my official duties in the Orient, and I therefore respectfully beg to notify whom it may concern that I have now resigned from the chairmanship of the Nugadong-Dalwallinu Railway League, and that I have also resigned my office of president of the Dalwallinu Farmers' Progress Association.—N. A. A. Nielsen."

This is the person of tremendous importance who could not leave the State without giving notice to all concerned that he was resigning, and going away, and this is the gentleman whom we are told in the *West Australian*, is enamoured of Western Australia, and who publicly announces, with his tongue in his cheek, that he is going away with £325 of our money in his pocket. He came here and "took all the people down," and, as a result, he is applauded in the columns of a newspaper in Western Australia which claims a high standard of political and social purity. Then this is how the reporter goes on—

Yesterday morning Mr. Nielsen, a tall, well set-up military figure, ran

lightly up the gangway of the P. and O. "Malwa," and laughingly assured some of his fellow-settlers "down to see him off" that they had not seen the last of him.

If Mr. Nielsen can do as well every furlough as he did on this occasion, we would naturally expect to see more of him. He was so successful in this instance in deluding the Government and the Press that he will want to come again. The report continues:—

To a *West Australian* representative he said, Australia is a great country, and I personally prefer this State.

Is it not most extraordinary, and most humorous? Every man who comes and takes us down prefers this State, and we swallow it. Mr. Nielsen went on—

It is a third of the entire continent, and has absolutely unbounded resources.

Yet he could not give up his lucrative employment in China to settle in the State! His remarks continue—

Its climate, soil, and environments generally are simply unsurpassable. I am very sorry I have to leave it. After 12 years in the Chinese Imperial service, the head of which was, until recently, a fine Englishman—

Of course it is best to say these things; it is tact, and goes down well. He continues—

and is now succeeded by another of the same nationality who promises to attain equal popularity, I took two years' furlough. The idea seized me to come to Australia. Of all places I know, Western Australia is the best for anybody who loves agriculture, horticulture, and all things pertaining to the cultivation of the soil.

Of course it is; because I do not know of any other State in Australia where Mr. Nielsen could have deluded the land board and the Government and left the State with £325 in his pocket.

Mr. Hardwick: He got a crop off the land, didn't he?

Mr. TROY: Yes, £325. The report continues—

The conditions, compared with other countries where there is snow for sev-

eral months, succeeded by bitter frosts, are simply idyllic. I met the late Mr. Green, the Herculean mining magnate, and on his recommendation I went up the Midland railway, where I was finally charmed into taking up some land. There was no difficulty whatever in the way of my taking up land. I found the officials of the Lands Department courteous, most intelligent in interpreting my requirements, and *en passant* the same elogium may be applied all round to the civil service of this State generally—so far as my experience goes.

He could not speak otherwise; he had a most happy experience. Then the reporter asks, and is answered as follows:—

Did you select 1,300 acres with the intention of becoming a permanent settler?

Of course I did, and what is more, I have sent home to Denmark many letters strongly advising agriculturists to sell out their little holdings of a few acres and come out to Western Australia where they have such a greater chance for themselves and families. Splendid soil, good rainfall, lovely climate, rapidly increasing facilities for sending products to all parts of the world—why how in the name of reason could there be more inducement required?

But did not the Danish Consul General over in Sydney warn his Government to check immigration to Australia?

It is true that the Consul sent home something to that effect, but it should never have appeared.

Of course not. Was not his experience happier than that of the Consul General—and who was the Consul General that he should give his opinion against this Danish settler, so enamoured of Western Australia? The interview runs on—

In a leading Danish newspaper the whole matter was thrashed out, and on my arrival at Copenhagen I will give them my own experiences. The supply of Danish papers in Australia, particularly in Perth, is limited, but if you could turn up a file of *Vore Landsmo-*

end i Udlauded the translation would be worth reprinting—that is concerning Australia and immigration. I will only have 10 or 12 days in Denmark, then have to get back to Shanghai in the quickest possible time. My wife will remain here, and then join me at Colombo later on. Afterwards, as soon as my arrangements with the Chinese Government are completed I will return to this State, and perhaps purchase back the land I am now forced to relinquish.

Any prospect of opening up trade with China?

Not unless you institute a direct service between your North-West ports with frozen meat. Chinamen are great meat-eaters, and they are awfully fond of fruit. They grow oranges—of course you know mandarins—but Chinese gardeners go in for vegetables almost to the exclusion of fruit, so if Western Australia could develop a trade in apples, frozen meat, biscuits, flour, anything in that way, something solid might eventuate. Metals, wool, and staple products of that kind have a world-wide market—

We are such an ignorant lot in this State and so easily taken down that Mr. Nielsen thinks that as a parting shot he can tell us a thing or two. Then he continued to the reporter —

and Australia knows all about Chinese products—especially those on two legs. The market for certain Australian commodities is there and only wants nurturing.

Any other possible market for Western Australian exports?

Well, I understand you have plenty of sharks all round the coast—

Yes, land sharks, of which special mention has been made during this debate. This enthusiastic visitor proceeds—

their fins and tails are dainties, and at Shanghai there is quite a big fleet of vessels engaged in shark fishing. Don't smile when I tell you that there is a Chinese millionaire who owes all he possesses to the tigers of the deep. Then you have plenty of *bêche-de-mer*—another valuable product of the sea.

Dried, the sea slug, or whatever you call it, is worth £50 per ton. Other products of that class may appear worthless to pearlers, but all the same there is money in the game—sponges, for another illustration. Anything more?

There is a market you consider for fruit and frozen meat, *bêche-de-mer*, sharks' fins, copper, etc.?

Most certainly. Italy, Turkey, and Arabia supply enormous quantities of fruit—mostly oranges and dates—during the months when your trees are bare. Anything you can send in that way to fill in the blank season would command top-side prices. You can easily find the proper months by shipping directly the fruit is ready—your season is the reverse of all countries north of the equator.

Another of Mr. Nielsen's views with which we were unacquainted. Then this most interesting reports ends with—

Let me say how much I admire Western Australia—people, climate, and everything. Good-bye, and I hope to get back and stay altogether after my time is up with the Chinese Government. In my department, which embraces Customs and Post and Telegraphs, we have over 100,000 employees, and as China is growing more accustomed to European methods every day you can imagine our service is ever expanding.

After all, the Government should have been congratulated, and the land board given a pat on the back for the manner in which they dealt with this gentleman. When Mr. Nielsen sold his blocks, the forfeiture on the score that he had not complied with the conditions was made at the instance of Mr. Moor, who again comes in for the criticism of the Premier because he dares do any such thing, which undoubtedly was in the best interests of the State. He has met with evasions and abuse. Owing to the publicity given to the matter the blocks were hurriedly forfeited and a fictitious value of £73 was placed on the improvements. Portions of these improvements were made by Mr. Moor and his sons, for which they had not been paid. The applicants

were told that when making application for the land they must not only put down the application fee, but full value for the improvements. The applications were opened on the 11th of this month. This illegality on the part of the Lands Department is wilful, because Mr. Moor has drawn the Minister's attention to them. Let me read some of the correspondence Mr. Moor has received from that department. He wrote to the Lands Department asking for the forfeiture on the 9th September and he received this reply—

I am directed by the Minister for Lands to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 17th instant with reference to Locations 1904 and 1907.

These are Mr. Nielsen's blocks, and the letter was signed by the Under Secretary for Lands, Mr. Clifton. On the 20th September, having gone and seen the officials, Mr. Moor received this reply from Mr. Morris—

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the blocks held by Mr. Nielsen, I beg to inform you that it has now been decided to cancel home-stead farm No. 13750/74 and conditional purchase No. 25112/55 and make them available for re-selection subject to the value of improvements effected thereon and to the Agricultural Bank advance of £20.

That is illegal, because the Lands Department has no power to provide anything for the Agricultural Bank advance. The letter continues—

Further particulars will appear in this week's *Government Gazette*, and the amount to cover improvements and advance must be lodged with the application. In the event of more than one application the matter will go to a board for decision.

Mr. Moor still perseveres, and writes again; following upon which he received the following letter, dated 24th September:—

Respecting the blocks in the Dalwal-linu subdivision which were held by Mr. Nielsen, I have to advise that such blocks are being thrown open for re-selection on and after 11th October

next, and the notice making them available appears in yesterday's *Gazette*, from which full particulars may be obtained.

This is on the 24th September. The notice that these leases were thrown open appeared in the *Gazette* for the first time on the 23rd September. Section 33 of the Land Act reads as follows:—

All leases and licenses held under the provisions of this Act or any Act or regulations hereby repealed, except quarry licenses and licenses under Part XI. of this Act, which may from time to time become forfeited either by failure of payment of the instalment of rent or purchase money, or by reason of the terms and conditions not having been complied with, shall be offered by auction at a price or rental to be determined by the Minister. All such sales shall be notified in the *Government Gazette* for not less than four consecutive weeks, . . .

The four consecutive weeks' notice was not given, because the first *Gazette* notice appeared on the 23rd September and applications had to be made by the 11th October. That only allowed two weeks and four days. What was the intention of the Minister for Lands when he was trying to do this illegal action? What attitude has he taken up, wilfully doing that which is in opposition to the law made by this Parliament to direct him in connection with his department? Is it not wrong; is it not an act of absolute maladministration? Not only was it maladministration, but the Minister went further. I do not blame the officials, they are only carrying out their instructions. The Minister could not demand, as he did demand in this case—and I shall read it—that the full amount for improvements should be paid down with the application money. On the 1st October, Mr. Morris, for the under-secretary, wrote to Mr. Moor—

In further reference to your application for blocks 1904 and 1907 I beg to inform you that these blocks will be open for selection on or after the 11th October next. Applications should be

lodged on or before the date at this office. The blocks together are subject to the value of improvements, namely, £73 8s. 3d., the full amount of such improvements to be lodged with application as a cash payment.

Now what is the law in regard to this? Section 147 of the Land Act provides—

The fair value of any improvements existing on or affecting any land applied for, or authorised and in course of construction or intended to be constructed, shall be determined by the Minister, and the price of any such land shall be increased by the value so determined of such improvements, with interest thereon at the rate of five pounds per centum per annum, to the intent that the price of the lands as increased by the value of such improvements, with interest thereon as aforesaid, shall be paid by the selector by half-yearly instalments at such time and in such manner as the price of the land, if unimproved, would have been payable.

Therefore if this fictitious value which was put on the land is a correct one, and is to be paid at all by the applicant, it is not lawful that he should be compelled to put down the full amount. He should pay the value over a term of years by half-yearly instalments, just as he would do in the first instance when taking up unimproved land. So again the department were acting illegally in asking Mr. Moor to comply with this condition, which is a breach of the land laws of the State. Was this done in ignorance? I venture to say, "No." The matter received too much publicity. Mr. Moor appeared too often before the Minister for the Minister to do anything other than knowingly. What was the intention? Knowing that Mr. Moor was a poor man, as he had lost his all in this State after being here nine years, the Minister must have thought that Mr. Moor could not raise the money necessary to make the application for this land, and therefore the land would go by default to the only applicants, those gentlemen from Victoria who had purchased from Mr. Neilsen. Apparently the

Minister did not scruple to commit a breach of his own laws in order to bring about his desires in this connection, that is, to defeat Mr. Moor. These are the charges; these are the facts which we are told by the *West Australian* and by the Premier are not borne out. Could anything be clearer than their own letters or their own laws? I submit there has been a grievous breach of the land laws of the State, knowingly and willingly apparently, by the Minister; and the Government permit this and call it a slight error, and go further and say they attach no importance to it. If they intend to pursue that policy the sooner they are turned out of office the better for the people of the State, and the better for the administration of our land laws. Mr. Moor tells me that he protested against the illegality, as undoubtedly there was illegality, but he was told the Minister was all-powerful under Section 21 of the Land Act, and could do as he pleased. I understand the Minister was never too gracious in these interviews and he used language, I am told—I should regret if it were true—a bullocky would not make use of in the most adverse circumstances. Mr. Moor was told that under Subsection 2 of Section 21 the Minister had power to order things as he liked. Well, we will find out whether he has or not. The subsection provides—

The Minister shall at all times have power in the public interest, and in his discretion, subject only to an appeal to the Governor under Section 37, to refuse any application whatsoever made under any part of this Act.

The Minister has power to refuse any application if he deems it in the public interest, but this is not refusing an application, it is putting a value on land and compelling the person to pay down that value with the application fee, a thing that the law does not allow. That is the difference. "The Minister can do as he likes." Of course he can do as he likes, if he has his actions, his wilful actions, endorsed by the Government and endorsed by the Press of the State also. If this State is faced with a greater danger than

any other it is that of Press domination, by which every statement made by those on the Government side of the House is deemed correct, and every statement made by those on the opposite side is deemed incorrect, and by which scandals of this character are covered up. Undoubtedly the Minister would have allowed this transfer had not Mr. Moor interfered; he would have put through this transfer of Nielsen's to those two gentlemen from Victoria. I do not blame those settlers from Victoria; they could not do otherwise; I am only sorry that because of our maladministration they are put in this unfortunate position; it cannot but react on this State. I understand they are very much incensed at the way they have been treated. I do not blame them if they write to Victoria and tell their friends of the maladministration of our land laws, by which they were kept idle weeks and weeks in the State and run the risk of losing their money also. As I said, the Minister would have allowed this transfer, even though Mr. Nielsen did not comply with the conditions which alone allow for a transfer. Under Section 55 Mr. Nielsen had to make certain improvements, and if he only made improvements to the value of £73, the value placed on the blocks by the Minister, then he did not make the improvements required by that section. He should have at least made improvements to the value of £250 according to the section, yet, though he did not make these improvements, the transfer would have been made by the Minister had it not been for the trouble raised by Mr. Moor. Has not Mr. Moor done a service to the State? Has not this sort of thing occurred year in and year out? Is it not occurring every day in the week? Are not similar blocks of land being sold and transferred by the department as ordinary business undertakings? Yet because a certain person, poor though he may be, cries out against this maladministration, and draws the attention of the people to it, he is criticised and assailed by the Minister. Not a word has been said against those persons who are carrying on these nefarious practices. Rather is

every endeavour made to excuse their actions and support a continuance of this policy. Now I will go into the case of Mr. Court's blocks. I have maps with me. Mr. Court had a long letter in the *West Australian* this morning in which he stated that he did not have these blocks for sale at all, and Mr. Gourley has made the statement that the blocks were never in his hands for sale. I am very diffident about making any charge against my own colleague of his not being entirely accurate when he denies any participation in the sale of Mr. Court's blocks, but I can only believe what I take to be his own handwriting. If it is not his own handwriting it must be a forgery, and if it is a forgery I hope he will take action at the earliest moment to bring the people responsible to book for it. The land board gave certain areas in this district to Mr. Court, and Mr. Moor makes the charge that Mr. Court had these blocks for sale. The blocks owned by Mr. Court and Mrs. Court are 1912, 1915, and 1921. There is another block, 1919, owned by Mr. Bonner, who is well known to the member for Canning (Mr. Gordon), as having been a land guide in the Midland districts and as having taken persons out to inspect land from a siding the other side of Watheroo. Mr. Bonner's land apparently adjoins Mr. Court's properties and his block is included in that which is up for sale. The Premier confessed last night that Mr. Court's application was illegal, that while applications closed on the 8th February last Mr. Court's application did not come in until the 9th; but there was a minute on it, "This application must be received" and Mr. Farmer was the person who wrote it.

Mr. Scaddan: He did not write it; he directed it to be written.

Mr. TROY: That is so. The minute reads, "This application must be received. By order, H. Farmer." Mr. Farmer was also chairman of the land board on that occasion, and even if he was guided by the best of intentions in advising that this application should be received, though illegally, one cannot help saying that he committed a very indiscreet action in so

doing, because as chairman of the land board he should have kept himself entirely apart from applications of this character. However, the applications of Mr. Court and Mrs. Court were received. I make no charge against Mr. Farmer other than the one of illegal administration, undoubted illegality. Mr. Court and his wife were given these acres by the land board. Mr. Gourley and Mr. Court have denied that these areas were for sale. I would be prepared to accept this denial in good faith were it not for the fact that I have a letter here, signed "H. Gourley, agent." I had better read it, though I am very much averse to doing so in the circumstances. It is dated 14th September, 1910, and is as follows:—

I have this day given an option of seven (7) days purchase conditionally on payment of £1 over blocks 1912, 1915, 1921, and 1919, situated at Dallowallinu (location near), price per acre ten shillings (10s.) cash, if terms required, arrangements to be made with the owner. The deposit of one pound (£1) to be paid by the 15th day of September, 1910. The terms are subject to the approval of the owner.

My only regret is that Mr. Gourley denies that. I do not know whether it is correct, but he will be able to identify his own handwriting. The matter is one so serious that I shall ask him to take the earliest opportunity to find out whether it is a forgery or not. This is the case which in virtuous indignation Mr. Woods and Mr. Lovekin referred to. I will say this, that if Mr. Moor made a charge that Mr. Gourley had appeared before the Land Board on behalf of Court and gave evidence, that would be incorrect, for he did not do so. If Mr. Gourley appeared before the Land Board I presume it was for someone else, and in that he was not wrong; but he did not appear for Court. Apparently, from this option, he undoubtedly acted as agent for Court and Bonner in endeavouring to sell the properties for 10s. per acre, or a total of something like £1,640. Mr. Gourley did nothing different from any other land agent of this City, he did no more than all the others do. He might say in reply

that as a land agent carrying on business he merely did that which was recognised by the Lands Department, merely did that which every other land agent was doing, and which one can satisfy himself by a perusal of the daily papers is being done day after day. The leader of the Opposition will be able later on in his reply, I am sure he will do so, to refer to Mr. Sommers, M.L.C., who indignantly denies his association with any such transaction. The leader of the Opposition has proofs that this is done and has been done by those who deny it. I hope when he does mention it, the *West Australian*, which said this morning that Mr. Sommers apparently can take care of himself, and that nothing can be proved against him, will give Mr. Scaddan's proofs the publicity they warrant in the circumstances. If I may take the signature of Mr. Gourley as proof of the option, I can arrive at no other conclusion than that Court did nothing on his property despite his letter to the contrary. I should be sorry to traduce or misrepresent him; however, the option shows that neither he nor Mr. Bonner, who had their properties offered for sale, had made improvements. In concluding this chapter of land maladministration I say that these people simply do what has been recognised all through, and that which has been endorsed by the Lands Department.

Mr. Underwood: And encouraged by the Minister.

Mr. TROY: Yes, undoubtedly encouraged by the Minister.

Mr. Underwood: And adopted by him.

Mr. TROY: *Hansard* may add that: they are my sentiments all the same. Here we have the land laws enacted by Parliament evaded and the Minister is in his office for the purpose of administering those laws as they exist in the statute-book.

Mr. Heitmann: He does not think so.

Mr. Underwood: He is there to build up big estates for his friends.

Mr. TROY: So long as he honestly administers the laws in the best interests of the country, and according to the laws, it is all right; but the reverse has been the

case. When this vote is put will the Ministerialists support the Minister, even though here we have proofs, numbers of them, that he has wilfully evaded the laws of the State in the administration of the department? Is it possible that we have members opposite who are so lost to a sense of decency that they will do this sort of thing with a view merely of keeping a Government in power, because they were elected to support that party?

Mr. Underwood: With a Press that can be bought.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. TROY: Although a charge of caucus is laid against this side—I do not care a snap of my finger for the charge—I might retort that if such things as I have related happened in the Labour party, if they were in power, it would be found that not alone would members opposite be fighting against the Government. Let us look at instances that occur in Australian politics to-day where the Labour party are in power. In South Australia we had the spectacle a few days ago of the Labour party defeating their own Government because they could not see eye to eye with them. For what? Merely over the appointment of a railway and tramway commissioner. Could that occur here with this Government? No. And because such a state of affairs does not exist it is a loss to the pure administration of the State. In the Federal Parliament over the capital site question, there was the spectacle of the Federal labour members fighting the Government all night because they thought the action of the Government was not in the best interests of Australia. Imagine the followers of the present Government taking that attitude! It never has occurred and it never could occur while they adopt their present attitude of servile support to a Government guilty of this maladministration. Although these proofs may not be given to the country, I hope we shall have an opportunity later on to do so. We will take the opportunity of appealing to the people of this country, and give them specific instances. I warrant this, that when we do we shall meet with the suc-

cess we have always met with, when the people, deluded by the Press, have had the actual proofs given them. If we go to them at the general elections and show how the Press have taken a party standpoint, then our success is assured. It is well worth cutting out the leading article in the *West Australian* this morning for future reference. I feel sure that if we go to the people with the proofs we have we shall come back with a considerable increase in numbers. So far as I am concerned this matter will receive the fullest publicity before the people of this State. There are other matters of maladministration in connection with this department.

Mr. Underwood: Is there a pure one?

Mr. TROY: There has been maladministration and gross deception so far as statements to people endeavouring to secure land here are concerned. The Minister tells everyone, and the Premier said it last night, that there are hundreds of thousands of acres of land awaiting settlers. He says, "Apply for it; go and get it; it is there." He would not send his own son or his relatives on it, but he says to other people, "Go and get it." When he is asked where the land is he says, "Here, here, here; go and get on the land, the country is full of it, it only wants courage; if you have no backbone you are a failure, that is all." But the Agricultural Bank will not give those settlers an advance on the blocks, for they do not think the land is worth it. Let me give instances of that. I have picked from land advertised by the Lands Department as open for selection no less than 100,000 acres of land on which the Agricultural Bank will not give one penny advance. That is to say, the Agricultural Bank do not think the land sufficiently valuable to advance one halfpenny on it. This is the land the Government tell settlers is waiting for them. This is the land they hold out to settlers, and they evidently desire to condemn those poor people to live on it for the rest of their lives. Do a Government, who are guilty of such things, deserve the support of members and of the country? No. I again charge members of the other side

with not serving their own interests, or the interests of the State if they support the Government when the vote on this motion is taken. I will give some proofs of what I have said. I have typewritten references to no less than 55,000 acres of land on which there is no bank advance. I find that some of the land consists of salt lakes. While the bank will make no advance on these lands the State are asking 10s. an acre for it, for land at Knungajen, Burracoppin, Lake Brown, Barbalin, Mount Marshall, Korrellocking, S. Dalwallinu, Waddouring, Nangeenan, Kumminin, Badjebup, Yerapin, Bending, Ongerup, Balwallinu, Mangowine, Nunajin, Merredin and Ajana. From the *Government Gazette* of the last two weeks I find the policy is continued. It is not only in the *Government Gazette* that these blocks are mentioned, but the Government are advertising the same lands in the papers of this State; they are using the people's money to advertise in the papers this land which is of no value, or, at any rate, land which the Agricultural Bank think is of no value. I see by the *Government Gazette* the following blocks are advertised by the Northam land agent:—1,000 acres, 6s. 6d., no advance; 1,000 acres, 14s., no advance; 999 acres, 14s., no advance; 1,000 acres, 14s., no advance; 741 acres, 12s. 6d., no advance; 999 acres, no advance. I will proceed further, and it is again the Northam land agency:—1,000 acres, 14s. 6d., no advance; 5s., no advance; 15s. 6d., no advance; 15s., no advance. Then, again, we have in the Nelson district a number of areas ranging in price from 9s. to 14s. on which there is no advance. It is mentioned, however, that each applicant for an advance in these cases will be dealt with separately. What an inducement! No advance, but each application will be dealt with separately. Then, again, there is Northampton, in the Victoria district, where we have 997 acres at 15s. 6d. and other blocks at 9s., 11s., 15s. 6d., 9s., 7s., 12s. 6d., 10s., 13s., 18s., 10s., 12s., 14s. 6d., 12s., and no advance on any of them. The total area in this district comprises about 10,000 acres, and out of all of them there are only two lots on which there is any advance. East of Nangeenan we have 11

areas on which there are no advances. The same in Albany, and wherever one looks in both these issues of the *Government Gazette* it will be seen there is no advance. This is the land which the Minister for Lands points out as being available for settlers. The leader of the Opposition has made all those complaints and the complaints have been proved to the hilt, yet the *West Australian* in its leading columns this morning disposes of everything and advises that we should get on with the business, and that there is no more trouble, and that there was never anything in these charges. It continues as follows:—

Mr. Scaddan is not to be blamed for bringing these complaints under notice. They are really most kind to Mr. Scaddan. They continue—

They were floating in the air on the wings of a gathering cloud of rumour. These are the rumours and these are the instances that I have given. Where does the *West Australian* get its facts from? I suppose they get their facts from the imagination of the gentleman, I presume, who writes these articles. He goes on to write—

Rumours that might have darkened the reputation of this State had they been allowed to proceed unchecked upon their course. The leader of the Opposition might, for his own sake, have examined more carefully the evidence upon which these reports and complaints rested. It is well that attention has been drawn to them and that their baselessness has been completely exposed.

This is the most amusing thing I have ever read. One imagines that the gentleman who wrote this article did so after having attended a performance of one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas.

Mr. Angwin: Do you not think we should make it compulsory for the man who writes to sign his name?

Mr. TROY: This is what you call public opinion.

Mr. Underwood: Some people call it tripe.

Mr. TROY: Continuing, he writes—

Mr. Wilson's question at the end of his speech was well timed. "Where are

the charges?" he asked, and there is but one answer; they have been dispersed into thin air.

Where are the charges? Echo answers. Where? The Premier replied that they were baseless, and the gentleman who wrote this article says that they have been dispersed into thin air. That settles the whole thing, I suppose. It may settle the matter in the mind of the writer, but it will not settle the matter in the country I can assure him. Reference was made last night to the case of Clarke and party, a number of English settlers who have recently arrived in this State and who, personally I may say, are by far the best stamp of immigrants I have seen in this State. They have come to Western Australia on their own initiative; they have brought here prize stock, the best that could be secured, and all they are desirous of is that the promises made to them by the Agent General in London shall be kept, and not only the promises made to them by the Agent General, but also all the promises made by the then Premier, Sir Newton Moore. These gentlemen were told in London that the promises would be fulfilled on their arrival in Western Australia. I have here a pamphlet called the *West Australian Selectors' and Immigrants' Guide*, 1910, issued actually this year. It gives a digest of the land laws, particulars of loans by the Agricultural Bank, information as to assisted passages etcetera, and has been compiled by W. H. Dolley by the direction of the Agent-General of Western Australia. This is what the people are told in this pamphlet—

Six hundred thousand acres are gazetted as being available for a special class of selectors to the exclusion of all other persons. The allocations comprised in this area of 600,000 acres are set apart as settlement lands, available for selection by persons who are not already owners of more than 100 acres of rural land in the State. . . . The fact that this system of special areas will enable settlers to take up contiguous blocks is of special importance in view of the oft-expressed desire of intending emigrants to form them-

selves into small groups for the purpose of mutual aid and co-operation. These people are assured here that there are these 600,000 acres available in Western Australia, and there is the special virtue that they will be able to take up contiguous blocks and assist one another. But when they do arrive they are told that they must appear before the Land Board and take their chance with others. I say that we should be sufficiently honest and let these people know the actual condition of affairs before asking them to come to Western Australia. When they arrive we insist that they shall go before the Land Board just as other settlers do, but it is criminal; and to my mind, it is distinctly wrong for any Government to deceive people in the old country with pamphlets of the character of this one which I have just read an extract from, and then refuse to fulfil promises made in England when these people arrive in Western Australia. Then the Premier shows a spirit of revenge and spite because these people dare to criticise and condemn the Government whom we are told are anxious to assist the immigrant. These immigrants to whom I have referred are prepared to spend thousands of pounds in the State, and are people who have come here on their own initiative; they have no desire to be a burden on the State, they have come to take up land, and they bring with them valuable stock, and these are the people who are referred to in a supercilious manner by the Premier. Can any greater indictment be made against the Government; can any greater proof be given that the Government will not scruple to vent their spleen on any person, be he new-comer or an old resident, if he dares to criticise their maladministration? We should welcome the criticism of these people because it shows that they have taken an interest in the State and that they are determined that the administration of the State shall be all that the people desire. I want to say again with regard to the treatment of these immigrants that there cannot be any worse advertisement for Western Australia. These people are reputable citizens, men of standing, and when they write and tell

their friends in England how they have been treated in Western Australia, and have been referred to in Parliament by the Premier of the State, and have incurred the displeasure of the Press, what will be thought of us? The Premier has assured us he has cabled to England and asked for the withdrawal of this pamphlet. There can be no doubt that since this pamphlet was issued at the beginning of this year the Government, who claim to be the lineal descendants of the Moore Government, are responsible for the distribution in England of that pamphlet and are responsible for all the promises contained in it. There is something pathetic in the desire of the Government to take upon themselves the mantle of Sir Newton Moore. Sir Newton Moore is a popular gentleman, but when it comes to accepting responsibility for acts of maladministration the present Government do their best to evade that responsibility. I think sufficient proof has been given with regard to the maladministration of the Lands Department. Is anything else wanted? If so, there are members on this side of the House who will give additional proof before the debate is concluded, and there will be not one, or even ten, but a hundred instances of maladministration in the Lands Department given. I want to refer to the policy of the Government in other matters, and in this connection I desire to mention some facts in addition to what was stated last night with regard to the agricultural railway policy. The Government of this State have already claimed to have initiated the policy of agricultural development by railways. They have stated that this was their policy and they would still declare it to be their policy but for the unhappy fact that they have in their ranks at the present time a person who was the leader of the Labour Government, and whom they dare not accuse of having been opposed to this policy because he would be compelled to refute that statement. The other night when the Attorney General attacked members on this side of the House he declared that this policy of railway construction, in order to assist agricultural development, was initiated by the present Government, and we found

that he was assailed by the then member for Subiaco, who is the present Minister for Works, who declared that the policy was that of the Labour Government. We on this side of the House claim to have initiated that policy as well as the policy of mining railway development which has since been adopted in the State. There are a few of these railways which I have opposed, and having in the course of my travels lately seen the country through which those railways have been constructed, I am gratified with the attitude I took up when the Bills for their construction were before the House. For instance, with regard to the Bolgart railway which was referred to last night, I had an opportunity recently of travelling over that railway, and I venture to say that it has not assisted agricultural expansion, and that the majority of new settlers to be served by that line are 20 miles away from the terminus. They are shut off from communication by the fact that between them and Bolgart there are a number of large estates and the land through which the line passes is held in very large areas. I found on visiting Bolgart that the terminus of the railway is in a swamp.

Mr. Gill: In a bog.

Mr. TROY: Yes; it is a bog. The member for Balkatta was with me, and where the farmers were bringing in their produce we could not stand without sinking up to our knees. The local station at the terminus is in a swamp and the Government township is largely in a swamp also, but right in front of the railway station, on the rising ground, the land is held by Mr. Phillips, who has cut up his area into blocks for a township, and his township, because it is on the high ground, will prove to be more attractive than the township of the Government which is in the swamp. The railway there serves the large estates and the Government township is of little value because it is so badly situated. The station yard itself is a disgrace to the engineers who located it, and the Government may be congratulated on the fact that they have enabled Mr. Phillips to gather in unearned increment by building the railway to his door,

and enabling him to cut up his land on the high ground in order to establish a township in anticipation of coming events. That is the policy of the Government which we should not endorse; that is the policy which the Government claim is sufficient to entitle them to the confidence not only of this House but of the country also. I shall not refer to the Katanning-Kojonup railway, because it was alluded to last night. Everyone knows at the present time why that railway was built.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TROY: Continuing my remarks in regard to the construction of railways, I want to express dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Government in respect to the proposed Lawlers railway; and I think it would be right if several other members representing Northern constituencies were to give this matter some attention also. It is well known that two Ministers in the present Cabinet have promised that the Lawlers railway shall be constructed from Leonora, and that another Minister, the Attorney General—who represents Greenough, the people of which electorate are keenly interested—has had no voice whatever in the matter other than to say a word in palliation of its construction *via* Leonora from the mining standpoint. The Attorney General put forward a very specious argument the other day at Naraling when he said that this railway should be considered from a purely mining standpoint. If I could gather anything, if any intelligent person could gather anything from his remarks, we could arrive at no other conclusion than that the Attorney General knew in his own mind that the Government were determined to construct the line from Leonora.

The Attorney General: I said "primarily," not "purely" from a mining standpoint.

Mr. TROY: Since two Ministers have given an assurance to their constituents that this railway is to be constructed from Leonora, we should at least have some declaration from the Govern-

ment as to their attitude on this question. The Attorney General should have something to say on this question, and should be prepared to give his opinion just as emphatically as his colleagues have done. What is the attitude of the Government in this connection? Are they prepared to endorse the remarks of the two Ministers, Messrs. Connolly and McKenzie, or will they take up the position once for all of denying those statements as representing the real intention of the Government? I think any honest Government, any Government with any degree of backbone, would be prepared to make a definite statement in regard to this question. We are told the Minister for Mines has been asked to make a report from a geological standpoint. That is absurd, because we know the Minister for Mines has already declared himself in favour of the construction of the line from Leonora. We know, too, he has secured a report from his officers, advising that course also. I will say no more than to make this assertion: if a railway is to be built to assist mining development, then primarily the first object of importance is that of lessening the costs; and the costs in the Lawlers district can best be lessened by giving the people of that district the shortest route to their natural port, namely, Geraldton. I hope the member for Geraldton will demand from the Government their decision in connection with this matter. If he does not, and if the Attorney General does not, neither of them is doing his duty by his constituents. I want to commend my remarks to them because two Ministers, indeed three Ministers, have been candid in the matter, and surely we may expect a similar statement from the gentleman who occupies the position of Attorney General. Reference was made last night by the member for Guildford to the Colonial Secretary's Department. That hon. member pointed out that the department was not being administered in accordance with certain laws passed by this House. He made reference to the fact that sweating exists in various industries in the city—and I want to bear out that contention and say that in

the select committee's inquiry proof was forthcoming that sweating did exist, and recommendations were submitted to the Government by the adoption of which they would have done away with the evil. So far, however, no action has been taken by the Government. Sir Newton Moore, the late Premier, promised in the House over twelve months ago that a woman would be appointed as an inspector. Yet we now find that so little have the Ministry of the day considered the positions of thousands of workers in the City, particularly women workers, who have no protection whatever, that the promise has never been kept nor has any attempt been made to fulfil it. Then in regard to inspection, in the annual report of the Medical, Health, Factories, and Early Closing Departments, we find that the Principal Medical Officer states in regard to the administration of certain Acts he has not had sufficient inspectors to adequately fulfil the duties. He points out clearly that he has had to neglect the inspection of many factories in the State because he has not had a sufficiently large staff. Now, it is a most extraordinary thing that although the welfare of thousands of our people is concerned in the administration of these Acts the Government are absolutely unsympathetic and will not even do have justice in administering the laws passed by the House. What is their attitude in regard to other persons? Never is an application made by the Employers' Federation, the Chamber of Manufacturers or the Chamber of Commerce but the Government lend a willing ear to such application. In the Lands Department dozens of inspectors have been appointed, and provision is made for further appointments; yet in this department, affecting the welfare of thousands of workers, no provision whatever is made for their welfare. I may tell hon. members there are in the City girls of 15 and 16 years of age working three or four nights a week putting in overtime in these factories. I can prove my statements should the necessity arise. In connection with the Colonial Secretary's Department I must condemn the attitude of the Government in reducing hospital subsidies, and more particularly seeing that that reduc-

tion tends to discourage those persons in remote localities who are doing so much to promote the health of the people. Last year a reduction was made in the subsidy, and although members on this side of the House protested, and although a division was taken and the Government defeated, the Government have gone on their way unconcerned and still adhere to the policy which the House condemned. I ask those members who, though sitting on the Government side of the House, gave their support to that vote by which the Government were defeated, what action have they taken calculated to force the Government to carry out the mandate of the House? Is it a fair thing that the Government should go on unconcernedly flouting the wishes of Parliament? If those members on that side are prepared to allow the Government to do so, I may tell them that members on this side of the House will not much longer permit it. Then again, the Colonial Secretary has taken still further action with a view to discouraging the hospital committees in various portions of the State. I apologise for giving an instance in my own electorate, because I have no desire to deal with parochial matters in this debate; but I have the details in connection with this matter, and I give them because they are worthy of recording in the House. The Sandstone hospital is probably one of the best administered in the State. I do not know any body of people who have taken upon themselves their responsibilities as cheerfully as have the people in that district. They have a most up-to-date hospital, one that has commanded the admiration and approval of Ministers and other important personages in the State. By the sacrifices they have made, by the enthusiastic interest they have taken in their hospital, they have been enabled not only to do good work in alleviating the sufferings of the sick among the local community, but they were able to show a slight surplus last year. Acting on instructions by the Colonial Secretary the Principal Medical Officer wrote to the secretary of the hospital commending the local committee for the good work they had done. He expressed admiration for the sacrifices made, and congratulated them on the

whole-hearted manner in which they had undertaken their responsibilities. Then, by way of encouraging them, he intimated that the Government intended to reduce the subsidy. "You have done good work," he said in effect, "the Government recognise that and appreciate it. You have done better work than others in many other parts of the State; you have undertaken your responsibilities in a manner that would put to shame many larger places, and, while we commend you, we are going to encourage you by still further reducing your subsidy." That action is going to discourage the committee controlling that hospital. If I were a committeeman, if I had made the sacrifices they have made, if I had put my hand in my pocket as they have done and taken the enthusiastic interest in the hospital which they have done, I would indeed feel discouraged by the action of the Colonial Secretary. I say such an action is not in the best interests of the health administration of the State. The Premier claims support on the soundness and consistency of his policy, and he puts considerable emphasis on the virtue of consistency and on the fact that he has been consistent right throughout his career. Let us see how he has been consistent and in which way that consistency has been adhered to. When the Labour Government were in office he condemned the small deficit that Government had at the end of their financial year, and he urged that before we could build agricultural or mining railways the deficit should be wiped off and the ledger squared, as that was the first consideration, and because the Government had not done that, he condemned their progressive policy. What did he and his Government that followed immediately afterwards do. They increased the deficit to over £300,000. Although the deficit to-day has been considerably reduced, this is due to one fact only, that the Government have borrowed money and expended it on roads, bridges, and public buildings instead of constructing these works from revenue. Had they constructed these works from revenue, as had been done in previous years, the Government would to-day be faced with a deficit

of over £400,000. The Premier claims, and undoubtedly will claim in the country, that as a financier he excels. We can only judge him by the experience of his administration during the short time he was Treasurer in the Moore Government. When he introduced his Budget in July, 1908, he said we were going to have a surplus of £942 for the current year. He certainly assured us that the surplus would not be large, but it would be at least a surplus. What was the result? This brilliant financier who excels in finance ended up that financial year with over £100,000 to the bad. So if we are to judge him by the past results of his labours, we can only come to the one conclusion that, as a Treasurer, as a financier, he is not entitled to support from members of this Chamber. In addition to the fact that the Government have borrowed largely and constructed non-productive works from loan moneys, I want to point out something not usually known to the people of the State. The position of any person may be judged by his debts, or by his assets, particularly by his debts, and the condition of a country is generally understood by its debt per head of the population. We must conclude that in regard to the debt per head of population this State is not as sound as it was some years ago, because in 1905 the debt per head of the population was £61 19s. 5d., whereas within five years the debt per head of the population made a great jump, and to-day is £73 6s. 5d.; in fact, our debt per head of the population is considerably higher than the debt per head of the population in New South Wales, £56, and in Victoria, £42. If we may judge the soundness of the State by these figures we can arrive at no other conclusion than that there is a very bad time in the future for us if the administration by this Government is to be adhered to. Now, in regard to the consistency of the political opinions of the gentlemen who occupy the Ministerial Bench little need be said. It is public property, and it need only be repeated in passing that all the gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial Bench have at one time in their political careers, years ago or at a later

date, been at daggers drawn so far as political opinions are concerned. I remember when the Morgans Government was formed, before I entered the House, I heard the Minister for Mines speaking at Cne, and after hearing him I went away with the opinion that if ever there was a political ruffian in the State it was the present Premier, and that if ever there was a corrupt politician in the State that person was the present Premier, and if ever there was a person whose occupancy of a Ministerial position or a seat in Parliament was more detrimental to the State than any other person's, that person was the present Premier. After hearing the present Premier condemned by his colleague throughout the country, we now find the two of them sitting cheek by jowl in the same Ministry. I do not think politics of that sort will commend themselves to the people of the State. When the Minister for Works (Hon. H. Daglish) was Premier—by the grace of the Labour party—the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) sneered across the Table at his policy and did his utmost to condemn Mr. Daglish and his policy in the country. The Minister has denied that he said the Daglish Government resigned over the Midland Railway, but I know there is a member on this side of the House who has the Minister's actual statement, and I will leave it to my colleague to read this statement later on. After all, who gave the Minister for Works the name of "Dreary Daglish"; who called his policy the "mark-time" policy? The very persons who now sit with the hon. gentleman, and who are his colleagues to-day. They branded him throughout the country as a miserable weak, dreary individual; and after condemning him in that way, they now sit with him and take him in as one of their colleagues. Do they imagine for a moment the people of the country have forgotten these episodes? It is not possible for the people to have forgotten; and as the case of Joe Cook was not forgotten recently in Federal history, so the case of Harry Daglish will not be forgotten in Western Australian history. We have the Attorney General who abused the present Government and condemned their

policy only a few short months ago. Now without any alteration in that policy, without any departure from the policy the Government have pursued during the last few years, the Attorney General has stepped into the Cabinet and accepted that policy in full. Can there be any sincerity of consistency in a policy of that character? Can the Premier imagine that by telling the people of the State that he and his colleagues have been always consistent, in view of their past actions, and in view of their past attitudes on political questions, he will be believed by the people? It is impossible to expect that he will be believed by the people.

The Premier: Do not get so worried about it.

Mr. TROY: After saying he was consistent, the Premier said, "I have changed my opinions, and so did Chamberlain and Gladstone, and so did a thousand others." So did Joe Cook, so did Judas and Brutus, and so did thousands of others whose names are condemned in history. So did John of England, and many of the worst scoundrels and wasters who have appeared in history, who, when it was necessary to accommodate themselves to their surroundings, did so. In English history there have been few patriots who have stood out against wrong, who have stood out in the people's interests, in comparison with the greater number who have always tumbled over to suit their own convenience. After all, the Premier may endeavour to put himself in the place of a man like Mr. Gladstone, but I would remind him that Mr. Gladstone did not pose as a Liberal; he was a Liberal, and a Liberal to his death. That cannot be said of the Premier, nor can it be said of any member of the Government. These politicians of course have the faculty of accommodating themselves to the progress of events. They call themselves Liberals. If they are Liberals, where are all the Conservatives whom they condemned at one time and who are now amongst their ranks? Have the Conservatives disappeared altogether?

The Premier: No.

Mr. Heitmann: They have converted them.

Mr. TROY: I have heard that if you put one bad apple in a bushel of apples that bad one will make them all bad. Apparently if you put one good Liberal in a body of Conservatives, he is going to change all the Conservatives over to his views. It is not possible. It has not occurred here. It will never occur. They call themselves Liberal; they claim to be Liberals because they think it will popularise themselves; but they might as well call themselves any other name; they are just the old Tories and Conservatives, and they represent the most undemocratic element in the State. These politicians remind me of an American politician of whom I read in the *Biglow Papers*—

“He’s been on all sides that give places or pelf,

But consistency was still a part of his plan;

He’s been true to one party.

And that is himself.”

There is something very sad and pathetic in the endeavour of the Ministry to pose as democrats. The Premier tells us he was so earnestly democratic that he endeavoured to form a democratic league which under his blighting influence died an early death. What else could be expected in such unnatural surroundings, how could he expect that infant to live?

The Minister for Works: They charged him with the funeral expenses, too.

Mr. TROY: Why should they not? If he was the cause of the infant’s death why should he not be charged with providing for its decent burial? I want to refer to one action of the Premier where he said he was democratic. He said he had never opposed a living wage, and that he had never asked that a person should be paid six shillings a day. He said it was five shillings one year, and then it got better and became six shillings. Last night he said that the only occasion on which he advocated six shillings was when he appeared in the Arbitration Court for Millars’ Karri & Jarrah Co.

The Premier: I did not say I advocated it; it was in the citation.

Mr. TROY: As a matter of fact the Premier said, “It was the only citation in which, while he was the employers’ representative, a six-shilling rate was mentioned. It was the sawmillers’ citation. It was true he had been connected with the preliminary application for the fixing of a date in connection with that citation, but the rest of the business was carried out by his successor.” The Premier is not altogether correct in his statement. He put the citation in; his successor did not do that; and the Premier would have appeared in the Arbitration Court but for one fact: he was unable to do so owing to the fact that he had accepted office in the Rason Cabinet and could not appear in the Arbitration Court. That is the only reason, but so far as putting the citation in is concerned, he was responsible. He put it in in his name; he took the initial steps; Mr. Gardiner came later, because the Premier’s Ministerial position would not allow him to appear.

The Premier: Why would it not allow me to appear?

Mr. TROY: Because the hon. member did not think it was politic to appear in the court. He was fighting an election denying that he had advocated six shillings a day. It would not look well for a Minister to appear in court and argue for an award that was not a living wage in this State. Then he went on to say—

Not only was that so, but, as a matter of fact, it was not asked in that citation that the rate for general workers should be fixed at 6s. per day. It was claimed as the minimum wage for tailors-out on picket benches, and everyone acquainted with the industry knew that they were lads 15 or 16 years of age.

The *West Australian* referring to that says—

The justification of his personal attitude towards the wages question was complete. He denies emphatically ever advocating 6s. a day as a sufficient wage for the worker, and he had no direct connection with a citation in the Arbitration Court containing such a proposal, although one prescribing it for

certain sawmilling work carried out by lads of from 16 to 18 years of age was submitted not by him but by his successor after Mr. Wilson had appeared in the case only so far as to apply for the fixing of the date of hearing.

I have shown that the *West Australian* is wrong.

Mr. Johnson: That is nothing new.

Mr. TROY: The article goes on to say—

Yet even this explanation does not satisfy Mr. Johnson, and it would seemingly be too much to ask that member to accept the most convincing proof.

Let me now ask the *West Australian* to accept the absolutely convincing facts, not the statements of the Premier, but the statement as shown in the report of the Arbitration Court proceedings; and let us see what the Premier did at those proceedings. I find on page 172 and 173 of the Arbitration Court proceedings, volume 4, 1905, that a citation was made by the gentleman now Premier of this State, and in that the wage of picket bench pullers-out is fixed at 6s. a day, and yet the Premier said that this was the wage to be paid to lads of 15 and 16 years of age.

Mr. Johnson: And up to 18 years.

Mr. TROY: The citation says—

The following shall be the minimum rates of pay which shall be payable by the employer to all workers of the age of 21 years and upwards in his service in the capacities hereinafter mentioned.

This does not refer to boys of 15 and 16 years but to men 21 years and upwards. I ask the *West Australian*, I ask the Premier, as an honourable man, whether he told the truth when he said that this referred to boys of 15 and 16 years of age. Do the *West Australian* want more convincing facts than those which are obtained from the records of the Arbitration Court? I commend this book to the Premier and to the leader writer of the *West Australian*, the latter of whom is so satisfied with anything said by the Premier and the supporters of the Govern-

ment, and doubts everything said by this side of the House. Let that leader writer take this and refresh his memory before he writes such piffle as he wrote last evening.

Mr. Scaddan: He writes by direction.

Mr. TROY: I do not blame the gentleman when I refer to the leader writer, but I am referring to the paper for I know perfectly well there are dozens of decent journalists who would not write such stuff unless it meant their bread and butter. It is unfortunate that, in connection with that profession, no matter how honest a man may be, or how democratic he is, he has to write to order. Dr. Hackett says that such a course must be followed and that this is his policy; he says that right or wrong the Government must be regarded as right, and the unfortunate leader writer has to sit down, with his tongue in his cheek, and write what he can in that direction in the most adverse circumstances. This has been done in connection with the articles written upon this debate. Further referring to this citation I may say that in addition to the 6s. a day for persons of 21 years and upwards it is provided that there shall be 54 hours work a week, and as to overtime it is said, "Overtime shall be paid for at the ordinary rates only." Just fancy working for 54 hours a week at 6s. a day and only to receive ordinary rates for overtime! The gentleman who advocated this is he who poses as the workers' and the people's friend, and the man who would provide a living wage. The citation also shows that grooms and feed mixers should receive 6s. 6d. a day, but these people had to work seven days a week and no provision whatever is made for overtime. Does the Premier think that everyone in this State is as dense as those who follow him; does he for a moment imagine that the people of this State are so lost to a sense of what is right and wrong that they will accept his every statement? I can assure the Premier that the people of this State will not accept his statements, neither in this nor any other matter concerning his alleged democracy, and

that if members are prepared to accept him they will find their constituents will not be prepared to accept them. Then, again, he made a special plea last night with regard to the school children, and said he only raised the school fees in order to charge the children of the wealthy parents. He said the child of the poor man would not be injured at all, and the only people who would be made to pay were the wealthy citizens. I want to put this question. If all children over a certain age had to pay so much a week, where is the discrimination between the poor and the rich? The only discrimination is this, that while the rich man could afford to send his child to school and pay for the tuition, the poor man could not pay and therefore would not be able to keep his child at school.

Mr. Heitmann: He has the pauper's book.

Mr. TROY: The poor man would have to send his child to work and that child must always be a wood and water carrier, the schools to be only for the wealthy. This was a blow distinctly aimed at the poor man. While the wealthy person could afford to pay the increased fees for his son, the poor man who wanted to keep his child at school so as to gain for him the advantages he, the father, had not obtained, could not afford it and would be unable to do so.

Mr. Scaddan: He had a pauper's book.

Mr. TROY: Yes, that was provided for. The Premier's excuses served no purpose. He had already been heard on that point in Parliament. The party which blindly support him dealt with the matter in caucus. There has never been a spectacle in any Parliament such as that one when members condemned a Minister for the attitude he had taken, and then declared that they must support him as they had been elected to do so. Could anything more degrading be met with in any Parliament? The position might have been different had it been a case of a real and acknowledged caucus, and some consideration might be paid to the attitude of those members had such existed, for it might be said that they did so in order to be

loyal; but that argument cannot be raised in their behalf as they say they have no caucus. The real position was that those members lacking initiative, having no policy, blindly accepted the policy of their Premier. The Premier cannot claim to be a democrat. He has not dared to introduce an increase of school fees since then. He is not going to bring it forward now, as he knows the people will not allow it and would not accept it in any circumstance. If he does so he will find that, as in the past, the people on this side of the House, representing the poor and the rich alike, will see that education shall be free to all, no matter whether the children are those of the poor or the rich. In conclusion I would like to refer to the remark of the Premier that he had introduced the land and income tax. He and those with him should be the last in the world to talk about the land and income tax as coming from them. We know perfectly well that, when condemning the Daglish Government, the Premier and his party went to the country and told the farmers that the land tax would ruin them. We know that they were the bitterest opponents of the land tax. It is the supporters of those very gentlemen who, as members of the Federal Parliament, are opponents to the Federal land tax. Those Federal members are the men whom the Premier and his party supported at the last elections. They are the people with whom their interests are identical, the conservatives who represent the monopolists, and whose interests are against the advancement of the State. The Premier claims credit for introducing the tax, and we and the people know they did so because they were compelled to accept the policy advocated by the party on this side. That was the only reason they could put forward, that was their only justification for bringing forward the measure. I have always said they have opposed the policy of this side of the House, but where they have gone forward it has been because they had to accommodate themselves to circumstances. Whenever members on that side have made an advance they have done so because they have been propelled forward by the heavy

boot of public opinion. So it is with this measure, so it is with every measure they have advocated. The hotch-potch Government, comprising persons of divers views, acting for selfish interests, who are consistent in nothing except their desire to retain their seats on the Treasury bench, can never be acceptable to this House or to the country. To support the Government, from what we know of them, would be as a cynic said of a second marriage, "A triumph of hope over experience." From my experience I can see no good resulting to the country from this Administration. I hope that as the result of the debate this party will be able to induce members on that side to recognise their duties not to the Government but to the country, and assist this party in turning the Government out of office.

Mr. PRICE (Albany): After the very severe castigation the hon. member for Mount Magnet has dealt out to the present occupants of the Treasury bench one would naturally assume that one of their number would get up to defend them.

Mr. Scaddan: They have no defence.

Mr. PRICE: Practically every crime in the political calendar has been laid at their doors and yet we see them sitting back smiling, and apparently impervious to the shafts of ridicule and contumely hurled at them by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. One cannot help marvelling by what process of reasoning, if reasoning it can be termed, such a peculiar combination of political characters could be gathered together as we see occupying seats on the Treasury bench. I do not intend to delay this House by dealing at any length with what may well be termed ancient history. Of the members who now occupy Ministerial positions some might almost have been termed at one time "red flag revolutionary socialists," while others have been in the forefront of what the leader of the Opposition termed "hard shell Toryism." We have seen a negative quantity in political affairs, individuals ready to jump any way or anywhere, as the circumstances and the exigencies of the moment demand.

Yet we find them all now sitting cheek by jowl and we are assured they are a very pleasant little family. We find also that the Press of the State is condemning members on this side of the House for referring to such a remarkable combination of members as a danger to the welfare of the State. One could almost have imagined a writer dealing with that as one writer did with that historical personage, the Vicar of Bray, because if ever there was a conglomerated Vicar of Bray in any Ministry, a Ministry prepared to serve under any king in any circumstances we have it in the present instance. We have a gentleman here—as has been pointed out by the member for Mount Magnet—the Premier, who is at all times and under all circumstances bitterly opposed to every movement for the amelioration of the condition of the workers; yet this gentleman has the audacity to state in this House that he represents the workers and that he will always do what he can for them. I presume, to be fair to him, the only workers he could have been referring to are the gentlemen who work by their wits, and not those who work by their brains or their hands. But let me take exception to the condemnation of members on this side of the House for bringing forward a motion of the character of the one under discussion at this stage in the life of the present Parliament. We are accused of wasting time, yet we find the Government deliberately prolonging the recess and deliberately wasting a fortnight only recently. We find also that the members of the present Ministry were parties to His Excellency's Speech, which was one of the most lengthy, in fact the most lengthy Speech which has ever been put into the mouth of His Majesty's representative. That Speech invited, nay, challenged criticism, and because this side of the House took occasion to refer, during the discussion to the extraordinary laxity and maladministration of Ministers during the prolonged recess, we are now told that we should no longer waste the time of Parliament, but that we should accept without any demur whatever the Premier likes to bring before us, and at once proceed with the business of

the country. For my part, as I announced publicly some time ago, I am pleased that the opportunity has arisen to draw attention to the attitude of members of the present Ministry with regard to the affairs of this country, because certain protests which were made quite recently on the Address-in-Reply have been ignored. Members protested against the maladministration of various Ministers, and yet we find these Ministers sitting back adopting an attitude of absolute indifference and treating with lordly disdain the righteous indignation of irate citizens regarding their conduct of public affairs. Let me say here that I have every reason to believe that it is the intention of the present Ministry, backed up by their following, to bludgeon out the motion now before the House. What do we see? Last night, and again to-night, four or five members sitting on the other side of the House. Can we for one moment believe that either the Ministers or their supporters are desirous of dealing with this motion fairly and justly? When we find that they are outside the Chamber, taking no notice whatever of what is being said within the Chamber, we must reasonably assume that, at any rate a majority of them, have made up their minds to follow the present Ministry no matter what charges may be made against them, no matter how it may be clearly proved that they have subordinated their Ministerial positions, no matter how serious may be the charges laid at their doors, these members intend to follow them blindly. If anything were needed to prove the necessity for the present motion we have it in the servile manner in which members are apparently following the present Ministry, and the contempt they are showing towards the motion now being discussed by members on this side of the House. During the debate on the Address-in-Reply I asked for explanations from certain Ministers regarding complaints in connection with their various departments. One particular instance brought forward was that with regard to certain would-be settlers from the Northern State of Queensland. I drew attention to the fact that a number of would-be settlers came to this State

and found it most difficult to secure land from the Government, and that at least one of them was taken to the manager of Dalgety & Co. and introduced to him by a responsible officer of the Agricultural Department and told that he might be able to secure from Dalgety & Co. the land which he could not get from the Government. Was any reply made to that? The Minister, to his credit be it said, did not attempt to deny the accusation, but I say he treated it with contempt and as one of the matters which should not be dealt with or, at all events, that too much light should not be thrown upon it. Another matter I drew attention to was the fact that the Minister for Lands was wantonly wasting public funds in spending £7 per acre for clearing land in the South-Western portion of the State for a pine forest. There was no answer to that, and no reason was given for this wanton waste, one might almost term it, wicked waste of public funds. And the Minister's indifference with regard to these charges lends colour to statements made by citizens concerning his conduct when they dare to go along and voice their objections to the cavalier treatment they have received at the hands of his subordinates. I have heard it from land seekers, and I have it at least from two of them, that when they expostulated with the Minister with regard to certain acts of maladministration in his department, he replied, "I intend to treat with the utmost contempt anything you may say or do." Is that the attitude which should be adopted by a responsible Minister of the Crown? Is it not, rather, one which should immediately call for condemnation, not only by members on this side of the House, when such a matter is brought before them, but by members who sit behind that Minister? But so far we have heard no word from any member sitting on the other side of the House, and, therefore, we must assume they agree with the Minister's attitude and are prepared to support the action of that gentleman. I do not desire to take up the time of the House bringing forward many complaints which one might bring forward against various Government departments. There are, however, certain matters which I de-

sire to refer to at this stage, matters of considerable importance, and although these, perhaps, might be termed in a debate of this kind, of minor importance, still, they are such as to indicate the general trend of the intentions and the actions of Ministers with regard to their departments. Let me first of all refer to the department under the control of the Colonial Secretary, the Labour Bureau. I find that quite recently the Labour Bureau of this State was used, and knowingly used, by an Afghan settler to secure the services of white immigrants. That Afghan residing at Quairading wrote to the Bureau asking that a man and his wife should be sent along to work for him at his home. That request was complied with by the Labour Bureau, the officers of which knew where they were sending this man and his wife, fresh out from the old country. What do we find? The man is sent two or three miles away into the bush to work on the holding, while his unfortunate wife, who has been brought out to this country by the inducements of the present Government, is left at the house in the company of seven or eight Afghans. A white man, a Britisher, is never about the place, and this has been done, and done knowingly, by the officer in charge of the Labour Bureau. Only quite recently the unfortunate woman, who has thus been cast under the influence of Asiatics, was asked how she liked being where she was, and she replied that she objected to it very strongly, but she could not help herself being placed in the position where her only companions throughout the whole of the day were Afghans. In view of the knowledge we have gleaned during the past few weeks regarding the conduct of Afghans, the action on the part of the officer of the Labour Bureau should not be glossed or passed over without comment. I certainly am not prepared to pass it over, and under other circumstances I should have said far more with regard to this matter than I am prepared to say at the present time. But I do hope that speedy action will be taken to relieve this woman from such a degrading position. I say it is degrading that the Government should be responsible for bringing a white woman into the coun-

try and sending her to be the servant of Afghans. That is not all. I desire to refer to another matter in connection with the Colonial Secretary's Department. Some time ago the master of the Old Men's Home at Claremont was discharged from the public service. It would be interesting were the whole of the papers connected with the inquiry, and the subsequent dismissal of that person laid on the Table of the House. It would then be found that for several years past so lax has been the control exercised in regard to that particular institution that the responsible officers of the Colonial Secretary's Department have been misled, have accepted deliberately false statements, and that the master was not only absolutely incompetent but had been guilty of actions which, under other circumstances and if done in private employ, would probably have led to far more serious consequences than his mere dismissal from the service in which he was engaged. But the main point arises when I inform the House that the discovery of this laxity was made, not by a permanent officer in the Government employ, but by a casual employee called in to fill a temporary position in the public service. The temporary employee discovered that year after year the Government had been misled in connection with the returns and reports of certain public departments. And does it not prove that Ministers must themselves be lacking in the efficient control of their departments when such a thing as that can occur? But let me go a little further and challenge the members of the Ministry to disprove that they recently appointed a certain lady, who is well known as a supporter, and an ardent worker on behalf of other supporters, of the Government to a responsible position in connection with the immigration office. I refer to the appointment of Mrs. Gresley Lukin to what is termed a "temporary clerkship" in connection with the immigration bureau.

Mr. Collier: I have heard the name before.

Mr. PRICE: Probably. There is a Mr. Gresley Lukin who is president or chairman of most conservative organisations in the city, and I believe Mrs. Gresley Lukin is the wife of that gentleman.

This lady is employed, or has been recently employed by the Government and given what is termed a "temporary clerkship"—given travelling allowance to sport around the country and attend to the female immigrants. Now, I have no objection to the appointment of a responsible woman to generally take charge of female immigrants when they come into the State, but I do take exception to Ministers prostituting their positions in appointing a woman who is a political partisan to such a position instead of calling for applications for the post.

Mr. Holman: They pay their tools with Government money; they always do.

Mr. PRICE: I am not prepared to go to that extreme, because I recognise I should be transgressing the rules of the House. But I do say there is something rotten in an Administration which can be a party to such a palpable piece of political trickery as that to which I have referred. If it was necessary—and I admit the necessity—that a responsible woman should be appointed, applications should have been called for the position, and the qualifications of the candidates should have been scrutinised in order that the Government, or the Minister responsible for the appointment, would be able to assure the House that he had done all he could to secure the best person available for so responsible a position. But I cannot believe that the Minister responsible has attempted anything more than to place in the position a partisan of his own political party. Now, I desire to come at once to the main clause, if I may so term it, in my indictment of the present Ministry. Much has been said regarding maladministration by the Minister for Lands. I recognise it is almost impossible to differentiate between the charges or allegations against the Government regarding immigration and the maladministration of the Lands Department; but I do take very serious exceptions to the statements made by the Premier in the House only last evening. We then found the Premier deliberately glozing over the charges made against the Lands Department, while the Minister against whom those charges had been made sat back, himself taking no part, nor has he

taken any part up to the present, in his own defence. We find the members for Guildford and for Mt. Magnet making charges of a most serious character against that hon. member—and I am reminded that they brought proof; yes, in every instance proof was brought. Yet we find the Minister prepared to remain absent from the Chamber, and neglecting to grasp the first opportunity of defending himself against the charges.

Mr. Collier: He is an exhibitor at the Northam show.

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Mr. PRICE: Is the honour of the Minister less to be considered than his presence at an agricultural show? He thinks more of inspecting cattle and sheep than he does of his own honour. Charges have been made against him which any man with the spirit of a man would rise and resent; yet the Minister remains absent. I must, however, compliment the Premier on his adroitness in parrying on behalf of his colleague the charges laid against him, and I readily admit that, aided by the *West Australian* of to-day, he may possibly have induced superficial readers to believe that he effectively answered the charges made by the leader of the Opposition; but no person who has followed this debate can for one moment admit that he has disposed of any one of the charges. For this reason: first of all we find the Premier objecting, or protesting against the general character of the charges made by the leader of the Opposition; he protested against the general character of them and expressed a wish for detail. Then we find the Premier himself supplying the very detail which he had demanded from the leader of the Opposition. Before proceeding to deal with the Lands Department I desire briefly to touch upon the question of immigration. I have already stated it is almost impossible to differentiate between the two questions. However I am one of those who, when Sir Newton Moore was in the old country, read with a great deal of pleasure the reports of his efforts to secure immigrants for this State; but I regret to find that the reports in connection with his actions in the old land are about as

reliable as are the reports of the debate now in progress. We were assured he had done all he possibly could to secure the introduction into the State of the proper sort of immigrant, yet we find the Premier himself, a colleague of Sir Newton Moore's and successor to that hon. gentleman, getting up and declaring that they could not be responsible for all the immigrants who come into the State. In other words, he denied the claim made by Sir Newton Moore that only the proper sort of immigrants were being brought into the State, and he admitted that immigrants of all kinds and all sorts are in reality being brought into the State. The Premier's remarks allow of no other reading. We find him practically admitting that anything but the proper sort of immigrants are coming in, admitting that they are not farm labourers; in fact, we heard him last night speaking in the most sneering terms of certain immigrants who have come into the State merely because they did not at once meet the wishes of Ministers in connection with their settlement in the State. Now, in connection with this immigration matter, I desire to refer to a question asked in the Chamber by the member for Mount Margaret. He asked if the attention of the Premier had been drawn to certain advertisements appearing in an English paper regarding the need for farm labourers and domestic servants, and the Premier said that he knew nothing of certain advertisements. For the information of the hon. gentleman and other members of the Ministry, I may say that I have a paper dated the 31st July. It was the first copy I picked up. I may say the advertisements are still appearing and they have appeared for over six months in *Lloyd's Weekly News*. The advertisement appeared in the last copy of the paper which came to hand in this State. I think the 9th September was the last copy available here. This advertisement reads—

Farm hands, Western Australia, fare £2, deposit £3 returned on arrival.
Wages 20s. to 30s. a week, living in.

I ask members on the Ministerial bench whether it is in the interests of the State that such an advertisement as that should

appear in any English journal? Let us turn to another—

Domestics, Western Australia, fare £2, returned on landing. Generals 15s. to 25s. per week; cooks 25s. to 50s. per week, living in.

Where is it that they secure these salaries? Where can they get them? Surely hon. members on the Government side of the House must be aware of the fact that immigrants coming into this State cannot receive at any place the wages stated in this advertisement. In other words, these advertisements are deliberately misleading; and if the Government or members of the Ministry were desirous of protecting would-be immigrants against this, then they would immediately take steps to deny the accuracy of these advertisements. It is still going on and people are coming out here—farm labourers—believing that immediately on arrival they get from £1 to 30s. a week. The member for Murray knows that immigrants when they come into this country are invariably exploited by those who employ them. They are told that they do not understand Australian ways, and are not conversant with West Australian or colonial (as it is usually termed) conditions.

Mr. George: Are you charging me?

Mr. PRICE: I am not charging the member for Murray with anything at the present moment; he need not be looking for charges.

Mr. George: I thought you were charging me, I wanted to know.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member is aware of the fact that the immigrant when he comes into the State is invariably told that he is not conversant with local conditions.

Mr. George: I say emphatically I do not know. It has not come within my experience. The only immigrant from the old country I know is a servant employed by my wife, and she gets a pound a week and her tucker.

Mr. PRICE: Immigrants are informed that they are not conversant with colonial conditions, that they do not understand the requirements here in the Colonies, as they are usually termed, and consequently must serve what I may term a probationary period, and that probationary

period usually extends to a very lengthy term. Just here let me challenge the accuracy of the figures submitted to the House regarding the number of vacancies open for immigrants or for employees in this State. The fact is that men are induced to take employment through the Labour Bureau at a certain wage, or a certain alleged wage, and when they get to the place where they are employed, when their first payment becomes due, they find invariably, in a very large number of cases, that, instead of receiving the wages stated when they left the bureau, they are paid at a much lower rate, with the result that many of them immediately toss up their jobs—I can bring instances of this—they toss up their jobs and their employer immediately sends along to the bureau for other poor unfortunate victims. He is duly supplied with them and consequently the number of situations available is unduly notified in the records of the department. We are assured by that influential journalistic apologist for the Government, the *West Australian*, that little mistakes are inseparable from a vigorous progressive policy. Little mistakes! A little mistake is it to bring unfortunate immigrants into the State by deliberately misleading means, by false representations, by actions which, if done in any other walk of life, would bring men within the strong grip of the law? Are these little mistakes? Is it a little mistake to publish deliberately false information such as has been published at the instance of the present Government? Is it a little mistake to know that immigrants have been brought into the State by the false representations made in official publications on behalf of this Government, and know they have come here and have been practically left to starve? Only last night we heard the Premier belittling certain gentlemen—they are gentlemen—who came and took up land in the Mount Barker district, four of them, young and energetic, and in every way a desirable class of settler, men who came out here determined if possible to carve out a home for themselves in this land of ours, believing sincerely that they had to deal with gentlemen as honourable as themselves and that every representa-

tion made on behalf of the Government would be absolutely reliable. These men have been absolutely misled, because I shall detail for the information of members of the Chamber the facts relating to Booth and party, who last night came in for such an amount of ridicule at the hands of the Premier. Booth and party were induced to come to the State and were told before they left England that in no circumstances were they to listen to any statements made by the settlers or any people in the State, that they were to place themselves in the hands of the representatives of the Government. They came out here, four of them, well connected and all of them with a little capital, men whom I may term in an affluent position for new settlers, with a few hundred pounds so that they were able to do all what was possible to improve their holdings: they came to Albany and were taken in hand by Mr. Ridley, who, despite plausible excuses made for him by the Premier last night, was allowed to represent himself as a representative of the present Government, to represent himself as a Government official. The only excuse made by the Premier now is that this gentleman was a contract surveyor. Whether a contract surveyor or not, it does not alter the fact that these would-be settlers were taken in hand by him and taken some miles out of Mount Barker. I may say here that before leaving England they were warned against old settlers and told that the old settlers had no desire to see new settlers come into their district and would do all they could to put them off. They were taken by Mr. Ridley and placed on certain land and assured that the land was good, that it was first-class land; and these unfortunate settlers accepted Mr. Ridley's statement because their land was valued at 11s. per acre. They had in their possession documents published by the Government stating that first-class land was available at 10s. per acre, and they naturally assumed that if they paid 1s. per acre more they must be getting extra first-class land.

Mr. George: Were they practical farmers?

Mr. PRICE: If the hon. member will wait a little while I will have a few practical farmers to give instances of. These men were desirable settlers and, if not practical farmers, at all events had a very fair knowledge of what was expected of them in connection with farming. These settlers at once set to work and commenced to improve their holdings and build up a home; they started fencing and clearing, but before they reached that stage one of the oldest settlers in the locality, and one of the most respected and most reliable as to the quality of the land in that locality, happened to come upon their camp and asked them what they were doing. They told him they were there to take up the land, in fact that they had taken it up and intended to settle there. He told them to do what they could to get off the land as quickly as possible, that they would never make a do of it if they stayed there till doomsday, and that the land was absolutely worthless. He could not too strongly advise them to get away. After Mr. Mitchell left them they said to each other "There, what did the Government agent tell us; what did they tell us in London about the old settlers trying to induce us not to take up land? Here they are doing it straight away." The representatives of the Government had been cunning enough to forestall the possible condemnation of any particular land by the old settlers, and the new chums—I say the word with every respect, and not in any other sense—immediately assumed that the advice given them by Mr. Mitchell was confirmation of the statement made to them before they left London and afterwards when they landed here.

Mr. George: Mr. Mitchell is a decent man.

Mr. PRICE: I have already said that Mr. Mitchell is one of the most respected and reliable settlers in the Mount Barker district.

Mr. George: I confirm that.

Mr. PRICE: The word of Mr. Mitchell and other settlers may and will be taken by me at all events, as infinitely more reliable than the mere word of the hand and the uncorroborated statement of the Premier. The statement of these old set-

tlers is that the land, despite the fact that the new settlers have already spent over £400 on it, is not worth 2s. 9d. per acre, much less the 11s. which the Government charged. The settlers worked on for a certain period, but when the winter came—and the member for Swan is fully aware of these facts—these unfortunate individuals found they were in the middle of a lake, and they were told that in the summer they would find themselves in the middle of a clay-pan which was absolutely useless for any purpose whatever. What do we find? Why this: The report made by the Surveyor General is that much of the land is only second class, much of it, not a little of it, but even he—and I know he is hardly likely to go to extremes in any matter which would sound condemnatory of the Government, or any official possible for him to say that a little of it, was second class land. If it had been possible for him to say that a little of it, only a small portion of it, was second class, he would have said so, but he said that much of it was second class, and that it might be possible for a man to make a living on it by grazing, if it were cleared and certain improvements were made upon it. The Premier, referring to this case, attempted to mislead this House; I do not say that he deliberately did so, for probably it was unwittingly, but he stated that in the case of Webster the two Rhodes and Booth the Agricultural Bank had approved of certain advances upon their holdings. The position was this: over £400 had been spent by the Rhodes Bros., Booth had spent a considerable sum, and Webster had spent a certain amount. When they found they needed a boat in order to get round their holdings, they decided to throw them up. When it was known here in Perth that at least two members of the party were negotiating for the purchase of other properties; that all of them had publicly announced their intention to throw up the land, and that at all events two of them had definitely done so, then we found it reported that the Agricultural Bank would lend money upon the land. The Agricultural Bank said they would lend it; but after the settlers had left, and when

they knew the money would not be taken up. I will not say that in this case the Agricultural Bank deliberately did that which would help to relieve the Government from condemnation in connection with these matters, but it is a peculiar circumstance that the approval for these loans should have been given after the men had abandoned their holdings. The position is that these four men were forced to lose several hundreds of pounds and have since very naturally been condemning the Government or the State, both here and through the medium of journals in the old country. We cannot blame them for doing so.

Mr. Scaddan: They should go to the organiser of the Liberal League.

Mr. PRICE: The organiser is taking a keen interest in matters to-night, and it is possible that we might find a second apologist for the Government, in addition to the *West Australian*. It would certainly be a remarkable circumstance if we found the organiser of the National League and the *West Australian* once more working in harmony.

Mr. George: Poverty finds strange bed fellows.

Mr. PRICE: For the hon. member for Murray to speak of poverty is rather amusing. Let me pass on from the case of the settlers at Mount Barker and come to matters nearer home. I desire to refer to the Land Board, or at any rate, to one sitting of that board recently held at Geraldton. Some time ago certain land was thrown open at Morowa near Mingew. Four different persons applied for it; one is named Bowers, a married man who had been 14 years in the State; another named Williams who had a wife and eight children, and the third named Murdock who was also married; then there was the son of Williams. They applied for certain land on this estate. There were also other applicants. It may be mentioned that Williams senior and Murdock are bona fide farmers, men with considerable experience. Bowers has been 14 years in the State and is a plumber by trade. In his application to the board he stated that his brother-in-law, also a married man with a family, was coming over from Victoria to go on the

land, if it were granted. The four applications were put in. The only other applications for the blocks were lodged, one by Mr. Hewson, another by Mrs. Hewson, and the remainder by two brothers named Tipping.

Mr. Collier: An appropriate name.

Mr. PRICE: I am tipping that they had a good thing on. These cases came before the Land Board at Geraldton and, despite the fact that we have on the one hand a man who has been 14 years here and three others who are practical farmers, yet we find that Hewson, an unsuccessful chemist and restaurant keeper, and Mrs. Hewson, the proprietress of a novelty shop in Baird's Arcade, and the brothers Tipping are successful in securing the land at Geraldton over the heads of those I have referred to. Why is this?

Mr. Scaddan: Are they on the land?

Mr. PRICE: We are all told that the Land Board deals fairly, squarely, justly and equitably by every applicant who goes before them. By what justice, by what species of equity could they give blocks of land to an unsuccessful chemist and the lady proprietress of a novelty shop in preference to bona fide farmers.

Mr. Collier: A fascinating lady, perhaps.

Mr. PRICE: The member suggests that the lady may be fascinating. I do not know that she put in an appearance; I hardly think she did.

Mr. George: All ladies are fascinating.

Mr. PRICE: The member for Murray may be an authority, but personally my beauty is not such as to attract. There is an instance where certainly the judgment of the Land Board was woefully astray, and one which to my mind indicates there may be influences at work in securing land even through a land board other than those which are recorded in the records of the Land Board sittings, because I can hardly believe that any body of men could, uninfluenced by other circumstances, allocate an area of land to the keeper of a novelty shop in preference to a bona fide farmer. I desire to refer briefly to matters in connection with the Denmark estate. I have before me certain statements which in a very striking manner support the

statements made by me some time ago in this Chamber on the action of the Minister for Lands in connection with the Denmark Estate in placing upon the land such a ridiculously high price, which has proved detrimental not only to the district but also to the best interests of this State. I find that as the result of the action of the Minister for Lands, or his responsible officers—and we can only deal with the Minister for the action of his officers, as he is the representative of those officers; he is the responsible party to whom we must look when matters arise of a condemnatory character—the Agricultural Bank through their trustees absolutely refused to lend money on the Denmark lots because of the very high prices placed upon them by the Minister for Lands. The member for Murray might make a note of it, because I am going to give cases in point. I have here a letter from one H. E. Wintle, or, rather, a copy of a letter sent to an hon. member on the other side of this Chamber, and who, up to the present, has neglected to answer it. I notice the member for Canning at once arouses himself. Can it be he who has been guilty of forgetting to answer that letter? This is a copy of the letter addressed to the member for Canning by a gentleman named Wintle, a constituent of the hon. member, wherein he asks that the hon. member might bring certain matters under the notice of the Minister for Lands.

Mr. Bolton: The member for Canning threatened the Minister the other day if the Government did not build the South Swan railway.

Mr. PRICE: Mr. Wintle, the writer of the letter, is a pensioner of the Indian Government, one of the class of individuals that a little while ago the Government were expressing a sincere desire to introduce to this State. Mr. Wintle, after having had certain farming experience in New Zealand went to England for a trip, and there came under the influence of the representative of the Government of this State, and he decided to sell out in New Zealand and come to this land of promise in the West. I may tell members that

Mr. Wintle's experiences are such that he assures me that he will do nothing towards inducing friends of his to come here, and, perhaps, go through the same experience.

Mr. Gordon: His family have done pretty well here, anyhow.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member knows him?

Mr. Gordon: I know him.

Mr. Holman: And they are earning less wages than they got in the old country.

Mr. Gordon: Perhaps.

Mr. PRICE: The position is that this man came to this State believing upon arrival that he could secure 100 acres of land upon the payment of £4 10s. However, we find him writing to the member for Canning in the following terms, and I may here interpolate that he had had a conversation with the member for Canning. Mr. Wintle writes—

As promised you on Saturday last I am writing to you in reference to the advance from the Agricultural Bank for my two sons and myself with regard to blocks 385, 386, and 387, granted to us on the 15th July last. I hope you will kindly speak to Mr. Paterson, the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank. Mr. Mitchell, the Minister for Lands, under whose special advice I selected the above blocks, after having failed to select other lands for other purposes, and spending a whole year and much money in going about the country in search of suitable land, in his letter dated 13th July last to me said, "I hope that the institution, the Agricultural Bank, will be able to do something for you in the matter of your Denmark blocks." Later on at an interview Mr. Mitchell told me that he would speak to Mr. Paterson for me.

The Minister said to Mr. Wintle that he would speak to the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank, and the Minister gets up in this House repeatedly and assures members that he does not use his influence in such directions. Yet we have him telling a settler that he will use his influence. Which is it; is he misleading

this House or is he misleading the settler?

Mr. Bolton: Both at times.

Mr. George: What influence do you think he would have with Mr. Paterson?

Mr. PRICE: It is not for me to say what influence he would have with the managing trustee of the bank. The question is, whether he would use his influence as promised to this settler. It is not a question of what influence he would have; the question is would he attempt to use his influence, would he prostitute his Ministerial position in an attempt to influence a subordinate officer of his department. He promised this settler that he would do that. The letter goes on to say—

On another occasion, while at the bank, he told the chief inspector that there was much to be done on these blocks.

Mr. Gordon: Now finish the letter in fairness to me.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member can finish it. Let him inform Mr. Wintle that he has received the letter; if he will not do that through the post he can do so on the floor of the House.

Mr. Gordon: Finish the letter.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member can finish it. I have no objection to reading the whole of the letter, but I have no desire to take up the time of the House.

Mr. Gordon: By way of explanation. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say before the hon. member gets off this subject—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better wait until the member for Albany has finished his speech.

Mr. Gordon: I wanted to take exception to his statement that I have not taken action. I want to say that I have taken action and the letter was forwarded on next day to the department and then on to Mr. Paterson.

Mr. PRICE: I had got to the stage in this letter where the Minister had promised to speak to the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank on behalf of this settler. In other words, the Minister promised to use his Ministerial position to

attempt to influence the managing trustee of the bank. The letter goes on—

To date I have not been able to obtain any satisfaction from Mr. Paterson, but he told me to put in my application. I went to the office, the application was made out by me, and the gentleman at the counter, Mr. McLarty, the sub-manager, informed me that it was useless as no advance would be granted as there was no margin left, and that the improvements already made were very heavily charged, but that if the Minister reduced the price, etcetera (that is the statement of Mr. McLarty, the sub-manager), perhaps the bank would make a small advance.

Perhaps the bank would do it if the Minister would reduce the price upon the land! The letter goes on to say that Mr. Wintle endeavoured to see Mr. Paterson, but he failed to do so.

Mr. Gordon: Read the little compliment he paid me at the end for past services.

Mr. PRICE: The compliment he paid to the hon member is as follows: "Thanking you in anticipation." Unfulfilled anticipations. Now we find this man, Mr. Wintle, the owner of blocks 385, 386, and 387, blocks which were taken up at prices of from £15 15s. to £20 10s. per acre—

Mr. George: At Denmark?

Mr. PRICE: Yes, at Denmark. These three blocks were charged by the Government from £15 15s. to £20 10s. per acre, and yet upon these blocks this man could secure no advance. Why? Here I have what is a reliable document which shows in the most lurid manner the absolute wanton waste which has taken place in connection with the Denmark lands. The total areas of the three holdings I have referred to is 181¼ acres; of that area 36.53, or speaking in round figures, 36½ acres, are allegedly cleared for the plough. As a matter of fact many of the stumps are still in the ground: 36 acres are cleared and certain ringbarking and scrub cutting has been done, and although the Minister for Lands has assured this House repeatedly that it only costs £7 to £8 per acre to clear the land, we find that the total expenditure by the Govern-

ment on these three blocks, which have been allegedly cleared to the extent of 36½ acres, has been £1,681. or over £40 per acre.

Mr. Jacoby: Who is your authority?

Mr. PRICE: I challenge the Minister to deny the accuracy of my figures. Never mind my authority. If the figures are wrong let the Minister deny them if he dares.

Mr. Bolton: There is a conspiracy of silence.

Mr. PRICE: Hon. members may ask the Minister if he dares to deny the accuracy of the figures, that the total expenditure by the Government upon blocks 385, 386 and 387 is set down as £1,681 and only 36 acres have been cleared.

Mr. Jacoby: Who set the figures down?

Mr. PRICE: Let the hon. member ask the Minister whether these figures are correct and see whether the Minister will attempt to deny them. A sum of £919 has been spent on clearing 36 acres of land, and the Minister repeatedly gets up and assures members that he can clear land for from £7 to £8 per acre, and we are told that is the outside price. The Minister quite recently made the statement that he could clear any land with the up-to-date appliances and engine which he possesses for this amount.

Mr. George: I will give him a job down my way. I say he cannot do it.

Mr. PRICE: Let me now refer to another block on the same area, No. 493. There we find no improvements have been made. The owner of that block applies to the Agricultural Bank for an advance, and we find that they are prepared to advance £4 an acre for clearing one lot of eight acres and £10 for clearing another lot of seven acres. It works out, practically, at an average of £7 per acre in round figures for clearing 15 acres, or practically, £105. If a private settler applies to the bank to clear 15 acres he gets £102, yet when the Government clear 36 acres it costs them £1,600 odd pounds to do it. Now, I think it must be admitted there is something—

Mr. Bath: Rotten in the state of Denmark.

Mr. Holman: In the Denmark estate.

Mr. PRICE: There is no doubt about that. But let me at this stage refer to a matter which comes practically within the knowledge, practically under the personal supervision of the Minister for Lands, a matter for which the Minister himself is solely responsible. It has been the practice of the representative of the Associated Banks to secure from the Lands Department, free of all cost, information regarding the improvement of conditional purchase holdings; in other words, the information of the Lands Department is made available to profit-seeking concerns in the shape of the Associated Banks. Information which the private citizen cannot secure is given freely, or has been given freely to the Associated Banks, and the Minister, evidently feeling some slight qualms of conscience in regard to thus allowing purely speculative institutions to use the department for their own private gain, issued an edict that arrangements should be made for the banks to pay for the information, information which is secured by the department through its inspectors at a cost of many hundreds of pounds per annum to the State. The Minister issued the edict, and to carry it into effect certain structural alterations were necessary in connection with the offices. A start was made, but almost before the carpenters got to work, before the sound of their hammers had had time to reverberate through the corridors of the Lands building, the Minister withdrew his edict on being waited upon by a deputation representing the banks; and to-day the banks are allowed to receive free information to be used by themselves for their own private gain, and certainly not for anyone else's. Why? Is the Minister for Lands occupying his position as Minister of the Crown to protect the interests of the people of the State and do that which is best for them, or is he there as the minion, as the catspaw of the financial institutions? Which is it? Why is it the financial institutions are allowed the free run of information in the Lands Department, information which a private citizen could not secure?

Mr. Collier: Why is the Press allowed information when we cannot get it?

Mr. PRICE: While dealing with matters of what might be termed a purely personal character in connection with the Minister I would like to state one definite case, in which one Campbell, an officer in the Colonial Secretary's Department, made application for land in the Beverley district and paid a deposit of £1 with his application. That application was illegal, and yet it was done to prevent a bona fide settler from getting the land. But I desire here to bring forward a direct charge against some officer in the Lands Department, the facts of which are known to the Minister, and to challenge the Minister to prove to the House that he adequately dealt with the officer in question. The facts of the case are these: Some time ago a man named Hanvin was informed by Messrs. Stacy and Williams that two blocks of 700 acres each were available for selection in the Baandee district. Immediately Mr. Hanvin went over to the Lands Department, and there he found the blocks marked on the plan as being not available, as having been already applied for. He went back to Messrs. Stacy and Williams and told them the blocks had been applied for. They told him "Nonsense, pay us and we will get them for you." Being not exactly a fool he went back and saw the Minister, and inquiries were made which disclosed the fact that these blocks had not been applied for, and that the marking had been done by an officer in the Department.

Mr. Bolton: That is pretty definite.

Mr. PRICE: And eventually one of the blocks was secured, although that man, on going to the public counter in the Lands Department, had been informed that the blocks were already applied for.

Mr. Troy: By a Lands officer?

Mr. PRICE: By an officer in the department. What action did the Minister take—did he ignominiously bump out of the service the officer responsible for that action? It would be interesting to know, and I trust that the Minister will give to the House some satisfactory explanation in regard to this matter. Can it be that there are officers in the Lands Department using their positions to help forward outside land agency firms? Because the cir-

cumstances of this case certainly lend colour to that suggestion. If Messrs. Stacy and Williams knew that certain land was available, how did they know it when the plan on the public counter of the department showed that the land had been applied for?

Mr. Holman: Perhaps the question asked to-day throws some light on it—"He paid a certain official £50 in cash, and that did the trick."

[Mr. Taylor took the Chair.]

Mr. PRICE: It is a matter that should be investigated, and it should demand some reply by the Minister for Lands. Now, I come to a case which is certainly of supreme importance in this indictment of the Lands Department, a case which, last night, the Premier, tossing his arm, brushed aside, and said to the House that the member for Albany had expressed himself as quite satisfied in connection therewith. I did express to the Minister my satisfaction that he had not been guilty of any dishonourable action in the matter; because I had received a letter charging the Minister with certain dishonourable actions. I went to the Minister, showed him the charge, and asked him whether there was any truth whatever in it. He satisfied me that so far as the charge then made was concerned there was certainly no foundation for it. But, Mr. Taylor, since then very much more information has come into my possession, information which demands that the Minister himself, on the floor of the House, should give some reasonable explanation, not such as was given by the Premier last night. First of all let me state that a man named Dunkley was granted Block 73 on the Stirling estate, when, as a matter of fact, the block had for years been in the possession of a Mrs. Lang. For years Mrs. Lang had held Block 73. Yet we find the department granting it to Dunkley; and so disgraceful is the conduct of affairs in the Lands Department that not until investigations were made by a temporary clerk in that department was it discovered that there were two claimants for Block 73. Only a little while ago the Minister for Lands

said in the Chamber that a profit was being shown on the operations of the Government in regard to repurchased estates. Where did he secure that information? How did he know that a profit was being shown? As a matter of fact I challenge the Minister to prove to the House that he had any reliable data for the statement that there was a profit being shown on repurchased estates. Moreover, I make the definite statement that only within the last ten days has any attempt been made to show whether or not a profit had been made on the Stirling estate. Again, I, here, with a full realisation of my responsibility in the matter, state emphatically that the balancing of the Lands Department's books in connection with repurchased estates was never properly carried out until recently, when it was done by a then temporary employee in the department. Yet the Minister assures the House that—

Mr. Heitmann: Everything in the garden is lovely.

Mr. PRICE: Everything in the garden is lovely, and that we are showing a profit in connection with our operations on repurchased estates. When it was discovered that Mr. G. A. Dunkley and Mrs. Lang were both claiming to hold block 73 on the Stirling Estate, the discovery being made at the time when an effort was being made to balance up the books of the department in connection with this estate—I may point out that the approval was given in 1909 to Mr. Dunkley—the department found itself in a quandary as to how to get out of the difficulty in which it found itself. We find the department throwing open certain blocks, lots 208 and 209. The Premier admitted last night that these blocks were thrown open so that Mr. Dunkley would have an opportunity of securing some recompense for his claim against the department in connection with block 73; but the department made the mistake, when throwing open blocks 208 and 209, of gazetting certain conditions, these conditions being that the only applicants who would be considered for blocks 208 and 209 were those persons already holding land on the Stirling Estate. Now,

what do we find the Premier doing in connection with this? Deliberately telling the House that although G. A. Dunkley held no land on the estate, his father did, and that because of that fact the granting of a block to G. A. Dunkley was a matter of no importance. A matter of no importance to gazette certain conditions and for these conditions to be ignored and a block to be illegally granted to a certain person! The settlers on the Stirling Estate were not prepared to tamely submit to this kind of treatment on the part of the Government, and we find Messrs. Krygger and Spalding, two bona fide owners of land, writing in protest to the department. They received but little satisfaction. Mr. Dunkley had the block; and, as I intimated earlier in the evening, the Minister for Lands has a decided inclination to tell people he will treat with contempt anything they say or do, and in this case he decided to treat it with a certain amount of contempt, with the result that Messrs. Krygger and Spalding, who were applicants for blocks 208 and 209, legitimate applicants, wrote to the *West Australian* and that other publication which slavishly supports the Government, the *Sunday Times*, drawing attention to the illegal action of the Government in connection with the matter. The next thing we find is the *West Australian* took no notice of their letter; put it on one side. They are not going to publish anything which is likely to bring the present Government into contempt, particularly a clear case of an illegal action on the part of a member of the Ministry. By the way, we were told by the Premier last night that the granting of the block to G. A. Dunkley has not yet been approved, but we find the representative of the *Sunday Times* taking a very keen interest in the matter. Only on Thursday night last, when the leader of the Opposition was speaking on this motion, we heard the Minister for Lands absolutely denying that any outside influence had been brought to bear upon him in connection with this Dunkley matter on the Stirling Estate, yet I have with me not a copy but the original letter sent by a representative of the *Sunday Times* to Mr.

Krygger, one of the protestants in connection with these proceedings, which letter I shall read to the House, and which will prove how much reliance can be placed on the Minister's word when he denies that outside influence was brought to bear upon him. This letter is dated the 19th September. It is interesting to note the date. It says—

We have inquired into your complaints and have seen the office files . . .

Mr. Heitmann: Seen the office files? That is good.

Mr. PRICE: Yes, it says—

Have seen the office files and find the position is somewhat about as follows:—Mr. Dunkley applied some time ago for block 207.

I may say that should be block 73, because 207 does not appear in the matter at all. The letter proceeds—

Mr. Dunkley applied some time ago for block 207 (73). In ignorance of the fact that it had been granted to someone else a temporary clerk dealt with Mr. Dunkley's application and issued a notice of approval. It was soon afterwards discovered that the department had issued an approval in respect to a block of land held by someone else. When it was discovered, Mr. Dunkley was asked to return his approval notice. He did so on the condition that he should be entitled to take possession of blocks 208 and 209. The question is, "Was the department bound to carry out this undertaking with Dunkley in defiance of a *Gazette* notice stipulating that only residents on the estate should be entitled to apply for the blocks you refer to?" On the law—

It is a remarkable letter from a newspaper man. It proceeds—

On the law the department was bound by its undertaking. The department has not formally approved of the land board's decision in favour of Dunkley but may do so as it has no alternative in the matter. But for this undertaking Dunkley would not have been permitted to apply.

I want hon. members to follow this letter. It goes on—

We have seen the department on several occasions and have finally reached an arrangement which should suit both yourself and Mr. Spalding. We send you under separate covers a map of the Stirling Estate showing the boundaries of the sections. We suggest, with the approval of the department—

They are suggesting with the approval of the department. The letter goes on—

We suggest, with the approval of the department, that you and Mr. Spalding should write a formal letter of application directed to the Under Secretary for Lands asking for the area you require to be cut out of the forestry reserve. We suggest you should select some of the land shown in blue pencil either at the back of your present holdings or alongside the block granted at the extreme southern end of the division and adjoining 210. Write your applications as above and send them along to this office at your convenience. We will present the applications to the department and see the matter through for you.

As hon. members can see, these words are underlined on the letter, that they are to send their applications along to the *Sunday Times* office and they will see them through. The letter is signed—"Yours sincerely, for the *Sunday Times*." Although this letter is in existence, although we have here the representative of a paper writing to indignant settlers assuring them that he has seen the files in the department and has made certain arrangements with the department, in other words, with the Minister, we hear the Minister deliberately rise in the Chamber and deny that any outside influence has been brought to bear upon him. What are we to believe after that? I have not yet finished. That letter is dated the 19th September. In the issue of the *Sunday Times* on the 25th September, a week following that letter, we find a full-page advertisement from the Lands Department.

Mr. Heitmann: And there is no corruption!

Mr. Scaddan: Perhaps the Premier will give an inquiry now.

Mr. PRICE: There is a full-page advertisement the week following the sending of the letter by the *Sunday Times* stating that they have taken certain action in connection with the Lands Department.

Mr. George: What would be the cost of a full-page advertisement?

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member may be able to discover it; I am not in the confidence of the Ministers.

Mr. Heitmann: It is a rotten, dirty piece of corruption; the Government cannot get out of it.

Mr. PRICE: Here is the full-page advertisement for members to see. When was there previously a full-page advertisement from the Lands Department in that or any other paper? When the Lands Department are crying out that they cannot find surveyors to make available land for settlers, we find this paper given a full-page advertisement on the Sunday following the writing of a letter such as the one I have read to the House this evening.

Mr. George: Was that put in any other paper?

Mr. PRICE: No. These are facts sufficient to speak for themselves. Does the Minister require anything further? If there is no connection between that full-page advertisement and the inquiries made by the newspaper on behalf of these indignant settlers, and the statement of the Minister in the House that no outside influence has been brought to bear on the matter, then I say we have arrived at a time when coincidences are so remarkable that no man can tell what may arise.

Mr. Heitmann: He should be impeached at once.

Mr. PRICE: They are remarkable coincidences. I do not intend to deal further with this department; I leave it, and if in face of what I have stated members on the Government side are still prepared blindly to follow a Minister such as he who holds the office of Minister for Lands, then I say there can be no Ministry formed which members on that side would not be prepared to follow. I care not what glossing over or excuses

there may be, I have stated certain facts. It cannot be denied that the Minister made a statement to this House which was absolutely misleading.

Mr. Bath: It was something worse than that.

Mr. PRICE: If I were allowed, I would say other words, but I am not allowed. I pass over the fact that the same week this paper is inquiring into the matter they receive a full page advertisement. I can do without that, however, and deal only with the Minister's misleading information given to this House. If hon. members can be found to apologise for that kind of thing, they will apologise for anything. If this state of things is allowed to continue members of this House who ask for information can never believe the information given. This sort of thing should not be tolerated without protest, and such a protest as will send Ministers to the country and allow the people to decide whether the departments of this State are to be run by responsible Ministers, or by copy-seeking pressmen.

Mr. George: It sounds like boodle-seeking.

Mr. PRICE: I did not suggest that they were seeking boodle.

Mr. George: Nor did I. Why not stick to your guns; that is your suggestion.

Mr. PRICE: I now leave the matters I have brought forward in the hands of members to deal with. If members can apologise for the Minister, if they can give to the House, and to the people, a satisfactory explanation, there can be no charge levied against a Minister which he will not be able to explain. I can conceive nothing worse than for a Minister deliberately to mislead members and allow people to be influenced by irresponsible persons outside Parliament and outside the members of his own Ministry. I sincerely hope that when the vote is taken upon this matter we shall find a sufficient number voting in favour of the motion to force members of the Ministry to resign their present position and appeal to the country and so let the people express their opinion upon the administration of the departments which they have in their

charge. I have done all I can to bring facts before this House to prove that at all events one Minister is certainly not fitted longer to hold the position he now occupies in connection with the administration of the affairs of this State. I trust that as the result of the indictment against the present Government, the people in this State will have an opportunity of passing their opinion on this matter, and if the people are given that opportunity then, despite the Press apologists for the present Government, I am sure the day will not be long in coming when we shall have changes in the occupants of the Treasury bench, and when we shall have men in power who at all events will give to this House reliable, honest information, and the public will know that when a question is answered the answer is one that may be looked upon as reliable.

Mr. Holman: Now, let us hear from the Attorney General.

Mr. Bath: Let the Minister speak for himself. A man who will sit down under the charges made against him will do anything.

Mr. Heitmann: He should be impeached.

Mr. Bath: Yes; either before this Chamber or a Judge.

Mr. Heitmann: It is absolute corruption from start to finish.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Heitmann: Corruption; yes, nothing more.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Heitmann: I say it is corruption.

Mr. George: Let the man defend himself; he is not here to-night.

Mr. Bath: Well, then, move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Heitmann: It is a case of corruption, and he should be impeached.

Mr. Bath: A Minister who will escape replying to these charges should be impeached.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. BATH moved—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	23

Majority against .. 3

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Troy
Mr. Heitmann	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Horan	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	(Teller).
Mr. Keenan	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Layman
Mr. Carson	Mr. Male
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Monger
Mr. Dagill	Mr. F. F. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. George	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Gregory	Mr. F. Willson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Harper	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): I have seen some extraordinary actions taken by members of the present Government, but this is the first occasion upon which I have seen a responsible Minister, who has been impeached, not only by the member for Albany, but by other hon. members in this House, who has had his Administration raked from beginning to end, who has had facts and conclusive facts, brought against him to show not only that he has been acting illegally, but that he has acted illegally with the view to vindictively dealing with men who dared to criticise his Administration, and who is not prepared to defend himself, not only against the charges made here to-night but against the charges made previously against him and who, instead of being in his place in this House to stand up and defend his personal honour, and defend his manliness, sneaks away to Northam in order to attend an agricultural show. A motion of no-confidence has been moved in this House, and I say emphatically that that motion

should be carried by a substantial majority for the simple reason, that we have not to go to members of the Opposition, but to members of the Ministerial party in order to find lack of confidence in the Government confirmed. The Premier in his speech deprecated the fact that hon. members on this side of the House had delved in ancient history in order to bring charges against the present Government. I could quite understand the strength of that argument if these charges were against the capacity of the Premier, because, after all, whether the capacity of the Premier may have been doubted five or ten years ago, different circumstances may, perhaps, later bring his ability to the front and prove that that lack of confidence was not justified. I quite understand there would be soundness in that argument if the lack of confidence was with regard to the conservatism of the Premier, because, after all, even a conservative can change and can embrace liberal opinions, but if the charges were brought against the integrity and the honesty, and the honour of a Premier, if they were sound 10 years ago, if they were sound five years ago, they are sound to-day and will be sound 10 years hence: and this vote should be carried because hon. members on the other side of the House, supporters of the Premier have impeached the Premier, not because of lack of confidence in his ability, not because of lack of confidence in his liberal opinions, but because of lack of confidence in his honour and his integrity. Charges have come from members on this side of the House. I have heard no hon. member on this side utter sentiments with regard to the Premier which have been uttered by his own supporters and men who are sitting behind him this evening. His own colleague, the Minister for Mines, in 1901, when the hon. gentleman joined the Morgans' Government, toured the country trying to defeat his colleagues and at that time declared that the then Premier, Mr. Morgans, was a prince of hoodlers, and that the present Premier was a hoodler and a bounder, and that the Government generally were a gang of hoodlers. Those were the charges which were urged

against the present Premier by his present colleague, the Minister for Mines.

The Premier: Are you prepared to prove them?

Opposition members: Yes.

Mr. BATH: To show that that was not a passing phase of opinion on the part of the Minister for Mines we find that in 1906 Mr. Rason was transferred to the Agent General's office, and that the present Minister for Mines and others of his colleagues pursued a course which under almost any circumstances one might mention, would be absolutely and unpardonably an act of gross treachery, because they conspired against those with whom they had been associated in the same Cabinet, and we know at that time the hon. gentleman, who is now Minister for Lands and who is deploring the formation of third parties, was prepared to form a third party because he declared he had no confidence in the present Premier. And it could not have been lack of confidence in his ability or his opinions, because a tribute had been paid to him and always had been paid to the Premier's ability; therefore, it must have been lack of confidence in his integrity. The member for Perth, a present supporter of the Government, said that the present Premier could only have been sent for by a process of log-rolling. The member for Claremont supported the same words which were quoted the other evening by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Foulkes: On a point of order. I am sure the hon. member is misrepresenting me. What I said was that the member for Sussex was unable to lead a party, and, therefore, I would not support him. The member for Brown Hill attributes to me the same remarks which were enunciated by the member for Perth, which were that there must have been a process of log-rolling.

Mr. BATH: I said that the member for Perth declared there was a process of log-rolling. The member for Claremont is not the member for Perth.

Mr. Foulkes: The member for Brown Hill said that I used the same language.

Mr. BATH: The hon. member expressed the same opinion. I want to point out the difference in the statements

made by the member for Claremont then and now. The member for Claremont said that he could not support the present Premier—

Mr. Foulkes: Because he was not able to lead a party. Read the whole of my statement.

Mr. BATH: At any rate the member for Claremont said that he could not support the hon. gentleman as Premier. We have had the member for Geraldton and some other hon. members whom I cannot remember at the present time all repeating the same opinion, and it has been the expression of this opinion by members of this Parliament, who sit on the same side as the Government, which has inspired them with a feeling of distrust. Whether that feeling is justified or not members on this side of the House are not called upon to say, but there certainly has been inspired a feeling of distrust in the integrity of the Premier; and I have heard that repeatedly stated in public by supporters of the present Administration, by members of the Ministerial party. Under those circumstances how is it possible, I ask, that any Parliament which has any regard for a high standard of political life, can continue or can allow this Government to continue without taking the first opportunity of moving a motion of this kind, and giving the opportunity to those gentlemen, either to show that their party is above political honour or else, at least, to vindicate their political lives. I want to go further and say that the morning journal, which at the present time is supporting the present Premier, when these statements were being made by the present members of the Ministerial party, took up exactly the same attitude with regard to the Premier. I want to know what motives could have been in the minds of the conductors of the *West Australian* when they put forward this aspect of affairs, that a member of the then Government, whose ability they have never questioned, and whose opinions they could not possibly question, because he was a member of the Government they were supporting, was unable to take on the Premiership of the State, and that the only gentlemen on that side of the House he could possibly bring into any Govern-

ment he might lead, were those at whom the whole of the world, or, at any rate, that part of the world we have in Western Australia laughed; when they made a jest of the fact that he had been asked by his Excellency the Governor to form a Cabinet; and they bracketed him with all the impossibles who were in the House. They would never have attempted to treat any other member of the Cabinet in that way with regard either to his ability or his opinions, and, undoubtedly, it was because of the general distrust felt by the Premier's own supporters that the Press took up that attitude. Yet to-day we find these same gentlemen, these same members of Parliament, who then declared that the hon. gentleman was unfit to take the Premiership, and this same newspaper which endorsed their opinions because of the exigencies of political or party affairs, are prepared to ask the State to accept this gentleman as Premier.

The Premier: You are making cowardly and dirty insinuations.

Mr. BATH: It is not an insinuation; it is a straightout statement.

Mr. Troy: On a point of order. I ask that the Premier be called upon to withdraw that statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister must withdraw.

The Premier: In obedience to your ruling I withdraw the statement. However, the hon. member is attacking my integrity.

Mr. BATH: I am not attacking the hon. member's integrity. In all the party battles we have had in the House we have never said one-hundredth part against the Premier of what has been said of him by his own colleagues.

The Premier: Why should you say it to-night?

Mr. BATH: Because, in the interests of straightforward public life in the State those gentlemen ought to be asked to vindicate their principles at the present time. If the supporters of the Premier are prepared to foist him on the public how can we submit to sitting idly here and allowing the thing to pass? I want to point out that this feeling amongst the Premier's own supporters in my opinion has

been largely responsible for many of these matters to which attention has been called by those who have spoken to-night and who spoke last night. If at the very fountain we are going to have this be-
 basement of public life we can only expect that those things to which attention has been called and, what is more, which have been proved up to the hilt—we can only expect that they will be calmly accepted by members of the present Cabinet. The Premier talked to us last night of consistency, and, following on this, recited a list of the great men who have changed their opinions and, I suppose, bracketed himself with them. And he put that list forward as a justification for any change in opinions on the part of himself and colleagues. Well, I have never held that if one changes his views then, in order to be regarded as consistent, he should remain in error and refuse to acknowledge his altered opinions. I believe with Emerson that a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds. But, after all, we have to judge each case upon its merits. I have known many cases in the history of politics in the old country and in Australia where changes of opinion have carried sincerity on the face of them, because it has meant that a man stepped, perhaps, from popularity and from a position of influence, carrying emoluments, into a position where, on the other hand, he has met with the taunts of the great bulk of the people. Such a man has made that change because he has honestly changed his opinion. But I want to point out to-night, in respect to the Premier and his colleagues that every change made in their opinions has been coincident with material advantage so far as their positions were concerned. Let me take the Premier himself. He was a supporter of the Leake Administration; he voted with the Leake party at the time the Hon. F. H. Piessé launched his vote of no-confidence against that Government, yet when Mr. Morgans was sent for after Mr. Leake had failed, and asked to form a Government the present Premier joined him as a Minister of his Cabinet. Now the Premier states that although he voted with the Leake party he forecasted his intentions to join Mr. Morgans if that gentleman was asked

to form a Ministry. But what I want to point out is that the hon. member's change of opinion was coincident with securing a portfolio; with securing prominence in the history of politics in the State at that time. Let us go farther; let us take the occasion upon which he joined the Rason Cabinet. At that time although the hon. gentleman had been a declared opponent of the tax on the unimproved value of land we find he changed his opinions with his advent into office in that Cabinet. Now, let us take his colleague who sits by him at the present time; that hon. gentleman has been all over the benches of the House. If there is any man who cannot be charged with either a wise or a foolish consistency it is the present Attorney General. One would almost imagine that that hon. gentleman was possessed, like the individual mentioned in Scripture, with an evil spirit—except that while the evil spirit of the Scriptural individual drove him into the sea, the evil spirit possessed by the Attorney General almost invariably drives him into a portfolio.

Mr. Bolton: Then he drives the others out; he wrecks them.

Mr. BATH: The hon. gentleman went into a position in the James Cabinet. He worked back later on into a position as candid critic of the Moore Administration, and from that position he worked into that of Minister and a supporter of the policy of the present Government. Then, again, take the position of the new Minister for Works. We find that every change of opinion made by that hon. gentleman has been coincident with material advantage so far as his political position is concerned. I can tell hon. members that at the time of the resignation of the Rason Administration in 1905, when the appeal was made to the country the present Minister for Works pledged his word of honour to the member for Guildford and myself in the corridor of the House that he was going to fight the election as a straightout supporter of the labour party.

Mr. Heitmann: He sold you as he sold the lot of us.

Mr. Bolton: And he will sell his new colleagues next.

MR. BATH: We went to Kalgoorlie to fight our election, and the first thing we saw in the newspaper when we arrived there was the announcement of the apostasy of the present Minister for Works. Then the hon. gentleman called himself an independent labourite, or a democrat, or something of that kind. Then when he found that the Labour party at Subiaco were desirous of being represented by a straightout supporter of that party he suddenly conceived a liking for the present Administration, or for the then Ministerial party, and he shifted over to the other side of the House. Now we find to-day a still further change; that although he has criticised those gentlemen, and although they in turn have criticised, and at every opportunity condemned and ridiculed him for his policy, he at the present time is sitting alongside them as a Minister of that Cabinet, as a holder of office with all its emoluments. Yet these Ministers expect us to give credit to them for honest changes of opinions! I say no one, no matter how unsophisticated he may be, is likely to give credit to them for honesty in all those changes.

The Attorney General: The electors of Subiaco showed their opinion of the Minister for Works, and their opinion of you and your objections.

Mr. Walker: You know bad habits can have good luck.

MR. BATH: Anyhow, I am not dealing with the attitude adopted by the electors; I am just stating plain facts which are known to members of the House in regard to the changes of opinions and the changes of positions which have occurred in the present occupants of the Treasury benches.

The Attorney General: And blaming the electors of Subiaco.

MR. BATH: As I said before, if we have in the formation of the Ministry and in the support, or the reasons for support which are given by the present members of the Cabinet—if we have this lowering of the standard of political life, we can only expect that Ministers will have less regard for it when they are dealing with their administrative work. I ask the Premier with what pride can he

accept the leadership of a Government in which he has as colleague a Minister who has attacked him in the language which the present Minister for Mines has used towards him? And after all, what can be the standard of political honour when we have regard to the actions of the Minister for Mines himself as the one who attacked the present Premier? Let us look at the attitude adopted by the present Minister for Mines in regard to the last election contest. That gentleman was defeated and was content to make the election void, or rather was content to win a case in which the election was made void, not by any dereliction committed by his opponent or supporters, but by the illegalities knowingly committed by his own supporters. I say that in winning the case he lost honour. As a defeated candidate he occupied the position of Minister for Mines for two months, and during that time he doled out grants from the mining votes to his own constituency. Why? So far as he was concerned, at least so far as his electors were concerned, he should have shut up the purse strings and said, "No; no money can go to my own electorate until my position is vindicated."

Mr. Holman: An honest man would have done that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw. He has accused the Minister of being dishonest.

Mr. Holman: I did nothing of the sort. I said an honest man would have closed the purse strings.

MR. BATH: Later on we have the Berteaux case; and we had a strong presumptive case made out in favour of the view that Berteaux robbed the Mines Department. I do not want to take up the position of entering an absolute verdict of guilty in regard to Mr. Berteaux. I say that, although the evidence was damning, although it appeared unanswerable, before pronouncing final judgment, we should have waited for the verdict of a court of law; and the Minister for Mines who was vitally concerned should have been one of the first to have vindicated his own position and the position of his Cabinet. The case should have been pressed to its logical conclusion;

there should have been absolutely no delay whatever in instituting legal proceedings; yet we find that the present Government were content to allow the position to drift, content to allow Berteaux to go unprosecuted and content to forego all inquiry into the matter until the eve of the assembling of Parliament when they knew that awkward questions would be asked.

The Attorney General: That is not so. Mr. Bolton: It is so.

The Attorney General: I deny it.

Mr. BATH: I assert it and I say the member for Boulder can prove it.

The Attorney General: The hon. member stated, as I understood him, that the Government made no inquiry into the Berteaux case until just before the meeting of Parliament, and I denied that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw.

Disorder—A Member Removed.

Mr. Heitmann: Do not withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I will deal with the hon. member.

Mr. Heitmann: You can do what you like.

Mr. Speaker: Before the member for Brown Hill proceeds I call upon the member for C'ue to withdraw that utterance and apologise to the House.

Mr. Heitmann: Apologise for what?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member defied the Chair and said, "You can do what you like." I call upon him to withdraw and apologise to the House, or I will order him to leave the precincts of the House.

Mr. Heitmann: Then do so.

Mr. Speaker: Then I order the hon. member to leave the precincts of the House.

Mr. Heitmann (rising): I am not the first and I suppose I will not be the last.

Mr. Holman: You are not going to leave like that.

Mr. Heitmann resumed his seat.

Mr. Speaker: I direct that the hon. member shall leave the precincts of the House.

Mr. Heitmann: I will wait until the House puts me out.

Mr. Speaker: I order the Sergeant-at-Arms to put the hon. member out. I

direct that the hon. member be removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

[Mr. Heitmann left the Chamber.]

Resumed.

Mr. BATH: What I want the Attorney General to understand is that the opinion of the Crown Law Department in regard to the prosecution was taken either by the Attorney General or by some member of the Government on the eve of the assembling of Parliament.

The Attorney General: You are repeating what I denied.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understood the hon. member to have withdrawn what was denied by the Attorney General?

Mr. BATH: What I wanted to explain—

Mr. Walker interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want to hear the member for Kanowna.

Mr. Walker: He is denying what was said.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want to hear the hon. member.

Mr. BATH: I wish to know exactly what the hon. member has denied.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is due to the hon. member that the Attorney General should say it.

The Attorney General: I understood that the member for Brown Hill stated that no action was taken by the Government to inquire into the Berteaux case until immediately before the meeting of the present session of Parliament. I denied that statement and I still deny it.

Mr. BATH: I could not possibly say that no action was taken by the Government in regard to the Berteaux case until the eve of the assembling of Parliament, because the matter was discussed in the House.

The Attorney General: Does the hon. member say no inquiry was made by the Government?

Mr. BATH: By the Crown Law Department.

The Attorney General: Then I deny that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw it.

Mr. BATH: As the Attorney General has denied it, in accordance with the rules of the House I have to accept his denial.

Mr. SPEAKER: And withdraw.

Mr. BATH: And withdraw it, and leave it to other members who have the facts to prove it. Again, we have the information given in regard to the legal position of the member for Perth in reference to his acceptance of an office of profit under the Crown. The Attorney General submitted to us a legal opinion to the effect that it was not an acceptance of an office of profit under the Crown within the meaning of the Constitution Act, yet we have had the same department warning other members of the Chamber that the acceptance of such a position would be regarded as an office of profit under the Crown. Which opinion are we to accept as correct? The leader of the Opposition gave one instance and the member for Murchison another. On each occasion they were told that the acceptance of such a position was the acceptance of an office of profit under the Crown, and therefore would affect the acceptors' places in the House; but we are told in regard to the member for Perth that this is not so.

Mr. Scaddan: He is a Government supporter.

Mr. BATH: And that his position as a member is not assailed. Which opinion are we to accept? The same position has cropped up in Victoria. Mr. Lemmon, a member of the Victorian Assembly who was in the State recently, informed me that in Victoria members were warned that if they accepted positions on wages boards they would be responsible for losing their positions as members of Parliament because it would be an acceptance of an office of profit under the Crown.

The Attorney General: Would you be good enough to produce the contradictory opinion of the Crown Law Department to which you have referred?

Mr. BATH: Look up the speech of the leader of the Opposition.

The Attorney General: I do not want his opinion, I want the opinion of the Crown Law Department.

Mr. Holman: It was given on the 27th June, 1907.

The Attorney General: But if you have the information produce it. If you have not the information I can understand why you do not produce it.

Mr. BATH: The Premier has attempted to convince the House that he is a democrat, but we have found in regard to his attempted rebuttal of the statement that he advocated 6s. per day as a fair wage for a man, that the rebuttal was absolutely incorrect, because the member for Mount Magnet has proved his case up to the hilt and has proved that the wage did not affect boys of 15 or 16 or even up to 18 years of age, as stated by the Premier, but it was a wage prescribed for men over 21 years of age. Again the Premier has tried to convince us that his only desire in imposing fees in the schools of the State was to impose a penalty on the children of rich individuals, that this was the only object for which the regulation was introduced. Let me tell the Premier that the regulation which he promulgated made no discrimination between children of poor and rich parents.

The Premier: I never said it did.

Mr. BATH: The attitude of the Premier in that respect was at the time very scathingly denounced by his present colleague the Minister for Works. As a matter of fact that regulation applied to all children, whether children of rich or poor parents; and the plea afterwards made that it was only to apply to children of rich parents was an attempt on the part of the hon. gentleman to retreat from an untenable position. Even that plea is inexcusable in a community of this kind. We keep State institutions of this kind, such as railways, the Education Department, our water supplies and our harbours, not for one section of the community exclusively, we keep them for all citizens, we make no discrimination between the rich and the poor, and it does not appeal to members of the Opposition or to people in poor circumstances in the country when they are asked to believe that the only object of promulgating this regulation was to penalise the children of

rich parents. The excuse was ten times worse than the offence. Again we have the position taken up by the Premier in regard to the construction of railways in this State. We have always known that the hon. member is an advocate of private enterprise and an opponent of departmental construction.

The Premier: Has he ever denied it?

Mr. BATH: No; I am just stating we all know it. The hon. gentleman has not denied it, but I want to point out that the hon. gentleman gives practical effect to his convictions, not at his own expense, but at the expense of the taxpayers of the State. The hon. gentleman has given railway contracts to private individuals and firms in this State at amounts considerably in advance of the rates for which his own department were prepared to do the work.

The Premier: No.

Mr. BATH: It is so. I will point out to the hon. gentleman that in connection with the Nannine-Meekatharra railway the first tender of Messrs. Smith and Timms was £36,567, while the tender of the Public Works Department was £30,000; and, as the result of some interview which Messrs. Smith and Timms had with the Minister, they offered to do the work for £33,000. That was the contract price.

The Premier: But will you read the minute of the Engineer-in-Chief giving reasons for his recommendation?

Mr. BATH: And so we find the present Premier prepared to give to private individuals £3,000 more than his own department would have constructed the railway for.

The Premier: No, No! Read the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief.

Mr. BATH: Just at that time the Mount Magnet-Black Range railway was approaching completion. That was a departmental job and one in which they were kept waiting for material by the Public Works Department, although the contractors could always get material; and although they were asked during the course of the work to pay and did pay higher wages to the men employed, and although they carried out extra work near

the Sandstone terminus, the department were able to complete the work for the contract price. They would have been able to shift their working material and take up the construction of the Chapman and the Nannine-Meekatharra railways. Yet we find the department handing over these contracts to private individuals at a price in excess of that which the department could have done the work for. This advocate of private enterprise, who is so ready to ladle out the taxpayers' money to the private contractor, is the same gentleman who is now the head of the Government and who would deprive the private hospitals of the State of a legacy left by a deceased gentleman in order to build a hospital to save themselves the expenditure. This is the manner in which the Premier supports his favourite private enterprise.

The Premier: It was to save the taxpayers' money, and it is the Judge's order.

Mr. Hudson: The hospitals had to pay the expense of getting the verdict, and you deprive them of the result of that verdict.

Member: Give it to someone.

Mr. Hudson: Yes, give it to someone; give it to Butcher.

Mr. BATH: Although this gentleman, the Premier, and his colleagues profess to be solicitous for the welfare of the workers, they refuse, in spite of repeated protests and requisitions from outside and inside the House, to allow an amendment of the Arbitration Act so as to make it a reasonable measure. They refuse to amend the Act and so give relief to the workers, and give the court power to do what it was designed to do—to arbitrate in industrial disputes. While denying workers the benefit of the Act they ask them to submit to the penalties under the Act; that is contrary to all principles either of law or justice.

The Attorney General: When did we refuse to amend the Arbitration Act?

Mr. BATH: The refusal has been made here, and the refusal is apparent in the absolute dropping of any proposal for an amendment of that measure in the programme submitted by the Premier. The other night the Premier submitted a 10

years' programme for this House, and yet there is no mention of the Arbitration Act. None whatever. We can go beyond the requisition made by members, for we need only to go to the remarks made by the President of the Court in order to show the absolute necessity and the urgency for such an amendment; yet all these requests and hints are disregarded. This is the Government so mindful of the interests of the workers. In regard to the administration of the Factories Act, and the Early Closing Act we have the same policy of doing nothing on the part of the present Administration. The other night the Premier talked about the measures passed by the so-called Liberal Governments in the past. A fig for all these measures unless they are administered in the manner the Legislature intended. They are of no use when they are not administered properly. The Government have made no attempt to administer these measures, for in their hearts they are bitterly opposed to them. I wish to refer to the charges made against the Minister for Lands. It is useless for the Premier to try and dismiss them with an easy wave of the hand, lightly passing over them, dodging those which are the most pressing. It is useless for the newspapers, who are prepared to be deaf and blind to the maladministration and worse, to attempt to gloss these facts over, for here we have undoubted proofs in the first place from the leader of the Opposition, and later on from the member for Guildford, and to-night from the members for Mount Magnet and Albany. They gave examples of gross maladministration on the part of the Lands Department. We have had for instance from the member for Mount Magnet a case where the Minister was guilty of an absolute act of defiance of the Land Act, under which he is supposed to administer the department. For what purpose did he go behind the Land Act? Why, for the objectionable purpose of acting in a vindictive manner towards a person brought to the State under false pretences, who was trying to vindicate his position and secure justice from the Government. The Minister acted vindictively towards him by asking him to pay an

amount which was prohibitive, and which they had no right to demand from him. We are told there is nothing in these charges, but we have been informed that members of the community can secure transfers of land without conforming to the conditions imposed by the Act. We are assured by the *West Australian* that these are mere flotsam when we consider the magnificent work done by the Lands Department. Let me tell members that this magnificent work is conspicuous by its absence. In Western Australia we have entered on an era of reckless land speculation and it is deliberately encouraged by the Lands Department and the Minister for Lands.

Mr. Hindson: Where is the Minister for Lands?

Mr. BATH: We have alienated I think somewhere about 14,000,000 acres of land in this State under various Acts, and under conditions imposed by the Acts, under which the land is held. I challenge the Minister to deny that if those conditions on that area, alienated or in process of alienation, had been fulfilled there would have been a much larger area under cultivation or cleared than there is now. The area under cultivation and cleared is not enough to set against the amount of work that should have been done under the regulations and provisions of the Land Act. Why has so little work been done? The public know, the land agents can inform them; they know by the papers, and the revelations heard from time to time, that they can take up land and, without fulfilling the conditions, can traffic in it and net a nice sum. While the producers cry out for assistance for encouragement in the legitimate development of their lands, on the other hand men can come in and make £50, £100, £200, £250, £500 almost with a wave of the hand. That is being encouraged and acquiesced in by the Government. If members want proof they have not far to go for it. Let them just visit the newspaper room in this House and look at the advertisements in the papers, especially those in the papers of Wednesdays and Saturdays; they will then get proof plainly enough. By this policy of promoting transfers in the Lands Department in violation of the

Land Act we are deliberately encouraging those who are discouraging legitimate settlement. I want to point out that although the excuse has been offered that the matter is going to be attended to, those charges are not charges of to-day, or of yesterday, for they have been made by members for years past. The member for Mount Magnet and the member for Pilbara, have pointed out instance after instance where the Act has been violated, where transfers have been effected on absolutely unimproved land. By questions in the House I was able to point to a case advertised I believe, I am not quite sure, by Mr. Sommers, of unimproved land in the Wongan Hills district which was absolutely unimproved, and which was advertised for sale. This sale was effected. On the other hand what is the position in regard to the legitimate settler?

Mr. Hudson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, are you going to allow conduct such as is being shown by members opposite? They are talking all the time.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not hear anyone speaking.

Mr. BATH: I want to point out that in contradistinction to this encouragement to men to speculate in land, we are absolutely discouraging the legitimate settler, the man anxious to establish a home and settle here, and to make the cultivation of the land a means of livelihood for himself and family in years to come. What encouragement is there for him? He finds right through his career that he gets very little encouragement. He clears his land, sows his grain, and has to dispose of it in the market, and in the whole process he has to run the gauntlet of a crowd of individuals who fleh what he has produced; he has to pay exorbitant prices for agricultural machinery and exorbitant prices to-day for the horses with which to till his land. He has to be content to accept, not the prices he fixes for his produce, as is the rule in every other business—if a man serves me with a pair of boots he is paid his price—but the price fixed by the buyer. If one wants to sell 100 or 1,000 bushels of wheat one has to take the price of the buyer or leave it alone. This state of affairs is

not likely to benefit the producer, but the man who farms the producer. These men who meet with such difficulties and discouragement see that the Lands Department openly assist those who are speculators who take up land with the express purpose of selling it, and who can sell it, despite all the Land Acts passed. There is a tendency to encourage this style of thing and discourage the legitimate settlement of the land.

Mr. Jacoby: The protectionist tariff robs the farmer.

Mr. BATH: The hon. member knows what robs the farmer, and that the reason is the cost of all his necessities and the expense of agricultural machinery. The position we have to-day is this, that in the alienation of our lands we are not building up a system of a body of settlers such as will redound to the permanent prosperity of Western Australia; we will have to change, and there will have to be attention paid to the charges and attacks made against the administration of the Minister if we are to have a change from this objectionable condition of affairs. The trouble to-day is that we have not got a Government with a definite policy. They are prepared to adopt any opinion, any passing whim to try and reconcile all the conflicting elements that form the present Cabinet in order to drag through the present Parliament to the next general election. In view of the fact that their maladministration cannot go unchallenged when they are compelled to face the electors by the effluxion of this Parliament, what is the proposal they propose to place before Parliament, that the details of this Bill have not told anything by the Government, but of which we know a good deal? We find that they propose to try and secure themselves a lease of power by a redistribution of seats, which will involve the jerry-mandering of constituencies. We find that the details of this Bill have not been made known to members on this side of the House, so that they are kept in ignorance of the proposals. The National Political League however can secure all the information about it; and evidently that body is in the confidence

of the Government, while members on this side of the House have been left in the dark. This is not the worst. Members of the present Cabinet have gone to members on their own side of the House, and have asked them to suggest boundaries for new electorates in order to suit themselves, and with the object of securing absolute unanimity on the Ministerial side of the House. They have done even worse, and have gone to ex-members of this Chamber, or, at least, one ex-member of this Chamber, who was a member for a constituency now represented by labour, and asked him to suggest new boundaries so that they might fix up the electorate to suit him. That is what the Government have done.

The Attorney General: Name.

Mr. BATH: I am not going to name him; but I say it is true.

The Attorney General: You had better name him.

Mr. BATH: It is absolutely true, and this is the way in which the members of the present Government hope to secure to themselves a fresh lease of power by taking ex-members into their confidence, and asking them to suggest boundaries in order that the redistribution might be fixed up to suit them, and then to extend the tenure of Parliament to four years. We have reached a low ebb in the history of political life when the Cabinet will stoop to things of that kind. What shall we say about members who will put personal aggrandisement above honour by consenting to such things? Can the Minister for Works acquiesce in conduct of this kind, and can hon. members who have any regard for the purity of public life acquiesce? I say it is absolutely disgraceful, and it is evidence of that debasement which has followed the accession to power of a Premier who is not trusted, and who has been publicly condemned as lacking integrity by his own colleagues and his own supporters in the House.

Mr. ANGWIN (East Fremantle): I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	18
Noes	21

Majority against .. 3

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Bath	Mr. Price
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	(Teller).
Mr. McDowall	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. George	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Gregory	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Layman
Mr. Harper	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

1 Question of Pairs.

Mr. Troy: I desire at this stage to make a personal explanation with regard to pairs. It is a question of honour, and as such it is well that the position should be explained. The member for North Perth paired with the member for Northam in order that they might both attend the Northam show. The member for North Perth has returned. He paired on the understanding that the debate on this motion would not terminate to-night. He paired honourably on the understanding that the usual sitting would take place, and that he would be able to return to his Parliamentary duties to-morrow and vote then if necessary. We find, however, that the member for Northam has not returned. It is unfair, therefore, that these gentlemen should retain their pairs without it being considered that a breach of faith has been committed.

The Premier: What is the breach of faith?

Mr. Troy: The member for North Perth understood that the debate would not be

concluded to-night and he thought he would have an opportunity of voting when the time arrived to vote on this motion. I appeal to the Premier to recognise the position of the member for North Perth, and to recognise the difficulty in which he has been placed. The member for North Perth has no desire to do anything which might be regarded as dishonourable; he wants to keep his word to the member for Northam, but we expect, at least, that the Premier and his colleagues will deal honourably to-night with members on this side of the Chamber.

The Premier: I know nothing whatever of any arrangement such as the hon. member has outlined. My colleague, the Minister for Lands, attended the Northam show to-day, and he was accompanied by the member for North Perth and they paired. I understood that they were both to return to-night, but I have just been speaking to my colleague on the telephone, and he has arranged not to return until to-morrow morning. The member for North Perth was good enough, when he returned a few minutes ago, to come to me and give me a message from the Minister for Lands; and he stated that if we came to a division to-night he would not vote, remarking that that was the understanding with the Minister for Lands.

Mr. Swan: No, I was not referring to a vote on the main question.

The Premier: Then what question was the hon. member referring to?

Mr. Swan: Perhaps I might be permitted to have a word to say upon this matter. There was no question of pairing with the Minister for Lands at all. He asked me to accompany him to Northam, and after some consideration I did so. I understood that we were both to return to-night.

Mr. Scaddan: He told me that he would be back at the tea adjournment.

Mr. Swan: I said that provided the House was not up when I returned I would come to the House, but that I did not intend to vote. The Minister informed me during the day that there was no likelihood of a division being taken to-

night. I can assure the House I would not have dreamed of pairing if I had thought for a moment that the debate was going to terminate to-night. I think the Ministry know that. I consider myself a man of honour, but I will not allow the Premier, or anyone else, to attempt to show me any party points. That is the position I took up, but it appears to me if the Premier intends to bludgeon this debate through to-night I will have to reconsider my position.

The Premier: Do I understand the hon. member does not consider he is paired at all; and does he deny having said to me in the corridor that he was not going to vote?

Mr. Swan: In mentioning the matter to the Premier I understood that the division would be on a question of adjournment. On anything but the main question I consider myself paired; but the Minister for Lands gave me to understand to-day that there was no likelihood of the division being taken to-night, and I thought he would know something about it. I told him I would not vote to-night and so would allow him to remain in Northam, but it appears there has been a job put up on me. In saying that, I am not referring to the Minister for Lands, because I do not think he would be a party to it. But it looks as if it had been readied up since.

The Premier: I must take exception to these constant insinuations of jobs being put up. How could I know of a conversation the member had at Northam. I was going to the telephone to speak to the Minister for Lands when the member came to me, and I was actually speaking to the Minister for Lands at Northam when the division bells rang. How, then, could I have put up any job on the member? I expected the Minister for Lands would have been here to-night, would have been here now. In any case I do not think this debate is going to terminate to-night. There is plenty of time yet to debate away, and still have many speakers for to-morrow night. I do take exception to the bullying tone adopted towards me. The leader of the Opposition says. "Be fair."

Mr. Scaddan: And I repeat it.

The Premier: If the hon. member will be aggressive and will not be courteous, then how can I negotiate with him? I will not make any arrangements to suit hon. members if they will not treat me courteously. I have no objections, and the hon. member knows it, to making reasonable arrangements. He has not come to me to-night, but he says I am bound by the arrangement made by the ex-Premier two months ago. I do not know what it was. And in any case surely hon. members are not going to bind me, a new leader, to an arrangement which I never made! And why should the hon. member have come to me last night to make arrangements for adjourning not later than a quarter past eleven? I agreed to that, but no arrangement has been made for to-night. Where, then is the unfairness? I have had no arrangement with the Opposition, either with the leader or the whips.

Mr. Underwood: You will not have it.

The Premier: Well, then, we go on; that is all. As long as I am leader I shall take charge of the House; when I cannot hold that charge I shall resign the leadership. When the hon. member comes to me for anything—

Mr. Underwood: He does not want anything.

The Premier: Well, go on with the debate.

Mr. Scaddan: Courtesy should be extended to both sides, but if the Premier imagines the only fashion of showing courtesy is to grovel to him—

The Premier: I do not ask for any grovelling; you are insulting me.

Mr. Scaddan: If I am to go kneeling to the Premier and begging him to do this or that—if that is courtesy he is not going to get courtesy from me. An honourable understanding was reached at the beginning of the session that we should rise as near as possible to 11 o'clock in order to allow members to catch their trains; and when any alteration is to be made in that arrangement it is for the Premier to come to me and let me know.

The Premier: I did not know of any such arrangement.

Mr. Scaddan: The Premier did know. I gave notice of amending the motion for sitting hours, but on representations from the then Premier I withdrew it, the understanding being that we would rise as near as possible to 11 o'clock. If any alteration is to be made in that arrangement it is, as I say, for the Premier to make that fact known to me. Where is the lack of courtesy in me—is it not rather in the Premier? I desire to work amicably with the Premier and be courteous to him, but I am not going to be made a tool of, and I think it is well to let him know that. I am prepared to consult with the Premier at any time, and if he desires to alter the general procedure he should come to me and say when we are going to sit all night. It has been flung about the Chamber all the afternoon that we were to sit all night to-night. Wires have been despatched and telephone messages sent, yet personally I, as leader of the Opposition, have had no intimation from the Premier as to his intention. We reached half-past eleven o'clock and then he refused to adjourn.

The Premier: Why did you come to me last night?

Mr. Scaddan: Because I wanted to make an arrangement which would allow the member for Kanowna to catch his ferry for South Perth.

The Premier: Why did you not come to me to-night?

Mr. Scaddan: Because, as I said, I heard these rumours floating about the House all the afternoon and I wanted to see if the Premier was going to keep his word in respect to being courteous to me. Only a few sittings have passed since the change in Premiership, yet we find the new Premier already lacking in that courtesy we ever had from Sir Newton Moore. However, let the debate go on. Why do you not reply to some of the statements made to-night?

The Attorney General: We shall divide if you do not go on.

Mr. Scaddan: You will get all the dividing you want if you are going to display those tactics.

The Premier: Go on with the debate.

Mr. Scaddan: You reply to some of the charges against you—charges of corruption.

Mr. Angwin: It was my intention to speak on this no-confidence motion. I feel that the members on this side of the House were fully justified in bringing this motion forward, not only on the change of Ministry but also in regard to the supposed policy of the Ministry. But when I realise the unfair tactics adopted to-night in regard to the motion for adjournment, and as Ministerialists have put it about the House all the afternoon that they are going to sit all night, I say it is unfair to us, seeing that we have tried in every possible way to be accommodating. I am disgusted with the whole of the proceedings and I shall refuse to take any further action as far as the no-confidence motion is concerned.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not adjourn until to-morrow and let the Minister for Lands reply?

The Premier: Why not get out all the charges first and then let him have a chance to reply once for all.

Mr. Hudson: You took a fortnight to see whether you would be Premier.

The Premier: No, only 24 hours. How many more speakers have you; let us make an arrangement.

Mr. Scaddan: I want it in black and white.

The Premier: You are insulting.

Mr. Hardwick: I understood the debate had been finished, so far as members on that side of the House are concerned. I would like to hear the Minister for Lands reply and, consequently, I would like to see an adjournment in order that an opportunity might be given the Minister for that reply.

Mr. McDowall: Am I in order in moving the adjournment?

The Premier: Will the leader of the Opposition agree to take the division to-morrow night?

Mr. Scaddan: I will agree to nothing.

Mr. Speaker: If no member wishes to speak I must put the question.

Several members: Divide.

Question (no-confidence) put and a division called for.

Mr. Troy: I promised to announce that the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Keenan) is voting for the Opposition on this question, and is pairing with the member for Claremont (Mr. Foulkes). The member for Collie (Mr. A. A. Wilson) has paired with the member for Bunbury (Sir Newton J. Moore), and the member for Cue (Mr. Heitmann) is absent.

Mr. Hudson: On urgent private business.

Mr. Troy: May I ask that these pairs be taken?

Mr. Speaker: Yes; they will be recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. Gordon: There is a book for pairs, and if it is not signed pairs cannot be recorded, even in *Hansard*.

Mr. Bolton interjected.

Mr. Speaker: The member for North Fremantle has persisted in talking the whole of the night. I ask him to keep order.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	21

Majority against .. 1

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Price
Mr. Bath	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Swan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gill	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Horan	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Gourley
Mr. McDowall	(Teller).
Mr. O'Loughlen	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Layman
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Draper	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Harper	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Jacoby	(Teller).

Question thus negatived.

Mr. Scaddan: That one vote by which the Government won was just put out of the House.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	21
Noes	..	..	..	20

Majority for	..	1
		—

AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Murphy
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Draper	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Gregory	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Layman
Mr. Harper	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Bath	Mr. Price
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Coiller	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gourley	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	(Teller).
Mr. McDowall	

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 11.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 13th October, 1910.

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

LANDS DEPARTMENT AND CHARGES OF CORRUPTION.

A Royal Commission.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): I wish to announce that, as in the course of the no-confidence debate which closed last night, charges of corruption were made in connection with the administration of the Lands Department, I have asked the Government to appoint a Judge of the Supreme Court as a Royal Commission to fully investigate such charges and such other charges of a like nature as may be submitted. Cabinet have agreed to my request and a Commissioner will be appointed forthwith.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

Mr. George and the No-confidence Division.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray): It was my determination and desire last evening to take the first opportunity I could to tender to this House and, through it, to the country, an explanation of why I refrained from recording my vote on the no-confidence debate division. I had hoped when it was known to the hon. the Minister that I had made a priority of application to him, he would have been courteous enough to allow me to speak first. His announcement would have come far more effectively after I had