

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 1st May, 1934.

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

BILL—SECESSION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th April.

HON. N. KEENAN (Nedlands) [4.33]: I join with other members who have spoken in expressing my appreciation of the work performed by the committee appointed to prepare the Case for Secession. Whatever the future may bring in the matter of secession, their work will certainly stand as a landmark for ever in the history of the State. I do not think any words that can possibly be phrased would constitute praise too high for that work. There is a curious conception on the part of some that the issue whether this State should secede from the Commonwealth, or should remain an integral part of the Commonwealth, is still a matter concerning which there is a difference of opinion amongst the people of the State. If that is so, of what use was the referendum that was taken in April of last year? Where is there to be any end to the discussion? Certainly, so far as those who profess democratic principles are concerned, there is no room for further discussion. The people were invited to express their will. They have expressed it: vox populi, vox Dei. It remains only to give effect to the expression of the will of the people. I often wonder what would have been said had the vote gone the other way.

Mr. Withers: There would have been nothing to say.

HON. N. KEENAN: It would then have been said, and properly said, even by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) that secession was dead and buried. To some people the verdict given by the citizens of the State, when it is taken in the form of a referendum, or any other form that is adopted to ascertain it, is in no sense binding unless it agrees with their own private judgment or private view. It may be said that class of person is to be found in every

community. Whilst the verdict of the people, as expressed in a form that ascertains it readily, must be accepted, that does not mean that any criticism of the means adopted to give effect to that verdict is illegitimate or indefensible. It would be absurd to say so, because that would mean that all the actions of the committee, no matter what they were, were above error, and that whatever means were taken to present the Case of the people of Western Australia to the Imperial authorities must be accepted without any examination. If the criticism of the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) had proceeded on these lines, however much any of us might disagree with it, no one could challenge his right to so criticise. But the position and the attitude of the hon. member are not difficult to understand. He alleged, on the motion for leave to introduce the Bill, that his one desire was that effect should be given to the expressed will of the people. His chief concern was owing to some doubt in his mind that that result might not be achieved owing to faulty procedure. In the light of subsequent remarks on the part of the hon. member, however, and in the light of our knowledge concerning him, is it not plain that nothing would please him more than to kill the Bill, which is before the House for the purpose of giving effect to the will of the people?

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: That is an unjustifiable remark. It is wrong.

HON. N. KEENAN: Is it not fair to say that the hon. member is willing to do his little bit, and is anxious to do his little bit—

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: To amend the Bill.

HON. N. KEENAN: To kill the Bill?

HON. W. D. JOHNSON: To improve the Bill.

HON. N. KEENAN: To wreck the Bill? I find it difficult to take serious notice of the arguments advanced by the hon. member, both on constitutional grounds and on other plausible grounds, which would warrant, if accepted, the rejection of the Bill. For what these arguments are worth and these statements are worth, I propose to deal briefly with them. The hon. member suggests that proceeding by way of petition to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, as well as by Address to His Majesty the King, amounts to blazing a new constitutional path. I notice in passing that the original objection taken by the hon. member, namely, that the proceeding should be by way

of resolution to be passed by this Chamber and another place, and not by way of a Bill seems to have been dropped into the background. Now the attack of the hon. member is based on the allegation that the presentation of petitions to the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and of an Address to His Majesty, is blazing a new constitutional path. Needless to say the hon. member can cite no authority for his statement—

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Neither can you.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Unless we accept as authority his suggestion. It is merely a suggestion of some casual conversation with some unoccupied and unknown member of the University staff. And then we only have the hon. member's recollection of that casual conversation. The hon. member descends to making specific statements which, if they had contained a single grain of accuracy, would undoubtedly mean that we were courting disaster in proceeding by way of presentation of petitions to the House of Lords and the House of Commons. He says that a petition can only be received and entertained by the unanimous vote of either or both of the Houses of the Imperial Parliament.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I never said anything of the sort. That is ridiculous. I do not descend to such arguments.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have refreshed my memory by looking up "Hansard," and I find the hon. member's statement is not correct. If he wishes to say it is absurd, I agree with him.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is too absurd for me to say it.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not know that I agree with that. The hon. member will find there is a difference of opinion as to our recollections.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is pure misrepresentation.

Hon. N. KEENAN: There is one thing to be thankful for; the hon. member did not saddle the unknown professor with the responsibility for that statement. His next objection was that to proceed by way of petition to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, as well as by Address to His Majesty the King, was an insult to the Imperial Government and Imperial Ministers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear!

Hon. N. KEENAN: Is that because we are going direct to the only source from

which we can obtain redress? It seems extraordinary to discover what the reason is. If the presentation of a petition to either House or both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, asking for some legislative action to cure some grievance which is set out in the petition, is an insult to His Majesty's Minister's in the British Parliament, then they are suffering an insult every week of every session that Parliament sits.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are not. You cannot quote one authority to support that statement, or to show that it has happened there with regard to any of the Dominions.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Apparently the hon. member draws this distinction. It is not an insult—perhaps it is a compliment—if it is done by the people at Home, but it is an insult if it is done by Western Australia. It would seem that we have not the same rights and privileges as the people at Home. We are a common lot, who can only do things in a common lot way, and not as British subjects who live at Home.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Does the British subject living at Home address His Majesty, or does he petition the Houses of Parliament?

Hon. N. KEENAN: He can petition Parliament or address His Majesty.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: He cannot. He petitions the House.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No one is prepared to accept the hon. member as a guiding light, except himself.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am sorry we cannot accept you.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I do not ask the hon. member to accept anyone. He accepts no one but himself. Unfortunately he finds himself in the position of having to argue that a British subject living at Home can present an address to His Majesty, or a petition to either House of the Imperial Parliament, without insulting His Majesty's Ministers, whereas a subject of His Majesty living in Western Australia insults His Majesty's Ministers if he does the same thing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is a high-sounding statement.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The hon. member makes a sound like beating an empty kettle. I do not propose to engage in these interchanges, in which the hon. member delights. They are surely useless, since he has had every opportunity of expressing himself and

fully availed himself of that opportunity to the greatest length. I propose, therefore, to ask that I shall have some time allotted to me to reply to him. He next alleges, as a reason against proceeding by way of petition to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, that it would invite a contrary petition. He wholly ignores, or wholly forgets, that exactly the same could be said with equal justice, and I may add with equal absurdity, if we proceeded, not by way of petition to the Houses, but by way only of address to His Majesty the King. Surely, if proceeding by way of petition to the Houses invites that contrary petition, so, too, proceeding by way of address to His Majesty would invite a contrary address. Therefore I do not think it necessary in any way to attempt to express my own opinion, or the opinion of this House, on that ridiculous contention. Then he proceeds to act once more as a prophet, and reminds us, in the same way as Old Moore's almanack always reminds us, that he has been a successful prophet in the past, though I am afraid that if we investigated the particular instance which the hon. member cited, it might be difficult to follow his contention. However, once more donning the mantle of Elijah, the hon. member says that no one representing the people of Western Australia will be heard either at the Bar of the Commons or at the Bar of the Lords to plead the cause of Western Australia. I quite admit that with the exception of the corporations of London and of Dublin, both of which enjoy a prescriptive right to appear at the Bar of either House of the Imperial Parliament to present petitions, leave has to be granted to allow any person to appear at the Bar; but I do not think it too much to hope for that what those two corporations enjoy as a matter of right, would be granted to a representative of a large section of one of His Majesty's Dominions beyond the seas. Even if the request were denied, the refusal would not have any material effect whatever on the procedure which is proposed to be followed in this Bill. I have now dealt with all those points raised by the hon. member which by any stretch of imagination could be described as constitutional or quasi-constitutional. Having exhausted himself on the constitutional aspect, the hon. member then addressed himself to the form of the Bill before the House. He objects to it because, he says, it contains a wealth of legal verbiage. I am not pre-

pared for one moment to agree with that description of the Bill; but supposing it does contain a wealth of legal verbiage, if what that legal verbiage says is correct and true, what is the objection to it? The hon. member does not say that there is anything in the legal verbiage which is incorrect or untrue. He merely says that he objects to it. He also objects to the preamble reciting the various happenings which explain the reasons for bringing down the Bill. But that is just what a preamble is for—that and nothing else. The preamble is intended to explain to those who read the statute afterwards the reasons why the statute was brought in. Yet the hon. member objects to those reasons being stated in this preamble. He particularly objects to the inclusion of the names of the members of the committee, who, he it remembered, were appointed by authority of this House, delegated to its own joint committee, for the express purpose of preparing this Case for Secession. It seems to me that the objection is invidious in the extreme. It unfortunately savours of a jealousy of the limelight that I did not think the hon. member in any sense harboured, which I should have ventured, but for this experience, to say was entirely foreign to his nature. The hon. member then addressed himself to what is properly called the Case, and in doing so he ventured the opinion that it should also contain the case for those who voted in the minority when a referendum was taken in April of last year. Now, what is it that the Case purports to be? That is stated plainly on the cover—the case in support of the desire, of the majority of course, to withdraw from the Commonwealth of Australia. It simply and only purports to be a statement of the grounds and reasons behind the majority vote, and of course grounds and reasons in support of the prayer which is attached to the Case. It could be nothing else without stultifying itself. If the suggestion were made that it should be anything else, that suggestion would be only comprehensible with a desire to wreck the Case. Lastly, the hon. member suggests that all the traditions—not just one of them, but all the traditions—of the Labour Movement are outraged by the present procedure that is before Parliament in the form of the Bill. Apparently those traditions would not be outraged in any sense whatever if we proceeded by way of an address only to

His Majesty the King, instead of proceeding by way of a Bill. I venture to ask has anyone ever heard, inside this Chamber or anywhere outside this Chamber, a more ridiculous, more childlike suggestion.

The Premier: Never.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It is an affront to all the traditions of the Labour Party to proceed by way of a Bill; it would not be anything, perhaps it would be even a blessing, something that might be prayed for, if it took the form of an address only to His Majesty. If all that I have dealt with—and I have attempted, from the notes I took, to deal with all that I could gather of what the hon. member said—if that is all that he can conjure up, what possibly can be the object that he is attempting to attain? Of course all this flimsy argument and all these nebulous suggestions are but a mere camouflage to disguise the hon. member's real object, which is to defeat the Bill before the House.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is untrue.

Hon. N. KEENAN: To defeat by that means the will of the people.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Untrue.

Mr. Sleeman: The "Sunday Times" said it, anyway.

Hon. N. KEENAN: No one but the hon. member, with the assistance of his lieutenant—

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am not attempting anything of the sort.

Hon. N. KEENAN: When one gets a child in a position that is hopelessly wrong, the child says, "No, I am not." That is its last line of defence. One would expect to hear that kind of thing in an asylum for the insane, but not in a House of debate, and not in any place where commonsense proposals are debated. So I am putting here the only inference that can be drawn from the acts and words of the hon. member. The only inference, I say, is that he wants to defeat the Bill, and by defeating the Bill to defeat the will of the people. The Secession issue is not to-day, and never has been at any of its stages, a party question. That has been amply demonstrated by the voting of the electors on the referendum. But although it is not, and I hope never will be, a party question—certainly it never will be so far as any possible interference on my part can prevent it—nevertheless it would not be wholly impossible to make it a personal question, and for some account

to be asked of a member by his constituents when he has deliberately flouted their expressed opinion on a matter of such importance as this. And now I turn to consideration of the Case altogether apart from the observations of the member for Guildford-Midland. No criticism of parts of the Case, taken from here and there, could possibly be fair except on the ground that those excerpted parts stated facts which were wrong. One can, of course, challenge any statement of fact bearing upon any part of the Case if one is prepared to maintain that the statement of fact is wrong. But to criticise such an extract not on the ground of its being an erroneous statement of fact, but on the ground that it conveys an erroneous argument, is absolutely and entirely unfair. An argument can be grasped and understood only by contemplating the whole, and not any one part torn from the context. It is, of course, open to say that the argument as a whole is erroneous; but that is only another way of saying that the verdict of the electors on the referendum was illogical, which in its turn is only another way of dodging the result of the referendum. However, accepting the argument—that is, treating the Case as a whole—it may well be that some fact of grave importance has not been so fully dealt with in the Case as one could wish. I myself regret, for instance, that the incidents which led up to Western Australia, then a Colony, joining the Federation are not more fully dealt with in the Case. There are few, if indeed there be any, who are really fully apprised of those incidents. As the result of a final conference which was held between representatives of all the Colonies, as they then were, of Australia, a Bill was drafted for the purpose of bringing into existence the intended Commonwealth. On a referendum being taken in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, the electors of those Colonies, by a majority, agreed to join the proposed Federation; but at that time Sir John Forrest, as he then was, and Mr. Hackett, as he then was, and the "West Australian" newspaper, which then as now exerted a very large influence on the public mind, were all bitterly opposed to this Colony joining the Federation. It is unnecessary to attempt to give their reasons. Perhaps it is sufficient to say that the fears

which they entertained, and which we then thought wholly illusory, have unfortunately, in the process of time, proved themselves to be deadly real. An then, suddenly, all those persons made a complete volte face. They turned completely round. Not only did they cease to oppose the colony joining the Federation but, by every means in their power, they endeavoured to induce the people to vote in favour of Federation. If they had not done so, there is no question at all that the referendum then taken would have resulted in a vote against the colony entering into Federation, because the population of the coastal areas was almost entirely under the influence of men like Sir John Forrest and other prominent leaders, who had been opposed to Federation.

Mr. Wise: They saw the light.

Hon. N. KEENAN: We will see later on how it was they saw the light.

Mr. Tonkin: You saw the light, too, at that time.

Hon. N. KEENAN: Their change over from opponents of Federation to open propagandists in favour of Federation was undoubtedly the reason why this colony, as it then was, joined in the Federation. What was the reason for their change, and for the extraordinary advocacy they were parties to. At the time when the question whether Western Australia should join the Federation or remain outside was under discussion, a movement was organised on the Eastern Goldfields for the purpose of compelling the colony to join the Federation. It was not, as has often been erroneously misunderstood, the object of the movement that the question be submitted to the people of Western Australia and the decision, whatever it might be, whether for or against Federation, should be accepted. That was not the trend of the movement at all. The object of the movement was a demand that this colony should enter the Federation. It had as its motto: "Separation or Federation." This demand by the people of the Eastern Goldfields took the form of a petition to Her Majesty the Queen asking that, under certain powers that were reserved to her under the Constitution granted to this colony, she should detach the area of the goldfields from the area of the coast and allow the people living in the goldfields area an opportunity to join the Federation. It was not generally known that Her Majesty possessed that power by virtue of the Im-

perial Act, which confirmed our local Act and granted us autonomous government. In Section 6 of the Imperial Act it was provided—

It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, if at any time or times Her Majesty so thinks fit, by Order in Council, to divide the colony of Western Australia by separating therefrom any portion thereof, and either to erect that portion, or any part thereof, into a separate colony or colonies under such form of government and legislature as Her Majesty may think fit to establish therein

So the power existed by which the Crown could cut off that part of the colony that constituted the Eastern Goldfields, thereby enabling the people there to become a separate colony and as such to enter the Federation. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies, and he was, as no doubt all members knew, a very ardent apostle of Empire Federation, and therefore he was an ardent advocate of the federation of the colonies of Australia, as a step in that direction. Sir Winthrop Hackett, as he subsequently became, in years after Federation had come into being, often assured me that the reason for the change of front on the part of himself, Sir John Forrest and other leaders of political thought in Western Australia at the time, who had been bitterly opposed to the colony entering the Federation, was that a plain intimation had been received from the Colonial Office that unless the people of Western Australia as a whole were prepared to enter the Federation, then Her Majesty would exercise the power reserved to her under the Constitution and would sever that part of Western Australia that was known as the Eastern Goldfields and constitute that area a separate colony to allow it to join the Federation. What was the position of Sir John Forrest, of Mr. Hackett, as he then was, and all the others who were opposed to Federation, including those who were Ministers of the Crown of this colony? In what position did they stand as the result of that threat? The people of this colony, then a mere handful, had ventured their all in developing the goldfields. They had built railways from the coast to the goldfields; they had then almost finished the accomplishment of the wonderful scheme of taking water from Mundaring to the goldfields. They had gambled their all, and all they could command in the venture of developing the goldfields, and they had won.

The successful development of the Eastern Goldfields provided a wonderful market for the products of the agricultural areas of the coast. They had gained a new, and before that a wholly non-existent, market for the produce of the coastal and agricultural areas, and, of course, the revenue derived, directly and indirectly, from the success of the gold mining industry went far in assisting the national revenue. And so, Mr. Speaker, they dare not lose that market or that revenue. Whatever price had to be paid, they dare not lose either. Naturally, the Government of the day of what would have been left of Western Australia if the goldfields had been separated, would no doubt have received back the expenditure that had been incurred in respect of the goldfields, but what would that have meant? It would have meant no more than returning to the backer of a horse that had won, the stake he had put up—that and no more. So it was clear to all those I have mentioned that the geographical severance that was threatened Western Australia, if it actually took place, would bring clear and absolute ruin to the people of that part of the colony that would have remained. For that reason, the leaders of political thought I have referred to were obliged to do all in their power to force the people in the coastal areas to vote in favour of Federation. It was the only means by which they could save the fortunes of the State, and they used every possible power and influence they could command, to obtain an affirmative vote in the coastal areas in favour of Federation. The great and grave importance of this historical incident lies in the fact that a bargain one is forced into, or a contract to which one is forced to become a party, not willingly and not of free will but under compulsion, is a contract from which, under the laws of all nations and at all times, relief is granted most readily. It is a principle in our courts of equity to grant relief where compulsion can be established in the case of a contract that otherwise would be binding on the parties. For that reason, I personally regret that the circumstances surrounding our entrance into Federation were not dealt with at greater length in the Case. Beyond any question, we were forced to enter the Federation. There was no free will in the matter at all. In those circumstances, the contract, in no moral sense, nor in view of these facts, in any legal sense, should be regarded as binding on the parties. If I may

do so, Mr. Speaker, I should like, with the indulgence of the House, to make clear the cause of the action of the people on the goldfields in forcing the colony to join the Federation at that time. I was one of the actors in that movement and much as I regret the fact in the light of after-experience and after-knowledge, I think it is only right to say that not one of those who took part in the movement acted except from the most proper and worthy motives. Of course, their main spring of action lay in the fact that 90 per cent. of us were newcomers to Western Australia, and in many instances those newcomers had relations and friends still living in the Eastern States. So it was only natural, and what one would expect, that they should desire to join with their relations and friends in establishing this new proposed Commonwealth. But there were other and very powerful causes that contributed to the action that the goldfields people took.

The Minister for Railways: That applied to many who cast affirmative votes on the coast. They, too, had their relatives and friends in the Eastern States.

Hon. N. KEENAN: But the proportion on the coast was nothing like that on the goldfields, where 90 per cent. of them were newcomers and had their relatives and friends in the East. I am not dealing with that phase now but propose to mention an entirely different but very powerful cause that induced the people of the goldfields to adopt the view they did. In many ways we were led to believe, and we were confirmed in the belief, that the people of the coastal areas, who had then largely the control of government, were ready on every occasion to exploit us and to use us for their own benefit. It is unnecessary that I should attempt to recall all the incidents that led to that belief, and which confirmed us in that belief, but I may refer to the greatest example of all. I allude to the great water supply scheme that I mentioned earlier. Undoubtedly that was a great national undertaking, just as truly national, and even far more so, as the construction of any railway. Members are aware that the actual cost of the construction of a railway has always been debited against the national purse. But the people of the goldfields were told, when the water scheme was on the eve of completion, that they would be called upon to bear not merely the full interest charged on the

money required to carry out the work, but full maintenance, full repairs and all working expenses, while, in addition, they would be required to repay the capital cost within a comparatively brief period.

The Premier: Within 30 years.

Hon. N. KEENAN: It was a brief period.

Mr. Lambert: But they did not do anything of the sort. Of the money paid in redemption of the amount, 50 per cent. was taken from Consolidated Revenue.

Hon. N. KEENAN: The prices fixed were based on the return of sufficient money to pay the full sinking fund charges—

Mr. Lambert: That is quite right.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I am not dealing with what happened in years after, but with what the people of the goldfields then knew they were to be called upon to shoulder. I am speaking with a good deal of inside knowledge when I say that undoubtedly that factor had tremendous weight in convincing us that we were two peoples—the people of the goldfields and the people of the coast. There was every desire to take every chance we could lay hands on to break away from those who, we thought, only wished to exploit us. But in addition to that, in addition to the irritation which was caused, not only by the incident to which I have referred, but by countless others with which I do not wish to weary the Chamber in recalling, the people of the goldfields were so hostile, so justifiably hostile to the people of the coast that their supreme desire was to do something, anything to get away from the people of the coast. Moreover, we were all of us idealists in the matter of Federation. We all believed that Federation would bring untold blessings to Australia, including Western Australia; and like all idealists, we forgot that the power one creates to do good and only good can be misused by man and made an instrument for the doing of injustice. So it was that the people of the goldfields forced the colony of Western Australia to enter Federation. It has sometimes been brought up against me personally that not only did I take a considerable part in bringing about this State's entry into Federation, but that some five or six years after that entry into the Commonwealth I defended Federation. Both those charges are absolutely true, and I venture to say that if we

could turn back the hands of time and reproduce the circumstances which existed in those days, and if I was called upon again to act, I should act precisely as I did then. I have already explained to the Chamber the reasons in chief for the action of the people of the goldfields, including myself, at the time we entered Federation. Five years after Federation was established, when I again supported the maintenance of Federation, I did so for reasons which I then explained. In common with all thinking men I held that the benefits of Federation could not possibly be judged in the short span of five years. It was absurd to imagine that this great experiment could be judged on that short space of time. And besides, as things then stood, there was no reason to fear that the Commonwealth Parliament would indulge in a fiscal policy which is entirely opposed to the interests of this State. At that time there was no high protective tariff in existence; it was not for some years afterwards that the first high protective tariff was passed in the interests of Victoria and New South Wales. That was in 1908 and was therefore after the time I am now speaking of. So it was that at that juncture I wanted, and I asked for, time to allow this great experiment to find its own justification. That time has elapsed, more than a quarter of a century has passed since then, and in the opinion of the great majority of the citizens of Western Australia Federation has not found its own justification. On the contrary, the people of the State are fully satisfied that they are wholly unable to bear the burden placed upon them. In the course of a short dissection which I have made of the voting at the secession referendum, I notice that the workers in every industry, with only one exception, in Western Australia condemned Federation. That one exception was the mining industry in all its forms. That one industry, if we take into account the polling in the nine electorates in which that industry is pursued, namely Boulder, Brownhill-Ivanhoe, Collie, Hannans, Kalgoorlie, Kanowna, Mt. Magnet, Murchison, and Yilgarn-Coolgardie—if we take the polling in all those electorates, we find that roughly 21,000 electors polled their votes, and of

that number 10,200 voted in favour of secession and 10,700 voted against it, a majority of 500 in a poll of 21,000, a truly negligible majority. And when we remember there was a majority of over 2,000 against secession in the Boulder, Brownhill-Ivanhoe, Hannans and Kalgoorlie electorates, largely no doubt the fruit of the heritage of those years I have spoken of, this very negligible majority of 500 in a poll of 21,000 is still further discounted. And the mining industry is the only industry in Western Australia the workers in which did not support secession. It is frequently alleged that the advocates of secession have put before the people a picture in which secession when granted, is going to be a panacea for all our ills. No responsible person has ever said that.

Mr. Tonkin: A lot of people believe it.

Hon. N. KEENAN: On the contrary, on every possible occasion I and others have stressed the fact that after secession is obtained we shall have to face dangers and difficulties which will call for all our capacity and intelligence to surmount. What I have always told the people of the State, and what I believe in my own heart to be true, is that, if we remain within the Federation there is little or no hope whatever for the future of the State, but that if we secede we shall have at least a chance of success, we shall have at least a chance of being able to surmount our difficulties and provide a promising future for the State. I do not desire to say any more in this debate, but before sitting down I should like to acknowledge the fair, the just and the equitable manner in which the Premier has redeemed his promise to the people of the State to bring down a measure to give effect to the will of the electors. This Bill does that and does it in a manner highly creditable to the Premier. I above all wish to say that, because under the inexorable law of circumstances I may be compelled to be a critic, and perhaps a hostile and severe critic, of other acts of this Government!—so I think it only fair and just that I should acknowledge, and acknowledge with thanks, the fact that the steps taken by the Premier and the Government to give effect to the will of the electors reflects the highest degree of credit on them.

MR. WANSBROUGH (Albany) [4.25]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	31
Noes	..	..	..	..	9
					—
Majority against	..	..	..	..	22
					—

AYES.

Mr. Brockman
Mr. Clothier
Mr. Collier
Mr. Cross
Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Hawke
Mr. Hegney
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Latham
Mr. McCallum
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Millington
Mr. Moloney
Mr. North

Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Raphael
Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Sleeman
Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Troy
Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Warner
Mr. Welsh
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Wise
Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Griffiths
Mr. McLarty
Mr. J. I. Mann
Mr. Patrick
Mr. Piesse

Mr. Seward
Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday the 15th May at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.