

Commissioner of Public Health are binding, but I think I would be lacking in my duty if I did not give this information to the House. This, briefly, is the opinion of the Commissioner of Public Health—

There are only two States of the Commonwealth of Australia which have adopted legislation in the direction of the registration of opticians, namely, Queensland and Tasmania. The Tasmanian Act is dated December, 1913. Whilst the Queensland Act was assented to only last year, upon its first presentation it failed to pass the Upper House, but at the second attempt was successful. Such an Act was presented in Victoria in 1913, but was finally discharged from the Notice Paper. In New South Wales, the Government recently, on the advice of the Minister of Public Health declined to introduce such a Bill on the ground that the registration of opticians as sight-testers was not in the public interest. In the United Kingdom the question was dealt with by the General Medical Council in 1906, when Sir Donald Macalister reported to the Privy Council against such legislation. The Federal medical committee of the British Medical Association is opposed to the registration of opticians in any State, as sight-testers, on the ground that it is detrimental to the public interest. They consider that the registration of opticians as sight-testers would be entirely parallel to the registration of chemists as prescribers of medicine, and they consider further that the acceptance of seats upon a board, which register opticians as sight-testers, would be incompatible with the interests of the public and unworthy of the medical profession.

Hon. J. Cornell: Even there, any qualified chemist can dispense prescriptions.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The next portion of the Commissioner's minute deals with various parts of the Bill, and they can be quoted to the Committee later on when we are dealing with the clauses. Finally, the Commissioner of Public Health says:—

You ask me for my opinion in regard to this Bill. I do not favour the introduction of legislation for the registration of opticians.

The attitude of the Government regarding the Bill is that, while we were not prepared to introduce the legislation, we were prepared to facilitate its consideration by Parliament in order that Parliament might be given an opportunity to express its opinion on the objects it seeks to secure.

On motion by Hon. J. Duffell, debate adjourned.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 17th November, 1920.

	PAGE
Questions: Flour Stocks, census	1670
Gold, Production and premium	1670
Electric wire poles	1671
Wheat at Narrogin	1671
Railways—Concessions to young workers ...	1671
Bunbury Harbour Improvements	1671
Ministerial Explanation—Basic wage, State trading concerns	1672
Bills: Fisheries Act Amendment, 1R.	1672
Factories and Shops, 3R.	1672
Coal Mines Regulation Act Amendment, discharged	1674
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 2R.	1700
Constitution Act Amendment Bill, 2R.	1701
Motions: Standing Orders Amendment	1672
Industries Assistance Board operations, extension	1673
Lunacy charge, to inquire by Royal Commission	1674
Workers' Compensation Act, to amend	1674
Water Conservation, Avon River	1675
Price Fixing, Australian commodities	1675
Traffic Act, fines	1675
Shearers' Accommodation Act, to amend	1677
Western Australia and Federation	1685

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

QUESTION—FLOUR STOCKS, CENSUS.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier: In view of Parliament having to fix the price of wheat for local consumption early in December, will he ask the Prices Regulation Commission to take a census on 27th November of the flour stocks held by millers, bakers, and traders?

The PREMIER replied: The revised price comes into force on 1st January, 1921. The Prices Regulation Commission have intimated that they intend to take a census of flour stocks before that date.

QUESTION—GOLD, PRODUCTION AND PREMIUM.

Mr. DUFF asked the Minister for Mines: In regard to the gold production of Australia and the operations of the Gold Producers' Association, 1, What proportion of the gold produced in Australia is dealt with by the Gold Producers' Association? 2, Is any part thereof reserved by the Federal Government for Commonwealth purposes? 3, If so, what premium, if any, over £4 4s. 4½d. per fine ounce (Royal Mint price) is paid for the gold, and who gets that premium? 4, Who gets the premium, or the increased value of all gold sent to the Royal Mint by prospectors and mine owners whose gold is not dealt with by the Gold Producers' Association? 5, What are the reasons which cause gold to be dealt with differently from other products, such as wheat, wool, etc., which have a free market, and for which the world's price can be obtained by the producers?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, The Gold Producers' Association puts into each term's pool all the gold sent to it by its members. The proportion, therefore, fluctuates according to the amount sent to the Gold Producers' Association by its members as compared with the total production. There is nothing to prevent the whole of the current production being sold through the producers' association if all producers become members, and send all their gold. At the half-yearly meeting of the Gold Producers' Association on 17th March, 1920, it was stated that approximately 90 per cent. of the total gold output of Australia had been dealt with by the association during the period of its existence. At the half-yearly meeting on the 29th September, 1920, the total amount of gold lodged to 30th June, 1920, was £5,624,655 sovereigns, of which £4,975,217 sovereigns had been sold at a net average price of 25s. 7d. per sovereign, giving a distribution of £1,365,506 among members as a premium. 2, No part of the gold received by the producers' association is reserved by the Federal Government. 3, Answered by No. 2. 4, The Government have no information on this point, but unless exported through the Gold Producers' Association, it is not known that any other body has any right to export, and presumably the gold is added to the gold reserves held within Australia. 5, This is a matter of Federal Government policy.

QUESTION—ELECTRIC WIRE POLES.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Forests: 1, Are not round poles for the carrying of electric wires of greater safety to the public than sawn timber, on account of guarantee of the grain of the timber? 2, If so, will he issue instructions to the Forestry Department to allow the cutting of poles for use in the State?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS replied: 1, Not if the poles are properly selected. The objection to sawn timber is that the poles, if they are not cut out of straight-grained trees, are liable to twist slightly, and so bring wires out of alignment; but sawn timber for telegraph poles has been in use by the Postal and Telegraph Department for many years now, and has given satisfaction. 2, The cutting of round poles in the past has been attended by a great deal of destruction to immature timber, which should have been allowed to develop into mill logs. Owing to extended operations of sawmillers, and the small trained staff organised at the Forests Department, it has not been possible to initiate sylvicultural methods for the thinning of the forests, and in order to prevent the destruction of valuable immature timber, the cutting of poles of a diameter and length which can be obtained from sawn timber has been prohibited. With the training of the general

field staff of the Forests Department, it is hoped to initiate sylvicultural work in certain districts, enabling the department to supply the necessary poles from thinnings.

QUESTION—WHEAT AT NARROGIN.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Are the Government aware that the Narrogin flour mill has been forced to close, owing to the action of the wheat scheme in exporting the wheat which is now at Narrogin? 2, Will the Government take immediate action to prevent the further export of this wheat at Narrogin which is now required for local gristing and use? 3, Will he prevent the removal of this wheat at Narrogin from being commenced to-morrow, pending further inquiries? 4, Is he aware that local stocks of bran and pollard are very low, and that unless they are quickly replenished the operations of those engaged in the dairying industry will be very adversely affected? 5, What steps do the Government propose to take to keep our flour mills working? 6, What steps do the Government propose to take to obtain local supplies of offal?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 2, and 3, The wheat is being withdrawn from the Narrogin mill because the mill is unable to dispose of the flour stocks on hand, of which there is considerably more than is required for local consumption, pending receipt of the new season's wheat. 4, Although bran and pollard stocks are low, the operations of those engaged in the dairying industry will not be seriously affected, because an adequate supply of oats at a cheaper rate can be obtained. 5, The Government will continue to urge the Australian Wheat Board to sell our wheat for export in the form of flour where possible, and will see that the mills are kept gristing for the maximum local flour requirements. 6, See answers to 4 and 5.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, CONCESSIONS TO YOUNG WORKERS.

Mr. VERYARD asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will he state why preferential treatment is accorded to indentured apprentices in the way of cheap railway travelling, while the same concession is not granted to unindentured apprentices, such as shop assistants, etc., who receive less pay than the average indentured apprentice, but who cannot be indentured? 2, Will he reconsider the question with a view of giving just and fair treatment to all young workers?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, The preferential treatment suggested by the hon. member does not exist. Similar conditions of issue will apply to indentured apprentices and junior workers who are not indentured apprentices, and as published in the "West Australian" of Thursday, the 11th instant.

QUESTION—BUNBURY HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. MONEY asked the Minister for Works: What progress, if any, has been made with the reclamation on the Bunbury harbour protected shore to provide the necessary site for wheat silo and coal bunkering direct from shore to ship in deep water, in accordance with the requirements of the port and as requested by all the South-West members of Parliament?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Investigations to determine the area of the deep water are not yet completed, and, until this is done, no scheme can be put forward for the consideration of the Government.

BASIC WAGE, STATE TRADING CONCERNS.

Ministerial Explanation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.35]: I should like to proffer an explanation. In reference to the question by the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen), replied to by me last evening, I find that the information upon which I based my reply was not quite correct. The employees at the Victoria Park timber yards are members of the Metropolitan Timber Workers' Union, and are paid in accordance with the agreements and awards which apply to the members of that union. The reference to Mr. Justice Higgins' award, therefore, had no application so far as these employees are concerned.

BILL—FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary and read a first time.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS, AMENDMENT.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [4.40]: I move—

That the Standing Orders Committee be requested to frame an amendment to the Standing Orders relating to Supply in such a way as to provide for motions for the reduction of a vote without prejudice to subsequent discussion.

The occasion which has given rise to this motion will be quite fresh in the memory of hon. members. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) the other night moved to reduce the Education Vote by £20,000. The ruling of the Chairman (Mr. Foley) was based on Standing Order 386 which reads as follows:—

When a motion is made in Committee of Supply to omit or reduce any item of a Vote a question shall be proposed from the Chair for omitting or reducing such item accordingly; and members shall speak to such question only until it has been disposed of.

The next authority the Chairman gave in regard to that was that—

After questions have been proposed from the Chair omitting or reducing any item no motion may be made or debate allowed on any preceding item.

The ruling of the Chairman was disagreed with, whereupon the Speaker came in and adjudicated on the question. The report of the Chairman was—

I ruled that no discussion can be allowed on any item after a question for the reduction of the total vote has been decided in the affirmative or the negative other than by the reduction of the vote by a lesser sum.

That decision was upheld by Mr. Speaker. The member for Moore (Sir Henry Lefroy) in speaking to the question remarked that if the decision of the Speaker was based on the Standing Orders all he could say was that the Standing Orders did not seem to be in accordance with common sense. The Speaker upheld the ruling of the Chairman, whereupon a motion was moved to dissent from the ruling of the Speaker. Before putting the question the Speaker said, "I am entirely in the hands of the House. I am here to interpret the rules and Standing Orders as I find them. Perhaps if the matter were left in my hands I could make the position more clear, so that members would not look upon it as being without common-sense." In view of that statement from the Speaker I decided to move this motion. On page 1478 of "Hansard" it will be found that, at a later date, on the Committee resuming consideration of the same vote, the Chairman of Committees said—

In accordance with the ruling given by Mr. Foley on Tuesday last, and endorsed by the Speaker and the House, I decline to propose this amendment to the Committee until the discussion of items has been completed. In doing so I am acting exactly as I would if an hon. member submitted a motion to reduce the last item of the vote. I am also following the precedent established in the first and followed without question in the second session of the present Parliament.

The Chairman then went on to quote decisions which had been given on a previous occasion. It is a very simple motion, and one which should be passed by the House. There is some ambiguity about the Standing Orders. So far as I can see the ruling given by the Chairman of Committees on the last occasion was based mainly on precedent, which in this case was only of very short standing. In view of the custom to adopt precedent

for the settling of disputes as to the rulings of the Chairman of Committees, I think it is expedient that we should carry the motion I have moved.

On motion by Attorney General, debate adjourned.

MOTION—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BOARD OPERATIONS, EXTENSION.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.46]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the provisions of the Act governing the Industries Assistance Board be extended to apply to all agricultural areas.

I recently asked a question of the Premier with regard to the Industries Assistance Board. In his reply he stated that the operations of the board did not appertain to the South-Western portion of the State. Since then I have taken the opportunity of again perusing the Act, and I find that in the interpretation clauses "State" means "the State of Western Australia." I cannot see anything in the Act to prevent the benefits accruing under the Industries Assistance Board from being extended to the South-Western portion of the State. In Part 2 of the Act, advances to settlers, it is distinctly laid down that the Colonial Treasurer may for the purpose of affording assistance to settlers, and other persons affected by drought or other adverse conditions, do certain things. It must have been in the minds of the framers of this legislation that there were other conditions than drought which were adverse to the industries of the State. Although drought is not a common factor in the portion of the State concerned, there are many adverse conditions against which the settlers have to contend. We frequently suffer from depredations consequent upon floods and frost, from diseases such as pests which affect the potato-growing industry in the way of fly, blight, and other things, and we also suffer from diseases in connection with our fruit-growing industry. In view of these circumstances a liberal interpretation of this Act should be given to make it apply to the South-Western portion of Western Australia.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Is the hon. member discussing the Industries Assistance Act (Continuance Bill)?

Mr. PICKERING: The original Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member is discussing the Industries Assistance Bill he is anticipating order of the day No. 16.

Mr. PICKERING: I am not discussing that Bill. I simply desire to have the operations of the board extended to the portion of the State that I represent. In the course of my argument it is necessary for me to explain to hon. members the manner in which I interpret the law as it stands to-day. I see no other way in which I can prove that this does not apply to the South-West.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would not the hon. member be able to discuss that on the Bill already on the Notice Paper?

Mr. PICKERING: I hardly think so. I am anxious that the advantages which accrue to settlers under the board should be extended in the way I have suggested. The Act in question goes on to say that the Minister may from time to time grant to the settlers such assistance under the Act as he thinks fit. The settlement of the portion of the State in which I am particularly interested has been frequently affected by dire distress. On behalf of the settlers in my electorate I have made application on one or two occasions to the department administering the Act, and have always been turned down with the reply that it does not apply to that portion of the State. I have a letter here pointing out that owing to the present abnormal season it was difficult for the settler in question to make any headway, and that he required assistance to enable him to develop his holding.

The Premier: The Act is all right.

Mr. PICKERING: Its provisions should operate in the South-West.

The Premier: There is no need to alter the Act to bring that about.

Mr. O'Loughlin: The Act gives power to make advances, but the Government are disinclined to do so.

Mr. PICKERING: The South-West should have the same benefits under the Act as are accorded to any other portion of the State.

Mr. Brown: Or more so!

Mr. PICKERING: Equally so! The difficulties confronting settlers in the South-West are greater than those encountered by settlers in any other portion of the State. In the first year of settlement the country on which dense timber and scrub are growing is very sour. If settlers take up the dairying industry, they cannot make any headway until they have pastures for their cattle to graze upon and have put in crops. Great disaster followed in the train of the experiments made by the Premier when he was Minister for Lands.

The Premier: What disaster?

Mr. PICKERING: He instituted the very laudable scheme of sending cows to the South-West.

Mr. Troy: They all died.

Mr. PICKERING: They were excellent cows, but were brought from the pastures of Victoria, where the grass is very good, and they were put down amongst settlers who had scarcely improved any of their holdings. The cattle were sent out to feed on scrub and very naturally they died. These animals would have been of considerable value to-day to settlers who had pastures on which to graze them.

The Premier: Give me the name of one settler affected in this way?

Mr. PICKERING: I can give the name of one, namely, Mr. Rose.

The Premier: Now give me the name of two.

Mr. PICKERING: I have given the Premier the name of one settler.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There are Murdoch, Brown, Stowe and others.

Mr. PICKERING: The Premier is one of the strongest advocates of settlement in the South-West. He knows the conditions appertaining to that part of the State, and he knows that a settler there, in the early stages of the development of his holding, must stand in need of assistance.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not get it from the Agricultural Bank?

Mr. PICKERING: I do not care from what source the assistance comes. The only means through which assistance can be given at present along the lines conceded by the Industries Assistance Act is through the Industries Assistance Board. If the Premier will say that the operations of the Agricultural Bank will be so widened that daily sustenance will be given through the Industries Assistance Board to the settlers, I am prepared to accept his assurance to that effect.

Mr. Maley: That is already provided in connection with the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. PICKERING: That bank provides assistance in connection with improvements.

Mr. Maley: It is the whole function of the bank.

Mr. PICKERING: The Industries Assistance Board provides maintenance for the settler while he is putting in his crop. Settlers in this part of the State have to open up vast areas. We know the various requirements in connection with such opening up. I hope in the interests of the State in general, and that portion of it that I have the honour to represent in particular, that the Premier will extend the operations of the Industries Assistance Board or so amend the Agricultural Bank Act that the terms of my motion may be acceded to.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

MOTION—LUNACY CHARGE.

To Inquire by Royal Commission.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.56]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into and report upon the arrest, on a charge of insanity, committal to, and detention in the Hospital for Insane at Claremont of Georgina and Thomas Mable.

The question of the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Mable some four or five years ago, and their subsequent detention in the Claremont Hospital for the Insane, is fairly well known to hon. members. It has been the subject of much correspondence and of a deal of investigation. Mrs. Mable has been released, but Mable himself is still in the asylum. There

has been much difference of opinion amongst the doctors as to Mable's real condition. It has been the subject of correspondence and of investigation by the officers of the department and others concerned. It is generally agreed by the friends of Mable, and the officers of the department who hold other opinions, that the case has now reached the stage when the whole circumstances ought to be investigated by a Royal Commission. I understand that the department say they have nothing to fear by such an investigation, and that the Minister does not oppose the appointment of a Royal Commission. In the circumstances, I do not propose to take up the time of the House by going into the merits of the case. I will content myself with moving this motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [4.59]: The Government have nothing to hide in this matter and I have no objection to the motion. The case has been looked into by me and others and has received publicity before Mr. Justice Burnside, while quite a number of medical men have examined Mable. I have no objection to a Royal Commission being appointed to investigate the case, more especially if it is thought that Mable is being wrongfully detained in the institution. A Royal Commission will at all events be able to wind up the matter as to whether Mable is sane or not.

Question put and passed.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Order discharged.

Order read for the second reading of the Bill.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [5.1]: The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) has informed me that he does not intend to go on with this Bill. I move—

That the order be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Motion put and passed; the order discharged.

MOTION—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT, TO AMEND.

Debate resumed from 22nd September on the following motion by Mr. Munzie—

That in the opinion of this House, the Government should introduce a Bill during the present session of Parliament for the purpose of amending the Workers' Compensation Act.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [5.3]: There is already on the Notice Paper a Bill dealing with this subject, so that I have no objection to offer to the motion, though I fail to see that any good can be achieved by carrying it.

Mr. Munsie: Nor can any harm result. It is just as well to have the motion carried. Question put and passed.

MOTION—WATER CONSERVATION, AVON RIVER.

Debate resumed from 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Griffiths—

That in view of the influx of large numbers of immigrants in the near future, and their part absorption on closer settlement lines—the time has arrived when a thorough investigation should be made of the Avon Valley and Avon River, to determine whether the fine fruit-growing lands along this valley can be utilised for intensive culture."

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [5.4]: There is no objection to carrying this motion, which merely asks for inquiry. From time to time the waters of the river Avon have been tested for irrigation purposes.

Mr. Troy: They are brackish, are they not?

The PREMIER: Somewhat. However, we often find, on investigation, that what we believe to be impossible, is in fact possible. We are irrigating from rivers throughout this State, including my own district, where a few years ago it was thought impossible to irrigate, and grow fruit. The Avon river extends for many miles beyond Northam—to Newcastle, York, and well beyond Beverley. I do not know what the result of the proposed investigations may be, and I offer no objection to the motion.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—PRICE FIXING, AUSTRALIAN COMMODITIES.

Order read for the resumption of the debate from the 29th September, on the following motion by Mr. Mullany:—

That in the opinion of this House the practice of making world's parity a basis for fixing prices of commodities produced and consumed in Australia is unsound, and that cost of production and forwarding to market should be the factors considered in fixing such prices.

Question put and passed on the voices.

Mr. Johnston: Divide!

Mr. Thomson: The member for Greenough (Mr. Maley) was on his feet to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has been decided.

Mr. Johnston: On a point of order, a member here called out "No" with me.

Mr. Maley: There was more than one "No."

Mr. SPEAKER: I put the question, and gave ample time, and it was carried on the voices. There was only one "No."

Mr. Johnston: There were a number of "Noes."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT, FINES.

Rebate resumed from the 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Griffiths—

That in the opinion of this House the fines inflicted for infringements of "The Traffic Act, 1919," which are being paid into Consolidated Revenue, should be paid to the Local Authority initiating the proceedings, in the same manner as was done under "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1906," and "The Cart and Carriage Licensing Act, 1876."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. P. Draper—West Perth) [5.8]: This motion would really have no force if it were carried. The allocation of fines is fixed by the Traffic Act, and the proper procedure for any member who desires to have the allocation made in a different way is to move to amend the Traffic Act.

Hon. T. Walker: Is not this motion a suggestion that the Act should be amended?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Everything is already covered by the Traffic Act.

Hon. P. Collier: Does not the motion ask you to do something that the Act does not permit you to do?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. The only way of achieving what the motion desires, is to amend the Traffic Act. Under the old Interpretation Act of 1898 fines were made payable to bodies which were mentioned in that measure, and the result was hopeless confusion. In some cases the fines went to one body, and in others to another body, and again in others to the Government; and thus the Government were compelled to keep a number of small accounts, causing endless book-keeping and not giving satisfaction to anybody. Later, the Government got the fines except in cases where municipalities and road boards prosecuted in cases arising within their districts, because the fines were generally imposed in connection with matters under their control.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And the police did the work.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. Later the Traffic Act was passed, and the control under that Act is vested in the Government, the local authorities getting the license fees, though in the metropolitan area those fees are apportioned. Now the mover complains on the score that local authorities in the country districts do not also get the fines. The local authorities say, "Where we prosecute, we ought to get the fines." But the work is really done by the police. In nine cases out of ten the police prosecute. There is really no hardship, because the municipalities and road boards get the license fees, and if they are successful in their prosecution they also get costs.

Mr. Griffiths: And if they are unsuccessful?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then they do not get costs, and do not deserve to get them. If persons can go into litigation with a certainty of not having to pay costs if they lose, the result is to give deliberate encouragement to litigation, which is not desirable. In this connection there may perhaps be a particular case where the local authority has to pay costs, but generally prosecutions of this nature are undertaken by the police, and there are no costs involved to the local authorities.

Mr. Munsie: What about prosecutions by inspectors? The police never undertake a prosecution in Kalgoorlie or Boulder on behalf of the Kalgoorlie Road Board.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In that case the inspector would get his costs if successful. Even if he does not get his costs, he gets his salaries and expenses.

Mr. Munsie: But how are the board to get his salary?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Through the license fees. However, the proper course for the mover to adopt would be to give notice of motion for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Traffic Act.

Mr. GRIFFITHS—York—in reply [5.13]: As regards prosecutions instituted by local authorities, the practice in the particular town on behalf of which I was asked to move this motion is for the police to give information to the traffic superintendent, who does all the necessary work. When the case comes before the court, it may be lost through some small technicality, through one of those hundred odd things that may crop up; and the Attorney General says that then the local authority deserve to lose their costs. That is absurd. Lawyers are very quick to discover some slight irregularity which may defeat a good and right case.

The Minister for Works: I suppose you know that the local authorities have not had a penny of the fines since 1909?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The local authorities are hard put to it to find revenue. Here is what my correspondent says—

With regard to Mr. Angwin's statement that in nine cases out of ten the evidence supporting the prosecution was furnished by the police and no one connected with the local authority has even attended the court, I beg to state that this is not the case so far as this municipality is concerned. If a breach is reported by the police, the complaint summons, witnesses' summonses, etc., are drawn up by me as traffic inspector; and I conduct the whole case. Where the police are witnesses, they are called and paid witness fees. These witness fees are paid into revenue, and are insisted upon by the Crown Law Department in its instructions to clerks of court. We contend that this payment recompenses the police, who in any case will be called upon to attend the court in their

ordinary capacity. The point raised by the Crown Law Department, that the local authority should pay for the maintenance of an offender committed to goal, is of course ridiculous; but in any case it is a very rare occurrence for an offender of this class to be committed to goal, and I would like to point out that the usual order, and one I am always prepared to apply for, is that the defendant be fined, in default distress, and in default of distress imprisonment, so that an offender is only committed to prison if he has no means whatever. It must not be forgotten that all these arguments applied equally under the municipal by-laws and Acts superseded by the Traffic Act; but during all the years the fines for precisely the same offences have been paid to local authorities, nothing has been heard of these arguments. I trust the Minister will take a more reasonable view of the position as a result of your efforts, and I should be glad to be advised in due course.

Nothing had been heard of these arguments prior to this. I trust that the Minister will take notice of these remarks by the Town Clerk of York. I heard nothing from the Minister dealing with the point I have raised, and I suggest that the course I have outlined should be followed.

The Minister for Mines: How will it help you?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I will have the fact behind me that I have moved in this direction and I will have had a motion carried to strengthen my hand for future action.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	17
Majority for				2

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Robinson
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Rocks
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Jones	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Maley	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Money	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Brown	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Chesson	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Davies	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Draper	Mr. Walker
Mr. Duff	Mr. Wilson
Mr. George	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Mitchell	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

MOTION—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT, TO AMEND.

Debate resumed from 29th September on the following motion by Mr. Green:—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable to amend the Shearers' Accommodation Act, 1912.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.22]: The motion which has been moved by the member for Kalgoorlie, is very timely. The people to protect whom the Act is framed are dissatisfied with the administration of the measure. The A.W.U., which is the union controlling the pastoral industry so far as labour is concerned, has frequently been requested by its members to make representations to the Government with a view to having the Act amended. The member for Kalgoorlie gave some reasons why the Act was not satisfactory to the people working under it. The principal objection to the Act as it stands is on account of the procedure for securing improvements at the various stations. Now that the administration of the Act is under the police, the position is slightly more satisfactory, because formerly the few inspectors appointed under the Act were not able to carry out the work necessary under that legislation. There has been considerable improvement. During the first six or seven years the Act was in existence there were, I think, only 42 inspections, or an average of about six per year. Seeing that there are about 500 stations in the North-West, members will realise that, in fact, the Act was hardly administered at all. I asked a question about 18 months ago regarding the administration of the Act and found that, although it had been in existence for five or six years, no prosecutions under it had been launched. I believe that the reason for that arose out of the procedure under which the inspectors had to take action. As it stands at present, an inspector has to inspect the premises; then he has to give notice regarding improvements he deems necessary. Twelve months afterwards he has to re-inspect the place and decide whether the improvements have been carried out. If they are not carried out to his satisfaction, he can take action before two justices of the peace at the local court. Even then the justices may vary the order made by the inspector. Perhaps it is quite natural that in a country controlled by squatters the majority of those who are justices of the peace are themselves squatters, and naturally are biased in favour of the pastoralists. I do not mean to suggest quite that they are wholly biased, but obviously they must be biased—

Hon. P. Collier: Unconsciously.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That was what I wanted to suggest. Unconsciously, they would be favourable to the point of view of their own class. When a request is made by an inspector that the ordinary common or garden squatter should do something that he desires,

they would have little difficulty in convincing such a bench that the order was harsh and the order would probably be varied. It might perhaps be varied to such an extent that the effect would be useless for the purposes which the inspector had in view. Probably for that very reason no prosecutions have taken place under the Act. The procedure under the Shearers' Accommodation Act is totally different from that under the majority of other Acts. Under the Health Act it is only necessary for an inspector to make an order and it has to be complied with. The same thing applies under the Factories Act, and the onus is on the people upon whom the order is made, to prove that they should not carry it out. In this particular instance, the procedure is quite different, and two people, drawn mostly from those who control the sheds, are asked to say whether or not the order of the inspector should be carried out. With such a procedure, it is hardly to be expected that the objects of the Act can be achieved. Having regard to the condition of the sheds throughout the North-West, it has to be admitted that the majority of squatters and pastoralists are quite in accord with the provisions of the Act and endeavour to carry them out. There are, however, some less scrupulous people who do not try to carry out the provisions at all. It is for the purpose of making these unscrupulous people fall into line that an amendment of this measure is essential. Action cannot be taken under the Act as at present framed, and I think it would be a good idea if union officials were appointed as inspectors to bring under the notice of those responsible for the administration of the Act, instances where its provisions were not being carried out. The chief inspector, I believe, has framed a number of questions which he has asked the police in the various districts to reply to after inspections of the sheds have been made, and on the results he decides whether orders should be made against individuals in control of the shearing sheds throughout the pastoral areas. Such work could only be done by the police under existing conditions, but the representatives of the union could assist in the work in order to give effect to the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Thomson: Cannot they do that now?

Mr. WILLCOCK: They can do so, of course, but no notice would be taken of them. The union officials could do a lot of things and complain about many defects, but unless there was some authority behind them, it would be futile. I should like to see the right given to the union officials under the Act, to enable them to inspect sheds and assist generally the inspectors who are appointed under the Act, and the police, to see that its provisions are carried out.

Mr. Lutey: They would be check inspectors.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That would practically be the position. I want them to be able to lay complaints, and the chief inspector under the Act could then secure information re-

garding the complaints, and if they were founded on fact, then the necessary action could be taken by those actually responsible for the administration of the Act. At the present time a shearing shed can only be dealt with when eight men are employed. Only then can a shed where shearing operations are being carried out be classified as a shearing shed. That is at variance with the provisions of the Factories Act. At the present time if two persons are working in a business, that constitutes a factory. Any place where shearing is carried on should be classed as a shearing shed, and thus enable inspections to be made, and if the conditions obtaining in that shed were not in accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Act should be amended so as to enable an order to be made on the persons controlling that shed. Another defect in the Act is that the inspector may inspect only premises where shearing operations are in progress. When we realise that there may be 50 or 60 sheds where shearing is in progress simultaneously, we must realise the impossibility of getting adequate inspection. It should be possible to make the inspection without requiring that the men should be working at the time the inspection is made. The inspection could be made at any time, and if the shed did not comply with the provisions of the Act, it should be possible to serve an order on the owner and insist upon the necessary accommodation being provided before the shed was again occupied by the men. The member for Kalgoorlie, in introducing the motion, indicated that he desired an Act somewhat on the lines of the Queensland statute, which is known as "Workers' Accommodation Act." The Queensland Act applies to buildings, structures, works, and premises used for or in connection with construction works, meat works, pastoral purposes, sawmills, shearing sheds, sugar plantations, sugar works, and such works as the Governor in Council may from time to time by Order in Council declare. In connection with railway construction works, the onus should be on the people constructing the works to provide accommodation for the men employed. When a man takes work on railway construction he has to carry not only his food and clothing but practically a house with him. The time has arrived when the people engaged in an industry, and without whom the industry could not be carried on, should receive protection under legislation making it obligatory on the part of employers to provide adequate accommodation. We all know what happens in connection with new mining discoveries. A mine is discovered in a new district and 40, 50, or perhaps 100 men are employed. No effort is made by the mine owners to provide accommodation for the men working for them. Mining cannot be carried on without the operations of labour and some effort should be made to provide suitable accommodation for that labour. I have seen some of the early mining camps and some of the outback mining camps, and

the same thing applies to them as applies to the railway construction works. Every man has to carry with him his house as well as his food and clothing. The times when these hardships were necessary should be past. When industries of this description are being carried on, we should insist that the owners should provide tents or other suitable accommodation for the men employed. In a great majority of cases no attempt is made to provide even decent sanitary arrangements.

Mr. Hickmott: Do you mean to say that a station owner provides no accommodation?

Mr. WILLCOCK: There are 500 or 600 stations in the North-West which come under the operations of the Act. Perhaps 90 per cent. of those station owners endeavour to comply with the Act. In every industry we find a few unscrupulous persons.

Mr. Thomson: Cannot the shearers compel the provision of accommodation under the existing Act?

Mr. Jones: Only by going on strike. You would not advocate that, of course!

Mr. Thomson: They do not hesitate to make their demands.

Mr. WILLCOCK: After a man has paid £20 of his own good money to get to the north, it means that he must pay another £20 to get back south if he is not satisfied with the accommodation provided. A man loses five or six weeks' work and also £40 or £50. Is it suggested that he should walk off the job? The owner of pastoral property should realise his responsibilities under the Act and provision should be made to enforce their fulfilment where necessary. Probably 90 per cent. of the station owners comply with the Act, but we want the law made more effective, so that the remaining 10 per cent. shall not be able to dodge their responsibilities. I have reports regarding the conditions on a number of stations. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) spoke about the Boolaloo station. The report states—

The sleeping quarters and dining room and cook house are all under one roof, just the usual 8ft. partitions separating the compartments. The sleeping compartment is all one room for 16 men, which is very objectionable. I might say here that only four men slept in the sleeping room; the others found sleeping accommodation elsewhere.

Yet the Act stipulates that decent accommodation shall be provided. If decent accommodation were provided, those men would have made use of it.

Mr. Jones: The boss does not sleep outside.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Of course not. Another report states—

Accommodation here very unsatisfactory. The shed is composed of bushes and iron over the board, and all the dust from the sheep yards continually came in on the board in clouds. We slept in tents

under a roof of bushes, no flooring and built on a patch of sand, consequently when the wind blew your bedclothes and clothing were literally covered with it. The dining room was bushes and an iron roof and all the food would be covered with sand and dirt. It was disgraceful and not fit for men.

Mr. Teesdale: Which shed is that?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Warrawagine. I have a lot of these reports and I do not wish to pick out special instances. I merely wish to quote some which are typical of at least 10 per cent. of the sheds in the North-West. The Act is designed to protect the men engaged in the industry and power should be given to enable all orders to be enforced. The member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) suggested that if men were not satisfied with the accommodation, they could leave the shed.

Mr. Thomson: I did not say that. I said they could compel the owners to comply with the Act.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If the hon. member can show me how this can be done, I shall be glad to forward the information to those concerned. There are many sheds that do not comply with the conditions.

Mr. Thomson: The owners could be prosecuted.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Act has been in existence for seven years and not a single prosecution has taken place, notwithstanding that complaints have been received throughout that period. Another report states—

Mt. Florence, 10,000 sheep, accommodation bad. Dining room and kitchen fair, no floor. Trouble occurred here over contractor and manager refusing to put suitable food in kitchen, which ended up with all hands leaving.

Mr. Teesdale: The men there wanted tomatoes.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I suppose the boss has tomatoes when he can get them.

Mr. Teesdale: The boss has a motor car.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There is no reason why those engaged in the industry should not be taken out in the motor car.

Mr. Teesdale: That will be one of their demands next year.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Some of the men with packs of 80 or 90 lbs. weight on their backs push their bikes over 100 miles of sand to get to the sheds.

Hon. P. Collier: They only cut the wool off.

Mr. Jones: Birds of passage!

Mr. WILLCOCK: There are great rows if they do not cut the wool off. Another report reads—

Towers station has no hut accommodation, tents being provided, which are unsatisfactory. The mattresses now provided are made of old wool bales stuffed with spinifex.

I do not think that the boss sleeps on old wool bales, stuffed with spinifex.

Hon. P. Collier: Hard beds are healthy, you know.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The report continues—

Bath accommodation very poor, only one shower for the mob.

Hon. P. Collier: Very lucky to have a shower. Why should shearers want a shower? These workers are getting altogether too flash.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Act provides that they shall be a little flash.

Hon. P. Collier: Remember the good old days.

The Minister for Mines: It seems to me that the Act only needs to be administered.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Act cannot be administered. An inspection has to be made while the work is being done, and if an order is made, it is necessary to go back 12 months afterwards to see whether it is being complied with.

Mr. Thomson: Section 10 of the Act says that an inspector shall, once in every 12 months, and every inspector may, whenever he thinks fit, inspect all buildings used for the accommodation of shearers situate within his district.

Mr. WILLCOCK: In another part of the Act it is laid down that a shearing shed is only such within the meaning of the Act when eight men are actually working there. The employer could argue that as no one was working there at the time, it was not a shed, and the inspector would be powerless to make an order. Then, if a prosecution did result, the owner would be taken before two men of the same class, who of course would be unconsciously biased in his favour. The inspector should have power not only to make an order but to enforce it. Then the Act could be administered more satisfactorily to the men concerned than has been the case in the past. I can quite understand my friends opposite not being enamoured of this proposal because the member for Kalgoorlie said that he would have agricultural holdings brought under the Act. This may account for the opposition from that quarter.

The Minister for Mines: Why did not he bring down a Bill?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The hon. member could have done so but the Government are in charge of the administration of affairs and when we make known to the Government the prevalence of certain disabilities, it is the duty of the Government to introduce a Bill to correct those disabilities. The accommodation provided in the agricultural industry is simply shocking. The Premier comes out with a bold immigration policy and asks Lord Jellicoe to send us a million people—

Mr. Thomson: There is plenty of room for them.

Mr. WILLCOCK: And it would be impossible to properly place one-thousandth part of that number. It would be difficult to find suitable accommodation on most of the farms in the country for a man and his wife.

Mr. Thomson: Many of the farmers have not decent accommodation for themselves.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Three months ago I heard of a man suffering from fever. His bed was a hag thrown on a heap of manure in a stable, but that, of course, is not typical of the industry. I admit that the owner of the average farm has not reasonable accommodation for himself.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yet you say that farm labourers here are better off than those in the Old Country.

Mr. Thomson: Did you say that a farmer provided a manure heap for a man to sleep on?

Mr. Harrison: What size was the farm?

Mr. Thomson: I would sooner sleep under a tree than on a manure heap.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I can say that that was what occurred and I can tell the member for Greenough who the man was.

The Minister for Works: You said that was typical.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I said that the accommodation provided for agricultural labourers was in some instances in outhouses. At the same time, I recognise that in many instances farmers have not decent accommodation for themselves.

Mr. Harrison: Why not?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Because they cannot afford it.

Mr. Harrison: Because the industry is in a bad state.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It was in a bad state, but that is not the position now. I hope that the agricultural industry will prosper to such an extent in the next 10 years that those who are engaged in it now will have made sufficient to enable them to provide decent accommodation, not only for themselves, but for all those whom they employ. The accommodation is good in some of the outback areas, but the Act is not being administered properly, and it should be amended in the direction suggested. Power should be given to see that when an order was made it was enforced. I have already said that a majority of the pastoralists endeavour to carry out the provisions of the Act but I want those who do not do so to be compelled to observe the law, and failing that to be prosecuted.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [5.50]: The mover of the motion was unfortunate in the title that he selected for it. He speaks about the Shearers' Accommodation Act, and amending legislation. What we have heard has not applied to the accommodation provided for shearers at all, and the remarks of the hon. member who has just sat down have been entirely on the subject of the accommodation provided for agricultural labourers. He admits that there have been very few prosecutions.

Mr. Willcock: There have been only 42 inspections in seven years.

Mr. TEESDALE: There has not been a single prosecution in my district. Hon. members should confine themselves to subjects they know something about. Some members

know as much about shearing sheds as logs of wood. We have had appeals from members who have no shearing sheds in their electorates, and we have had impassioned orations from other members who have passed shearing sheds while travelling in the train, and though they have never been in or near certain shearing sheds in their lives, they have talked about what is done in those sheds merely because of what they have heard from disgruntled individuals who have declared that they would get home on somebody by writing a letter to the member for the district. The very fact that there have been so few prosecutions shows that there is no justification for the grievances.

Hon. P. Collier: It shows that the Act has not been administered.

Mr. TEESDALE: These people are notorious throughout Australia for working up grievances on the smallest possible pretence. I have known some of them complain because they have not had vermicelli in their soup. The truth is that if we asked some of those people what vermicelli was they would tell us that it was some new kind of tinned fish. I know of one place where the men actually demanded tomatoes, because the Chinaman employed on the station brought the first tomato of the season to show to the boss, and to prove that the tomato plants were going to bear that year. Some of these gentlemen on seeing the tomato dashed out of the shearing shed and immediately formed a deputation and demanded that tomatoes should be supplied to them with their meals. I was there at the time and I went to the shed to see what kind of vegetables these men were receiving and I can assure the House that they had potatoes, onions, cabbages, and cauliflowers to an extent to which perhaps it would not be possible to get at the Savoy Hotel. Of course we know that the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones) is used to artichokes.

Mr. Jones: I do not know what they are.

Mr. TEESDALE: Some hon. members who know so much about the North-West have never been there. The member for Fremantle I suppose acquired a good deal of the knowledge he has of the North-West after having been there for nearly 10 minutes. He did not find the conditions congenial and, therefore, hurried back again. He finds it now much more congenial to confine himself to Murray-street than to knock about the shearing sheds, because sometimes one has to take his part in those sheds, and in such conditions it is not pleasant to be there. I would support the member for Geraldton if I thought that the Act was being evaded, but I say without fear of contradiction that 90 per cent. of the squatters in my district—and I speak with an intimate acquaintance of the shearing sheds there—closely observe the law.

Mr. Willcock: I said the same thing.

Mr. TEESDALE: And if it can be said that 90 per cent. of the employers are obeying the law, surely that is a satisfactory average.

Mr. Munsie: Why not compel the other 10 per cent. to observe it as well?

Mr. TEESDALE: I know Boorooloo and I can assure hon. members that the accommodation there is equal in comfort to that which is provided at the boss's house. Do the men want any more than that? The houses of the boss and the men are made of the same corrugated iron, but I believe the boss's house is kalsomined inside while the other is not. Of course if it was thought that the absence of kalsomine in the men's house affected their appetites, the boss would order it to be done because he is a very fine fellow. These pettifogging, pin-pricking grievances cause a deal of trouble, and may be responsible for those who have attempted to do so much for the men to allow things to drift back again. That is only natural when the efforts one puts forward are not appreciated.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not think that.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The law is put into force against those who will not observe it, not against those who carry it out.

Mr. TEESDALE: There may be a few small sheds, the owners of which are in straitened circumstances, where it is not possible to carry out expensive alterations demanded by the Shearers' Accommodation Act. I know of a case where an expensive sleeping shed, equal to any sleeping accommodation that can be found in Perth to-day, was specially provided for the men, and the first time the men went into it, they demanded that the costly louvres, which had been put in that shed, should be removed. The owner of that shed is not likely to make a similar mistake again. With regard to Mt. Florence, it shows how hard up hon. members are for expenses when they admitted that seven items were fair. We could expect them to admit that they were good until they came to the tucker. I have tuckered at Mt. Florence scores of times.

Hon. P. Collier: But you have been a distinguished visitor.

Mr. TEESDALE: I have distinguished myself in the kitchen, and I can assure the hon. member that the station supplies really good food, as good food as can be got at any place in Perth. Of course one might get a greater variety in Perth, but it would be difficult to get better beef, better bread, or better plum duff. By heavens, if the men there got plenty of beef, bread, and plum duff, I do not know what more they would want. The member for Fremantle chuckles. I hope he will always be able to get plenty of first class beef, bread, and plum duff. It is a crime to bring cases of this description before Parliament, and it is a disgrace to discuss the North-West in such a way when there is no justification for doing so. We are pandering to a few, and I speak advisedly when I say that very few genuine shearers have put forward such rotten complaints as those we have heard from the member for Geraldton.

Mr. JONES (Fremantle) [5.58]: I am sorry the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) has taken up the attitude he has adopted with regard to the motion, because I believe it is in the best interests of the squatting community that because there are some who are not carrying out the provisions of the Act, the law should be so strengthened that their hands would be forced. It is surely an advantage to honest men that wrong-doers should be brought to book, and be compelled to cease their wrong-doing. Incidentally it would be an advantage to the 90 per cent. of the squatters to know that those who were taking advantage of the better conditions created were compelled to fall into line and provide decent accommodation. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) must agree that men can work better and produce more in decent conditions than under the conditions mentioned by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock). Take some of the model cities erected by Messrs. Cadbury, by Lever Bros., and by Henry Ford. Those employers realise the advantage of providing decent conditions for the men in their employ. During the influenza scare in the East the model city of Daceyville, near Sydney, had a lower death rate than any other of the Eastern cities. Whilst we cannot hope for modern cities in the bush, at least those employers who are honestly trying to carry out the Act should be compelled to fall into line with the majority who are doing so. The Act requires amendment in several ways; chiefly in Section 13, which allows a squatter to defer the making of improvements for three years. Seeing that certain squatters are trying to evade the provision of decent accommodation, I should like to see the Act so tightened up that those squatters will be compelled to provide proper accommodation in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Thomson: Where does the Act say three years?

Mr. JONES: Take Section 12. The inspector makes an inspection and declares that certain alterations must be effected. The squatter scratches his head and goes off and leaves it at that.

Mr. Thomson: Does it say three years?

Mr. JONES: I take it for granted the hon. member will bring a little intelligence to bear.

Mr. Thomson: I am sorry if I have not any.

Mr. JONES: Under Sections 10 and 11 the inspector inspects the building. Under Section 12 he notifies the owner.

Mr. Thomson: Within the time mentioned in the notice.

Mr. JONES: The hon. member must understand that we are not dealing with Perth or with Katanning, but with the vast spaces of the North, where it is fortunate if the inspector can get out once every 12 months.

Mr. Thomson: You distinctly said the Act provided for three years.

Mr. JONES: The hon. member must allow

me a little latitude in explaining the point. Over three shearing seasons will be taken up before the squatter can be compulsorily forced to introduce alterations. The first year he is warned, the second year he is summoned, and the third year he has it done.

The Minister for Works: That is only two years, after all.

Mr. JONES: No, the first year he is warned, and the second year he is summoned.

The Minister for Works: And the next year he carries out the improvements—two years.

Mr. JONES: Well, say it takes 18 months to get it done. It does not affect the argument. The fact that so much time is required is proof that the Act is obsolete. But that is, if the Act were being administered. After eight years of the operations of the Act we have to admit that no prosecution has ever been instituted.

Mr. Thomson: It is proof that the Act has been carried out.

Mr. JONES: Quite the opposite, and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. Thomson: I know differently.

Mr. JONES: The hon. member belongs to the class referred to by the member for Roebourne as having a look at a sheep station from a railway carriage. I am not posing as an authority. I am merely pointing out the defects in the Act. I do not wish to enlarge upon the list submitted by the member for Geraldton, but after the statement made by the member for Roebourne that so few stations are not complying with the Act, I should like to enumerate one or two in his own district. Mundabullangana is not in the hon. member's district. Still, they cannot plead poverty, because last year they shored 40,000 sheep, which are run during the year by two white men at £2 per week and 30 niggers.

Mr. Gardiner: And you expect us to believe that!

Mr. JONES: These are the actual figures. They shored 40,000 sheep. There were 27 hands employed, there was one shower bath among the lot, and they all slept in one hut on wooden beds.

The Minister for Works: What is wrong with the wooden beds?

Mr. JONES: I mean wooden bottoms to the beds, with mattresses on them, beds as hard as a squatter's heart.

The Minister for Works: I like a hard bed. Generally I sleep on a sheet of iron.

Mr. JONES: It serves to prove they have never had an inspector out there.

Mr. Thomson: What sort of bed do you suggest?

Mr. JONES: A plain straw mattress on a wire stretcher, something not too soft, but which, after a strenuous day's shearing, will give men a chance to recuperate so that next day they may refreshed go to work again for the boss. If only the squatters were sufficiently advanced to see it, they would realise that the fitter they can bring their men to work

in the morning, the better the cut they are likely to get throughout the day.

The Minister for Mines: What did you sleep on last night? You seem pretty bright to-day.

Mr. JONES: I slept on a sofa upstairs. Incidentally I think the House Committee ought to provide stretchers for us here. However, what applies to Mundabullangana applies also to dozens of other stations. Take Portree, where they provide continuous bunks in spite of the Act. The whole of the 20 men had to sleep in one room with one shower bath to serve the lot.

The Minister for Works: What does it matter, if the shed is big enough?

Mr. JONES: Parliament decided not more than four men to a room, and until the Act is amended I, believing as I do in law and order, say that this Act ought to be complied with. The dining room at Portree adjoins the bedroom, and the men are half suffocated with smoke if they happen to be taking ten minutes' stretch during the day. At Mount Satirist wooden bunks, with spinifex mattresses, are provided. There they have complied with the four beds to a room provision, but the rooms are only six by eight.

The Minister for Works: Why, you couldn't get the stretchers into such a room!

Mr. JONES: They are sleeping in bunks, just as in the steerage of a ship.

The Minister for Works: But I tell you you could not get them into a six by eight room.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. JONES: I do not know that any good purpose will be served by continuing to quote at length the list of those stations which constitute the horrible examples and are not in any way endeavouring to conform with the decent conditions provided by a majority of the squatters, but which from north to south run through the length of the country in one cancerous chain. Since the member for Roebourne has challenged the existence of some of them, it might be advisable to mention one or two more stations in the hon. member's own district. Yallalooloo and Red Hill both have had accommodation with only wooden bunks. The former has ordinary wire-netting bunks, on which the men have to stretch their weary limbs after tacking the squatter's sheep for the whole day. Particularly I would refer to Yallalooloo, which I believe is also in the Roebourne district. The accommodation there is very bad. During last shearing season it was necessary for the men to go on strike in order to get the yard disinfected and made reasonably clean so that their food would not be contaminated by the flies. Instances of this kind, thank goodness, are not too numerous to-day, but they are sufficiently numerous for us to urge that the legislation on the statute-book be made effective. These stations extend right down

to the Cranbrook district, and on some of them similarly bad conditions still prevail.

The Minister for Mines: Cranbrook?

Mr. JONES: Yes.

The Minister for Mines: That is not so.

Mr. JONES: There they have sleeping rooms without windows. Many of the men crowd into the sleeping rooms and the rest have to go into the harness rooms and other places.

The Minister for Mines: What is comfort for one is discomfort for another. You can go without socks; I could not.

Mr. JONES: I quite appreciate the Minister's genial attempt to sidetrack me, but I wish to pin members down to this fact, that they are doing an injustice to the good squatter.

The Minister for Works: I thought there were no good squatters.

Hon. P. Collier: We have not sold out.

Mr. JONES: Well, some are better than others.

Mr. Willcock: Some are worse than others.

Mr. JONES: We are not doing justice to the better squatters so long as we permit men, who do not care for the comfort of their fellows, who show no consideration for the creature comforts of their employees, and who have not sufficient patriotism to realise that the production of the State is being retarded by bad working conditions, to continue as in the past. It is unfair to place a handicap on the good men and to penalise them when unfair and unjust employers are taking advantage of the lax administration of the Act. It is not fair to allow the Act to remain ineffective as it is. While I do not suggest that the Act should at present be extended to the agricultural districts it must undoubtedly follow that, if men working in one part of the country have decent conditions of living, the same should apply in other parts of the country. Members on the cross benches have endeavoured to impress upon us that, as a rule, the employee sleeps in accommodation which is quite as good as that enjoyed by the farmer himself. I do not deny the truth of this in many cases, but we must remember that a majority of the men who accept casual work—I do not refer so much to the permanent farm hands—are not in a position to provide themselves with tents or other accommodation, and it would be in the interests of the employer himself if tents were provided. The employer should provide proper accommodation so that the men, tired at night, might rest well and rise in the morning, renewed in strength to continue the work of helping their employers to produce more and more. Members of the Country party would do well to consider the union representing these men—the A.W.U.—as their friend rather than their enemy, inasmuch as it represents the best interests of Australia.

Mr. Thomson: Say that again.

Mr. JONES: Because unfortunately there are agitators like the member for Katanning who are endeavouring to stir up the farming elements of this State to believe that the A.W.U. is opposed to their interests.

Mr. Thomson: You do not suggest that I am an agitator.

Mr. JONES: Undoubtedly the hon. member is.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Fremantle must not be offensive.

Mr. JONES: You and I would never consider that offensive, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think the member for Katanning does. The work of the A.W.U., the body which is moving to secure this improved accommodation for its members, has been of advantage to the squatters in showing them how to increase their production. The shearers, through their union, have taught the squatters of this State how to draft sheep. They have not taught the small farmer in the South-West, who has but a few head of sheep to deal with and is not so handicapped as the man in the far North who is drafting huge flocks, but the members of the A.W.U., by their rules and regulations, have taught the squatters how to draft sheep. They have compelled the squatters to draft the two-year fleeces simply by increasing the prices and compelling squatters to deal with the classification in a manner which was not adopted previously.

Mr. Maley: I should like to know how they draft fleeces.

Mr. Teesdale: You are all right on a paper but you are pretty rocky on sheep when you talk about drafting fleeces.

Mr. JONES: The hon. member knows exactly what I mean—drafting double-fleeced sheep. Members will be doing an injustice to the cause of production and to Australia generally if they fail to recognise that better accommodation must be provided for the workers, and if they will not realise that the A.W.U., so far from being an enemy of the farmer, is the best friend the farmer has in this State.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough) [7.41]: I should say it was difficult in any undertaking to get the full 100 per cent. of effort, and yet that is what some members expect from the Shearers' Accommodation Act. Statements have been made that because two or three per cent. of the shearers are not getting the precise accommodation stipulated in the Act, therefore a lamentable state of affairs exists. I do not think it possible to get 100 per cent. of effort in any direction. The conditions throughout the pastoral areas with regard to accommodation must be admitted to be undeniably good. It is easy enough to pick out a few instances, but I think the member who introduced the motion, and probably the member for Geraldton too, were overstepping the mark when they spoke about

men having beds on dunghills and sleeping with the fowls. If it is true, it is a pity.

Hon. P. Collier: Pity 'tis, 'tis true.

Mr. MALEY: To give effect to the hon. member's wishes, the country would be overrun with inspectors. We could not have men travelling to every individual farmer and squatter in the State to see that the conditions of the Act were being complied with. We know that the A.W.U., which controls most of this business, is endeavouring to enforce on agriculturists the same conditions that apply to the pastoralists.

Mr. Willecock: Parliament will decide that.

Mr. MALEY: The A.W.U. desires that the same conditions as are imposed on the pastoralists should apply to the agriculturists. The extreme statements made by hon. members do not tend to improve matters. I favour the provision of reasonable accommodation for the workers, but when we understand the conditions which prevail throughout the agricultural areas it is perhaps a little unreasonable to expect that the farmers should be brought into line with the pastoralists in this respect. I remember that when I first went out on the Murchison and engaged in mining I camped under the trees. There was no tent or anything else for me. I do not know that I suffered any great hardship through being obliged to camp out in the open, nor did I find the ground too hard to sleep on. We are engaged in developing this country, and the conditions which some hon. members desire to see brought about cannot be given in an industry which is yet in its infancy. Many of our pastoralists and farmers have not adequate accommodation for themselves. I am sure that every farmer is prepared to give his men just as good accommodation as he has himself. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, such exceptions being found in all industries, and in all walks of life. I only rose to say that the extreme statements which have been made on this question do no good either to the mover of the motion or its supporters. In fact, they may discredit to a certain extent the efforts that are being made in this direction.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [7.47]: The remarks made by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) with regard to the agricultural industry are not warranted by the facts. I have travelled a good deal throughout the State, especially in the agricultural areas, and have witnessed much of the development that has been going on. I know that as soon as farmers can afford decent accommodation for themselves they invariably make similar provision for the accommodation of their employees. I have come across innumerable instances showing that farm labourers on our farms have been provided with accommodation that should satisfy anybody. If we are going to pass extreme legislation applying to the agricultural areas, whilst we have this contemplated policy of development of our

broad acres, we shall greatly hamper our progress. When I first started on the land, I lived for about two years in camps. I frequently slept on the ground, with blackboy rushes and tops of gum-trees for a bed, and did not find it an unhealthy mode of life. My 17 years of farming experience in Western Australia have taught me that as a rule the farmer gives the utmost consideration to his employees. He recognises, just as does the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones), that if his employees are to work contentedly, they must be given conditions of life as comfortable as possible. In the early stages of development the farmer shares everything with his employees, and takes his turn at every duty that appertains to a camp. It will be unwise to alter this particular legislation in such a way as to make it press unduly upon our agricultural industry. As remarked by the member for Greenough (Mr. Mailey), there is a general tendency to bring the agricultural industry into line with the pastoral, but the time is not opportune for such extreme legislation. The farmers are only too anxious to provide accommodation for those whom they employ, but it is not advisable to bind them by hard and fast laws, which will make it increasingly difficult for those who are willing to undertake the task of opening up the country.

Mr. THOMSON (Kataanning) [7.50]: I listened with interest to the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones). He quoted extensively from what purported to be the Shearers' Accommodation Act, but I have grave doubts about the document from which he quoted being the Act in question. I have a notion that he was quoting from the constitution of the Australian Workers' Union. The hon. member, referring to Sections 12 and 13, said that the employers were given a period of three years in which to comply with the requests of the shearers. He also said it was difficult for the inspectors or the shearers to have their conditions complied with. All I can say is that his experience of shearing is different from that which has been experienced by people in my electorate. I have more than a passing knowledge of shearers in the Kataanning district. In fact, I speak from practical knowledge on this subject. The desire of people in my electorate is that the shearers should be made as comfortable as possible. I said to one man that he was making the shearers' quarters exceedingly comfortable and he replied, "We only have them here for a short period, and it is my desire to make them comfortable, because then they will come back again." I believe that is the general desire of people in that district. To say that shearers have no voice in the matter is incorrect. I know of one man who was unable to get a cook for the shearers. His wife, in order to assist him, said she would do the cooking, but until she took out an A.W.U. ticket she was not allowed to do the work. Some hon. members may think that is a laudable act to enforce, but I think it is going to

extremes. I know of another man who was on his way to my district and was in a similar fix. A young lady volunteered to do the cooking for him, but she also had to take out a ticket before being permitted to do the work.

Hon. P. Collier: She was a better woman for it.

Mr. THOMSON: That may be, but she was not the better cook.

Hon. P. Collier: She would not be worse.

Mr. THOMSON: Probably not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You believe in that policy?

Hon. P. Collier: You make us pay 9s. for wheat whether we like it or not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMSON: I will deal with that question at a later date. At any rate, I do not think the Speaker will allow me to discuss it now.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You believe in that policy?

Mr. THOMSON: The rules of the House will not permit me to answer the interjections of the leader of the Opposition and the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. P. Collier: We will suspend the Standing Orders for your benefit.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMSON: I have gone carefully through the Act, and have come to the conclusion that every thing requested by the members for Geraldton, Fremantle, and Kalgoorlie is provided for already. Section 12 says that when an inspector after making an inspection has reason to believe that any of the requirements of the Act have not been complied with he shall notify the employer, directing him within the time mentioned in the notice to comply with the request, and that he shall also in the notice specify in what respect such requirements have not been complied with. It has been said that it is impossible to get a prosecution. If the requests that are made are not complied with we know perfectly well that no shearing is done. It, therefore, pays the employer to comply as far as is humanly possible with the requests of the shearers. Some of the statements which have been made with regard to the men being obliged to sleep on manure heaps, and to do other things of the kind, are absurd. Any man who would do this when he has the heavens to sleep under must have something wrong with him. The farming districts must be considered. If the member for Kalgoorlie could have his way, the farmer would be given perhaps only two or three days in which to provide the accommodation asked for, which might be out of all proportion to that which the farmer himself enjoys. I know from experience that the average man on the average farm lives under exactly the same conditions as the owner. He gets the same food, and in 99 cases out of 100 he sits at the same table and partakes of the same joint. Some hon. members have spoken of the deplorable condition

under which those who have to labour in the agricultural industry suffer. These statements are unfair and overdrawn. As the member for Greenough has said, if the case was put in a more reasonable light there would be more chance of our meeting the requests. In my opinion, the whole situation is in the hands of the men themselves. One of the first things I look to, as an employer, is to see that the men I send out into the country are properly housed, and that the conditions are fair and reasonable in the matter of food supplies.

Mr. Willecock: You may be a good employer.

Mr. THOMSON: A man who is not a good employer will not induce his men to stay with him. Members opposite need have no fear that the employers will not provide the best conditions possible for those who work for them. I can see no reason for an alteration of the Act and intend to vote against the motion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	23
Majority against				11

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munster
Mr. Collier	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Willecock
Mr. Jones	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. O'Loghlin

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Broun	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Brown	Mr. Naira
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Draper	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Duff	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. George	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Maley	

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

MOTION—WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND FEDERATION.

Debate resumed from the 12th October, on the following motion by Mr. Angelo—

That this House is of opinion that the State has suffered great financial loss through the Federation of Australia, and that the time has now arrived when steps should be taken to place the position clearly and strongly before the Ministry of the Commonwealth with the view of obtaining some measure of relief.

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [8.4]: When it comes to discussing Federation, and the evils Federation has wrought to this State, one's mind goes back to one's reading of the marvellous speeches delivered at the three Federal Conventions, when one was carried away with the expression, "Trust the people; they are all brothers, and they will treat you as brothers should." One does not like to forsake the ideals of his salad days; but I am pretty certain that, while the ideals were all right, the idols of Federation had feet of clay. I do not know of any State that has suffered more than Western Australia has from Federation. I do not know of any Parliament that has equalled the Commonwealth Parliament in the matter of disregard of obvious obligations. That remark does not apply to any particular Federal Ministry. They have all sinned; but it is we who have suffered. At the very inception of Federation the Commonwealth Constitution laid it down that the Commonwealth should pay for properties transferred from the States, and that if there was any disagreement, the matter should be decided by the Commonwealth Parliament. And what has been the method adopted? The Commonwealth still owe us for the transferred properties, but they have given us a credit in their books in respect of them at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest; and they call that paying. There are various other shocking things. Possibly the worst instance that I could give of men being false to their trust, false to the people of other States who trusted them, is the manipulation of the Commonwealth Surplus Revenue Act. In order to take away from the States money which the Commonwealth Act provided should be paid to them by the 1st July in each year, the Commonwealth Government put through an Appropriation Act and the measure for which the money was appropriated was never brought before Parliament. Could anything be worse? The Commonwealth Act specifically provided that after the 1st July in each year any surplus revenue must be divided on a per capita basis among the States. What happened? The division was not made on one 1st July. I found it out. Thereupon I made a claim in this State's behalf on the per capita basis for a sum of about £287,000. But in the following September the Commonwealth Government put through another Act taking the money away from us again. In order that such a "mistake" should not recur, they actually put through Parliament an Appropriation Act for ten millions of money for old age pensions, which represent an annual expenditure. I say that when a man with any sense of honesty comes to write the record of the Federal Parliament on this question, he will have to do it with a handkerchief in one hand and a tin of disinfectant in the other. Indeed, I said that at the time. Now, there is going to be a Convention, and we want to get ready for it. With all due deference to Mr. Owen, the matters with which his report deals are not what has to be considered. I read the same

things from Mr. Owen's pen in pre-Federation days. This State wants to get down to bedrock and find out where the pinch is hurting us. What has happened with regard to our State Savings Bank? During the Federal Convention discussions it was specifically stated that the Savings Bank business would be retained by the States. However, the Commonwealth have come here with their Savings Bank, and after five years of competition our Savings Bank deposits, less withdrawals and including interest, amount to about £357,000, but in the case of the Commonwealth Savings Bank the excess of deposits totals approximately £1,300,000. That £1,300,000 is money which this State could have borrowed at four per cent., instead of being compelled to pay £6 2s. 6d. or £6 10s. per cent. One can easily recognise how the pinch hurts us there. So many instances of the same kind can be given, that we should get our case put before the people fairly and squarely. I previously suggested that a joint select committee of both Houses should go into the question of the disabilities under which we suffer owing to Federation. Those disabilities are far more than I would be likely to enumerate if I stood here for an hour. The question should be brought before each House of Parliament and the two Houses should endorse a statement on the subject, so that whoever goes to the proposed Convention will go there armed with facts. Every Minister who has attended Premiers' Conferences says that they are an utter farce. At those conferences you speak in the order of your population. New South Wales goes first, and Mr. Holman, once he starts, takes a lot of stopping. Then, in the case of the Convention I attended, came Mr. Lawson of Victoria. He was clear and concise. Those two speakers took us up to lunch time. In the afternoon we had Mr. Theodore of Queensland—a very exhausting but a very exhaustive and able speaker. He occupied an hour and a half. Thereupon South Australia had its go, and then we were at knock-off time. The next day we had the two smaller States, Western Australia and Tasmania. Then the other members of the Conference said, "Are we not rather tired of this?" Unless you bit every time you spoke, nobody listened to you. If we send across this proposed delegation, it will have no effect. There may be some effect when it comes to altering the whole Federal Constitution by a Convention; but any delegation we send from here to Melbourne will merely get promises. Then, when we send back to remind the Commonwealth of those promises, the Commonwealth will make the same promises again. Western Australia lost a wonderfully good friend—all Ministers who have been to Melbourne will agree with me in this—when Mr. Watt resigned the Federal Treasurership. He was the one man in the Federal Cabinet who would help the smaller States. When I was in Melbourne he was called "Western Australia Watt," because

I could always rely on him to give me a good lift. In the same way Sir George Turner was the best Treasurer for the States that the Commonwealth ever had. In the Commonwealth Parliament there is a grasping at power, and it is no good trusting to our representatives there to abstain from grasping at power. They are impregnated with the same idea. They themselves have begun to ask, "Who are the State Parliaments? Why should we consider them?" So long as the present Federal environment continues, so long will there be an everlasting grasp for more power by the Commonwealth at the expense of the States. I will guarantee that if the six Western Australian senators were asked what disabilities Western Australia had suffered as the result of Federation, not one of them would be able to say a word on the subject.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Each and every one of them would reply that Western Australia had not suffered at all.

The Minister for Mines: They themselves have not suffered.

Mr. GARDINER: I want this Parliament to realise the responsibilities resting on us to prepare our case. It may be a good case, or it may be a bad case, or it may be an indifferent case; but those of us who have been through this business know where the shoe pinches. It ought to be the aim and object of every one of us to give whatever service we can render towards the making out of a clear and well-defined case. Goodness knows, if there is any alteration in the Constitution, what may ensue. It may be that we will allow the Federal Parliament to take over the whole control. That may come or it may not, but whether it does or does not, while the hon. member is quite right in bringing this motion forward, I do not think that any good will be derived by sending a delegation from this Parliament unless that delegation goes to a convention on the same basis of representation that we had at the previous conventions. The case for Western Australia is largely a case for South Australia and Tasmania, at any rate. As to the two bigger States of New South Wales and Victoria—what do they care? Their troubles! It is the smaller States that have suffered and this is a fight for the smaller States. When we were preaching Federation, we said: "You have six State representatives in the Senate. Those men are not representatives of party, they are the representatives of the States; they are there to protect State interests." Those men had not been there very long before they commenced as they have carried on ever since, protecting party interests. So far from the Senate being representative of the States as we preached, that House is absolutely an unmitigated farce at the present time.

The Minister for Mines: That is the fault of the people. Sir Josiah Symon stood apart from party and he got left.

Mr. GARDINER: Exactly. We thought that the Senate stood for the protection of

the State. If such were the case, there would be no need for a convention. We could have sent all our business and representations to our senatorial members. They are the last people we would think of consulting. I want that position to be realised because if we do not realise it, we will have a convention on us before we know where we are and without the slightest preparation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George — Murray-Wellington) [8.19]: With every word that the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) has uttered, I agree. The attendance of Ministers at the conferences the hon. member referred to, is an absolute farce. The only justification Ministers can have in going from Western Australia is to keep their eyes open and to see, if possible, that even worse positions do not arise. The conference at which I was present with the hon. member, resolved itself into a duel between Mr. Watt and Mr. Holman, with Mr. Theodore as a sort of bottle holder and referee. I felt that, as far as we in Western Australia were concerned it was just exactly as the member for Irwin stated. When the Federation fight was on, he was on one side and I was on the other.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is responsible for a lot.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That may be so. Probably as he has grown older, added experience has shown him more clearly the true perspective of the ideals which he fought for in those days.

Mr. Hickmott: The ideals were all right.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: For my part, I would not take the word of any Commonwealth Minister on Commonwealth matters. I would not take their written word unless I had it in such a form that they could not possibly get out of it. My part of the business, apart from the conference on that occasion, was to attend to one or two matters affecting my department. After my discussion with Senator Millen I asked for a sheet of foolscap. I wrote down exactly what we had agreed upon and then asked him to sign the paper, which I would sign as well. It took over half an hour to persuade him that, as he had agreed to what was set down, no harm could follow from his signing it. The paper was signed. When we got back from Melbourne there was a letter here attempting to overthrow what we had agreed upon. I am pleased to say that the agreement arrived at was not overthrown. So far as the transferred properties are concerned, I find—I understand their strategy; I believe it was arranged from the very outset—they do not purchase in the ordinary way, being responsible for the principle. They put these properties in their books and credit us with interest on the amount involved. As soon as their use for a property has gone, or if it suits them to erect a new building for their utilities, then they quietly inform this Gov-

enment that they do not require the transferred property any longer and it is left on our hands. Let me give members an instance so that they may know something about this aspect of the relations between the State and the Commonwealth. Take the question of the soldiers' homes. The building of the homes in Western Australia by the Federal authorities is one of the biggest disgraces I have ever known in public life. The money wasted in connection with those buildings and the absolute lack of system, either in procuring materials or in carrying out the work, is enough to make a dead contractor arise in his grave and wonder where he has been. The Workers' Homes Board of Western Australia has done really excellent work; that is generally acknowledged. The board puts up cheap and well designed homes. The State Government were approached with a query as to whether our organisation could be made use of for the construction of soldiers' homes. Negotiations went to such a length that the agreements were despatched and were actually in the Premier's office ready to be signed, when the Federal authorities changed their minds and decided to establish a fresh organisation of their own to undertake the work. The Commonwealth has a Ministry but the Commonwealth business is transacted by the bureaucrats of the departments. One cannot see the Prime Minister unless he kicks up a row and unless he is as big a bully as I am said to be. One could not see Mr. Watt unless the same row was kicked up. The experience of the then Premier (Sir Henry Lefroy), I believe, was exactly the same. Of course we could see Mr. Shepherd, the secretary of the Prime Minister's department, if he said he would see us. We were told in some cases that they would communicate with us by letter. In some cases while we waited for the letters in Melbourne, they posted the letters to Perth and we had to wait until we got back to get the replies.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We had no trouble in seeing Mr. Fisher when he was Prime Minister.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That may be so, but so far as the Commonwealth Government are concerned, they are no good to this State in any shape or form. Although when Federation became an accomplished fact, I said that now we were married there could be no divorce, and while I have tried to be and have been loyal to Australia as a whole ever since, I declare emphatically that if ever an opportunity arises to cut the painter from the Eastern States, I will be found ready to use all my strength in carrying on that fight. How have we been treated? Let me tell the House how Western Australia was looked upon 30 years ago. In those days Western Australia was merely used as a dumping ground for goods from the Eastern States.

The member for Forrest will remember the store at Jarrahdale, which belonged to certain merchants in Victoria. Absolute rubbish came into that store. I saw bell-bottom trousers there that I had never seen since I left London, where the costers delighted in them. There was maggots bacon and weevilly flour. The principle that anything was good enough for Western Australia, which was popular in those days, is the same principle pursued by the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth Parliament towards Western Australia to-day. As far as our representatives are concerned, they are our representatives because it suits them to be, but as for the country they do not care a twopenny hang for it.

Mr. Johnston: That is not fair.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think it is fair. I do not think they mind very much about Western Australia. It makes little difference what Government, Liberal or Labour, are in power. We have had the same treatment from them all and I put that down largely to the fact that we are governed by the bureaucrats of the Commonwealth public service. The member for Irwin seems to be a bit pessimistic as to whether Western Australia can, or cannot, secure any good from this proposal. For my part I believe that Western Australia can, and if the people in this State will arouse themselves, and members of Parliament arouse themselves too, the people in the Eastern States will be induced to recognise the claims of this State. If not, the people should be prepared and ready to agitate for a severance of that connection we have with the Commonwealth. Members have only got to turn their attention to the naval base to see what extravagance is going on under the Federal regime here. If the extravagance which has occurred at the Naval Base at Fremantle had been indulged in by the State Government, these walls of Parliament would have been scorched by the heated remarks of hon. members.

Hon. P. Collier: We have a dock behind us at Fremantle, remember.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I suppose we have. We have all made mistakes, but the Commonwealth people are not content with making one mistake. Their appetite has grown and we have got to pay for mistake after mistake. Some people may say that this is so much railing. Perhaps it is. Looking at the matter from the point of view of the State, however, I want to see Western Australia take her proper place, which she will not do as long as she is shackled and bound to people who do not care a twopenny hang for her.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.28]: I do not intend to follow the suggestion by the Minister that we should cut the painter, and inferentially convey the impression that physical and other force should be

used to accomplish that result. It was only the other day that a member of the Federal Parliament was expelled for using language somewhat analogous to that of the Minister.

Mr. Thomson: There is no comparison between the two instances.

Mr. Teesdale: Have another go.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know whether there is much difference between one member discussing the Empire and another speaking about the dismemberment of the Commonwealth by cutting the painter from the rest of Australia. Personally I think it is very similar.

Mr. Jones: It is decidedly worse.

Mr. LAMBERT: There are few Australians born or adopted who would desire to bring about any dismemberment of Australia, at all events.

The Minister for Mines: Don't say "at all events." It might be taken to mean that you would object to the dismemberment of Australia but not of the Empire.

Mr. LAMBERT: That was not suggested by me. I do not know whether it has suggested itself to the Cornish association or not.

The Minister for Mines: Not for a moment.

Mr. LAMBERT: While I stand unitedly for Australia, I stand unitedly for the Empire. No progress in civilisation can be made without that united stand, which is essential to build up civilisation, no matter what we may be. It is quite true that my friend has a good deal to complain about. The member for Irwin also made out a strong case so far as the attitude of the Commonwealth Government towards Western Australia is concerned. The Minister for Works in his own sphere of activity is aware of the extent to which duplication of offices has been carried on. He gave an instance of the soldier settlement homes. Exactly the same thing is happening in connection with the Commonwealth railway system. They hooked on a small railway to each end of the system in two States, and then created a big and expensive department to control the line. The burning desire of the Commonwealth Government to build up mammoth departments is a positive disgrace. It seems peculiar that we in Australia should be railing against Parliaments while in some parts of the world there should be a desire to create them. My brief experience of Parliament is that if we were without it I would be loth to foist one upon the people. I cannot understand the desire of people, who are without a Parliament, to create such an institution. One thing can be emphasised so far as the Commonwealth Government are concerned, and it affects us more than any other part of Australia, that is, the big undeveloped territory which we, as a sovereign State, control. The central Government should have come

to our assistance to develop our huge areas. A comprehensive scheme should have been submitted and that should have had at its back the finances of the Commonwealth. We as a small struggling State cannot possibly be expected to give the attention that the Commonwealth Government could to any big scheme for peopling our unoccupied areas. Our vast empty spaces will some day prove a menace to the continent if steps are not taken to fill them, and that is one great thing that the cut-throats of the Eastern States should be made aware of. We hear a good deal about Federation and the national ideal, and about the unified development of the Commonwealth. What has taken place? Almost every department that has been administered by the Federal Government is a lasting disgrace to the Commonwealth. We should try to arouse public opinion in Australia as to the responsibility of the greater-peopled portion of the Commonwealth towards the unpeopled north. If, as has been suggested, we are to hold another Convention for the remodelling of the Federal Constitution, it is essential that we start early, and it is important that if we are to have a tearing up of our present written Federal compact we should go there and exact a clearer understanding of our financial obligations. That can only be done by sending there men who are thoroughly conversant with the subject, and not only that but experienced in the public affairs of this country. I trust that some of the Ministers and a former Minister for Mines, who I observe is in his seat, will stress the great disadvantages which we as a Federal State suffer. An instance was given by the Minister for Works in connection with transferred property. I understand at the present time the Federal Government desire that the indebtedness in that respect should be used as a set off against certain loan moneys which were advanced to this and the other States during the period of the war. There are many matters, too, it is essential that we as Australian citizens should take an interest in. There should be a Government in power who would try to counteract many of the strong influences, political and commercial, which are operating in the Eastern States to the detriment of Western Australia. As a matter of fact, I feel very much like the hon. member who desires that we should cut the painter, but we should use not only strong language but take strong action. Our representatives in the Federal Parliament should be true to Western Australia first, last, and all the time. Unfortunately, they know the difficulties that exist only too well. They are in Melbourne the whole of the time, where the newspapers will not concede a single thing to Western Australia. The Melbourne "Age" will not hear of a railway being constructed in Western Australia, but not only does the opposition come from the newspapers there, we get no assistance from anyone. Little or no heed at all is paid to

Western Australia. A Victorian politician named McNamara, a member of the Legislative Council, in that State, had a speech that he made recently on the remodelling of the Federal Constitution, printed in pamphlet form, and one would think to read that speech that there was no such place in existence as Western Australia.

Mr. Willecock: Oh, yes!

Mr. LAMBERT: If he did refer to Western Australia he was most eloquently successful in his effort to omit any reference to it.

Mr. Willecock: They did not report him properly.

Mr. LAMBERT: The speech was reprinted by himself, and I do not suppose that he would deliberately cut out any reference to Western Australia. It struck me as being a piece of impertinence on the part of this man to submit a bald scheme for the remodelling of the Federal Constitution without the slightest regard for Western Australia. He chopped Victoria into certain provincial states, and did the same with New South Wales, and then he proceeded in a beautifully theoretical manner to show how the interests of those two populous places would be affected. He did not touch on the bigger and wider problem of national development, which, after all, is the most important we have to deal with.

Mr. Willecock: That is just what he did do.

Mr. LAMBERT: My friend must have read some other speech delivered by this politician. There were certainly no reference to the wider and more important subject in the pamphlet which Mr. McNamara sent to this State. The motion which has been submitted by the member for Gascoyne is one upon which we should take an early vote. The hon. member must be complimented upon bringing it forward. It is not so much the actual financial loss that the State is suffering—that in itself is bad enough—but it is the implied obligation of the Commonwealth Government, which is first and foremost to assist the weaker States of the union. Not only have the Federal Government not given weaker States any help, but they have never carried out to the slightest extent that implied obligation which was the real foundation, after all, of the creation of the national Australian sentiments which made Federation possible, and that is the feeling which wants to be engendered amongst those in the Eastern States who are indifferent to our call for assistance. The speech of the Minister for Works, although I do not agree that he was justified in declaring that he would cut the painter—

Mr. Thomson: You said you were almost with him.

Mr. LAMBERT: Not to the extent of the language that he used. It is very seldom that my friend is rash, but I hope that his were not the matured words of one who has

lived the better part of a quarter of a century in the public life of Western Australia. I trust the Government will assist in the direction of carrying the motion which has been submitted. If there is no other way of drawing the attention of the Federal Government to their obligations towards Western Australia as well as to the other States, then I hope that the hon. member's ill-advised words will be telegraphed all over Australia. Let it then be declared that the Minister for Works, with his full mental and physical force, will make one to cut the painter from the rest of Australia. I believe we are virtually standing alone in our battle against the great political and commercial interests of the Eastern States, which interests ever since the dawn of Federation have been indifferent to Western Australia.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.40]: After listening to the remarks of the member for Coolgardie, I am quite convinced he is satisfied as to the advisability of carrying the motion which has been submitted to the House. It is my intention, however, to move an amendment in the direction of the appointment of a committee representative of the members of Both Houses of Parliament to prepare our case to submit to the forthcoming Convention. One could not help being struck by the eloquent address of the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) who pointed out that the Federal Government have never been sympathetically disposed towards Western Australia. The hon. member showed where they had broken their pledges. I am proud to say—though I may be termed a little Australian—that I opposed Federation, honestly believing it would be harmful to Western Australia. Unfortunately, my then expressed belief has come only too true. When we realise the vast sums of money which are being raised through the Customs, and also the fact that the Commonwealth have broken their promise to us so far as per capita payments are concerned, we can come to no other conclusion than that we have not had a fair deal. We have to remember also that there exists now a dual land tax, and a dual income tax, and that the Commonwealth Savings Bank is in competition with our own, while in regard to post office administration that is any thing but what it should be. When a matter, as small even as a mail route, or the extension of a telephone needs attention, the subject must be referred to head office in Melbourne. No matter how trivial the subject is, it must go to the central authority. I do not intend to cover the ground traversed by other speakers, except to say that I congratulate the member for Gascoyne on having submitted the motion and to express the belief that some good will come from it. I trust, however, that he will accept the amendment because I believe it is essential that Western Australia should be prepared to put its case before the Convention. It is only before that Convention that we can expect to have reasonable notice taken of our de-

mands, and we should therefore be properly prepared so that those who may be appointed to represent us will be able to speak with knowledge of our case. I trust also that our representatives will have the backing of the people of Western Australia. There is a small section in favour of unification.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A very big section.

Mr. THOMSON: Let us test that question. Let us have our case fully prepared. If, then, it is found that the majority are in favour of unification, we shall be compelled to accede to the wishes of the majority. However, I believe we can put up so strong a case that no man amenable to reason will contend that Federation has been to Western Australia the boon which we were promised.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Have you ever known anything to be as good as was promised?

Mr. THOMSON: One of the promises made was that the abolition of the interstate tariff would reduce the cost of living. That won a great many votes for Federation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Butter went down 3d. per lb. straight away.

Mr. THOMSON: It did not stay down very long. Ever since Federation the cost of living has gradually increased. One of the reasons for it has been the steadily increasing Customs tariff. If we could abolish the present system of collecting Customs, and replace it with a system akin to that of our stamps, it would afford considerable relief.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is this a debate on protection versus free trade?

Mr. THOMSON: It is the effect of Federation; it is one of the disabilities we are suffering from; it can be conclusively proved that, prior to Federation, the Customs tariff of Western Australia was considerably lower than the Commonwealth tariff to-day.

The Minister for Mines: We had a pretty high tariff in Western Australia.

Mr. THOMSON: But a lot of things came in free which to-day are paying a high tariff. That is one of the explanations of our high cost of living. I trust the House will accept my amendment. It is desirable that we should have a committee to thoroughly prepare our case so that it may be placed, not only before the proposed Convention, but also before the people of Western Australia. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "arrived" be struck out, and the following be inserted in lieu: "to appoint a committee from both Houses to prepare our case to submit to the forthcoming Convention."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [8.51]: I will oppose the amendment on the ground that it is the duty of the Government to make all the preparations necessary, and through the officials of the various departments to get all statistical information so that the case for Western Aus-

tralia may be properly placed before the proposed convention.

Mr. Thomson: Ministers now have more work than they can attend to.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Ministers will not do the work. It is regrettable that some hon. members are always of the impression that they should take the place of Ministers. The only seats which would satisfy those hon. members are the front benches where, however, they cannot get. In all probability, the delegates to attend this convention will be appointed, not by Parliament, but by the electors.

Mr. Thomson: All the more reason why our case should be prepared.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All the more reason why the departmental staffs should prepare all information necessary for the guidance of those who will represent Western Australia. The Ministry of the day can be trusted to realise their responsibility for seeing that all information is placed before each delegate elected to attend the convention, so that he shall be fully posted on all the various questions affecting Western Australia.

Mr. Thomson: Would not that be better done if we had a committee representing both Houses?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It would not be wise to elect another Ministry of 10 members to control the departmental offices. One Minister in a department is quite sufficient. We do not want a number of deputy Ministers to be getting in the way of the departmental officers.

The Minister for Mines: They can appoint a committee at any time and get all the information required.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: You mean they can ask Ministers to get it for them.

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is what I am saying. Ministers will feel that they have a duty cast upon them to supply the information. The interests of the State demand it, and the people of the State will demand that the Minister supply it. It is true that under Federation Australia has had many difficulties to contend with; but is it not also true that when a man gets into debt he always looks for an excuse?

The Minister for Mines: I believe you are right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And that when he gets into difficulties he tries to throw the blame on to somebody else?

The Minister for Mines: I believe that is right, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It can be seen in "Hansard" that two years ago the Minister for Education, speaking in another place and searching for some excuse for the unsatisfactory position of Western Australia since 1918, threw all the blame on Federation.

Mr. Angelo: Three years ago I asked questions about this very thing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Which is only prima facie evidence that my statement is

correct. The hon. member has been tutored to put up some excuse for the unsatisfactory financial position of the State.

Mr. Thomson: Do you say that we have not suffered financially through Federation?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I cannot say. It is true the people of this State have had to pay for a duplication of offices; but they have only paid their share of that cost, just as have the other people of Australia. Like the hon. member, I voted against Federation. I went and heard the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) speak one night, but he could not convince me that Federation was good for Western Australia. But the point to-day is that we are in Federation, and for any member to talk about withdrawing from Federation is nothing but humbug.

The Minister for Mines: I object to your calling the Minister for Works a humbug.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I did not say the Minister was a humbug; I said that to say such a thing was humbug. It is too late to talk of withdrawing. After the heavy expense of the last four or five years it is impossible to place that responsibility on the individual States. We are now financially tied in such a manner that it is absurd to talk of withdrawing from Federation. Some who have held Ministerial positions in the Federal Parliament have thought very little of Western Australia. I visited the Eastern States but once while holding Ministerial rank, but I found no difficulty whatever in gaining admittance to the gentleman I wanted to see.

Mr. Thomson: Did you get all that you wanted?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In some instances, yes. I went to see Mr. Fisher on one occasion. I was not there two minutes before he appointed an officer to supply me with any information I required. Also I had to see Mr. Tudor. I was not so successful in that case, because the matter had become a Cabinet decision before I arrived. I went to see another gentleman about some sleepers. He said he could not do what I wanted, because he had Australia to consider. I told him I had always been of opinion that Western Australia was a part of Australia. The people have since tired of that gentleman and sent him about his private business. He is no longer even a member of Parliament. Now let us see what Western Australia has gained by Federation; we have been told about the losses. Take her position when the war broke out. Members realise that it was impossible to go on the market to raise money. No one realised the necessity for loans at that juncture more than did the members of the farmers' party. We were experiencing a drought, one of the most serious droughts in our history.

Mr. Thomson: We could have issued bank notes just as the Commonwealth did.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We could not.

Mr. Thomson: I mean if we had not been federated.

Hon. P. Collier: And the bank notes would not have been worth a penny each.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member says we could have issued bank notes if we had not been in the Federation, but we were federated and therefore we could not issue bank notes. No money could be raised. From London we were told that the Government should cut out all public works that were not essential, and should not expend any more money than they could help. Who came to our assistance? The Liberal Government were in office at the time, but the Liberal Government could not see any way in which they could assist us. Fortunately for Western Australia there was a change of Government within a month or two, and Mr. Fisher came to our assistance with several millions of money.

Mr. Lutey: His was the truly National party.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And the farmers of this State, with the assistance obtained from Federation, are in a very prosperous condition to-day.

Mr. Thomson: Not only the farmers, but the whole of Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: One of the most important things which we had to face at that time was the necessity for financing the farmers in the interests of the State as a whole. The money was made available, and from that time down to 12 months ago, every shilling of loan money necessary for the development of this State has been provided by the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Works: On our credit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course; but it was impossible to obtain money elsewhere.

Mr. Thomson: We had a couple of millions offered us.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But that was since the time to which I am referring. Could we get that two million pounds to-day? We have never been told the terms on which it was offered to the Government. I could say something about that two millions if I so desired, but I do not wish to go into details at this stage. We know that the Commonwealth came to our assistance financially. Therefore we derived some gain through being one of the federated States, because independently we could not have raised a shilling. Federation has been a benefit to this State during the last five or six years. It is true, as the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) stated that if the customs duties between the various States had not been wiped out, we might have been able to put on a higher customs rate.

Mr. Thomson: And saved Western Australia from being the dumping ground for stuff from the Eastern States.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But a good deal of the money raised by way of customs duties is coming back to Western Australia, in addition to the £600,000 which we get direct.

Mr. Thomson: How many hundreds of thousands of pounds went to Victoria?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know. The motion deals with Western Australia, not with Victoria. We have received a certain percentage of the customs duties collected by the Commonwealth—

Mr. Thomson: A very small percentage.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And this in addition to the 25s. per head to which the hon. member referred.

Mr. Johnston: We are paying £8 per head by way of customs duties.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not care what we are paying. We are getting hundreds of thousands of pounds annually back into the State by various payments, and a greater proportion of it represents money raised by way of customs duties.

Mr. Thomson: But the people of Western Australia are paying for it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Does the hon. member expect to get it for nothing?

Mr. Thomson: No, but the Commonwealth are taking it from our right hand and putting it into our left hand.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So long as we get it back, what difference does it make?

Mr. Thomson: But we are not getting all of it back.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have to pay our proportion of the cost of government. Who is going to pay for the telephone which the hon. member desires should be laid to somebody's back yard?

Mr. Thomson: Did I say that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I understand the hon. member complained that the matter had to be referred to Melbourne. If the member for Gascoyne wanted something done in his district, the same thing applies. Naturally these matters have to be referred to the seat of Government. It is necessary that they should be; otherwise how could the Treasurer keep a check on the finances? The Federal Treasurer must have control and these matters must be referred to Melbourne. With regard to the transfer of properties, the Government should have transferred that loan or relieved us of it. There is a sinking fund. The Commonwealth should have taken these properties over. I agree with the member for Irwin regarding the money taken by the Commonwealth from the Surplus Revenue Fund. The Commonwealth had no right to do that without having first consulted the States. It was a mistake on the part of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Troy: A mistake?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, intentional or otherwise, but still a mistake.

The Minister for Mines: It might not have been such a disadvantage after all that those properties were not taken over, because we could not erect similar buildings at the same cost.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is a large number of properties in the goldfields areas which the Commonwealth should have taken over, and when these places go down a little, the Commonwealth do not want them.

Mr. Gardiner: The whole of the States in 1903 asked the Commonwealth to take over

transferred properties and to take over our responsibilities for the expenditure, and our bonds.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They should have done so.

Mr. Gardiner: The Constitution says that they shall, not may, pay us as soon as they take them over.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I agree that there is no necessity for the Commonwealth to start new departments in this State. There was no necessity for them to start the Commonwealth Savings Bank. This was detrimental to the State. I think that arrangements could still be made with the Commonwealth to take over the State Savings Bank without any loss to this State.

The Minister for Mines: Then they must have altered since you negotiated with them.

Mr. Gardiner: They offered to allow the States 75 per cent. of the money if permitted to take over the savings banks.

The Minister for Mines: But they would not take over our securities.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I believe that arrangements could be made even now. There was no necessity for the Commonwealth to start an Electoral Department, or an Analytical Department.

Mr. Gardiner: Again they offered to take over our Taxation Department for 20 per cent. of what it was costing us. I said, "Right," but none of the other States would agree.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In all probability we could have combined their work with ours just as cheaply. A Commonwealth member once said to me that unless I agreed to what he wanted he would start a works department here or advocate the starting of one. I replied that he could go to Halifax and start it as soon as he liked. I did not agree to what he asked. The Commonwealth Governments are all the same, and I am satisfied that they are trying to build up big staffs in each State and make the positions more important.

Mr. Gardiner: Hear, hear!

Mr. Davies: And that will lead to unification.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In other words, they are trying to bring in unification by degrees, and the people of this State, members of Parliament included, are to a certain extent encouraging them in this direction. Immediately the Federal Government open a sub-department in this State there is an agitation that the State department should be closed down and that there should be only one department. The people who thus agitate are merely encouraging the Federal Government to go on opening the various sub-departments in the State.

Mr. Gardiner: Take the Savings Bank, that is a striking instance.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Take the Quarantine Department. The State had a Chief Quarantine Officer for whose services the Commonwealth Government were contributing £150 a year. They were not satisfied with

this. They appointed a Chief Quarantine Officer who gets about £1,000 a year and he has some assistants. Take the Analytical Department. The whole of the Commonwealth work was carried on by this State for £400 a year. The Commonwealth were not satisfied and appointed an analyst of their own who gets £800 to £1,000 a year and has a staff of assistants. This is largely due to the fact that the men appointed set out to build up big staffs. This development is noticeable within the State also. Once a small department is opened the officers never rest until the make it of such importance that they will be able to command a higher salary and run the State into greater expense.

Hon. P. Collier: The people in the outlying portions of this State have the same complaint against centralisation here as we have against federation.

Mr. Willecock: Quite so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think that we in Western Australia suffer a lot, and even more than the other States, from the fact that our Federal representatives do not make Western Australia their home.

Mr. Harrison: The sooner they move the seat of government to Canberra, the better it will be for all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Our members in the Federal Parliament come to Western Australia for a week or two every year. When a member has been residing in Melbourne for 20 years, his politics are not those of Western Australia. His environment is such that his politics become Victorian and all his views shape themselves according to the policy of the Press of Victoria which is before him day after day. He cannot get away from that environment, and we in consequence are suffering, perhaps more than any other State. In 1915 a Federal member in Sydney told me that he would like to represent Western Australia in the Federal Parliament. I asked him the reason. He replied, "If there is Heaven in politics, it is in representing Western Australia in the Federal Parliament." I said, "How do you make that out any more than in the case of New South Wales?" He replied, "A West Australian representative need go back only once a year and then the people make a hero of him, but if I do not visit my State once a fortnight, the people want to know what has become of me." That is the difference in the position. We in Western Australia suffer because our members stay away too long from the country they represent. If this convention is to be held, it is necessary that every preparation should be made to place all the information available before the delegates who will represent the State. We should get it out of our heads that there is any possibility that we can get out of Federation. We cannot do so and must make the best of a bad bargain. Above all things, do not let us blame the Federal Government in regard to our own debts. We are responsible

ourselves for these. Let us take our share of the responsibility. Western Australia, although perhaps not in as good a position as we would like it to be, is probably as sound financially as any of the other States. We have to pay our share of Federation; we must pay our share of old-age pensions and invalid pensions; we must contribute towards the upkeep of our post office and the Defence Department, and all the other departments which are run in the interests of the general community.

Mr. Harrison: Not forgetting the baby bonus.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have to pay that too, and we are getting it back. We have to contribute our share towards the whole cost of administration in Western Australia, in conjunction with that in the other States. We are sometimes prone to condemn the Federal people too strongly. The Minister for Works said that they were extravagant, and that the roof would probably fall down if he spoke as the Federal Government deserved of their extravagance. I do not know why the roof of this Chamber has not fallen in before. I have heard the Minister make the very building vibrate with the sound of his voice in speaking of the extravagance of the Labour Government when they were in office. If the Labour Government were extravagant, what can be said of the extravagance which has occurred since? There is no doubt the convention will be held at an early date. I hope Ministers will set about obtaining all the information necessary to supply to those who are elected to the convention, so that they may place the requirements of Western Australia before that body when it meets. While that is being done, let us not appoint eight or ten extra Ministers to assist the Government. So long as Ministers are supported by a majority of the House, I do not care who they are, for they will be the proper people to place our views before the convention. The responsibility must rest on the shoulders of the executive heads of this State. They are the people who should collect the information required.

Mr. Harrison: Do you not agree with a committee doing it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We have a committee of eight Ministers elected by Parliament. If members on the cross benches have no confidence in them, let them put the Government out of office. It has surprised me of late to notice how often members on the cross benches have requested that certain things should be done which would tie the hands of the Ministry. They evidently do not trust Ministers.

Hon. P. Collier: We have to stand by the Government at every turn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On every occasion that a man is in difficulties he tries to throw the blame on someone else.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [9.20]: I wish to dissociate myself from the remarks of the Minister for Works. Seeing that he has made a statement on the matter, it may be imagined even by hon. members, that it was a Ministerial statement. On this question he and I differ, and are almost as far apart as the poles. I hope I am a good Australian. My interests, both politically and privately, and in every other respect, are first of all Western Australian. I want to see Western Australia receive proper treatment at the hands of the Federal authorities whilst we remain a part of the Federation. All this talk about cutting the painter with the rest of Australia is nonsense. To do so would be impossible and impracticable, and it is only beating the air to talk about it. I agree that we have a good case to put before the Federal authorities with regard to the special treatment we should receive at their hands, as compared with that accorded to the rest of Australia. I think they realise it to a certain extent, though not to the full extent. They are not likely to realise it to the full until the Federal representatives who are said to represent Australia, come to Western Australia and study on the spot some of the problems they ought to understand, and that they have to face as well as we have in the good government of the Commonwealth. I do not altogether agree with some of the statements that have been made with regard to our Federal representatives. If they have failed us they have only failed us in common with other people who have been placed in the same position. Every party in this State, and in the other States of the Commonwealth, has made exactly the same statement about the representatives of the other parties which sit in the Federal Parliament. I have no hesitation in saying that, whether it be the Labour party, the National party or the country party, that is represented in the Federal Parliament, before many years have passed we shall find representatives of the other parties declaring that this party has neglected the interests of Western Australia, and become absorbed in those of Victoria and New South Wales.

Mr. Troy: What has the Senate done for us?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They were all right a little while ago. It is more a matter of opposing the representatives of the other parties than it is of actually degrading their value, because they have not interested themselves in Western Australian affairs. I agree with the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) that the Senate is a huge farce, the greatest farce ever perpetrated upon a democratic community. It will not help us, however, to say while the Senate lasts that it is a farce, and take no action to abolish it or improve it. I do not think it is possible to abolish the second Chamber in Australia. For many reasons, which I need not go into now, it might be dangerous to do so.

My personal belief is that the Senate should be made a State House for the purpose of getting over the difficulty such as that which arose in connection with the Referendum. The Federal authorities said to the smaller States, "We will give you the second Chamber in which you will receive equal representation." They overlooked the fact that we were gradually growing towards a method of election to the Federal as well as the State Parliaments on definite party lines, and that sooner or later it would not be a State House representing State matters, but would be a House on the same lines as the House of Representatives, although elected on a different basis, representing purely party interests. Take Sir Josiah Symon, one of the best representatives the Senate ever had, from the point of view of his consideration of Australian interests, as well as the interests of his own State. He stood up for those interests even against his own party, until finally he refused to accept the dictates of that party when the fusion took place. He stood for the Senate at the following election, and we all know how he came out. At the previous election when he was attached to his party he came out at the top of the poll. Whilst we may talk about there being no party from the point of view of the best interests of the country, when it comes to a question of election we know that the party question is driven home to us with the object of defeating the other man. That is what really happens. If we divide ourselves into small sections, the other party that is well organised must defeat our interests. That is the condition of affairs that exists in Australia. If we want a second Chamber that is to be essentially a State Chamber, we should see that it is elected direct from representatives of our State Parliament. It should be made up of men who have sat in our own Parliament, not, however, of men who have been sitting day after day dealing only with matters which have been dealt with by another Chamber.

Mr. Gardiner: Would there not be a likelihood of the same party feeling coming up again in such a Parliament?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not to the same extent. There have been many occasions when we have had to elect select committees. I know of only one instance in which there was a squabble over such an election. It is a simple matter to appoint a select committee to make inquiries affecting the welfare of only one person, but it would be difficult to appoint representatives to go from this Parliament at £1,000 a year to decide upon all those issues which so vitally affect our welfare. Many of our difficulties to-day are apparently due to our being so far removed from the seat of government. The same complaints we are making against the Federal Government are constantly being made in different parts of the State against the State Government. I do not know how that is to be got over.

Mr. Troy: By some other system.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It may be possible to have some better system, but I have never seen anything different in any other part of the world. The more remote parts of the State complain about the centralised system of administration, or that some influence is brought to bear at the seat of government against some outlying part of the State. The member for Kalgoorlie knows that when he first stood for Parliament in Kalgoorlie he declared that if he were elected he would live in his electorate and not in Perth, and that he would not be influenced by Perth. It was not long before he had to do the same as other members had to do. He could not attend to his duties and have his home in Kalgoorlie. Many people in the country imagine that because one's parliamentary duties compel one to live near the seat of government, one has no interest in the affairs of the country. This is particularly so in regard to Ministers. The same thing applies to our Federal members. They cannot come here every fortnight.

Mr. Troy: Some of them do not even come here once a year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Probably they do not come here as frequently as they might, but the Federal Parliament sits very often. As the member for North-East Fremantle has said, State members themselves are sometimes responsible for that condition of affairs. We frequently get requests from our electors upon purely Federal matters. We should say that we are not going to attend to such matters, that the people have their Federal representatives for this purpose, and that we have no right to interfere with them and that they should pass the matter on to the right quarter. I receive more requests from my electors on Federal affairs than does the Federal representative, Mr. Prowse. They do not seem to know that he is their member for Federal matters. And all State members find themselves in the same position. We State members ought to refuse to deal with such requests. We ought to refuse even in the interests of our Federal members. If a matter arises which affects our interests and concerns the Federal authorities, we ought to put it before our Federal members. Our Federal members complain that when they come over here, nobody says anything to them about Federal matters. It is true that the newspapers make a noise on that subject sometimes. But the fact is that we do not use our Federal members as we ought to use them. We ought to compel them to take sufficient interest in these matters to make them effectually our Federal members. It is the most difficult thing in the world to get the Federal members representing this State to come together for the purpose of considering matters submitted to them. I suppose they, like State members, are slightly jealous of each other, particularly if they happen to belong to different parties. Let me point out that a State member will rise here and ask ques-

tions concerning another member's constituency, for the purpose of getting one in on that member and making his electors think that he is neglecting their interests. Possibly my remarks will be interpreted by hon. members as meaning that we have not a special case calling for special consideration at the hands of the Federal Government. I think we have such a case. I have raised my voice against the intrusion of the Federal Government into the State sphere of activity. I contend that the Commonwealth Government never had any reason for establishing a Commonwealth Savings Bank. The State Governments were doing the Savings Bank work quite well. I fought against the introduction of the Commonwealth Savings Bank. However, merely to put our heads in the sand as regards this matter would be absurd. There are the two Savings Banks side by side, competing with each other. An hon. member suggested here recently that we ought to increase the rate of interest in our State Savings Bank merely for the purpose of getting more of our people's money away from the Commonwealth Savings Bank. We ought not to consider the matter from that standpoint. It is the people's money that is in question, and the same people who make up the State make up the Commonwealth also. It is to the interest of the people that we should use their money at as little administrative cost as possible. The administrative cost to-day is doubled all along the line. If the Commonwealth Government will not meet us to our complete satisfaction, we must go some way to meet them. Indeed, the people are compelling us to do that. The people are saying that there is no reason for all this duplication. Still, very few in this community really understand or appreciate that the Federal Government belongs to them just as much as does the State Government, and that they can influence the Federal Government in exactly the same way as they can influence the State Government. I do not hold with the idea that there must be unanimity among the State Governments before they can approach the Federal Government. At Premiers' Conferences I have seen more than one battle royal between New South Wales and Victoria out of which possibly we could have got some advantage. More than once at Conferences the Prime Minister has laid it down that unless the States are unanimous on a subject, the Commonwealth Government can do nothing with regard to it. Personally I believe that Victoria and New South Wales will always put their heads together to prevent agreement among the States on certain subjects. If we can make a satisfactory arrangement with the Federal Government, we ought to make it. I believe we could get proper consideration from the Federal authorities. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) the other night spoke about a certain action of this Government as being opposed to the spirit of the Fed-

eral Constitution. At the very time the hon. member was saying this, I was advised that the special tribunal set up by the Federal Government to deal with the price of coal had decided on an increase of 3s. per ton. Although I, as Minister for Railways, am the biggest user of coal in Western Australia, I was never consulted as to whether there was any necessity to put up the price. However, the Commonwealth Government are not likely to do anything injurious to Victoria, and so Morwell coal has been exempted from the increase in price, ostensibly because that coal is to be used for the purpose of generating electricity, which in turn is to be used for the establishment of industries in Victoria. Three shillings per ton has been put on to the price of Collic coal, which we desire to use in order to establish industries in Western Australia. We shall be unable to do so if the increased price continues.

Mr. Davies: Did the Victorian Government agree to the exemption of Morwell coal?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not care whether they agreed or not. If the Federal Government have not power to compel all the States to act on the one basis, then the Federal Constitution is not worth a dump. In that case the proper course would be for one State to take up the public utilities of all the States and say, "Hang the Federal Government!" Here in Western Australia we are attempting to balance up the population of the continent, but we get no consideration from the Federal Government. While we have a good deal to say to the Federal Government, we are not going to say it in the fashion that is proposed and get any consideration. The proper method is first of all to draw the attention of our Federal representatives to the disabilities under which we suffer, and insist that they shall take a proper stand in the matter. Although we have only five members in a House of 75, still, they represent the balance of power. A single Tasmanian representative once stood at the Table of the House of Representatives and said, "I am not attached to any party, and I am only one representative, but I hold the fate of Australia in my hands." If one Tasmanian representative could do that, five Western Australian representatives can do it in the House of Representatives, and six Western Australian senators can do it in the Senate. We have roughly one-third of the continent to develop; and, as I have said at Premiers' Conferences, it is useless to talk about populating Australia if the whole of the population is to be placed on one side of Australia, which will mean over-balancing the continent. We have to develop this western part of Australia, and we can only do it by encouragement of our industries. The Eastern States were able to develop their industries prior to Federation. In pre-Federal days the only import-

ant industry we had, our only industry worth consideration, was gold mining. With some of the things said by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) I agree, and I am even prepared to endorse some of the contentions of the member for Kataanning (Mr. Thomson); but I submit that if this community of 300,000 souls had not been in the Federation when the war took place, we could never have got through.

The Minister for Works: We would have had double the population but for Federation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In spite of that, I still say we could not have got through. We would not have had a hope in life. As it is, we got through better than most other countries.

Mr. Harrison: We had the cheapest breakfast table in the world.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some benefits have accrued to Western Australia from Federation, but those benefits have been largely counterbalanced by the fact that the Commonwealth has never shown an appreciation of our special difficulties as the youngest State with the largest area and almost the smallest population. After the Melbourne land boom burst, Victoria was saved by this State; and Victoria ought to show us some consideration to-day. But I am afraid we are apt to forget the fact that the differences between the Federal Government and the Government of this State are not all the difficulties which confront Western Australia to-day. The disabilities under which our people labour, are greater than any of those arising in connection with State Government activities. Because of Federation our base metal producers have suffered most severely—perhaps more severely than anyone else has suffered because of Federal policy. If we are going to have an inquiry as proposed, it should be an inquiry from all points of view. It should not be restricted to one department alone, but it should cover all the factors which have a bearing upon the development of our industries. We should ask the Federal Government to take into consideration the removal of certain embargoes. We should ask the Federal Government whether they cannot under the Federal Constitution assist us with bounties. I contend that Federal bounties should not go only to Queensland for the purpose of establishing the sugar industry, but also to Western Australia for the purpose of developing some of our national resources.

Mr. Thomson: What about my committee?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member has in mind the establishment of a committee of members of Parliament.

Mr. Thomson: Not necessarily members of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: With assistance from outside, we have already drawn

the attention of the Federal Government to some of Western Australia's disabilities. But we are not going to get our disabilities removed by having three members of Parliament, or six members of Parliament, going round the Federal departments and taking notes here and there and so imagining that they are getting up a case which the Federal Government will take seriously. The Federal Government will not take the slightest notice of such a case. They will say, "As a Government we must deal with a Government. If you have a case, make it as a Government." Our people are suffering severely by reason of the embargoes imposed by the Federal Government, and the proper course is to advise the members interested in the industries concerned, and those members will secure redress. The base metal producers brought their case to me, and I approached Mr. Watt, the Federal Treasurer, and pointed out the difficulties under which they were labouring. I knew that the industry was practically crippled by the embargo. I attended the deputation not for the purpose of making out a case for these people because I did not know it, but I wanted to show that the Mines Department was sympathetic with them in their efforts to try to get the disabilities removed. When I heard their case, I was satisfied that they had made out a good one for the Federal Government to consider. They got that consideration. I do not deny that some of these things which have been done by the Federal Government have been most harmful to this State, but the actions of the Federal Government in those instances were absolutely essential during war time and for a period subsequently. If an injury was done to industry in this State for the good of the rest of Australia and for the Empire as well, now that times are getting back to normal, we should be repaid by assistance rendered to us by the rest of Australia. I have tried to get that assistance, but have not been able to get it so far. There is the base metal industry, for instance. I want the Federal Government to appreciate the difficulties that that industry has experienced. I want them to assist in repaying for the hardships that industry has gone through, and to help that and other industries in Western Australia as well to re-establish themselves.

Mr. Gardiner: They are taking 75 per cent. of the profits of the mines now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have to contend with very great difficulties. I do not think that the motion will be of any avail except in so far as it has caused a discussion, which in itself is valuable. I believe that the amendment by the member for Katanning, if agreed to, would be even less effective. Having drawn attention to the necessity for presenting the case for Western Australia in its strongest phases, the Government, I am sure, will continue as they have been doing, to prepare the case for the Federal convention, should it be held, with a view to enabling the people in the East to get a better appreciation of the difficulties

we are confronted with. We want to prepare a case that will enable members who are elected to take part in the convention, to fight on clear issues to secure the removal of the disabilities as they exist at present. I am not a little Australian. I want to see the whole of Australia developed. It is a tremendous task and is almost too great for the few people we have to attempt it. As the task of developing Western Australia is a huge one for the State Government, so also is the task of developing Australia as a whole, a huge one for the Federal Government. While I ask for generous treatment to be extended by the community to any Government, no matter who they may be, in charge of the affairs of the State, I suggest that the same generous feeling should be extended to the Commonwealth Government in their task of developing Australia too. It is no easy task. We have a duty to perform in drawing attention to those disabilities which exist in our own State, and let us go to the convention fully armed with all information upon the serious questions which will be submitted to the convention for consideration.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.49]: I do not support the amendment because I do not think it will serve any good purpose, and, as the Minister for Mines has already pointed out, the motion only serves the purposes of a general discussion. A considerable amount of complaint has been made regarding the injustice done to Western Australia by the Federal Government. I have no doubt that we can claim that had Western Australia not entered federation, the financial position of this State would have been better than it is to-day. Our population would probably have been larger; our industries would have been further advanced, and we would have been largely self-contained so far as secondary industries are concerned. Our chief disability is that, with the removal of the customs barriers, a great majority of our secondary industries have been destroyed because they could not compete with the larger business concerns in the Eastern States.

Mr. Money: They were established earlier over there.

Mr. TROY: There is also another reason. The business firms in Western Australia are largely branches of businesses in the Eastern States. Naturally, such firms are averse to spending their capital in this State, seeing that they have so much already invested in the Eastern States, from where they are able to supply the needs of the smaller population in Western Australia. We complain that we have lost, according to the report of the Under Treasurer, Mr. Owen, practically eight millions of revenue which would have come to Western Australia if it had not been for federation, and we also have reason to complain regarding the great extravagance of the Federal Government, particularly the present Federal Government. Quite without

any party bias, we can readily admit that the present Federal Government is the most extravagant we have known. That extravagance is notable in Western Australia. We also complain of the fact that the Federal Government have developed a considerable number of departments which could have been carried on by one authority. The work of some of these departments could just as well have been carried out by the State departments. I have in mind the Repatriation Department which is erecting soldiers' homes in this State. That work could easily have been done by the Workers' Homes Board here and the work could have been done more reasonably and more efficiently than it is being done by the Federal Government. I shall not be surprised if we hear a lot more about the soldiers' homes in the future, and when that question is looked into, the results will not be very creditable to the Federal department concerned. I do not complain that we feel the Federal bond in this State, because, as already pointed out, the complaint of Western Australia regarding want of sympathy and the centralisation by the Federal Government in Melbourne, is only the complaint which the people in the back country have regarding the State Government in Western Australia. It is only natural that that should be so because members who represent Western Australia in the Federal Parliament are too far removed from the people they represent to give effective consideration to the wishes of their constituents here. Unless members of Parliament keep in touch with their constituents, and have something in common with the people they represent, they adapt themselves to the conditions obtaining in the cities. As a result, I have no doubt the Western Australian members in the Federal Parliament have, probably unconsciously, adopted a Melbourne attitude, and they are not serving the best interests of the people of Western Australia. I do not know whether the Minister for Mines correctly stated that I agreed that several senators who represent Western Australia have been our best representatives. For a number of years I have been dissatisfied with them. I have considered for a long time that they could have used what ability they possessed in conserving the interests of Western Australia far more energetically than they have done for years past. Apart from that, I am rather glad that the pressure of the Federal bond has been felt in this State for I have realised that the Federal Government have been invading avenues in this State which should have been left to the State. Since the Federal Government continue to create further departments, I believe the time is coming when there will be a system of unification. The present Parliamentary system does not adequately serve the interests of the people of Australia, and the time will come when it will be abandoned in favour of some more efficient system. The present system is obsolete. The grievance the people of Perth have against the Federal

Parliament is the grievance my constituents have against the State Government.

The Minister for Mines: The same thing applies to every Government.

Mr. TROY: There is no doubt about that. Wherever there is the pressure of population, the interests of that population will be served at the expense of the people in the back country. The time is ripe for the introduction of a new form of government in Australia. I am satisfied that Western Australia cannot develop the North-West of Western Australia, although I am quite prepared to give the Government every credit for being in earnest regarding the development of that portion of the State. Although the Minister for the North-West, Mr. Colabatch, is enthusiastic according to his speeches, the Government have neither the money nor the opportunity of looking after the interests of the North-West as they should be attended to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Premier: We will probably look after them better than the interests of the Northern Territory have been looked after by the Federal Government.

Mr. TROY: That may be so, but we cannot do much. Our population is too small. The Federal Government will never lend money for the development of the North-West although Mr. Miles, M.L.C., and others may think that they will be able to get money from them. The Federal Government will not lend that money unless we hand over to that Government authority over that part of this State.

The Premier: The Federal Government would not have more people there if they took it over. It would be developed with our money.

Mr. TROY: This State has neither the population nor the money to do the work.

The Premier: We have both.

Mr. TROY: My experience in Western Australia is that whenever facilities are to be cut down, those in the country are dealt with first. Whenever the Government have to retrench, it is done in the country first.

The Minister for Mines: If the Federal Government could make a survey of the North-West, we could develop it better than they could.

Mr. TROY: They are not going to do that. They will not spend a penny in our territory.

The Minister for Mines: It is their territory just as much as it is ours.

Mr. TROY: That may be so, but unless they have the territory they will not spend money there.

The Minister for Mines: That is not a proper Australian attitude.

Mr. TROY: The Federal Government have never advanced money for internal development of a State.

The Minister for Mines: Of course they have. What about the Murray River water

scheme? They are spending three millions there.

Mr. TROY: Yes, but that money is only lent to the State concerned.

The Minister for Mines: No, the Federal Government are taking separate responsibilities for that money.

Mr. TROY: I did not know that.

The Minister for Mines: Why can they not do that for Western Australia?

Mr. TROY: However, apart from that, I think that Western Australia is too big for one Government.

The Premier: Australia, you might also add, is too big for one Government.

Mr. TROY: The north of Queensland cannot be adequately administered from Brisbane. The northern part of New South Wales is agitating for separation from the Government at Sydney. The Riverina is carrying on an agitation for a separate province. South Australia had to give up the Northern Territory because it was too big and too weighty.

Mr. Johnston: Mildura wants another State.

Mr. TROY: It would be a good thing if the southern portion and north-western portion of Western Australia were declared separate States. I welcome the fact that the activities of the Federal Government are tending towards unification. We have no reason to cavil at the Senate being a party House. Our Legislative Council is a party House. The Senate is more truly representative than is our Legislative Council. I see no hope of the people of Western Australia getting self government until another convention is held, and until the individual States are constituted on a different electoral basis. We have to approach the position sooner or later. The Federal Government are short of money and will be shorter still, and in consequence the States will receive less and less. The sooner we have a convention which will fix the revenues of the States, fix the activities of all Governments and give the people of Australia more local representation, the better it will be for us all round.

On motion by Mr. Brown, debate adjourned.

BILL—PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Second Reading.

Mr. SMITH (North Perth) [10.2] in moving the second reading said: I feel sure all members will agree to pass the second reading without delay. The Bill is a very excellent one. It has passed the Council.

Mr. Munsie: That makes me suspicious of it.

Mr. SMITH: It has received all the necessary amendments in that House, and has come to us in modern form. Therefore, there is not much need to further amend

it. I hope it will meet with the approval of every member who has the welfare of the brute creation at heart. It may be said that the amendments introduced in the Bill might have been brought down in the form of an amendment of the existing Act. However, owing to the length of time which has elapsed since that Act was passed, so many amendments have become necessary that it would be undesirable to bring down an amending Bill. Far better is it to have a new Bill altogether. In connection with land administration we have no fewer than 16 amending Acts which, it will be admitted, must be very confusing to all concerned. The Bill consolidates the best in the existing Act, with many modern amendments taken from other States where the legislation is more up to date. The result is a really good Bill, and I am sure hon. members will find a difficulty in suggesting improvements.

Mr. Pickering: You have not told us much about it.

The Premier: He has told you everything.

Mr. SMITH: The Bill has been on the Notice Paper for some weeks, and now the member for Sussex is so anxious to pass it that he cannot wait to have its provisions explained. I am pleased to know that the hon. member is so enthusiastic, and I hope he will not be the cause of any unnecessary delay. If hon. members will refer to the memorandum of the Bill they will there see the chief amendments to the existing Act. Clause 4 contains one of them. With the exception of the several paragraphs, the provisions in that clause are all in the existing Act.

Mr. Maley: That does not convey much information to us.

Mr. SMITH: If the hon. member will read the clause, he will see exactly what it contains. Necessarily the Bill confers certain powers on the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you not think we ought to have the Act administered by a board?

Mr. SMITH: No board is provided for. That is one of the merits of the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: One of its defects, surely.

Mr. SMITH: I am confident the leader of the Opposition will give the Bill strong support. Obviously, the Bill must be administered by somebody, and in this State the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals makes it its business to carry out this work. I should like to pay a tribute to Mr. Titus Lander, once a member of this House, for the very excellent work he did in connection with that society. It is almost entirely due to his wonderful energy that the society has attained so strong a position in Western Australia. The member for Guildford reminds me that Mr. Lander's work for the society was entirely honorary. At all events, the State

to-day is reaping the benefit of that work. I will not weary the House by recounting what the society has done, for all are fully seized of the excellent work of that organisation, which deserves to be backed up by some statutory authority for its activities. One of the main features of the Bill is the prevention of pigeon-shooting from traps.

Mr. Troy: What do you think about that?

Mr. SMITH: I think it is an exceedingly cruel practice. There is also a provision against trafficking in worn-out horses. Members know that a great deal of that traffic is going on. Many horses, unfit for work, are sold for a song.

Mr. Maley: What is the difference between shooting pigeons out of traps and shooting them elsewhere?

Mr. SMITH: We will deal with that when we come to the clause.

Mr. Pickering: You would not have them shot in the traps, would you?

Mr. SMITH: Another provision deals with the laying of poison.

Mr. Maley: Poison for rabbits?

Mr. Duff: I had 48 sheep destroyed in one night by wild dogs.

Mr. SMITH: I am speaking of the laying of poison in towns, where very frequently it is picked up by animals for whom it was not intended. In some cases we have had children poisoned in the same way. Another provision is for the destruction of animals suffering from disease or accident. The existing Act does not give the society power to destroy an animal with a broken leg.

Mr. Maley: But the laying of poison could be prohibited by the local authority.

Mr. SMITH: That means has been found ineffective. There is also a provision in regard to the doping of racehorses, which will appeal to hon. members interested in racing. It has been held to be a cruel practice, and the Bill seeks to put a stop to it. Hon. members will agree that it is a very desirable provision. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th October.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [10.15]: The question of extending the franchise for another place has been discussed session after session for a very long time. I hope that members will have none of this Bill. The measure does not anticipate merely the simple change which the leader of the Opposition would lead us to believe. He wants to abolish every existing qualification.

Mr. Munsie: That is so.

Mr. Troy: What is wrong with that?

The PREMIER: The present qualifications for another place have stood the test of time.

Mr. Willcock: But have not given satisfaction.

The PREMIER: Under this proposal every qualification must go, and in place we are to have household franchise.

Mr. Troy: Is the test of time the only justification for retaining the present qualification?

The PREMIER: I know that this Bill does not go so far as some members would like to go.

Hon. P. Collier: No wonder we are drifting towards unification.

The PREMIER: Some members would like to abolish the franchise, and even the Upper House itself.

Hon. P. Collier: It is too moderate.

Mr. Willcock: That is so.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition would have us believe that the Upper House is elected entirely by rich men.

Mr. Munsie: So it is.

The PREMIER: And that only the rich man has the right to vote for representatives in that House. I would emphasise that the Upper House is the House of the married man and the thrifty man. For every vote for the Upper House possessed by rich men in this State, I venture to say there are 100 votes exercised by men of comparatively small means.

Mr. Munsie: Hundreds of married men have not a vote for it at all.

The PREMIER: Almost every married man in this State has a vote for the Upper House.

Mr. Munsie: There are hundreds on the fields who for years have not had a vote for it.

The PREMIER: Every married man living in a house has a vote for the Upper House, for surely there is not a house in this country that is not worth £17 a year!

Mr. Munsie: There are hundreds on the fields who cannot get a vote for it.

The PREMIER: If a man lives in a house worth £17 per annum he has a vote for the Council. If he owns £50 worth of freehold land, or if he holds leasehold he has a vote.

Mr. Munsie: There are thousands who do not own £50 worth of freehold land.

The PREMIER: Every man who wishes can do so. Surely everyone who wishes to qualify can qualify under the present franchise.

Mr. Munsie: No.

The PREMIER: Surely every man occupying a house worth the name has a vote for the Upper House.

Mr. Munsie: He has not.

The PREMIER: I think he has.

Mr. Willcock: Many will not get their names on the rolls for fear of being prosecuted.

The PREMIER: I think we ought to remember just how low the present qualification is. The ownership of £50 worth of land, not £50,000 worth, not £5,000 worth, not £500 worth, but £50 worth, entitles a man to a vote. If he has £50 worth of land in Kalgoorlie and £50 worth in Perth he has a vote for both provinces. Some people are under the impression that only the man who owns a considerable amount of property has a right to vote for the Council. I wish to impress upon members that the qualification is a very moderate one.

Hon. P. Collier: So moderate that it excludes 100,000 of those entitled to vote.

The PREMIER: But they need not be excluded.

Hon. P. Collier: The fact remains that they are excluded.

The PREMIER: They need not be excluded. Every man who does his duty and takes unto himself a wife must have a vote.

Mr. Munsie: Not under the present franchise.

The PREMIER: Yes, under the present franchise.

Mr. Munsie: Then how is it that there are only about 12 electors with votes in the Forrest electorate?

The PREMIER: Is there a married man in Perth occupying a house which is not worth £17 a year? I know of only one.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If there is one that is quite sufficient.

The PREMIER: No, that does not prove the rule; that is the exception. I am talking about the 120,000 men in the metropolitan area. Every married man in the metropolitan area must have a vote for the Council. Every man who owns a small block of land must have a vote. On the goldfields, and in other parts of the State, many people occupy temporary houses.

Mr. Munsie: Really substantial four-roomed houses for which they cannot get a vote.

The PREMIER: I cannot understand that, though we all know that in the pioneering stages, and on the goldfields and in the timber areas, people do live in makeshift places. I do not object to giving the franchise to a man who lives in a reasonably comfortable four-roomed house anywhere, but we are asked to enfranchise the man who merely puts four poles into the ground and pitches a tent around them. A man might buy a roll of hessian and put up half a dozen houses and, under the proposal of the leader of the Opposition, he would be regarded as a householder.

Mr. Munsie: None of the men on the timber mills, except the manager, is entitled to vote.

The PREMIER: Because such men pay very little for their houses.

Mr. Munsie: Are not they desirable citizens?

The PREMIER: Yes, very desirable.

Mr. Munsie: Are not they entitled to a vote?

The PREMIER: If married, and living in such a house—

Mr. Munsie: Hundreds of them are married.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition is asking us to agree to wipe out every existing qualification and to substitute the household qualification. He wishes to extend this qualification to the man who attaches any sort of dwelling to the soil.

Hon. P. Collier: Your colleague, the Minister for Education, said only a few weeks ago that he was now, and always had been, a strong believer in the household franchise.

The PREMIER: Yes, I can quite understand that. If the hon. member would give us a definition of what constitutes a reasonable house, we might all agree with him, but when he wishes to designate a temporary structure a house, it is quite another matter. Whether the rental value be fixed at £27, £15, or £10 a year, it is only a rough and ready means of arriving at the qualification.

Hon. P. Collier: Very rough and not very ready.

The PREMIER: The hon. member wishes to introduce household franchise and to make a tent constitute a house. I hope that members will not agree to this. What reason has the hon. member put forward to justify so drastic a change? Surely the Council has been a very useful House. I suppose members of the Opposition realise just how useful it has been at times, and I think we ought to maintain a reasonable franchise. I would impress upon members that it is so easy to earn the right to a vote for the Upper House. Any man in this country could save enough and he would not have a vote.

Hon. P. Collier: He might save thousands of pounds and put it into Government bonds, bonds, and he would not have a vote.

The PREMIER: That would be a good investment.

Hon. P. Collier: But he would not have a vote and yet he might be a better man than he who put his money into a block of land.

Mr. Willecock: It would not be a very desirable investment to put £50 into vacant land. You cannot get much of a house for £50.

The PREMIER: It is the land that counts, not the house. This question has been debated time and again. The object of members opposite is to whittle away the franchise for the Upper House little by little until it is completely abolished. I hope that members will not agree to this proposal. I, in common with my colleague the Attorney General, would like to see household franchise introduced if we could get a proper definition of a house and provided that the house were a reasonably comfortable permanent structure.

Mr. Munsie: This is the same definition as they have in South Australia and they manage there.

The PREMIER: South Australia is a very different place from Western Australia.

Mr. Munsie: But they manage all right.

The PREMIER: I hope I shall have the support of a majority of members in opposing the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [10.27]: The leader of the Opposition is to be commended for his moderate speech in moving the second reading of this Bill. I have always supported household suffrage for the Upper House.

The Premier: So do I support it, but I want a definition of house.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It is peculiar that a man, whose house situated in one district is valued at £17 10s. a year, should have a vote for the Council, while a similar house in an adjacent district valued at £15 a year does not entitle the occupier to a vote. On the goldfields where this is a burning question, particularly on the occasion of the Council elections, anomalies have given rise to very great heart burnings and discontent.

The Attorney General: I have not had any complaints.

Mr. JOHNSTON: There have been many complaints in the past.

Mr. Munsie: Hundreds of people were not on the roll at the last election and refused to go on.

The Premier: Hundreds were on but did not vote.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The Minister may lay this flattering unction to his soul if the complaints were not in evidence at the last election, that electoral matters on the goldfields have much improved under his administration. I must confess that the Bill is very inadequate in the direction providing a proper franchise for the Upper House, particularly as it will disfranchise a large number of people who to-day have the right to a vote.

Mr. Troy: Then amend it.

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is what I shall endeavour to do if the Bill reaches the Committee stage. At present a large number of producers have the franchise for the Upper House, even if they are not living in separate houses of their own. I have in mind a family of several sons, each of whom is working his own farm but they all live in one homestead and each has a vote for the Upper House. If the Bill is passed in its present form the whole of those young men will lose the franchise. Under the Bill no one would have a vote for the Upper House except the householder, and every householder would have a vote by virtue of his being a householder. That is an undesirable condition of affairs. When all is said and done, the occupancy of a house is only one form of property qualification. I fail to see why should we give the property owner who occupies a house, a vote, and take away from a young man who has no house but who

has 200 or 300 acres of crop and occupies his father's house, the vote that he enjoys to-day. I would give every householder a vote. I am with the leader of the Opposition in giving a household franchise for the Upper House, but would not take the vote away from miners, farmers, producers and others who to-day enjoy their franchise. The leader of the Opposition would have been well advised to have simply brought down a measure removing the present £17 household value anomaly and substituting a household franchise for every householder in the State in addition to the existing qualifications. I have given notice of amendments I intend to move in Committee, which will give every person who has a vote for the Upper House to-day a continued right to that franchise, and also enroll every householder in the State and every returned soldier, sailor, or nurse within the State. I was pleased to hear the words of appreciation which, consistent with his public utterances on the subject, the leader of the Opposition spoke with regard to the returned soldiers, but I was surprised that his Bill did not provide for their enfranchisement, particularly as that franchise had previously been approved with very few dissentient voices by this Chamber last session.

Hon. P. Collier: I got it through this House before, but the Bill was lost in another place, I believe mainly because it contained that provision.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I believed it to be a Government measure, but I do not wish to rob the hon. member of any credit he may deserve in the matter. I have a distinct recollection of the Government introducing the measure, giving returned soldiers a vote for the Upper House, and of that provision being lost in another place.

Hon. P. Collier: That is why the Bill was thrown out in another place.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The whole argument adduced by the leader of the Opposition, as well as the general attitude of the Government of preference to returned soldiers, and the attitude of this House as recorded in its previous actions, justify the extension of the franchise under this measure to all the returned soldiers in the State.

Hon. P. Collier: I am prepared to support you in that amendment.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am glad to hear it. Progress should be the watch-word of the State in the matter of its legislation. The amendments I have foreshadowed are much more fair than is the Bill in its present form. I propose to support the second reading with a view to endeavouring to secure household suffrage, the retention of the existing franchise, and the whole of the qualifications which are at present enjoyed, and also to secure the enfranchisement of returned soldiers, sailors, and nurses. If these amendments are not accepted and the Bill is passed in its present form—

Hon. P. Collier: I think it is sure to do that.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Rather than that a large number of producers, miners, farmers and others who enjoy the franchise to-day should be disfranchised, as proposed in the Bill, I will reserve the right to vote against the measure on the third reading.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.35]: I do not propose to labour the Bill.

Mr. Davies: It has been before us for two years.

Mr. TROY: Although it has been introduced twice, it is worthy of consideration at the hands of this House and should be passed through both Chambers. Surely there can be no valid argument to-day against a Bill of this character, which, while conferring the franchise upon a large section of the people, does not go as far as the franchise in a democratic country should go. I am not complaining that the Bill does not contain all the principles we on this side of the House would like to see embodied in it. The leader of the Opposition has been very moderate in his requests as contained in this Bill. He has not asked for the embodiment in it of our principles.

Mr. Maley: It is a step in that direction.

Mr. TROY: He has given the House an opportunity of going a part of the way, and enfranchising a large number of deserving citizens who have no voice to-day in the government of the country.

The Premier: They have some voice.

Mr. Davies: You take away the voice from others who have a perfect right to it.

Mr. TROY: Why raise that pretence? The hon. member knows that the party with which he is associated has not given the slightest concession in another Chamber. His leader is opposed to the Bill and hopes the House will not accept it.

The Premier: That is so.

Mr. TROY: He says that the present franchise has stood the test of time. So has every other abuse and rotten principle which the people want to get rid of stood the test of time. Every tyranny and despotism has stood the test of time. Sooner or later the people will get rid of them.

The Premier: There is tyranny in Russia.

Mr. TROY: There was a system which stood the test of centuries of time.

Hon. P. Collier: Slavery and every other injustice in the history of the world has stood the test of time.

Mr. TROY: Every evil that we have known has stood the test of centuries. If we are satisfied that what exists now will not exist for all time, what are we here for? Why is there any government? If all is well that now exists no changes are necessary. The Premier does not desire any change. In that respect he is not very different from the late Premier, the member for Moore (Sir Henry Lefroy).

The Premier: I did not say that I desire no change at all, but that I do not desire this change.

Mr. TROY: Can any man pretending to democracy give any valid reason why the people of this country should not be represented in the government of the country in both Houses of Parliament while two Houses exist? The people have no voice in the government of this country, and the present representation is a fraud. With one hand it gives opportunity to govern the country, and with the other hand it takes that opportunity away.

The Premier: How much does Parliament take away?

Mr. Munsie: While the Labour party were in office, 32 of their Bills were rejected.

Mr. TROY: I have a very vivid recollection of how a Government in this House, representing the great mass of the people were embarrassed at every turn by another place. There was a veritable intrigue between members of the then Opposition in this House and the members of another place to embarrass the Government of that day. Another place carried special resolutions condemning the policy of the Labour Government. That condemnation referred to systems and principles now claimed by the present Government, who were then in Opposition. And if a Labour Government came into power to-morrow and had in this Chamber a following like that of the present Premier, namely, two-thirds of the membership of the House, the Upper House would still indulge in opposition. Of course, the Upper House does not indulge in opposition to-day. Members of that House may pretend to a sort of impartiality, but impartiality does not exist and never has existed in that House. Moreover, the straightforward men there do not lay claim to impartiality, which is only claimed by those who want to humbug the people. What objection can there be to giving every person in the country a vote for both Houses of Parliament? Are not they all wealth producers? Are not they all responsible for the values given to property, even though they possess no property themselves?

The Premier: You are quite honest now. You do not believe in this Bill.

Mr. TROY: The Bill represents a step onwards. I have no doubt the leader of the Opposition will withdraw this Bill immediately an assurance is given by the Premier that he himself will introduce a Bill embodying the full principles of representation. I concede that property should have security and protection. But that is all property is entitled to. Property is not entitled to the right to decide what legislation is good for the community, and what is not. The people without property have just as much right to speak on that matter as have the people who own property. There are great numbers of people in this State to-day, people who made the country, not owning property. I doubt whether Paddy Hannan, of Kalgoolie, has a vote for the Upper House; and his name is regarded as the finest name on the goldfields.

Hon. P. Collier: He has no vote for the Upper House. He does not own a house of that kind.

Mr. TROY: But thousands of others, for whom Paddy Hanaan has made wealth, have votes for the Upper House. I know of many men in this country who have given the whole of their lives to develop the mining industry, who probably have made rises in the past but have spent the money again in developing good properties and bad properties, and who have not a vote for the Upper House. I could name dozens of such men in my electorate. I know a man 75 years of age, one of the best prospectors this country ever knew, one of the old brigade, who has not a vote for the Upper House. He lives in a camp, and therefore has not the vote. Hundreds of men working on stations at well sinking and fencing, thousands of navvies who have built our railway lines and who do all the work of the country, thousands of road makers, thousands of men who do the clearing of the land—all these find themselves debarred from the Upper House franchise. Why have they not the vote for the Upper House? They make the values of property.

The Premier: This Bill will not give them that vote.

Hon. P. Collier: That is because you will not let me. I am quite willing to give them the vote.

The Premier: I know that.

Mr. TROY: There are hundreds of railway men in this country living in cottages rented at 4s. per week, and they have not the vote for the Upper House. They keep our railway lines in repair, and they create wealth for this country; but they have not the vote for the Upper House. Then there are the miners in the Wooroloo Sanatorium, who have given their health and their lives for this country; they have not the vote.

Hon. P. Collier: Twenty years in the mines, and then they go to Wooroloo.

Mr. TROY: In contradistinction, there are people in this country who have never done it one service, but who have the vote. The usurer in the city, who lends money, is entitled to a vote. The speculator who buys a block of land of a certain value is entitled to a vote. Persons of ill fame are entitled to a vote.

Hon. P. Collier: And the owners of property in which persons of ill fame reside are entitled to the vote. Such owners are good citizens.

Mr. TROY: Meantime, valuable citizens are entirely shut out from representation.

Hon. P. Collier: The man who owns a house in Roe-street has a vote for the Upper House.

Mr. TROY: Yes; and the occupant of the house has the vote, too, if the owner does not claim it. The member for Geraldton (Mr. Willock) was rebuked to-night because he spoke about defects in the accommodation provided for shearers. The shearers are a body of men who cannot be

done without in this country, who spend their time going from station to station shearing sheep. Without them the wool of the country could not be sent abroad and the money for it could not be brought into Western Australia. But they have no vote for the Upper House. There are hundreds of prospectors and bush workers who have no established homes, and who therefore have not that vote. Yet, quite apart from the large bodies of men whom I have mentioned, even of those who actually possess the franchise two-thirds could be struck off the rolls because they have not property of the necessary value to entitle them to the vote. The present Upper House franchise is most absurd, shutting out, as it does, many of the most deserving and including many of the undeserving. Yet we are told that the people of Western Australia have full representation in the Parliament of the country. I am not a believer in two Houses of Parliament. I think it is a pity that in a country such as this we should have the expense of two Houses of Parliament on our present franchise. I would go further, and abolish one House—I do not care which House, so long as the remaining House is fully representative of the people. There is no valid reason for the existence of two Houses of Parliament. In the early days when responsible Government was given to Western Australia, the Legislative Council was advised by Lord Knutsford to adopt the single Chamber system. He pointed out the experience of Ontario which had a population at that time of about a million people, and he advised Western Australia to profit by their experience. The attitude of the Council on that occasion was that Ontario was not on all fours with Western Australia because the latter was a sovereign State and Ontario stood behind the dominion Parliament of Canada. If that excuse existed then, it does not exist to-day.

The Attorney General: We are still a sovereign State.

Mr. TROY: So is Ontario. To-day it is a State with a population of two millions and it has the single Chamber system still. All the new great provinces of Canada have adopted the single Chamber system, yet in Western Australia we are carrying on what the Premier says has stood the test of time. The two-Chamber system is a crying injustice to the people of Western Australia.

Mr. Pickering: It is not peculiar to Western Australia.

Mr. TROY: That does not matter. The House of Lords is not peculiar to England. The House of Lords, as the leader of the Opposition has pointed out, has less power than the Legislative Council in this State. Whereas legislation becomes law in England after it has been passed twice in the House of Commons, the Council in Western Australia can reject Bills a dozen times. We are considerably behind the conservative Parliament in Great Britain. There has

been a demand from time to time for a change in our Parliamentary system. Although the Bill does not go as far as we would like, it will afford an opportunity of testing the sincerity of members who pretend that they want justice for the people as a whole. The Bill provides a step in the direction of reform. I am afraid that some of the members on the Government side who have spoken on this question are not sincere.

Mr. Brown: Try them.

Mr. TROY: I believe the hon. member is sincere. I think he is on the wrong side of the House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He should have been over here all along.

Mr. Brown: Let us go to the division now.

Mr. TROY: If members on the Government side desire to adopt full adult franchise, we will support them. I hope to see the one Chamber system adopted, for the Legislative Council is the greatest obstacle in the way of reform that we have at the present time.

On motion by Mr. Willecock, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 18th November, 1920.

Motion: Electrical Energy, to inquire by Royal Commission	Page 1706
Bills: City of Perth Endowment Lands, 3a, returned	1712
Public Service Appeal Board, 3a, passed	1712
Guardianship of Infants, report	1712
Factories and Shops, 2a	1712
Opticians, 2a	1724

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

MOTION—ELECTRICAL ENERGY.

To Inquire by Royal Commission.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [4.31]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the feasibility of generating electrical energy at Collie

and transmitting the same from there with a view to reducing the cost of the supply of power for industrial and domestic purposes at centres where it is required.

I have to thank you, Sir, and the House for the courtesy extended to me on two occasions in agreeing to a postponement of the motion. My reason for moving those postponements was that I was particularly busy at the time and, being of some importance, the matter required considerable attention before it could be placed before the House. The present is an age of electricity and it is the duty of the Government to anticipate the future and make provision for all developments, and for the ever-increasing requirements in respect of electrical energy. My aim is to endeavour to point the way by which power can be generated at Collie, or any other centre in Western Australia which would be better than Collie—Collie is the only one we know of at present—at the minimum cost and transmitted to Perth. By adopting such a scheme we should be advancing the interests of this great State and developing our natural industries. I do not for a moment pose as an expert in this matter. In fact, I am only too well aware that my knowledge of electricity is somewhat limited, but from a study of what is going on in other parts of the world, especially Canada and America, and of what is going on in the Commonwealth of Australia, I hope to be able to convince the House of the necessity for the proposed inquiry. Moreover, I hope to induce other members with a greater knowledge than I have of this important question to place that knowledge before the House and so help me to secure a Royal Commission or an advisory board which will thoroughly and exhaustively inquire into the question. The Victorian board to which I will refer later on was a board of experts. I have no intention of asking the Government to appoint any but experts who thoroughly understand the question and who will be able to place before us a report which shall be equally valuable to Western Australia as the report which I have in my hand has been to Victoria. I have from time to time advocated private enterprise, and I have no intention whatever of asking the Government to take up this enormous question themselves or to find the necessary money in order to generate electricity at Collie and transmit it thence to Perth. What I ask them to do is to incur the initial expenditure for this inquiry. That expenditure will be considerable, because the inquiry must not be carried out in any half-hearted manner. Then, when the data has been collected and is available, I am convinced from what I know of people in the old country and in America that if a reasonable scheme is put before them the money will be forthcoming to develop this great enterprise for the