

Mr. Butcher: That is incorrect.

Mr. SCADDAN: It is absolutely correct; no other man could get there in time for nomination. I contend that the time has arrived when the people should be given another opportunity to express their opinion of the policy of the Government, outlined by the Premier, and as to the administration by the Government of the departments. Members should consider the question from that standpoint, not from the standpoint of extending the tenure of Parliament so as to avoid responsibility. If this is done I am satisfied that in the very near future, as the result of members going before the people, we will obtain an alteration in policy and in the administration of the departments.

On motion by the Premier debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.47 p.m.

Legislative Assembly, Tuesday, 11th October, 1910.

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

MR. HOLMAN'S POLICE COURT FINE.

Mr. Brown having given notice to ask the Attorney General: Has the fine of £25, inflicted on the hon. member for Murchison for assisting in a strike been paid? If not, why not?

Mr. HOLMAN said: I can answer that question now: The fine has not been paid, nor have the costs been paid, nor will they

ever be paid, nor have the two months been done.

PRIVILEGE—MR. BROWN AND AN OFFICE OF PROFIT.

A Press interview.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): On a question of privilege, I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to a paragraph in an interview granted by the member for Perth, or the ex-member for Perth as he is in my opinion, to a newspaper during the last few days. It referred to the matter I brought forward in the House last week, in which I asked your ruling as to whether the member for Perth was in order in sitting in this Chamber as he had accepted an office of profit under the Crown. Since then Mr. Brown has given an interview to the Press, an interview which contains more than one deliberate untruth.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not use that expression in the House.

Mr. HOLMAN: I withdraw it, but I will say that the statement is absolutely incorrect. In the first place Mr. Brown in his interview with this paper said—

I have nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of so far as I can see, and I have certainly not abrogated my functions as a legislator any more than has Mr. Holman on several occasions.

That means that I have received payment from the Crown for services I have rendered. I desire to give that an emphatic denial as I have never received a solitary appointment from the Crown in any respect, nor have I received any payment from the Crown in connection with any matter. Further on in the interview Mr. Brown says—

Mr. Holman was nominated as assessor for the plaintiff (Barry) and attended two sittings of the arbitrators, who verdicted for Barry with costs. I was entitled to a guinea a sitting under the Act, and I was paid two guineas for two sittings. Mr. Holman claimed five guineas for two sittings and received three—a guinea more than he was legally entitled to.

In the first place I was assessor for Barry,

and I took the case up when the Crown declined to hear him. He was legally entitled to compensation and I fought the case right through, giving a guarantee for the expenses of the solicitor who took the case up after I had pushed it on as far as I could. At the time I brought the matter of Mr. Brown's position before the House I had never received a penny from Barry, nor one penny for any sitting I had as assessor in connection with the case.

Mr. SPEAKER: I may point out that it is no question of privilege; the hon. member may make an explanation.

Mr. HOLMAN: I am drawing attention to an absolute misstatement, and I will ask the member who made it to withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a question of privilege.

Mr. HOLMAN: I should like to know then what it is.

Mr. SPEAKER: You may make a personal explanation.

Mr. HOLMAN: I have no explanation to make.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, it is not a question of privilege.

Mr. HOLMAN: My point is that direct misstatements have been made in connection with the matter I brought before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: That really is no question of privilege.

Mr. HOLMAN: Your decision now is in accordance with a good many rulings you have given.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member intends to reflect on the Chair I will take further action.

Mr. HOLMAN: Very good.

Mr. SPEAKER: I rule that the member cannot speak to the question as one of privilege, as it is not admissible as such; he may make a personal explanation.

Mr. HOLMAN: Well, I will make a personal explanation if that will suit you. In connection with that matter I have never received one penny for sitting as an assessor of Barry. It was thrown out by Mr. Brown that I should be in the same position he was in when the matter

was brought before the House. It was then that I asked for two guineas so that I was not in the same position as Mr. Brown. At the time I brought the matter of the member for Perth up I had not received one penny as assessor. I have not received three guineas. Mr. Brown says that he has only received two guineas, but he has received three. The matter I wish to draw attention to—and I claim there is a question of privilege connected with it—is particularly included in the following paragraph from the paper, which is a further portion of the interview with Mr. Brown—

Further, if I have rendered myself liable to loss of political place and pay. Mr. Holman and other Labour members are liable in the same way for having acted on various Royal Commissions.

I claim the protection of the Chair, for I never received payment for, nor acted upon, a Royal Commission. When misstatements are made such as those in connection with a matter brought before the House, then a member is entitled to claim the protection of the Chair and ask that these misstatements should be withdrawn. I claim the privilege I have in this House and ask for the statements to be withdrawn.

The Premier rose to speak.

Mr. HOLMAN: If a person, supposed to be a member of this House, makes untrue or deliberate misstatements, then, if he has a particle of manliness in him he should withdraw those statements on the matter being brought forward and the statements being denied.

Mr. Brown: I will reply to you when the papers are on the Table.

The Premier again rose to speak.

Mr. HOLMAN: One, however, does not expect that from the member for Perth. As I say, if he has a particle of manliness in his whole carcass he should withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is offensive, and the hon. member must withdraw it.

Mr. HOLMAN: I withdraw it, and will say this, that it is most offensive for a man to make a deliberate misstatement.

which he knows to be such, and is not man enough to withdraw it. It only shows what the man will do when he deliberately acted as a tool for the tramway company and received a gold pass for doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must withdraw that latter statement, for it is an offensive remark.

Mr. HOLMAN : I will withdraw it in accordance with your desire, but I move—

That the member for Perth be asked to withdraw the deliberate misstatement he made with regard to me when he made this statement to the Press.

Mr. SPEAKER : I cannot accept such a motion.

Mr. HOLMAN : You will not accept anything.

Mr. WALKER (Kanowna) : I rise to a point of order. I submit that the motion is fair and should be taken. A statement has been made and the first opportunity is taken by the member aggrieved to deny it. The member's privileges, his character, and his honour have been attacked, as a member of this House, not as a private citizen, for he is a member of Parliament, and is seriously accused of things which, if true, would render him not only odious as a citizen, but would show that he was unfitted for the performance of his public duties. It is moved, when the misstatements are pointed out, that the member guilty of the offence of making them should be asked to withdraw. Surely that is the mildest possible form in which to obtain a correction, the clearing of this House from aspersions cast upon it by one of its own members. It is not upon the character of John Holman that we have to consider this point, but the character of the member for Murchison. The constituency is affected, the country is affected, the honour of the House is affected. It is bad enough to let the man in the street throw mud at members of this Assembly, but when the man who does it is a member, whom we can deal with, I submit that it is within the province of this House to do so; and the House proposes, through this motion, to deal with the matter in the most polite

manner possible by asking the member to withdraw statements that are averred to be absolutely untrue.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) : I give notice that to-morrow I will move, "That Mr. Speaker has shown by his bias and prejudice that he is unworthy to fill the Speaker's position."

Mr. Walker : No, no.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must withdraw that statement, if he does not do so I shall expel him from the House.

Mr. HOLMAN : I will withdraw that, but I will give notice that to-morrow I will move, "That Mr. Speaker does not possess the confidence of this Assembly."

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe) : I have pointed out previously that when an hon. member drew attention to certain statements made by another hon. member on a public platform, and when the matter was brought before this House, that the then Speaker called upon the member who made the statements to substantiate them or withdraw them, and that the hon. member, not having been able to substantiate the statements, withdrew them.

The Minister for Works (Hon. H. Daglish) : What statements were those?

Mr. SCADDAN : Statements in which the member for Murchison and the member for Guildford were concerned.

Mr. Walker : A motion has been moved, and you, Mr. Speaker, cannot refuse to accept it.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member knows full well that Standing Order 139 provides that—

Any member complaining to the House of a statement in a newspaper as a breach of privilege, shall produce a copy of the paper containing the statement in question, and be prepared to give the name of the printer or publisher, and also submit a substantive motion declaring the person in question to have been guilty of contempt.

I am not aware of anything which has taken place in the newspapers.

Mr. Walker : That is practically what has been done.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member knows the procedure full well.

Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford): It has often been ruled by you, Mr. Speaker, that you go on precedent. If a precedent has been established, you have followed it. A precedent has been established in connection with a matter of this description: that precedent was in my own case. I made a speech at Kalgoorlie and uttered one or two words which were offensive to hon. members; the matter was brought up in the House exactly as has been done in this case and I was called upon to withdraw by his Honour the then Speaker. It had nothing to do with a newspaper at all, it was a matter where it was claimed that I had reflected on a member and I was compelled to withdraw. That precedent having been established and a ruling having been given by a previous Speaker, I contend that the hon. member for Murchison is entitled to pursue the course that he has adopted.

Mr. SPEAKER: I differ from that ruling.

Mr. WALKER (Kanowna): With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, you have not appreciated the full sense of the motion of privilege. A privilege motion may not concern a newspaper at all. You can have privilege without bringing in a newspaper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am fully aware of that.

Mr. WALKER: This is one of those cases. I say that the hon. member has taken the only course he could take. One hon. member in this House has been guilty of an accusation against another hon. member. The accuser is present; it is within your jurisdiction and you cannot refuse to accede to his request. He has made charges and he has concluded with a most respectful motion, which is in the character of privilege. He has concluded with a motion that you ask the hon. member to withdraw these charges which are untrue according to the statement of the member for Murchison, and if they are true they should be substantiated. You have that power: you are the guardian of the privileges and rights of every member in this House and when your attention is drawn to such a matter, most

respectfully I submit that it is your duty to see that one member wronged by another shall be righted as far as you have the jurisdiction to do it. I submit that the motion which has been moved is in perfect order. We cannot allow the matter to rest; it would look like the House endorsing what the hon. member for Perth had said; it would look like you, Mr. Speaker, helping the hon. member for Perth to abuse the character of an hon. member, and instead of this House upholding its dignity it would be held up to the scorn and contempt of every lover of justice and fair play throughout the length and breadth of the country. If an error of judgment has caused you to put a wrong construction on this matter, even now it might not be too late to alter your decision.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I should like to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, and also to members opposite, that the case in which the member for Guildford made some remarks in a speech at Kalgoorlie, to which there has been some reference, was brought before the House by Mr. Holman, the member for Murchison, and Mr. Speaker said on that occasion—

The hon. member must bear in mind that if he chooses to bring a matter forward under privilege, he must do so in connection with an accusation made against him as a member of this House. I do not know if the hon. member is in order in bringing before the House any matter that may have occurred in caucus. The hon. member is justified in bringing forward any suggestion in regard to his conduct made against him as a member of the House, but matters dealt with in caucus are not fit matters to be brought before the House on a question of privilege.

The hon. member was not called upon to withdraw but on his own initiative he got up and apologised for the remarks, at the same time saying that he was not proud of the speech he made in Kalgoorlie and that he deeply regretted that his feelings should have got the best of his judgment.

Mr. Bolton: He was a man.

The PREMIER: That is not the question. There was no demand from the Chair that the hon. member should withdraw the statements he made.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is at liberty to make a personal explanation, just as any other hon. member.

Mr. BROWN (Perth): I am not responsible for what appears in the Press. I told the interviewer distinctly that I was not in any worse position than other hon. members who had received money from Royal Commissions and I also stated that in Mr. Haynes' bill of costs an item appeared, "J. B. Holman, 5 guineas," as his fees as assessor in the case of Barry versus the Crown.

Mr. Walker: For Barry.

Mr. BROWN: Mr. Holman was allowed three guineas which came from the same source as the money that I received. I was no worse in accepting this fee than Mr. Holman who got his fee either directly or indirectly from the Crown and no different from other hon. members who have sat on Royal Commissions. I say again, that if Mr. Holman wants to unseat me, let him take the constitutional means of doing so.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): The statement made in connection with myself is as follows:—

Further, if I have rendered myself liable to loss of political place and pay, Mr. Holman and other hon. members are liable in the same way for having acted on various Royal Commissions.

That is an absolute misstatement, I have never acted on a Royal Commission and never received payment for services from the Government in any direction. As far as Barry's case and many other compensation cases are concerned, I have acted on them and I have secured thousands of pounds for injured persons and their relatives and I have never received a solitary penny piece. In connection with Barry's case I have never received a single penny for acting as assessor until last Wednesday, when I asked deliberately that I should receive that amount so as to give Mr. Brown every chance against me. The statements

he has made against me are absolutely incorrect. As I have already stated, a person with a shadow or spark of manliness, if he was worthy of the name of man, would withdraw in a moment, and if there was anything behind him he should come forward and prove it. I am entitled to say that the statements made against me by Mr. Brown are absolutely incorrect.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1. Report of the Railway Advisory Board dealing with suggested railway routes between the terminus of the Goomalling-Wongan Hills line and the Murchison railway. 2. Report of the Royal Commissioner on pulmonary diseases amongst miners.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: 1. Report of Departmental Board into the corrosion of the steel conduit on the Goldfields Water Supply. 2. Annual Report of the Goldfields Water Supply Administration to 30th June, 1910.

QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY, METER RENTS.

Mr. TROY asked the Minister for Works: 1. Is the Minister aware that the Goldfields Water Supply Administration has cut off the water service of certain private customers resident in Kalgoorlie, whose water rates were paid in full, on the ground that meter rent was due and owing. 2. In view of the resolution passed in the House of Assembly referring to the imposition of meter rents, does the Hon. the Minister approve of the present action of the Goldfields Water Supply Department? 3. What action does the Hon. the Minister intend to take in the future as regards charging meter rents to private consumers in Kalgoorlie of water supplied by the Goldfields Water Supply?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish) replied: 1. Action is now being taken in accordance with the Goldfields Water Supply Act and regulations made thereunder for recovery of outstanding accounts, and where consumers in arrear have failed to pay their accounts after expiry of the

prescribed period, and after receipt of the usual notices, the supply of water has been cut off in the ordinary course. In only one recent case on the goldfields the amount in arrear at date of disconnection was for meter rent only which was duly paid and service restored. 2, In the case in question the meter rent was legally due on the first of January last. It is the obvious duty of the officers of the Administration to collect outstanding accounts. 3, Local authorities have been informed that meter rents on private residences will be abolished if communities concerned will agree to the amount being made up by increased charges in other directions. In view of the fact that the Goldfields Water Supply is being worked at a large annual loss, it is the intention to maintain this attitude.

MOTION—WANT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT.

Debate resumed from 6th October.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson): I endeavoured carefully to follow the speech of the leader of the Opposition on Thursday night last, when he moved this motion of want of confidence in the present Administration. I have since taken the opportunity of perusing that speech and I must confess that I find some considerable difficulty in ascertaining his ground for the motion. Of course I can and do realise it is a motion that, of necessity, the Government, and I, as leader of the Government, must seriously consider. It is a motion which he, in his position, supported by hon. members opposite, has the undoubted right to move at any time in his discretion; and on that account, of course, I must receive it with due respect, and I do so. At the same time I would like the House to understand that so far as I can see of the charges brought forward on that occasion, there is little or nothing for me to reply to. One half of the speech of the hon. member was taken up with the recapitulation of events which happened many years ago, and the balance of his speech, I think, was based more or less, according to his own language, on conjecture, rumour and street

corner gossip generally. Of course he quoted individual opinions of members of this Chamber, and also expressions used in several newspaper interviews with regard to myself personally; and he took up a considerable portion of his time in roundly abusing a gentleman who once happened to fill a position as member of this House. At first I almost thought the motion was directed as a no-confidence motion against Mr. Wallace Nelson and the *Daily News* generally; and I must say I regret exceedingly that the hon. member should have lowered his position so much as to apply offensive terms to that gentleman, Mr. Wallace Nelson. No matter what views Mr. Wallace Nelson once held and may hold now, anyone who happened to be a member of this House when that gentleman was also a member, and heard his utterances on many and various questions must conceive that, at any rate, he was no "cringer" and no "crawler." These are offensive terms which I think the leader of the Opposition, if he consults the dignity of his position, would do well to leave out of his address on any future occasion, even if he be attacking one politically opposed to him. I hope the newspaper and the gentleman to whom I have referred in particular, are duly impressed with the enormity of their offence. I again say I have had to wade through this lengthy indictment to endeavour to pick out the kernels, if I may so term them, the actual charges the hon. member has made against me and my Administration. The leader of the Opposition was good enough to say he wanted a fair and open fight—and I thank him for that expression—that he wanted no traps; and he also expressed the hope that when the vote was taken it would be a true expression of the opinion of the House. I hope that all our conflicts will be fair and open; and as far as I am concerned he may rest assured that our fight will be fair and above board, that we do not want to lay traps for him, as he has expressed himself as opposed to the laying of traps for us. I can also assure him that the vote to be taken at the end of this debate will be a true reflex of the opinion of the majority

of this House, and I hope it will, for this session, settle the differences between us once and for all.

Mr. Angwin: Not in the country, though.

The PREMIER: I am convinced that in the country the party I am representing can command a majority, and I am perfectly satisfied that no one on this side of the House—certainly I myself do not want it—would wish that we should retain our positions one moment longer than we can retain the majority behind us.

Mr. Seaddan: In the House, or in the country?

The PREMIER: Either. If we have it in the country we cannot well avoid having it in the House—the hon. member knows that—and if we have it in the House we must have it in the country. With regard to pairs: the hon. member referred to the alleged refusal of the Government to give pairs to members on that side absent through illness. I have no knowledge that on any occasion when an hon. member was ill he has been refused a pair so far as the Government whips are concerned.

Mr. Holman: I will quote my own case of last session.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether the hon. member was ill, but I know that on one occasion, or at least, so it is said—perhaps I may be permitted to apply to Dame Rumour as the hon. member so freely did in his indictment—it is said that a resolution was passed in caucus last session to the effect that no pairs were to be given under any circumstances whatever.

Mr. Gordon: Quite true.

The PREMIER: Be that as it may, I am grateful to the hon. member inasmuch as he has kindly arranged a pair for Sir Newton Moore, who has left the State to-day in order to try to recuperate to some extent.

Mr. Holman: That is more than you would do for members on this side.

The PREMIER: I have shown that it is not. I can promise the hon. member that pairs will be given in case of sickness: and I hope the leader of the Opposi-

sition will extend that spirit and grant me a pair for Mr. Hayward who is lying sick in bed.

Mr. Bolton: You would not have offered it but for that.

The PREMIER: The personal reference to myself requires little or no defence, but I may be pardoned if I take a few minutes to give them a passing comment. I have, of course, to acknowledge that we are dealing with the present and not with the past; and I am sorry the hon. member should have found it necessary to dig into past ages, back to 10 years, in order to rake up anything that he might utilise and which, in his opinion, would discredit me as a member of Parliament and a public man. Now, although I must point out to the hon. member that it would have been more in accordance with the rules of fair play, of which he claims to be an exponent, had he brought his no-confidence motion in at the beginning of the session, yet I am prepared to accept the responsibility for the Moore programme and the Moore Administration; and I would ask the House and the country to judge of that programme and of that Administration by the results that have accrued to our efforts. I do not want hon. members to go into the streets and highways and byways and listen to the complaints of disappointed men, whether new arrivals or old identities; and I think the least the hon. member could have done was to bring facts before this Chamber when challenging this Government, instead of basing his charges upon the tittle tattle of the man in the street. To return to the personal matters which require some brief notice at my hands. The leader of the Opposition wished to discredit me, and he laid great emphasis on the fact that I once was a member of the Morgaus' Administration, concluding his remarks by saying that on the no-confidence motion I voted with the Leake Government, and a few weeks afterwards, when Mr. Piesse was unable to form a Cabinet, I was found accepting a portfolio in the Cabinet formed by Mr. Morgans. He rubbed that in to the best of his ability by saying that although I opposed the no-confidence motion against

the Leake Government I took the first opportunity that presented itself to obtain a seat in a Cabinet of those I was opposed to politically. That is absolutely incorrect, to use the Parliamentary term, and has not a vestige of foundation. I want to point out to those members who are not familiar with the occurrences of those days, that although I was opposed to the Leake Government, and yet refused to support the no-confidence motion levelled against them I clearly outlined my position in a lengthy speech, and wound up by declaring that I was prepared to join the member for Coolgardie, Mr. Morgans, in an attempt to turn them out of office and form an Administration. These were my words—

The country is not in favour of the Piessé-Throssell Administration. Had we found the member for Coolgardie taking up the leadership, we should have had a very different state of affairs. Had the hon. member moved a motion of want-of-confidence, I should have felt perfectly justified, and I should not have hesitated a moment in joining him in putting the present Government out of office; and if he wished it he could have formed some coalition with them or done something to end the present state of affairs under which the country is suffering, and suffering more than members realise. There is an absolute necessity for a change. Seeing on the one hand my old colleagues, and on the other hand the Forrest Administration, which I have battled against for years in the House, I cannot but support my old colleagues in the division that is to take place.

Could anyone have been more open or above board? After a long speech explaining my position—

Mr. Johnson: Or could anyone have misjudged the position worse than you did?

The PREMIER: No. I admit I misjudged the forces against me, and I admit that an unholy alliance between certain members of the party to which the hon. member belongs, and some of my own friends, defeated that Administra-

tion; and I think also it is universally admitted that it is ten thousand pities the Morgans' Administration was defeated on that occasion.

Mr. Johnson: You will have the satisfaction in the near future of turning the tables on your own colleagues.

The PREMIER: I have no desire to turn the tables on anyone; my desire is to support and maintain the Opposition members on the benches they adorn so well. I have every belief that I shall be able to fulfil that desire. The leader of the Opposition also said I was very wrathful because at Menzies he had termed me, I think, "a shell-back Tory." I can assure him I was not wrathful at all. When referring to this matter at Subiaco I only expressed my sorrow that he did not seem to understand the original term, and did not seem to realise that all my actions and, indeed, my works, in Western Australia were a direct refutation of such a charge. I pointed out on that occasion, what I venture to repeat to-day, namely, that if there is a shell-back Tory—we know but very few of them in Australia at the present time—but if there is one to be found then my friend opposite is the representative of that class of people because he represents the one class—he and his followers—and the one class only, and that is the trades unionists.

Mr. Scaddan: What did the Tory represent?

The PREMIER: The Tory represented one class only; therefore the hon. member is a Tory.

Mr. Scaddan: What class do you say he represented?

The PREMIER: I always represented the democratic class. I have always lived in a Liberal atmosphere, and I was always a democrat representing all classes of the community. I have lively recollections of 14 or 15 years ago formulating the first democratic league in Western Australia, I believe; and I had some very prominent (now-a-days) Labour members on that league, and they did me the honour of electing me as president. It is quite true that ultimately I and others were left to pay the liabilities of the league; but

that is beside the question; the fact remains that these Labour members of to-day—and I presume democrats at that time, because it was a democratic league—recognised in me the true spirit of democracy when they elected me to the position of president.

Mr. Bolton: That was a league of wheelmen.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member will allow me, I want to take a minute or two to point out to hon. members opposite that they cannot be true representatives of the people of the State so long as they act and battle for one section of the community only.

Mr. Walker: Who does?

The PREMIER: So long as they want by their attitude and their legislation to give preference to a certain section of the community against the great outside majority.

Mr. Walker: That is to all.

The PREMIER: No; so long as they want to exercise their arbitrary powers under their trades union regulations to force all men into their ranks and be subject to the will of their caucus, they cannot possibly claim to be true representatives of democracy and of all classes of the community. Men who will brand a man as a political blackleg if he dares to oppose their platform or disobey in the slightest degree their orders, are not true democrats and do not represent the whole of the community in this State any more than in any other country.

Mr. Scaddan: Ask your colleague, the Attorney General, what he calls them.

The PREMIER: The hon. member trots out the old bogey of six shillings a day.

Mr. Bolton: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member says "Hear, hear": he will say "Where, where" before I am finished with him. No matter how I may have publicly denied that accusation, the leader of the Opposition still returns to the charge very unfairly and ungenerously and wants to fasten it to some citation of the Arbitration Court which was never mentioned when the original charge was made.

Mr. Bolton: Did you advocate six shillings? That is the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: Hon. members opposite must know, and the leader of the Opposition ought to know, that the original charge which emanated from the man in the street regarding that matter was that I had stated that no worker was worth more than five shillings a day.

Mr. Scaddan: I did not say that.

The PREMIER: It is more than 10 years ago since that was said; then it grew to six shillings a day; and it was made years before ever I saw an arbitration court. It has nothing to do with any citation which the hon. member quoted, and it has not formed the rate of wage in any citation, so far as I can find out, in which I have appeared in the Arbitration Court.

Mr. Holman: You were advocate in the case, anyhow.

The PREMIER: The hon. member was good enough to inform me—I applied to him because I could not find the information—he was good enough to inform me that he could not tell me the citation, but it was prior to 1904. He sent me that message, and I thank him for it. I want to point out that I did not appear in the Arbitration Court before 1904. I only appeared before the court as the representative of employers in their cases in August, 1904, and I only held the position for 12 months. The only citation in which there is a six-shilling rate of any description is the saw-miller's citation. It is true that I made a preliminary appearance in that case to fix the date of hearing.

Mr. Bolton: And the price.

The PREMIER: The date of hearing. And then the business was carried on by Mr. Gardiner, my successor. What was the six shillings in that case? It did not appear as a general rate for general workers; it was a claim as a minimum rate for tailers-out on picket benches, and everyone knows, who is conversant with that trade, that the tailers-out on picket benches are lads between 15 and 17 and 18 years of age.

Mr. Holman: They are all getting eight shillings a day.

The PREMIER: That is beside the question. I have run these mills, and I know we used to have lads of 15 and 16 and no older taking pickets from the benches. If the hon. member reckons that is full workers' labour, I disagree with him *in toto*. It is not worth eight shillings a day; and in this case it applied only to two or three men employed in that industry. The leader of the Opposition wants to fasten on to me that I denied at Subiaco that I had appeared in the Arbitration Court in any case in which six shillings a day was advocated. I did not.

Mr. Scaddan: I did not say you did.

The PREMIER: I think I can quote the hon. member's words. The fact of the matter was that, when I was speaking at Subiaco, a man simply interjected, referring to the old charge, "What about the six shillings a day;" and he made no reference whatever to any arbitration court. I said at once it was a deliberate lie, and I repeat it on the floor of this House; but, even if he did refer to an arbitration case, I would like to know whether representatives who have to take the citations of their employers, and who have to endeavour to prove cases for their employers before the court with the evidence that is given them to handle, are to be branded as personally advocating certain matters in the citation because they happen to be representing the parties concerned. The thing is preposterous. Every lawyer, every solicitor, every barrister that went into court would be asked to carry all the sins of the clients they represent. I have on many more occasions than I can remember publicly stated that every man is entitled to the wages he can earn, and I have tried to enforce that in the Arbitration Court time after time rather than have men bound down by a minimum, by one fixed rate of wage to the level of which all shall be brought. The only question in my mind with regard to this wages matter is as to a man's ability and as to the condition of the industry, as to what it can afford to pay.

Mr. Troy: That is beautifully indefinite.

The PREMIER: It is not; it is very definite—the ability of a man, what his

labour is worth, and what the industry can afford to pay, these things have to be taken into consideration; and I say the repetition of this base insinuation is certainly cowardly, if nothing else. It is an endeavour to perpetuate something which is not true, and an endeavour to perpetuate it to my disadvantage.

Mr. Johnson: You have given absolute verification of it.

The PREMIER: Of course I know I cannot convince the member for Guildford, but I will give him something to think about before I have finished. I promise him that. He might as well keep quiet and take his gruel kindly. Enlightenment is not all on the Opposition side of the House, I can assure the hon. member. With regard to this education matter—I want to refer to these matters only briefly—the hon. member puts an entirely wrong construction, a false construction I may say, upon what happened when I was Minister for Education. The hon. member knows full well I have always advocated free education in this State; he cannot prove anything to the contrary. He would have the public believe that I wanted to charge fees all round on all and sundry in our schools, but he knows full well that I explained the position in the House that my object, and only object, was to prevent the children of well-to-do parents receiving what I classed as secondary education to an advanced age in our public schools at the public expense. That point was made very clear.

Mr. Scaddan: Is that not opposing free education?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. Collier: Why did you not make these wealthy people pay?

The PREMIER: Because hon. members would not allow me to do it. If anyone will take an impartial view of the whole position—I need not wade back through the whole of the details now—it will be admitted I was quite able to convince everyone on that occasion; but, if members will take their memories back and inquire into the extension of the education system during my term of office, they cannot but give me credit for having done something in the direction of ex-

tending our education system. The Normal School was established for the training of teachers, the extension to the Technical School was commenced and built; and in accordance with the announcement I made on the occasion the hon. member referred to, the Secondary School was established and has since been built. The number of children in the schools has advanced. When I took charge of the department four and a half years ago there were 281 schools. The number is now 445 schools. During my term of office I put up no fewer than 164 new schools. Surely that is a record a man might be proud of, and it is not to be destroyed by an erroneous statement like that which the hon. member has used, endeavouring to twist something which was fully explained, fully justified at the time by the finances of the State, into a charge that I am an opponent of free education in the State.

Mr. Gill: Would it not have had the effect of blocking the children of poor people?

The PREMIER: No. Of course, as I pointed out at the time, if it is the hon. member's idea of free education to educate persons up to 40 and 50 years of age, it is not my idea. The next thing the leader of the Opposition endeavoured to drive home—and I must say unfairly also—was the statement that I was opposed to the developmental policy propounded by the English Government some five years ago. He endeavoured to show this by quoting—or misquoting—an extract of a speech I made during the discussion of the Mines Vote in 1904.

Mr. Scaddan: Do you say I misquoted you?

The PREMIER: I say the hon. member very ingenuously omitted a small portion even of the portion he quoted which put rather a different complexion on the whole. In order that the hon. member may be convinced, I will just read the words. It is a speech I had a great difficulty in finding; indeed I could not until I applied to the hon. member, because it was not on the general debate or on the no-confidence debate, or on the Address-in-Reply; but it was on the Mines Estimates. The then leader of the Opposition had been making remarks about the

deficit having increased, and I endorsed them. I said:—

It was rather unfortunate at the present time that we should show a deficit at all. We were about to embark on an extensive progressive policy brought forward by the four erstwhile Independents, and adopted by the Government. The Premier said he viewed with sympathy the requirements of our northern districts. He had promised the member for Dundas that he would refer the question of the Norseman railway to some board yet to be created. The Premier also talked of putting out spur lines anywhere along the Great Southern railway in order, one supposed, to win to some extent the approbation and support of agricultural members on the Opposition cross-benches. The Premier also said that a dry dock would be constructed at Fremantle, and sewerage works would have to be commenced almost immediately according to the Minister for Works. All these things totted up ran into several millions of money. When we had publicly stated through the Government of the day that we were going to embark on this progressive policy and build railways here, there, and everywhere—a few were wanted in the South-Western districts as well as on the goldfields or adjoining the Great Southern Railway.

Mr. Scaddan: I did not read that as it has no bearing on the question.

The PREMIER: It was of interest to me for it refers to a portion of the country I represent. I pointed out that I was ready to have a few railways down there. Then I said in continuation—

It would have been better if we could have shown by legitimate means a revenue account at any rate that would have balanced our expenditure. Surely that was a proper thing to say. I continued—

The leader of the Opposition referred to an item of £17,000 for a water supply for Day Dawn, and pointed out that the late Government had intended that this and other municipal water supplies should be taken over by the municipalities and paid for by debentures.

tures. That was a very good scheme in many ways. It would not only reduce the deficit on the Estimates, but would also place the responsibility directly on the shoulders of those who ought to bear it. These were his views, and he hoped the Ministry would take the matters into consideration. We had an immense country in our charge to develop; we had a country which was undoubtedly rich: there was nothing wrong with it. The only thing that was wrong to his mind was that we had been timid in our administration in the past. This applied not only to the gold-mining industry, but to every industry in Western Australia. It showed a lack of confidence in ourselves. It was about time the Labour Government made some amends, showed more confidence in the country, and pushed on the country to that prosperity and progress which it deserved.

Are those the words and the only ones the member could dig up of a man opposed to a progressive policy? Are those the words of a man opposed in the slightest degree to a policy of railway construction or of the development of this country?

Mr. Scaddan: I said you ridiculed it.

The PREMIER: Later on in July, 1905, and members will see my remarks were directed against the four independents who were then dominating the Government of the day, I took the leader of the independent party severely to task for not enabling the leader of the Government to carry out his policy, and at the end of a long speech on that occasion, when there were more interruptions than I am receiving to-night, I said—

What have the Government done to try to restore confidence in the industries of the State, to try to induce the investment of capital, to solve the problem of the unemployed? Where are their efforts to employ those now seeking work? Where is the bold immigration scheme which was projected to the command of the four independents, which was to open up our lands, bringing increased traffic to our railways and increased trade to our merchants,

and general prosperity to our workers? Nothing has been done.

On that occasion I pointed out that to the Premier of that time and his colleagues.

Mr. Walker: Your colleague now.

The PREMIER: Yes, my colleague now. They could do nothing because they were hampered by the domination of the four gentlemen on the Government cross-benches, and by the opposition of some of their own members. The point I want to make is this, that I was never opposed to any progressive policy in Western Australia. Members must admit that I always wanted to build railways, carry out works, and bring in a big immigration policy. I want to make this point also that no matter who has talked of the policy in the past, it has remained for us to carry it out. We have initiated it and carried it out to a successful issue. Talking about a policy is not initiating one.

Mr. Johnson: What about the speech of the Minister for Works the other night?

The PREMIER: It is idle for the leader of the Opposition to attempt to discredit me by quoting references to myself during the crisis of five years ago. The sum total of such references was a desire for stable Government. Those who went through those times will remember that matters were in a very parlous state politically, and that we were on the eve of a crisis which might have ended disastrously to our State. I was determined to avoid that, and I think the least the member could do is to realise that position, and that I, by foregoing the leadership at that time, at any rate assisted to that stability of Government which has brought so much advantage and benefit to the State. Despite divergence of opinion I am proud to-day in the knowledge that I have won the confidence of the majority of this House and, I may add, of the people of this country.

Mr. Heitmann: You can easily win a man's confidence with a club.

The PREMIER: Well, I shall try one on the hon. member.

Mr. Bolton: That is your usual practice.

The PREMIER: Some members deserve it. I notice that the member himself is getting a bit of a clubbing because his railway association is not going to allow him to take two jobs.

Mr. Bolton: That is where you make a mistake.

The PREMIER: One man one job; stick to your principles. I approve of the hon. member taking the two jobs: I think he is entitled to them. I would let him have his £9 a week for the two jobs and I think he would carry out the duties satisfactorily: but his bosses will not allow that.

Mr. Bolton: You will see.

The PREMIER: I want to pass away from the personal matters which, after all is said and done, have not much bearing on the matter of the debate, and I am sorry they have been introduced. The only charge, or charges, that I can find in the whole of those indictments of the leader of the Opposition appear to me to be in connection with the Lands administration, or at any rate the Lands Department. They are, it is true, largely composed of trivial complaints of a few discontented applicants for land, and this I will prove before I sit down. It is up to the members of this House to acknowledge at once, and to realise, that all big movements bring similar complaints. I do not care whether one is acting in a private capacity, in a private commercial undertaking, or in a public capacity, endeavouring to carry out large undertakings on behalf of the State, for one is bound to have complaints, more especially when introducing people from one side of this great world of ours to the other. The fact of bringing people not acclimatised to our shores is in itself something which must engender complaints, and in many instances brings disappointment to those who come among us. It is regrettable that the leader of the Opposition should have deemed it necessary to cause such serious injury to Western Australia by attaching so much importance to the two or three complaints he has utilised for his indictment.

Mr. Holman: There are hundreds of them.

The PREMIER: It is passing strange then that if there are hundreds of them we had references only to two or three.

Opposition Members: We shall refer to plenty more.

The PREMIER: I cannot deal with hundreds to-night but I do intend to deal with the two or three the leader of the Opposition referred to. May I be pardoned for adding that I think it is deplorable that we should have had a comparison of our Lands Department with the land scandals which took place in a neighbouring State some years ago. To insinuate for one moment that the Lands Department is crooked in the same way, or to the same extent, which we know it was in the neighbouring State at that time, is to give a very bad impression to outsiders, and is an insinuation which I say at once is without foundation either in fact or in the slightest possible detail.

Mr. Scaddan: They said the same over there just as indignantly until the statements were proved by a Royal Commission.

The PREMIER: Why does not the hon. member bring proofs and not make insinuations?

Mr. Scaddan: I have the proof.

The PREMIER: Then move for a Royal Commission, make an indictment, impeach the Minister for Lands, if you have the proof.

Mr. Holman: We did that with one of your Ministers and you beat us.

Mr. Collier: You would get an opinion from your Crown Law Department.

The PREMIER: We have not only these groundless insinuations thrown across the floor, and a comparison made which I think is discreditable for a member to make, but we also have implications with regard to the land taken up by a member of the House of Representatives, Mr. Hedges. It has been implied that that land has been taken up in an improper manner, also it is suggested that my colleague, the Minister for Mines, possibly got his in the same way. I find that Mr. Hedges took up his land exactly in the same way as the leader of the Opposition took up his when he applied, and there are no grounds for supposing there is anything to the contrary.

Mr. O'Loghlen: There are hundreds of Italians there.

The PREMIER: That is not the point; does the hon. member wish to discredit Mr. Hedges because there are hundreds of Italians on the land? There are hundreds on the timber concessions.

Mr. O'Loghlen: There are too many.

The PREMIER: That may be the hon. member's opinion, but it is not fair fighting to throw in an assertion of that kind and try to discredit the member who owns that land and say that because he is engaging Italians, which the member for Forrest objects to, he takes up land in an improper manner. That is absurd. There are no grounds for supposing that the land was taken up in any other than the ordinary manner.

Mr. Scaddan: How much does he hold?

The PREMIER: He holds 2,000 acres. An application was made in the ordinary way in 1908, 12 months prior to my colleague, the Minister for Lands, taking office. Since then the principle of survey before selection has been insisted upon in many districts. At the time the land was taken up there was free selection, at any rate such was permissible so far as land to the East of the Great Southern railway was concerned. The principle of survey before selection was then being pursued in certain districts. At that time also applicants were permitted to take up land under grazing leases. These latter conditions I understand were withdrawn in July, 1909, for the time being, so as to allow the department to overtake the arrears of survey. After Mr. Hedges' application was lodged the land was surveyed in the ordinary course, and the applicant was advised by the department of the conditions under which the land would be granted. Mr. Hedges agreed to the conditions and made application accordingly, and since then he has very considerably improved his property. He has spent thousands of pounds on it and that is the great desideratum so far as the State is concerned.

Mr. Scaddan: Were there any other applications in at the same time for the same area?

The PREMIER: His son has land, and I do not know whether his wife has land.

but other members of his family have land in the same district, too.

Mr. Scaddan: Are they residents?

The PREMIER: Yes. His son is doing work there. I say at once that the insinuation that Mr. Hedges took up this land and that immediately afterwards a reserve was declared in the district is not borne out by the facts. The fact remains it was not until some considerable time afterwards that the land east of the Great Southern Railway was reserved under the principle of survey before selection.

Mr. Scaddan: How long after?

The PREMIER: I do not know, but it was a considerable time; more than a year afterwards. That was in continuation of the policy which the Minister had initiated, and a policy which the hon. member will admit is a sound one. There is no ground for believing that anything underhand has taken place with regard to this land, or even the land that the Minister for Lands has taken up. If we are to have these insinuations thrown broadcast in the House why do not hon. members look to their own land. I venture to say that more hon. members on the Opposition side of the House have taken up land under those conditions than hon. members on this side.

Mr. Troy: Honourably and squarely, too.

The PREMIER: And so they have on this side of the House.

Mr. Troy: Opposition members have not taken up large areas.

The PREMIER: The generosity of the hon. member passes my understanding altogether. The leader of the Opposition proclaimed that he had nothing to cover up. I can assure him that the Government are in a similar position. We do not want anything hidden, but we resent any suggestion that there is need for inquiry upon such flimsy material as he has brought forward, because he has become hysterical in his effort to turn the Government out of office. Is that a reason why we should grant inquiries unless something more can be brought forward? Prove to me that there is any doubt whatever of the honesty of purpose of any hon. member on either side of the House with regard to these land transactions.

and I will immediately grant an inquiry, but I will not grant an inquiry on anything which can not be absolutely borne out.

Mr. Scaddan: There is more yet.

Mr. Heitmann: You prefer the Chinaman and his wife.

The PREMIER: Let me get on to the subject of the supposed Chinaman and his wife. We will take the case of Mr. Moor, who has ventilated his grievances, and of which the leader of the Opposition made such a tremendous outcry when he spoke on Thursday last. This Mr. Moor was an insurance agent at Home, and he is not a newcomer by any means, as the hon. member would have us believe. Perhaps that is news to him.

Mr. Heitmann: He stated that in the Press.

Mr. Scaddan: He gave evidence before the Royal Commission some time ago.

The PREMIER: When Mr. Moor came out he had a small capital and some farm implements, including bean sticks for planting beans. He had practically no experience as a farmer.

Mr. Heitmann: He has neither beans nor sticks now.

The PREMIER: It is admitted that he had no farming experience although he had some little experience in growing tomatoes.

Mr. Collier: Like all the rest of the immigrants.

Mr. Bolton: Do not ridicule him.

The PREMIER: I am not ridiculing him; I am ridiculing the leader of the Opposition for making the charges that he did. This Mr. Moor began by speculating in land at Bunbury. He did not come to the Government but bought land privately, and the greater part of what he bought was poor. Can anyone prevent a man from buying poor land if he does not seek advice? Naturally within 12 months he was stranded. His experience up to then was that he had got into a poor district five miles from Bunbury, and not knowing how to set about his work, as I have said, he became stranded. He appealed to the Government to help him out of his difficulties, and this Government which hon. members say is without sympathy, went to his aid and lent

him £100 in order to get him out of his troubles. This is as far back as Dr. Jameson's time, and the loan was ultimately completed by his successor, Mr. Hopkins. At the present time that loan is still outstanding, and he owes on it several years' interest. The loan, however, is secured. Does that look as if the Government were unsympathetic? They helped this man and lent him money, and they have allowed the interest to accumulate. About four years ago Moor and his sons selected land near Bridgetown. Three of the blocks which were selected have been forfeited because they did nothing with them; and the last one, the fourth block, is now being forfeited. In the early part of this year Moor and his sons put in applications for four blocks at Dalwallinu, and at about the same time there came in the Customs official from China, Mr. Neilsen, about whom we have heard so much, and who applied for two of these four blocks. Two were granted to Mr. Neilsen and two to Mr. Moor's sons. Mr. Moor's land was granted under residential conditions, and 1,700 acres was granted to Mr. Neilsen under residential conditions, and the balance, 300 acres, under non-residential condition. With regard to Mr. Moor's application some difficulty arose as to fees. The Government again showed its sympathies and assisted Mr. Moor by transferring the amount that had been paid on the selections at Bridgetown, with the exception of one lot held by Mr. Moor's son, which is now forfeitable, to the new application, and this, with the amount of £11 4s. 6d. made up by Moor, represented the money he paid when the Dalwallinu blocks were thrown open. As I have stated two blocks were granted him and the balance of the money was refunded to him, although the usual custom is to carry the amount forward to the period when the next rentals fall due. Does that show a lack of sympathy towards the man? First of all he is lent money, and the interest on it is allowed to accumulate; then he is granted land at Bridgetown; he does nothing on it and it becomes forfeitable, the department take a lenient view of the position, and then, when he does not get the whole of the land he applies for at

Dalwallinn they give the balance of the payments he made back to him in cash.

Mr. Scaddan: Moor did not get any blocks.

The PREMIER: He got two.

Mr. Scaddan: No; his sons got them.

The PREMIER: That is so. Neilsen appeared before the land board with Moor and his sons, and he succeeded in getting two of the blocks. It has been charged against the department that this man Neilsen was merely a speculator, but he gave evidence before the land board as to his intentions to start dairy farming in that district on Danish principles. He gave evidence that he intended to throw up his position in the Chinese customs department and settle in this State. The land board accepted that evidence and on it granted him two of the blocks.

Mr. Scaddan: Did he put in a declaration to that effect?

The PREMIER: He gave it in his evidence. I suppose it was sworn evidence.

Mr. Bolton: Yes; it was sworn evidence.

The PREMIER: What does Neilsen do? He proceeded to the land to carry out some improvements and live on it. He cleared 20 acres and that work was done by Moor, who is trying to build up his case, and Moor was paid for it.

Mr. Scaddan: No; he only did a portion of it.

The PREMIER: I think members will take Mr. Moor's statement with a grain of salt when they hear the whole thing out.

Mr. Scaddan: You have not shaken it up to date.

The PREMIER: Some time afterwards Neilsen said openly that there was some difficulty about his retirement from the customs department in China, and that unless he gave up a certain retirement allowance to which he was entitled he would be obliged to return to China. Before doing so he endeavoured to induce his wife to remain in Western Australia. Then he endeavoured to sublet the land, but being unsuccessful he found two buyers, and he sold the land to Higgin and Beattie for £325. This transaction is a private trans-

action and has nothing to do with the department. The total value of the improvements which were carried out was £73 8s. 2d., but the transfers to these two men have not been registered. Moor has applied for the forfeiture of the blocks for non-compliance with the residential conditions, and the blocks have been forfeited and thrown open for selection on the 11th instant.

Mr. Scaddan: There is a lot you are leaving out.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can have the whole file. Hon. members are welcome to all the information which is contained in the file, and the public are welcome to it also. Surely there is no charge of maladministration against the department on that score.

Mr. Scaddan: You have not told all the story.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows nothing about the case. Why does he not get the papers and read them?

Mr. Troy: I have the papers and I will show you that you are not telling the truth with regard to them.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw that statement.

Mr. Troy: I will withdraw it.

The PREMIER: What I want to point out is that charges have been made that Mr. Neilsen was a speculator because he sold his land, but I do not say that he was or was not. The land board was satisfied that he was a genuine selector, and he was held in high esteem by the people of the district in which he lived. On one occasion he waited upon me with a deputation in connection with railway communication to that district. There is no evidence to show that he did not act in a perfectly aboveboard manner in these transactions. As to the leader of the Opposition's statement with regard to the *Daily News* and the proprietors of that journal, permission was sought to have access to the files, and I at once granted it. They came to my office one day, Mr. Lovekin, the proprietor, and Mr. Woods, his editor, and they said that there was some serious scandal going about and that a man had approached them and asked them to publish a long statement. Then it was that they asked if there was any

objection to the papers being seen by them. I said, "Not at all; so far as I am concerned I have never seen them." The papers were down at the Crown Law Department, and I suggested they should go down there and see them. The leader of the Opposition says in his speech—

I believe the *Daily News*, that wonderfully outspoken journal I referred to earlier, point blank refused to publish his letters at all. I believe they went to the Department and obtained files which hon. members cannot obtain very frequently—

Which they can obtain. The speech continues—

and they told Mr. Moor, the gentleman I refer to, that the matter was more serious even than he had stated and that there was not only perjury in connection with the matters but something even worse; that the statements made by Mr. Moor were so serious that they would do injury not only to the Government but to the State as a whole if all of these transactions were published.

These are the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, who accepted the statement of Mr. Moor without endeavouring to ascertain whether they were true or not. There is not one word of truth in this with the exception of the first portion, namely, that they had come to me and got permission to see the files, and that they had refused to publish Mr. Moor's statements—not letters, because he gave no letter. I have appealed to Mr. Lovekin and Mr. Woods to know what their version of it is, and this is what they write to me—

Several Members: Oh!

The PREMIER: If charges were made against an individual, surely hon. members would not refuse that individual the right to reply and give his opinion! Why, then, should I not get the opinion of these gentlemen. Mr. Lovekin's letter is as follows:—

Two portions of the above statement only are correct—(1), That we did refuse to publish Mr. Moor's statements—he gave us no letter; and (2), That, by permission of the Premier, we did

peruse the files connected with five charges made by Mr. Moor. The balance of the above statement is absolutely false. Instead of telling Mr. Moor that the matter (should be "matters") was more serious even than he had stated, etc., we gave him as our reason for not publishing his statements that we had perused the files very carefully and found there was no justification for his charges. We suggested to him (Mr. Moor) after a three-hours' perusal of the files that we had come to the conclusion that he had been misled by someone who had supplied him with a portion of the information contained on the files only (that containing the complaints) and not the replies and explanations. We told him that the worst-looking case he had brought before us was that in which he had used Mr. Gourley's name, but that even his suggestion in that case depended on a document (which he, Moor, had obtained from Mr. Gourley and which did not appear on the files) rather than upon anything which appeared in the files. We distinctly told Mr. Moor there was nothing on the files to suggest any *mala fides* on the part of either Mr. Gourley or the Department. As regards the statement that we said, "The statements made by Mr. Moor were so serious that they would do injury not only to the Government but to the State as a whole if the whole of the transactions were published," there is not a scintilla of truth in it and it must be pure invention. Mr. Woods, our sub-editor, was present whenever I saw Moor and he also went through the files with me.

This is signed by Mr. Lovekin. Mr. Woods also writes a few lines in which he says—

Further to Mr. Lovekin's statement, which is right in every particular, I may add that when, after our examination of the files, we discussed the result with Mr. Moor, he complained that by thrashing the matter out as we had done we had "spoilt his hand" in the attack he was making on the Government. I explained to Mr. Moor then that it was

no use writing anything about the matter he had communicated to us, because if we used the statements he made without the information the files disclosed, the statements would be refuted next day and the paper would be discredited. Mr. Moor could not by any possibility have misunderstood the import of what Mr. Lovekin and I told him, because we thrashed the whole thing out in an interview extending over a couple of hours. If, therefore, the statement of Mr. Scaddan is a true reproduction of what Mr. Moor told him, there can be no words too strong to denounce his flagrant mendacity. Mr. Lovekin and I pointed out to Mr. Moor that we had been so impressed with his statement that we sought access to the files, but when we had seen them his charges disappeared altogether. Those who are immune from legal consequences by reason of "privilege" may, apparently, make unfounded charges, but newspapers find it necessary to prove their facts as far as possible before publishing them.

Mr. Walker: That is a slur on Parliament.

The PREMIER: That is signed by Mr. Woods.

Mr. Scaddan: You ought to deliver a lecture about culture.

The PREMIER: When the hon. member makes such unwarrantable charges as he made the other night when he ought to have known they were not true, he dares to accuse me of having a want of culture in reading a letter written to me in defence of the man he attacked. Is it too much to ask that the members of this House and the leader of the Opposition in particular shall take, at any rate the same trouble that these people take, to ascertain the truth of the facts before he publicly condemns and charges them?

Mr. Scaddan: Is that the usual procedure, to go to the Department and see all the files—can any member go and see the files if he has a complaint to make?

The PREMIER: I do not know that any member has been refused permission to see the files. I say at once it all depends upon the object the hon. member

may have. If he wants to get at the truth there would be no objection to his seeing the files, as far as I am concerned, but if he wants merely to base an attack and use the information for ulterior purposes, then the case may be different.

Mr. Hudson: When you want to slander Parliament you get Lovekin to write a letter.

The PREMIER: I did not get Mr. Lovekin to write; I simply referred this paragraph from Mr. Scaddan's speech to Mr. Lovekin and asked, "What is the position?"

Mr. Scaddan interjected.

The PREMIER: It has been said that the biggest tyrants in the world cannot stand any punishment themselves. There is another consideration, to which I do not think I need give more than passing reference. It is the question of publicans. The hon. member most unfairly charged a member of another House with being a party to this. Publicans, he said, had obtained land over genuine applicants, and Mr. Sommers had had the land for sale. Mr. Sommers has written a letter to the Press denying it. I do not think it is necessary to read it to the House.

Mr. Scaddan: I again repeat the charge and will challenge Mr. Sommers to put in his resignation if I prove it.

Mr. Bolton: Read the letter.

The PREMIER: Here is the letter—

Mr. Scaddan in moving his no-confidence motion yesterday stated:—"There were publicans in Perth who were able to obtain land over the heads of genuine applicants and who, immediately after securing such land, turned round and placed it in the hands of a well-known member of Parliament, namely (for he would not mince matters), Mr. Sommers, M.L.C., auctioneer. He had before him plans taken from the office of that member of Parliament showing certain lands which had been issued to certain publicans of Perth." I shall be glad if Mr. Scaddan will supply me, through your columns, with the names of the Perth publicans referred to, as so far I have been unable to find such names upon my books. I might state, however, for Mr. Scaddan's informa-

tion, that since I have been in business I have never sold any unimproved C.P. land, nor do I think among land agents in general is it a custom to sell unimproved blocks.

Mr. Scaddan: He has offered them for sale.

The PREMIER: The letter concludes—

The Lands Department at all times insist upon proof that the land has been improved before consenting to a transfer.—Yours, etc., Chas. Sommers.

The hon. member is bowled out and he knows it. Now I come to another case. I am dealing with the case he referred to and based his indictment on. He mentioned the case of Messrs. Woods, Webster, and Rose at Albany, and he made a great deal of the fact that these people had not been a success on the land they had selected, and he practically blamed the Government for it. I want to point out that there is no blame attachable to the Government in connection with these settlers. They were landed in Albany in March of this year. They appear, as far as I can ascertain, to be without experience of land matters. One is a cabinet-maker and another a solicitor. They were not misled—

Mr. Price: Who induced them to come here?

The PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member. I do not know. Anyhow, what has the inducement to do with it?

Mr. Troy: Are not all the immigrants farm labourers?

The PREMIER: You get a few solicitors and cabinetmakers among them according to this, and a great many domestic servants according to the leader of the Opposition—the majority he says; I will prove him absolutely wrong in that too, bye and bye. These people came out and brought their families with them. They came to Albany. I do not know whether they were assisted immigrants; I am inclined to think they paid their passages. They went to Mr. Ridley, who is a contract surveyor, in order to ascertain if there was any land available. He knew all that would be suitable. They were introduced—that is, Messrs. Rose brothers and Webster, for Mr. Booth had not ar-

rived in the State—they were introduced to Mr. Ridley by a mutual friend. This is a report by Mr. Ridley, and it reads—

In reply to the Under Secretary for Lands' letter of the 27th inst., Messrs. Rose Brothers and Webster were introduced to me by a mutual friend who had travelled by the same boat. I advised them to take up wheat country if they looked for a quick return, but they said they would not go into a hot and dry district as their wives and children must be the first consideration. I then asked what they wished to produce. They said "apples and general mixed farming." I next inquired whether they possessed sufficient capital to improve land up to £20 per acre and wait some years for a return, and they assured me that they had, I believe, about £1,000 each, or would have it shortly. I then took them out and showed the land to them. They had my services, two traps and sustenance for three days, and I believe I charged them £4, or it might have been £5. I was away from my work and, as there were three of them with healthy appetites, I think this was a very moderate charge. They were very pleased with the land and especially with the fact that there was permanent water on their blocks. I advised them to erect a windmill and work the banks around the swamp, as by doing this they could get a summer return for vegetables, etc. I showed them other orchards in the district and pointed out the similarity of the soil and its adaptability for apple growing. It must be understood that Mr. Booth was not then in the State. I strongly advised them not to take out their wives and children until they had proper accommodation for them, and naturally I did not press them to buy an improved place. I pointed out that on an improved place they would still be inexperienced and that mistakes would be more costly. As far as the roads were concerned they were shown places where my own vehicles had bogged the previous season, and I advised them to leave heavy carting until after the first winter. As Mr. Booth says, I was introduced to the

wives and children of Messrs. Rose and Webster, and Mrs. Ridley and myself did all we could to help them, at times at considerable inconvenience, although it was always a pleasure to us. We found that they had a very poor impression as to the sort of life they would have, and we did our utmost to prepare them for the inconveniences and even hardships inseparable from pioneering, and my wife even went so far as to have them up to take lessons in making bread, cooking, and also milking cows. For some weeks I was camped near them, and several times I drove one or the other into Mt. Barker without dreaming of charging them anything, and did a lot of carrying for them. I continued to impress upon them that it would be better to leave their families in town until the winter was over. During this time they seemed very pleased with their land and expressed themselves so to the land agent at Albany. I do not think that any settlers, except Messrs. W. W. Mitchell and Mr. Muir of Forest Hill, have had anything to do with the matter; but they were both very bitter on the subject of the land being surveyed and advertised long before these selectors' arrival in the State. Mr. Muir went so far as to threaten in public that he would end my professional and departmental career even if he had to go into Parliament himself to do so. These selectors have wasted money on houses. I strongly advised them several times to employ an experienced bush carpenter, but they are all "by way of being" carpenters. Mr. Rose is certainly an experienced cabinetmaker. The roads have been very bad owing to the very wet winter, but I do not know anywhere that you could put selectors on to the land within 14 miles of a railway and township with permanent water and a good road. It is absurd to say that they were cut off from food. The horse and buggy they had carried 82wt. through all sorts of hogs last winter and up to the time I sold them. The trap sold them had four very good wheels, so £8 was not exorbitant, and the horses were well worth the money

and I offered very lately to buy one or both of them back at the same price, but my offer was declined. They had the use of horses, buggy and collars for two or three weeks before buying them, although I was feeding the horses. Mr. Booth's statement that "Mr. Ridley was only looking after himself" was most unfair and ungrateful. They complain that they have lost their money, but they have made no attempt to get any return yet, and anyhow could not expect to do so, considering that they only went on the ground at the beginning of the winter. In conclusion I must say that I adhere to my opinion of the land, and I feel sure that much of it will be settled shortly, and that if the new settlers have the necessary capital and the pluck and patience generally associated with Britishers they will do well. I have devoted much time to meeting White Star boats and advising settlers and helping the land agents at Albany for the last three years, but I shall be very shy of doing so in the future.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: The Surveyor General has something to say upon this case. I have a copy of his remarks, which I propose to read to the House. He says—

These blocks were surveyed by Mr. Ridley prior to selection on general instructions which he held to mark any suitable blocks. He valued the land within these blocks at 8s. per acre, but thought they might be worth 10s. Their prices were fixed at 11s. per acre to cover cost of survey. Inspector Moore values the blocks at 8s. per acre. A classification of the blocks is shown on tracing. The file contains Mr. Hewby's report on the land, from which it is evident that, although he considers much of the country is second-class, he thinks it possible for the men to make a living off it if they go in for grazing and other pursuits. On the strength of Mr. Hewby's report the Agricultural Bank decided to advance to Mr. D. G. Rose £225; also a similar sum to Booth. I have been over part of the land in question and still consider that, al-

though it is not of the best quality, parts of it are adapted for fruit-growing and gardening, and that much of it will profitably carry sheep if improved. The litho. shows the classification and valuation of very similar land in the locality which has been recently subdivided and priced. Mr. Ridley is a contract surveyor and therefore quite entitled to charge selectors for services rendered and sell horses or other things to them. His charge of £5 2s. for his own services, transport and sustenance for three days, is in my opinion a reasonable one. I can, however, express no opinion from the data herein as to the value of the horses and traps. In this case I do not think the apparent failure of the selectors is due to the character of the country. They evidently have been discouraged by the adverse opinions expressed upon it by old settlers. I still think that it is possible for men of a suitable stamp to profitably use this description of country.

Mr. Jacoby: They would want much more money.

The PREMIER: Possibly. I think this conclusively shows that if these people have failed—I maintain they have not failed because they have not given the land a proper trial.

Mr. Price: They have lost their £400.

The PREMIER: They have lost it because they have thrown up the land. They have never given the land a proper trial. They took possession of the land early in March of this year, and what sort of a trial can possibly be given to land between March and October? That is what I want to know. It seems to me they have been frightened by some very bad advice.

Mr. Price: No wonder: they wanted a boat to get to where they were in the winter.

The PREMIER: I think that is disproved.

Mr. Price: The member for Swan can hear me out in that statement.

The PREMIER: They did not want any boat to get there. There certainly is a fair amount of rain in the district, and the roads were bad as we can see.

Of course they had all the privations settlers always have in new countries during the rainy season. The position is this, that the charge that Surveyor Ridley misled these people cannot be sustained from the evidence before the House. The charge was that he treated them unfairly and made a profit out of them. That, undoubtedly, cannot be sustained. I wish to impress upon members that Surveyor Ridley had nothing to gain by misleading these people. In fact, if he wilfully and knowingly misled them he would only be injuring his own reputation, and it would rebound on his own head.

Mr. Price: Who accused Surveyor Ridley of these things?

The PREMIER: The men themselves: the settlers accused Surveyor Ridley, and the case was quoted by the leader of the Opposition as being one of mismanagement and maladministration by the Lands Department and its officers. I have shown the House that this is not so: I have shown that the land was not worthless as alleged, and that if they had known their business there was no occasion to throw up the land. As a matter of fact, the Agricultural Bank has agreed to advance them money on their improvements, just as it does in other portions of the State. Not only did Booth and D. G. Rose have their applications approved, but Webster and T. W. Rose also. Webster had an approval for £225, and Booth had an approval for £225; T. W. Rose had an approval for £275; and D. G. Rose had an approval for £225. These applications were approved. It is true these people subsequently advised the bank they did not intend to take advantage of the approval because they had decided to throw up their holdings on the advice of the local residents. Two local residents had advised them, and if anything has gone wrong with these settlers it is because they took the ill-advice of the gentlemen referred to.

Mr. Price: When was that approval dated?

The PREMIER: I cannot tell the hon. member, but I know the approval was given.

Mr. Seaddan: Since the complaint was lodged, I suppose.

The PREMIER: No, no; the approval was given to the advances before they threw up the land, and the reason they did not avail themselves of the advances was that they had decided to abandon their holdings.

Mr. Price: They had already abandoned them when the approval was made. It was known they had abandoned them and that they were living in Mount Barker.

The PREMIER: It has been by interjection inferred that these gentlemen were a sample of the immigrants the Government were bringing to our shores. I want it to be understood that they were not assisted immigrants. These people came out with their families on their own accord.

Mr. Butcher: And good people, too!

The PREMIER: They were good people, and the great pity is that they were induced to abandon their holdings and not attempt to make them successful. The next case that has been quoted is that of Mr. Court. I may say at once that it appears this man Moor made it his business to go round to different land agents inquiring if they had conditional purchase land for sale in order to build up charges against the Lands Department. He did this also in Court's case, the same as I pointed out in the information he attempted to get the *Daily News* to publish. The report I have with regard to the Court case is as follows:—

A. H. Court applied for Locations 1912, 1915, and 1921, situate at Dalwallinu, which were thrown open for selection on the 8th February last. Strictly speaking his applications were not received by the department until the 9th.

This is a case where the application is alleged to have been received on the day following the closure of application. It is alleged it was wrongly admitted. Hon. members can see for themselves how much truth there is in that assertion. The report goes on to say—

According to a marginal note on the application forms by Mr. Thom-

sett the applications were received under instructions from Mr. Farmer, and placed before the Land Board as being in order. On communication with Mr. Thomsett (who is at present employed in the Northam office) he states that he well remembers the circumstances of the case which are as follows—"Mr. Court came into the office before three o'clock on the 8th February for the purpose of making application for the land, but not having the deposit money with him he left the office for a while to obtain same, and did not return until after three o'clock (closing time). He (Thomsett) then consulted Mr. Farmer, who instructed that the application should be received." Mr. Thomsett is almost certain that the application was lodged on the 8th (after three o'clock), although it is dated the 9th."

Let me emphasise this point, that if there was a mistake made in regard to this matter, if they did decide to allow this application to be lodged after the office was closed on the 8th, or, perhaps, early on the 9th, the whole circumstances of the case were subsequently explained to the land board, and the board decided to consider Mr. Court an applicant.

Mr. Seaddan: Who is the chairman of the board?

The PREMIER: I do not know.

Mr. Seaddan: The same gentleman who instructed that the application should be received.

The PREMIER: Possibly. I am not denying that fact, but there are other members on the board and they are not going to be influenced by the chairman. The report proceeds—

The circumstances of the case were subsequently explained to the land board and the board decided to consider Mr. Court an applicant and to hear his evidence, copy of which is given hereunder:—(Mr. Court appeared in person). "Block 1912. He had never held any agricultural land in this State, but up to a month ago he had a garden area on the goldfields. If he were granted the block he proposed to go in for wheat and sheep. He had not seen

the land but he took it up from the plan and was guided by the bank advance of £500. He had had a little experience of farming in Gippsland and other places in Victoria. He had been apprenticed to an agricultural implement maker in Victoria. If he were granted the block he could see his way clear to make a do of it, as he possessed between £6,000 and £7,000 capital. He was a married man with one child, a boy aged five years. He had been 16 years in this State, chiefly mining on the gold-fields. He desired to go on the land and had been debating with his wife whether to go to Queensland or to stay here. He was also an applicant for blocks 1915 and 1921, and subject to his getting this block he would take the other two, and desired to have sufficient land in order to permit of future expansion. He did not consider two blocks containing about 3,000 acres sufficient to make a good sheep station. He hoped to be able to get some pastoral country just to the south of these blocks."

After hearing the whole of the evidence the board decided that his application was admissible and they decided that he was a suitable applicant and they gave him the land.

Mr. Scaddan: What has he done with it?

The PREMIER: Since then three months' extension of time to take possession of it has been granted to Mr. Court. This time expires on the 1st November, and I am informed that tenders have already been called for clearing 300 acres of the land. It seems to me this does away with any suggestion of corruption as alleged by Mr. Moor; and no matter how we may deplore the fact that applicants for conditional purchase land, or those who are successful in getting it granted to them, may try to dispose of it without doing any improvements on the land, yet there is no system I can think of that will prevent a man disposing of his equity on redemption. The department carefully watch every transfer with a view of refusing same unless the

statutory improvements have been carried out. This action was taken in one case and fully substantiates my assertion. Another case referred to was that of Dunkley, and I say here that the member for Albany interviewed the Minister with regard to that case, and I understand the papers were immediately placed at his disposal. I think he did not take the trouble to peruse the papers and expressed his satisfaction with the explanation made to him. Possibly he has primed his leader, the leader of the Opposition, with the facts in connection with this case; but, in order that there may be no mistake with regard to those facts, let me explain them to the House. This man was granted an area in the Stirling Estate, Lot 73, in April, 1909; he then found unfortunately that the lot had already been granted to another person and that a clerical error had been made in the department, due presumably to the inexperience of one of the officers. He expressed his willingness to accept Lots 208 and 209. The lots he wanted were reserved at the time, but it was decided afterwards to throw them open for selection. This was done with a proviso that only those who already held land in the Stirling Estate should apply. The board dealt with the applications and gave Dunkley lot 208, and Krygger, who also applied for both lots, lot 209. The unfortunate business position is that Dunkley did not own any other land on the estate although his father did, and he is apparently ineligible; at any rate his application has not been approved. Where then is the scandal in connection with the case? I contend that all these cases are shown to be absolutely nothing. Then the leader of the Opposition turns to Myers' case and makes a charge against that family. As to this family, the only case that any exception may be taken to is that of F. Myers; he holds 1,000 acres under residential conditions, and a homestead farm of 160 acres adjoining. He applied under Section 64 to convert the blocks into non-residential blocks in order that E. J. Myers—whether a brother or cousin, I do not know—might secure them. The latter already held the maximum under the residence conditions, and 300 acres under non-

residence, and he could not therefore hold the whole of this land, and the application was refused. The question of forfeiture is now under consideration. The Myers family, which consists of some 16 persons all told, I know from my own personal inspection of their land when there last year, are doing excellent work, and I think I may quote from a letter received in order to show what work has been done on their property. Nothing wrong has been done. An application was made to transfer land to another member of the family, but that is under consideration, and up to the present the land has not been so transferred.

Mr. Scaddan: Can I see the papers in connection with that case?

The PREMIER: Yes, and in connection with any of the cases. This is what Mr. Myers writes from Wongan Hills on the 29th September—

Sir: I read in a recent morning paper that your notice had been directed to a letter written by a person named Hy. Moor, of Dalwallinu. In that letter reference was made to land being held at Dalwallinu by "speculators who already held large areas at Wongan Hills." So far as I know the only persons who hold leases at Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu are my nephew, E. J. Myers, and myself. E. J. Myers holds 300 acres C.P. and 300 acres grazing lease at Wongan, and 1,000 acres C.P. at Dalwallinu; I hold 1,000 acres C.P. at each place. The improvements on my holding at Wongan include 7 miles of 7-wire fencing; 400 acres cleared (250 of which is under crop); 3 dams; 6-roomed house; man's quarters; 7 horse stables; barn, etc., all of these improvements were commenced and completed in 18 months. On my Dalwallinu block I have 500 acres ringbarked and 70 acres burned down ready for clearing next year. E. J. Myers has 200 acres cleared at Wongan, and that area is now being ploughed for cropping next year; and has erected a comfortable 4-roomed house. The improvements on his Dalwallinu block are 300 acres ringing and the work is still proceeding. He has been residing at Dal-

wallinu for some months, and is now on his way to Goomalling for galvanised iron to roof his dwelling at Dalwallinu. Both myself and nephews are perfectly satisfied with our prospects, and as you are aware have sold out all other business interests and are now settled on the land with farming as our only business. Henry Moor's statements concerning us are absolutely without foundation; we are not speculators in any sense of the word, and we are busy working and improving our holdings (and minding our own business). I am satisfied that we have done more on our Dalwallinu leases than Moor and his sons have on theirs. Moor is apparently a very bad failure, and from the way he writes I think he will continue to fail on the land. I would also like to tell you that myself and nephew will have all of our leases at Dalwallinu completely ringbarked by the end of this year, and have arranged to have them enclosed during the winter with a rabbit-proof fence. Does this look speculative or bona fide? Moor says he has 12 in family. Now, besides myself my three nephews are each married; one has five children; one has three; and the other has one—making in all sixteen genuine, well satisfied settlers, not speculative or morbid like that man Moor, who went to Perth and made unfounded statements to the detriment of the best interests of this splendid State. You are at liberty to make use of this letter in Parliament or elsewhere in refutation of Moor's allegations so far as they refer to us.—Yours faithfully (Signed) Abm. Myers.

It seems to me that after all what we want in this State is that the lands shall be developed, and shall be improved and cultivated. It is not the business of the department to harass genuine settlers, even though slight errors might occur. I would appeal to the House to endorse the opinion that when we have thousands of settlers coming on to our lands, when we have thousands of acres, nay hundreds of thousands of acres, even millions, being thrown open for selection, and being taken up, we

are bound to have some mistakes, even in the best regulated department, and I think that rather than try to enlarge and exaggerate these complaints it is the duty of every member to endeavour to minimise them as much as possible, as the Government and the department are doing. The object of the Government is to help the settler, and not to throw obstacles in his way. I believe that a member of this House applied for the forfeiture of some of these blocks so that he and his friends might have a chance of taking them up. He will have a chance to apply for them if they are forfeited, but, whether he will get them or not depends on the Land Board. The last case the leader of the Opposition made much of, and quoted in his indictment against the Government was that of Clarke and party. This case has occupied pretty considerable attention because of the fact that certain action was taken by land agents to deery this country and wire to the *Lige*, Melbourne, to see if the party could be induced to settle in Victoria. It is admitted at once that some of the publications issued by the Agent General's office might be read to convey the meaning placed on them by the leader of the Opposition, but immediately this point was brought to light, and brought under my notice by my colleague the Minister for Lands, I cabled ordering a substitution of another form for the one now being issued pointing out that applications would have to be dealt with by the Land Board when more than one was received for the same block.

Mr. Scaddan: Have you withdrawn all the other publications?

The PREMIER: Certainly. This is a copy of the cablegram I sent on the 23rd September—

Your publications faulty. Recommend you confine distribution literature for present to copies of 1910 *Land Selectors' Guide* recently forwarded you. If supply insufficient get quantity reprinted England, inserting any fresh up-to-date illustrations you have available. Also insert slip in every copy stating that "in the case of simultaneous applications for any land the matter is referred to Land Board for

decision; notice of the date, time, and place of such sitting is given the applicants, and they are permitted to appear in person and give evidence in support of their application. Where qualifications are equal married men are given the preference." Regarding folder *Western Australia*, 1910 edition, stop circulation pending receipt revised edition. In future when preparing new publications submit draft proposals here first. By first mail please forward copies of all literature distributed from your office.

This shows that the department are alive, and that if two constructions can be put on printed matter issued at Home, some more definite publication will be issued in its place. I have met Mr. Clarke, and found him to be a very estimable gentleman. He interviewed me, and I found him most reasonable. We do not want to lose him from Western Australia. The action the Government took shows at once that the department are only too anxious to make everything as clear as they can. We do not want to mislead anyone.

Mr. Collier: Did you tell Ranford to shut up his "matrimonial" department.

The PREMIER: As soon as it was found that any two constructions could be put on a printed circular, steps were taken to rectify the position. In future, as will be seen by the instructions I have given, all literature must be submitted here first before being issued. That can easily be done, for it is only a matter of a couple of months. That will obviate to the greatest degree any errors such as those I have referred to. In view of the fact that there might have been two different constructions put on the publications issued, everything possible has been done to assist Mr. Clarke and party to get land. They applied for some 10,000 acres at Kerkenin and Kumminin but they represented having to go before the Land Board. As other applications were in for the land, that was necessary under our system. They said that they were not advised that it would be necessary to go before the Land Board at the time they decided to come out from the old country. We have, however, put that right. They also desired to get contiguous holdings.

Mr. Scaddan: Is it not a fair indictment against the Government that they had not informed the Agent General that applicants for land would have to go before the Land Board? Conditions are altered here, and the London office are not advised.

The PREMIER: This custom has existed for years in Western Australia. If there has been an error in the London office, surely the Opposition are not going to saddle that on my colleague the Minister for Lands. The error has been rapidly remedied. Where in the world can one find a case, with so big a movement as that going on here, with thousands of immigrants coming in, with thousands of applications for land, not only from immigrants but also from the residents of the State, without some errors creeping in. I was pointing out that Clarke and party applied for land at Kerkenin and Kumminin. Of course they could not get it granted to them without going before the Land Board. An effort was made to place these people where they could have contiguous holdings, and 12,000 acres which had already passed the Land Board, and was available for selection to anyone who walked into the office, was at their disposal. This was at Mount Marshall where the land was reserved until these people could inspect it. In view of all the circumstances free passes were granted to enable these people to proceed to Kellerberrin, and they went to inspect this land. They returned to Perth and expressed their satisfaction with it, and it was understood that all the trouble was ended. A day or two later, after having given the matter further consideration, they decided that they would not take up this 12,000 acres of land and that they would still proceed with their application for land at Kumminin. They appeared before the land board and out of twelve blocks which they applied for they secured two. Then they started to ventilate their grievances in the local Press, and their agents, Messrs. Stacy & Williams, wired to the Melbourne *Age* as hon. members know. Now these people are applying for further land which has been thrown open at Kumminin and their applica-

tions will be dealt with by the land board in the course of a few days. It seems to me that I can claim this with regard to that particular party, that the Department has done everything in its power to assist them.

Mr. Scaddan: Did anyone give them a promise to obtain land?

The PREMIER: Not to my knowledge. There was 12,000 acres reserved for them at Mt. Marshall and they went there to inspect this land, but they refused to take it up. I say that for the land agents, Messrs. Stacy & Williams, who are doing pretty well in Western Australia, to take the first opportunity to malign this country is at any rate an unpatriotic move as far as they are concerned, and I want here to warn prospective settlers to leave all land agents alone and go direct to the department. It is only when they go to land agents that trouble begins, and as far as I am concerned I will take care that land agents are kept within the strict limits of their rights as far as the Lands Department is concerned. It is impossible for all applicants for land to get picked blocks when new land is thrown open for selection; when you have 50 or 100 applicants for one block of land in an area which has been cut up, they cannot all expect to get it. As I said before, at the present time there are 800,000 acres of land available for anyone who likes to walk into the Lands Office and take up a block, and they can see there the complete system which my colleague, the Minister for Lands, has initiated and is carrying out, and they can ascertain how much the Agricultural Bank is prepared to advance on each block.

Mr. Heitmann: Are they prepared to advance anything on this particular 800,000 acres?

The PREMIER: Of course they are; you can go down and look.

Mr. Heitmann: There are 800,000 acres and you cannot get one penny on it.

The PREMIER: Anyone can take up a block of land and get it within a very short time.

Mr. Heitmann: And no advance is made on it.

The PREMIER: I tell the hon. member there is.

Mr. Heitmann: Then ask the Minister for Lands.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, it is possible.

The PREMIER: Those who take up the land can see exactly the amount that will be advanced on it; if no money will be advanced on it they need not take it up. There is plenty of land on which money will be advanced. I want to know where are the charges against the Lands Department? Everyone of them have been proved to be futile and of no effect. Is the Government to be condemned on such flimsy accusations?

Mr. Scaddan: You will find them in *Hansard* No. 10.

The PREMIER: Are we to be condemned on the complaints of the man in the street and the disappointed selector who has come here and who has no knowledge of agricultural pursuits, the man who has lived in a solicitor's office in the old country and expects to make a success on the first go off in a new country and on virgin soil? Are we to be judged on the general results of our administration? The fact that the Minister for Lands surveyed such a large area of country last year, 2,664,000 acres, as against 1,779,000 acres in the previous year, at an extra cost of only £971, I think speaks volumes in favour of his administration. It should be a satisfactory reply to any charge of maladministration. Let me pass away from these charges against my colleague and his department, which I have proved to be so groundless, and let me refer to the oft-repeated cry that the leader of the Opposition has raised against me in connection with the day labour question. The hon. member on every occasion tries to pin me down to the fact that I have been opposed to departmental construction or day labour. I admit at once and I have always admitted, that I believe the contract system is the best system. On the other hand, I would take good care that the contractors did not get more than they were entitled to receive from the Government.

Mr. Heitmann: Why do you give them contracts over and above the Estimates?

The PREMIER: Will the hon. member try and keep quiet while I explain.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

The PREMIER: I have pointed out on more than one occasion that if I have found that the contractors were opening their mouths too wide, I have not hesitated to construct public works departmentally. We have this cast in our teeth by hon. members who individually and collectively are pledged to departmental construction, that is, day labour every time, no matter whether it costs more or less. The member for Guildford did not think so when he was a member of the Labour Government some five or six years ago. The following extract, which is from the policy speech of the then Premier, shows the attitude of the Labour Government, and the then Minister for Works in connection with it.

Mr. Collier: Poor old Subiaco.

The PREMIER: He is all right now. It is a perfectly sound speech and the member for Subiaco has not altered his opinion one iota; but the member for Guildford has when he is supporting such charges as the Opposition have made. This is the extract—

The Minister for Works in administering his department had endeavoured as far as possible, to adopt that method of construction which was most favourable to the public. The Government had not attempted to construct all work by day labour; he had no hesitation in saying that it would be impossible to do such a thing with advantage, and the same remarks could apply to the contract system.

That was the principle which actuated the Minister for Works and the Government intended to adhere to it as long as they were in office. I commend that to the member for Guildford and hon. members opposite. That is exactly the attitude I took up, and out of 22 railways which have been constructed during my occupancy of this bench 11 have been constructed departmentally and 11 by contract. As I have always said, I am prepared to give the contractors work whenever they are within reasonable measure of the department's estimate, but if they

ask too much then I shall be prepared to do the work departmentally. The leader of the Opposition then goes on to tackle me on the immigration question, and he makes the serious charge that the majority of the immigrants we are bringing out are female domestic servants. Here again he is absolutely wrong in his facts. He has evidently not taken the trouble to look up the records and ascertain whether the statements are right or wrong. On turning up the records for the last six months I find that 1,400 immigrants have arrived in the State, 435 were nominated, 143 men, 155 women, and 137 children; all of those of course are going to their friends or relatives who have nominated them.

Mr. Scaddan: I say, No.

The PREMIER: I say, Yes. Anyone who nominates a person from the old country as an assisted immigrant pledges himself, or herself, to look after that nominated person when he or she arrives in the State. There were 965 immigrants assisted; these are the immigrants the hon. member referred to, namely 516 men, 330 women, and 119 children. Among the 330 women were 196 domestic servants: 196 out of a total of 1,400, yet the hon. member charges us with bringing in a vast majority of female domestic servants. All these domestic servants secured situations immediately after they arrived here.

Mr. Scaddan: They are all married now.

The PREMIER: I hope so. The hon. member seems to think that all immigrants are land seekers. A small percentage of the assisted immigrants take up land immediately; most of them prefer to work for others and so gain colonial experience. The immigration system is on a very solid basis and during August and September last vacancies were advertised at the Labour Bureau totalling 922. Out of that number 651 positions were filled, so that the supply was nothing like the demand for labour. This includes the people who have already been in the State a number of years. Out of 161 single farm labourers who were registered during this month at the Labour Bureau

all found situations from two to five days after their arrival.

Mr. Swan: How long did they remain in their positions?

The PREMIER: The hon. member can best answer that. The work is there and the bulk of them are doing well in their situations. Only last week 40 arrived; 36 were fixed up in a few days and of the remaining four two are taking up land and the other two prefer not to take up land—I presume they have the tired feeling after their voyage and want a rest. The reports we have received from all over the country at the immigration bureau point to a scarcity of labour. Is it to be wondered at when applications for land during the last six months have totalled 2,785, representing 1,170,000 acres, exclusive of grazing leases? All this land has to be cultivated and has to be opened up, and it will all need a large amount of labour to do it.

Mr. Hudson: Does it include what has been approved in the Esperance district?

The PREMIER: I presume it includes all land wherever it is. Let me make this point also before I leave the subject, that the immigration policy is a success, and has been proved by the simple fact that the people who have already settled in the country are applying for nominated passages for their wives, families, and relatives, and the extraordinary average for the past three months has been 40 per week. Is it not satisfactory to have a position of affairs like that? I think it reflects the greatest credit on the Government of the day and shows it to be the result of a progressive policy which my colleague, the Minister for Lands, is carrying out in his progressive department.

Mr. Scaddan: What do you do in the case of a nominated immigrant who does not comply with the conditions?

The PREMIER: The man nominating him is responsible and has to pay the money. Let me again say one swallow does not make a summer, and one bad immigrant does not condemn the whole lot. We are bound to get some who are bad and some who have passed inspection in the old country but are not what

they claim to be, namely, agricultural labourers. But it is satisfactory to know that, so far as we can ascertain, out of the number of immigrants who arrived last year there have not been more than 12 failures.

Mr. Swan: What constitutes a failure?

The PREMIER: A man who will not work is a failure in any walk of life. Scarcity of labour is being felt in other avenues besides agricultural pursuits, and it is a natural result of the increase of prosperity which has come over the country. The leader of the Opposition also fell into a very grievous error when he attempted to charge the Government with something in connection with the Redistribution of Seats Bill, although knowing nothing about it, and not having seen it. It was the error of a very youthful and inexperienced politician to presume to criticise a measure he admits knowing nothing about.

Mr. Scaddan: Are you talking at the member for Kalgoorlie now?

The PREMIER: I am talking of the speech made by the leader of the Opposition on Thursday night. Although he tried to convince this House that it was a criminal act on the part of any Government to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill on their own initiative, and quoted the Queensland Act, let me remind him that the last redistribution of seats in Victoria was framed by the Cabinet and the Cabinet was solely responsible for it. The last redistribution of seats in South Australia, in 1901, was made on the recommendation of the Government of the day, and the same applies so far as Tasmania is concerned, where it was decided upon by Cabinet. In Queensland, I admit, the system is followed as quoted by the hon. member, and New South Wales has a system by which they call in the aid of three commissioners appointed by the Governor; and, of course, they have a fixed margin of allowance in the quota of 1,200, above or below. Anyhow, I want simply to briefly review the charge that this Government are doing anything out of the ordinary in presuming to ask their officers to frame a Redistribution of Seats Bill on certain lines, and presenting it to the House for acceptance, am-

endment, or rejection. The Government will take the responsibility for that measure when it is placed before Parliament, and it will be found to be based on equity and justice. I have been accused by the hon. member of being reactionary and of having changed my opinions. I should be sorry to think I could go through half a century's experience and not change my opinions. If I have changed I find I am indeed in good company, and if I have, at any rate, the slightest tinge of Toryism—as the hon. member will have the public believe, although I think I am the true democrat of this House—I should like to point out that I have always supported democratic measures, such measures as the Sunday Labour Bill, the Truck Act, the Arbitration Act, Payment of Members, Workers' Compensation, Early Closing, and Factories Acts. I supported motions in the old Parliaments of Western Australia in connection with working men being appointed as justices of the peace, to enforce a minimum wage in Government contracts, and eight hours a day for railway workers. These are not Tory measures. Surely they are democratic, liberal in the extreme, and ought to counteract the expressions of opinion which the hon. member has quoted so freely from the man in the street. I supported measures of this description, and can claim that I successfully introduced and carried the land tax measure through this House; carried it because of the necessities of the State—not because I like to impose taxation for the sake of taxing anyone, but because, as Treasurer, I felt and knew that the necessities of the State were such that we must have increased revenue. But the hon. member would have us believe a man must never change his opinions; that once a Tory he must always remain a Tory, and once a Liberal he must be a Liberal to the end. But there have been far greater men than this Parliament have even seen, in the old country and in Australia, who have changed their opinions with advantage to the country and good faith to themselves. I go right back to the early part of the 18th century. Sir Robert Peel began his political career as a sincere Tory and was afterwards head

of a Liberal Administration, passing such measures as the Free Trade Bill of 1846. Mr. Stanley, subsequently Earl of Derby, supported the Reform Bill and afterwards became an uncompromising Tory. Mr. Gladstone was a staunch Tory and afterwards became the greatest Liberal leader that Great Britain ever knew. Disraeli commenced as a Radical and ended up a staunch Conservative. Chamberlain, the idol of Australians, was a Liberal with Mr. Gladstone, and is now a Unionist and tariff reformer. Mr. Winston Churchill, the youngest recruit to the Tory ranks, leapt into fame when he shattered Mr. Brodrick's army scheme, but he now holds office with one of the most radical-liberal Ministries that ever existed. There have been many others, such as Mr. John Bright, the Marquis of Hartington, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Trevelyan, the Earl of Selbourne, and others too numerous to mention. In Australia Sir John Robertson, a bitter opponent of Sir Henry Parkes, resigned his seat in the New South Wales Assembly and immediately afterwards became the representative of the Government in the Upper House in the interests of strong and stable Government. Mr. Trenwith, a man whom the hon. member ought to know, was leader of the Labour Party in Victoria; he left that party in 1900 and joined Sir George Turner's Ministry. Mr. Kidston in Queensland was driven out of the Labour ranks and is now leader of a Liberal Government. Many others have changed their political faith from honest conviction, and if I have changed shall I be denied the same right? If I have become broader, more liberal in my views through experience of years, I can only say I am proud of the fact. The Wilson Government stands for liberalism and progress, representative of all classes of the community, and we intend to carry our policy or sink in the fight.

Mr. JOHNSON (Guildford): The Premier has now spoken for over two hours, and for two-thirds of that time he has been replying to charges of maladministration of the Lands Department made by the leader of the Opposition. After tak-

ing up that long time in replying to them he states he had nothing to reply to. The Premier has simply supplied the public with the details to justify the general attack made by the leader of the Opposition. He has perused the departmental files and secured absolute proof in detail, which he has been good enough to give to the general public to-night. Before I finish I shall have something to say about the Lands Department, and probably I shall be followed by the Minister for Lands, who will have something to reply to in addition to what his leader has attempted to answer. Before getting on to my specific indictment I want to make a few remarks as to the administration of the affairs of the State at the present time. The Premier started off by referring to the supposed action of this party to bring about preference to unionists. It is true that I and others on this side of the House have urged that the court should be given the right to grant preference to unionists just as to-day the right exists to grant to employers the first claim on union labour. It must be in the minds of the members for Menzies and Subiaco that the Arbitration Bill, when originally presented, contained a provision for preference to unionists, and also for the right of the employer to have first claim to union labour. But when the Bill reached another place the preference to unionists provision was struck out.

The Minister for Mines: You attempted to amend the Act in 1904, but not in that direction.

Mr. JOHNSON: It was part of the policy of the party to put that Bill into its original shape as when presented by the James Government. But the point I desire to make is that I do not expect the Premier to agree to preference to unionists. We ask that the court shall have the right to use its discretion—that if the unionists can present their case so as to justify the court in giving preference, then the court shall be at liberty to direct that preference shall be given to unionists. The Premier does not agree with that. Why? Because he has always been in the posi-

tion of a man who stands outside the unions, of a man fattening on other people's labour. The man who stands outside the unions allows the unions to go on paying week after week to increase the standard of conditions of labour, and working day by day to protect the industry from the workers' point of view; and when we go to the court the non-unionist reaps the same rewards as the unionist. That is a miserable attitude to take up, and the Arbitration Court should have the right to protect the unionist against an attitude of that description; but it can with absolute consistency be advocated by the Premier. The Premier also referred to the attack often and correctly made—the charge that he has supported the proposal for a payment of 6s. a day to labourers in this State. The Premier gave an absolute verification of that; he gave the details as he did in connection with the Lands Department administration. I was not in possession of the details previously, and I was inclined to think that there must be some misunderstanding after his statement at Subiaco, when he declared the charge was a deliberate lie; but he has now made it out to be an absolute truth. He said to-night he did go to the court with a citation, and that citation contained a provision for the payment of 6s. a day. And what is his justification? It is that the man who did the work was only 16 years of age and that the work was not worth more.

Mr. Seaddan: He says it is not worth 8s. per day.

Mr. JOHNSON: We know that the Combine, Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company, Ltd., are paying 8s. per day for that labour, and are we to take the Premier as a judge of the remuneration that is to be paid for that class of labour, or are we to take Millars' who are constantly employing that labour? They have demonstrated this class of labour is worth 8s. per day, yet the Premier says it is not worth more than 6s., and to-night he has given verification of the charge repeatedly made against him that he has advocated 6s. per day as a fair rate of pay for workers in this State. Then the Premier went on to reply to the statement that he op-

posed the construction of spur lines and the opening up of agricultural districts by a progressive policy of railway construction; and although he denies this, he immediately reads a speech in which he ridiculed the policy. He ridiculed it when it was brought forward by the then Premier, Mr. Daglish, now the Minister for Works; and in the next breath he took credit for the very administration of what he ridiculed when the member for Subiaco was Premier. His speech to-night is a direct indictment against the administration of the then Premier, and I was wondering how the member for Subiaco felt when the Premier was defending himself at the expense of the hon. member. Then we heard something about these letters of Mr. Moor's. What was the grievance Mr. Moor had against the department? It was that certain lands were given to one person, that these blocks were open to forfeiture and that he applied for forfeiture and was refused. The Premier went on with a long statement, and it ill becomes the Premier to ridicule any immigrant and to talk about a man bringing in bean sticks. After going through a lot of details, the Premier went on to state that the department to-day had done what Mr. Moor asked them to do some time ago and what he condemned them for not doing when he asked for it. Mr. Moor made a charge against the department, and now the Premier tries to defend the department against Mr. Moor's attack, and winds up by saying, "We have done what Mr. Moor asked," consequently absolutely proving the charge Mr. Moor levelled against the department. I do not wish to refer to the letters read by the Premier in his desire to cast ridicule on Mr. Moor. I believe Mr. Moor has been badly treated by the Government of the State.

Mr. Seaddan: Hear, hear!

Mr. JOHNSON: I believe Mr. Moor was brought into the State by misrepresentation, like many others who have been brought into the State. Mr. Moor has suffered by that misrepresentation, and now that the man has failed because he got wrong advice in England and was misled after he came to the country, we

find the Premier of the State, in order to justify his administration, trying to pour ridicule on to this deserving colonist. I think it ill becomes him to do it, and it looks distinctly worse when he goes out of his way to get newspaper editors and those associated with newspapers to write letters to assist him in his desire. The Premier then made reference to the departmental construction of public works and he attached a statement made by the then Premier, Mr. Daglish. I am prepared to admit that the system then in vogue in the Public Works Department was such that it was absolutely impossible to introduce construction by the department; but I did introduce and absolutely stuck to the departmental construction of railways, because I found that they could be built considerably cheaper and considerably better by the department.

The Minister for Mines: You might quote a certain speech.

Mr. JOHNSON: I admit that as far as the speech made by the Premier at that time is concerned it can be attached to me, but the point I desire to make clear is that as Minister for Works I found the cheapest way of constructing railways in the best interests of the State was departmentally. We tried it and we proved it, and the Ministry of the day are gradually and surely departing from that sound policy; and that is the grievance we have against them. It was proved conclusively—and I challenged time after time inquiry into the matter—that that method of construction was the best in the interests of the State, but it is being departed from, and it is because of that departure that we have this grievance against the Government. Now, to get to the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, one has to start off realising that we are attacking a Ministry that has been more generously treated by the Press than any Ministry we have had in Australia—one might almost say that they have been more generally boomed than any Administration in Australia: and we find the Press right through almost generally covering up their mistakes or apologising for their mistakes, and on the

other hand absolutely exaggerating any little successes that have followed their efforts. I am prepared to admit there has been a general improvement during the recent years in the condition of Western Australia, but we have also to admit that there has been a general improvement throughout Australia. The improvement in conditions in Australia is not limited to Western Australia. As a matter of fact, if we want to go to the biggest improvement, the most genuine improvement in the condition of a State, we have to go to South Australia, where there is a Labour Government in power. But I am not one of those who think that because a State has improved, this State or South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, or New South Wales, the Ministers ought to get all the credit for that improvement; but if we are to give credit to Governments we should of necessity have to give that credit to the Federal Government, because, after all, the improvement has been so general throughout Australia that, if Governments are to get the credit, that credit must go to the national Government that administers affairs throughout Australia. As a matter of fact, the whole thing has been general, and we can all rejoice and participate in some little credit for the general improvement right throughout the nation. The Ministry have been marked by their tenacity for office and by the absolute converse for policy—converse for policy, because we find, taking their policy, taking the land tax to start with, we know it was a policy of land tax without income tax, but they were dictated to by the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council told them distinctly that if they did not attach an income tax to the land tax and reduce the land tax in proportion it would not be passed, and the Government absolutely departed from their policy and attached an income tax to the land tax as dictated by the Legislative Council. Mr. Rason promised us, when he took over the reins of Government—and this Government is a continuation of the Rason Government—that he would produce a Bill for the reform of the Legislative Council, and year

after year, election after election, we have had the same promise, but to-day we are in the position that we find we have not yet that Bill before us. Local option was promised by the Rason Government, it has been promised every year since, but there is grave doubt in my mind and in the minds of a lot of people in the country as to whether the Government are sincere in their desire to pass the Licensing Bill at all. But while Ministers have not been closely sticking to policy, we find on the other hand that they have sticking closely to office. We know it by the fact that repeatedly their policy has been altered by this Chamber; we have defeated their policy time and time again as outlined in Bills, and we find how successfully criticism has been combated in order to keep office. We find that those who have criticised from the Government side have been silenced in order to avoid disaster; and not only have members criticising from the Government side of the House been silenced, but we also find that, immediately an attack has been made on any particular department, there has been a change or a re-shuffle to avoid the disaster that would inevitably follow unless there was some movement. For instance, we found the present Premier Minister for Works; then he went to the Treasury because of some criticism, and then he went back to the Works Department and somebody else had a try as Treasurer. Then Sir Newton Moore went to the Lands Department; there was a little criticism against lands administration; then he went to the Treasury; there was a little more criticism and then Sir Newton Moore went out altogether. We find also we had a little corner party at one time, consisting of the member for Kalgoolie, Mr. Keenan, the member for Northam, Mr. Mitchell, and the late member for Fremantle, Mr. J. Price. These three men were critics of the Government policy, and what did we find? They were immediately silenced by two of them getting paid portfolios and by the other being made an honorary Minister. It is to the credit of one of these gentlemen, namely, the member for Kal-

goorlie, that he evidently carried his criticism into the Cabinet, he was consistent in his policy, eventually with the result that he was duly passed out. Then the late Mr. James Price conveniently made room for another critic, and Mr. Nanson, who had made himself objectionable from the self-same corner where the three silenced members sat, got £1,000 per year. Then owing to the indiscretion of the Attorney General last put into Cabinet, the member for Subiaco had, from his seat in the House, to defend himself from an attack on his administration made by that indiscreet Minister; and because of the criticism then given by the member for Subiaco, we find that hon. member also earns £1,000 a year.

Mr. Heitmann: The turn of the member for Murray has yet to come.

Mr. JOHNSON: One could go on. Reference has been made to the member for Murray, but he will hear from me before I have finished.

Mr. Bolton: He gets £1,000 a year.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes, he gets that; I suppose it is in the gift of the Ministers. I claim that the Ministerial career since 1905 has been "absolute unrepudiated promises." Promises made by Mr. Rason have been repeated year after year by the Continuation Government, yet to-day we can put our fingers on measures that were made prominent in Mr. Rason's speeches and that have not yet been passed by this Chamber. We find that political criticism in the Press and by members has been silenced. We find the Press silenced by the granting to a very large extent of advertising in connection with Government land. For instance, it is a common thing to pick up a paper advertising the sale of some particular land in a locality where you could not possibly buy the paper if you wanted it. When we see this, time after time, we can only come to the one conclusion that these advertisements are not given with any desire to advertise the resources of the State, but rather with a desire to silence criticism that might come or would come if the Press did their duty to the public in regard to the actions of the present Government. The

Press to-day devote considerably more time to booming or assisting the party than to aiding the State. As a matter of fact, I say advisedly the Press of this country are sacrificing the interests of the State in the interests of party. I do not desire to say anything in connection with the latest re-construction except this—

Mr. Heitmann: It speaks for itself.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes; but I wish to say as one of a political party in this State that I believe we were wanting in our duty in connection with the election of the Minister for Works at Subiaco recently. I believe it was our duty to give the people of Subiaco an opportunity of voicing their opinion in connection with the inclusion of that gentleman in the Ministry. We failed to do that, and we failed in our duty to this State. While we have party Government it is the duty of the parties to give the people an opportunity to voice their opinion. I wanted the people of Subiaco to have that opportunity, and had the people of Subiaco been given the opportunity to voice their opinion the member would have had a very close shave, even if successful in securing the seat which he now holds.

The Minister for Mines: If you really thought that you would have tried it.

Mr. JOHNSON: I really did think so, and that being so I was very anxious to see an opponent found for the hon. gentleman. While the Minister makes a great deal of the fact that he sacrificed himself in the interests of the State, that he has left a snug little billet as Chairman of Committees in order to take an extra £600 a year for the sake of his bleeding country, I am inclined to think that he is only a stop-gap, that he was only used because the hon. gentleman recently elected for Beverley upset all calculations. I think the Minister should be kind, should be generous, to the people of Beverley, and that he should give one-half of the difference between his present and past salaries to charities and institutions in Beverley, for it is well known among the people that the gentleman successful in that election was not the one wished for by the Government. Another gentle-

man, supposed to be he who would be successful, was going into the Ministry and not the member for Subiaco. Probably, after all, the member for Subiaco has a lot to thank the people of Beverley for. I desire to speak very briefly in connection with the financial administration of the "continuation" Government for the last five years. We know that the Government came in with a flourish of trumpets, that they would square the finances, and that there were going to be no land values taxation. We find to-day, five years since the statement was made, that the finances are not squared, and that we have land values taxation in a limited sense. There is no doubt that Mr. Rason did make an effort to square the finances, but it was made in a most cowardly fashion, a fashion often resorted to by incompetent Treasurers, and that was by transferring revenue works to Loan Account. We find that for the last five years the expenditure on public works per annum has been gradually reduced by an average of £40,000 a year, and that this reduction is mainly confined to roads and bridges and public buildings, to works that are not reproductive in any sense of the term. While we find that year after year the Government of the day have been reducing at the rate of £40,000 a year from the Revenue Account, they have been spending at the rate of £85,000 a year more from Loan Account on those particular works. During the years 1901 to 1905 on roads and bridges and public buildings, works that are not reproductive, there was hardly a penny piece spent by the Governments, and it is worthy of note that during those years there was greater political activity, greater freedom of criticism from the Press, than we have now. When the people were more active politically, when they started to fight to get rid of the old Forrest regime, we had sounder administration, with the result that there was no expenditure of loan moneys on works not distinctly reproductive. As a matter of fact, if one only suggested the expenditure of loan funds on a road, or a bridge, or a public building, at that time, he would be roundly condemned by the peo-

ple and by the Press; but to-day we find that this reduction of expenditure, brought about by this cowardly transfer from revenue to loan, is called by the Press of this State, by the leading journal of Western Australia, true economy. A reduction of revenue expenditure on un-reproductive works and an increase of expenditure on those works from loan is called economy. This expenditure of loan funds on works not reproductive is not a sound progressive policy. Now for a few figures. Take the year 1905. We find that the revenue for that year was £3,615,000 odd, while the revenue for 1910 was £3,657,000; therefore the revenue for 1910 as compared with that for 1905, when this Government took office, or, rather, when the "continuation" Government took office, was £42,000 more. In 1905 the Labour Government spent out of revenue on public works £338,000, but out of their £3,657,000 the present Government in 1910, while they received £42,000 more revenue, spent only £125,000 on public works, or a reduction of £213,000 in that one item alone. We find also that during their term the interest and sinking fund has increased by an average of £47,000 per annum. In 1905 the interest and sinking fund amounted to £765,000, while to-day it is close on £1,100,000. The interest and sinking fund of this State to-day is close upon one-third of our total revenue.

Mr. Heitmann: A great and sound policy.

The Minister for Mines: You would not borrow the money then?

Mr. JOHNSON: It is called a sound financial policy. During this term, while the interest and sinking fund have been increasing the revenue has been absolutely, or almost, stationary. Any increase in the revenue, despite this large expenditure on public works, this increase in interest and sinking fund, is almost entirely confined to the sale of our assets, namely the sale of Crown lands. We find that our debt has been increasing, that there has been no increase in revenue, and we have been increasing the alienation of our assets, the alienation of Crown lands. The Government, evidently realising this un-

satisfactory, or rather dangerous, state of affairs, decided to overcome it by another cowardly method, that is by reducing the sinking fund. We find that in our Bills to-day. While for years past we have boasted that we were sound in our financial methods here, as compared with other States, owing to the provision of a sinking fund of at least one per cent., still the Government, realising now the unsoundness of their land policy, have decided to overcome their difficulties by decreasing the sinking fund to one-half per cent.

The Minister for Mines: What do the Federal Government propose to do?

Mr. JOHNSON: It would have been sounder if the Government had considered the question from another point of view, and that is the discontinuing of expenditure of loan moneys on works that are not reproductive. I expected that the Minister for Mines would interject to the effect that we were opposed to the borrowing of money. Whenever there is a criticism of loan expenditure, that is always interpreted to be opposition to a borrowing policy; but I want again to deny that this party, or any other Labour party, as a party, have opposed the borrowing of money for the development of the resources of Australia. It is true that we only propose to borrow, and our policy is only to borrow, money to be utilised on works that will be reproductive. The party will never support the expenditure of loan moneys on works that cannot be shown to be reproductive. As I have stated, there has been, during the last year, an increase in our revenue, and I think all have cause to rejoice that the revenue is increasing at last; but we have to turn and find out what is the cause of the increase, where does it come from. By looking through the *Statistical Register* we find it is confined to land sales and to an increase in the railways. One naturally turns to the railways to find out the position there. I have gone to the trouble of reviewing the position of our railways in 1906, under one management, as compared with that in 1910, under a change of management. I find these figures. On goods and coaching, that is passengers and

goods, the earnings in 1906 were £1,081,000, while in 1910 the earnings from these two main items were £1,065,000; that shows that in 1910 there was a loss in the earnings of £16,000. More railways are opened, our population is supposed to be increasing and yet we find that in 1910 we earned less by £16,000 than in 1906. In the latter year the earnings per train mile were £672.98, while in 1910 it was £508.83, or a decrease of £164.53. Now we come to the expenditure. In 1906 it was £1,201,000, while in 1910 it was £1,097,000, or a decrease in expenditure in 1910 of £104,000. We find that the earnings per train mile were less and that the profits were greater by over £100,000, and yet during this year we had a fire at Midland Junction, which cost some thousands of pounds and we also had an increased expenditure, entailed by the granting of 48 hours to the railway workers. That is the point I desire to make. Of this £100,000 no less than £70,000 of it is represented by savings in wages and salaries, and I demand an explanation of this, in the interests of the country, from the member for Murray. We find that in 1910 the railways earned less, and they showed £100,000 more profit. We find in 1910 that there is £70,000 saved in wages as compared with 1906. Either this indicates sweating on the part of the management of the railways at the present time or it is a damning indictment of the administration of the member for Murray. I want to know from the member for Murray what all this means, whether it was total incompetency on his part or whether it is sweating on the part of the present Commissioner for Railways. That is the point I desire to make. Of this £100,000 no less than £70,000 of it is represented by savings in wages and salaries, and I demand an explanation of this in the interests of the country, from the member for Murray. We find that in 1910 the railways earned less, and they showed £100,000 more profit. We find that in 1910 that there is £70,000 saved in wages as compared with 1906. Either this indicates sweating on the part of the management of the railways at the present time or it is a damning indictment of

the administration of the member for Murray. I want to know from the member for Murray what all this means, whether it was total incompetency on his part or whether it is sweating on the part of the present Commissioner for Railways.

Mr. Heitmann: A little of both.

Mr. JOHNSON: One gets interested in this railway report, and naturally turns to see the result of the construction of the agricultural railways. We find that last year there was no less a sum than £5,174 lost on the operation of these railways. I have no objection to that. I am one of those who think that from these agricultural railways we get an indirect benefit. I do not expect those railways to be directly profitable, or to be profitable for a few years, but one is justified in looking through the Commissioner's report to see how the railways that were passed through this House owing to political influence have resulted in their operations. Take the first railway, which I suppose was one of the greatest political railways passed by any Parliament in Western Australia; I refer to the Katanning-Kojonup line. That line has been operated now for years, and we find that last year there is again a loss of over £1,500. Then we turn to another political railway, which I opposed in season and out of season, and in the Chamber and out of it, and I am sorry to say it was supported by some members on this side of the House; I refer to the Wickel-pin-Narrogin line. We find that it showed a loss last year of over £1,000. We come to yet another railway, that from Toodyay to Bolgart, a railway in regard to which certain threats were made unless it was passed, and we find that line has shown a loss of over £1,200. These three railways, which were passed mainly for political considerations rather than for any desire to develop agricultural interests, represent a loss of £3,700 out of a total loss of a little over £5,000. I desire to make a few remarks in connection with the administration of the various departments. I did propose to start with the Mines Department, but I feel that a great

deal of attention will be given to this department by my friends from the mining constituencies; yet I cannot pass without drawing the attention of the Chamber once more to the administration of the Mining Development Vote. Year after year I have drawn attention to the expenditure from this vote, and to the danger of leaving a lump sum of this description in the hands of a Minister such as we have at the present time, and although year after year reference has been made to this vote, and the administration of it, we have never had one concrete instance of what I was almost going to say corruption, but I will say dishonesty on the part of those who have received assistance from the vote. The member for Boulder, however, gave one instance which was denied, just as the charges which have been made against the Lands Department have been denied to-night. An attempt was made to cover it up, but through the persistency of the member for Boulder we did get an inquiry, and we would not have got that inquiry if one or two from the Government side had not raised their voices in protest. I think myself they only raised their voices in protest because they did not think that the Minister was going to come out so badly, rather did they think that the member for Boulder was making a blunder and he was the individual who was going to suffer. We had an inquiry, and what did it prove? It proved that that vote should not be in the hands of the present Minister. The Berteaux case has proved conclusively that the Minister is not worthy of the confidence reposed in him in administering a lump sum vote of that description, because Berteaux has been a particular friend and a loyal supporter of that Minister. I remember on going out to address a meeting in that district where the money was to be spent, and being told that I had arrived too late because Berteaux had obtained all the money that was available.

The Minister for Mines: Why do you try to create the impression that I gave that grant?

Mr. JOHNSON: When all the circumstances of the case are taken into consider-

ation, and when it is realised that the Attorney General would not take action, it makes one think that there is running a friendship through the granting of this loan and the method in which it was used by Mr. Berteaux.

The Minister for Mines: Why do you try to convey that impression?

Mr. JOHNSON: I convey that because it is absolutely correct. I would not have said one word of this had Berteaux been prosecuted by the Attorney General. There is no question but that he wrongfully obtained the country's money, and that he wrongfully used it, and that he made a false statement in connection with it, and the fact of Berteaux doing that demands in the interests of clean administration, and in the public interest, that he should be made an example of, but when we find the Attorney General saying, "No action is to be taken against Berteaux," then one is justified in remarking that there is more behind all this than has yet been brought to light by the inquiry, which was the result of the efforts of the member for Boulder. I do not propose to go further into the Mines administration, but I want to say a few words in connection with the Railway administration. I want first of all to refer to the action of the Minister in refusing to recognise the Officers' Association because they were affiliated with other railway servants, and to say that those men are justified in their attack upon the administration, or I would say their criticism of it, because we find that when we met the ex-Premier in conference and we raised the question he, simply by a shrug of his shoulders said, "What have you to growl about; have I not recognised you"? The then Premier conveyed the impression of having recognised the Officers' Association sitting side by side with these men they are now affiliated with, or as a matter of fact they were affiliated with at that time, because they both went as organisations together to the Premier to discuss wages and the general working conditions in the Railway Department. The Premier met them and recognised them side by side, and I defy contradiction when I say that

the then Premier conveyed the impression to these men and myself, and other members present that he recognised the Officers' Association even though they were associated with the Railway Association, and that consequently they should not complain. But the then Premier went to England and immediately another attitude was adopted by the Minister for Railways.

The Minister for Mines: They were notified before the Premier left the State by a paragraph in the Press.

Mr. JOHNSON: That may or may not be right, but it is apart from my point, which is that the ex-Premier conveyed the idea that these men were going to be recognised. What is the position? The officers desire to run their own association, they desire to have an organisation composed solely of officers in the Railway Department, and I want to say that I believe every worker, let him be a worker for the State or a private individual, ought to have the absolute right to form an association for his own protection. But they formed their association, limited to officers, with the desire of consulting with the other workers in the same industry, and they said "We will affiliate," and what was their method of affiliation? Simply that they were to appoint two or three of their number to meet two or three from the Railway Association to discuss matters of mutual interest, then to separate, to take them back to their separate organisations and discuss them and come to any decision they in their wisdom thought best.

The Minister for Mines: To have a joint executive.

Mr. JOHNSON: You can call it that if you wish. It was to be composed of two or three men from each organisation with no powers whatever further than to consider matters, and refer them back to their respective organisations. Because they desired to do that the Commissioner backed up by the Ministry of the day conveyed to them that unless they discontinued their association with the other railway workers their organisation would not be recognised. If this is persisted

in what is to be the result? I have no hesitation in saying that the result will be that if the Commissioner continues to refuse to recognise the Officers' Association he will compel those officers to join the railway association and there will be nothing to stop it.

The Minister for Mines: And come under the Arbitration Act.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes, and they would all be associated in the one meeting. Those men are being forced into exactly the same position, which is said to be undesirable. You say it is wrong for the officer and those under him for the time being to sit at the one meeting to discuss matters of common interest, but they have no desire to do that. They desire to be protected against being forced into that position, and because they take the attitude of protecting themselves against that the Minister in defiance of what was stated by the then Premier turns round and says—

The Minister for Mines: What did the then Premier say?

Mr. JOHNSON: He said they would be recognised.

The Minister for Mines: Oh, no.

Mr. JOHNSON: He distinctly said that.

The Minister for Mines: Who to?

Mr. JOHNSON: To the conference that met him, and there were other hon. members present. The members for Balcatta, North Perth, and North Fremantle, as well as myself.

Mr. Bolton: That is so.

Mr. JOHNSON: There is no doubt about it; it is absolutely correct. The position we are in to-day is that the Minister by persisting in his attitude, and the Commissioner adopting the Minister's policy, will compel these men to go into one organisation and compel them to take up that attitude they themselves feel is undesirable, and which the Minister has said is undesirable. If he wants the officers to keep to themselves and discuss their own business in their own ranks he should recognise them and the affiliation; but if he persists in his present attitude, which is absolutely wrong, I say he will force them into one organisation and will

then be compelled to recognise them in conjunction with the general workers in the railway system.

The Minister for Mines: It is to be hoped you give them better advice than you gave the tramway men.

Mr. JOHNSON: I am not sorry for the advice I gave the tramway men; if anyone is sorry it is the tramway company, for our experience has been very profitable. Then, again, I want to know from the Minister why he persists in transferring married men to Merredin, where he has not provided the slightest accommodation for these poor, unfortunate railway servants. It is becoming a common practice. They know perfectly well there is no private accommodation there, yet the Government have provided no accommodation, notwithstanding which they call upon the system's workers in Perth to go and domicile themselves at Merredin, with the result that they compel these men to establish two homes. It is impossible for them to take their wives and families, and the nearest place to Merredin where they can secure a home is Northam. The Minister has compelled them to leave their wives and families in one home at Northam and go and establish another in batching fashion at Merredin. The workers find it impossible to maintain two homes on the wages they are receiving and, consequently, they refuse to go; and they ask that the transference should be reconsidered. But the terms on which it is reconsidered are that they shall be stood down for two years and shall not obtain any further promotion. It is distinctly unfair, and it deserves that the condemnation of the country should fall on any Minister who makes himself a party to that sort of administration. There is just one other thing while the Minister is making notes. I ask the hon. member to make a note of this, in connection with his friend Mr. Hedges, who we know has a tract of country about Doodlakine, or south of Kellerberrin. Does the Minister know anything about taking 22 Italians from Kurrawang to Doodlakine and back again?

Mr. Heitmann: They would be only about one crate.

Mr. JOHNSON: They came in a covered-in truck, not in a crate. But I want to ask the Minister if he is aware that 22 Italians went down from Kurrawang to work that land, and went back in a covered-in truck labelled as goods and effects.

Mr. Scaddan: Two tons.

Mr. JOHNSON: I am informed—and I want the Minister to make inquiries and furnish a statement on this question—I am informed that these 22 men went back to Kurrawang in a covered-in truck, that they were labelled "two tons of effects," that inside the van they had their stretchers and were sleeping on the way from Doodlakine to Kurrawang, and on the same train there were carriages which were empty. The Australian or Britisher travelling in a carriage has to sit up all night, there being no sleeping accommodation, and pay a passenger's fare and be in possession of a ticket; but these Italians came in a covered-in truck, bringing their stretchers with them, and travelling as two tons of effects. The duty of the Minister is to inquire into this matter and make a statement to the country.

The Minister for Mines: It is not worthy of notice.

Mr. JOHNSON: The declaration of its not being worthy of inquiry makes me believe, knowing the Minister as I do, that he knows a great deal about it and does not require to inquire. But he conveys the idea that he will not inquire. Why? Because he does not desire to make a statement to the House. But I demand that a statement be made as to this administration of the Railway Department. Now, I propose to leave the Minister for the time being and devote a little attention to the Colonial Secretary. We find that this hon. gentleman is devoting no attention whatever to the administration of measures that have been passed by Parliament from time to time to protect the general health and condition of the toilers in Western Australia. Let us take one measure, namely, the Early Closing Act, which has been in existence for many years. It was passed with a view to limiting the number of hours over which shops should remain open, and to protect the workers in the

shops against unscrupulous employers. But to-day, while the Ministry have not the power to repeal a measure they are opposed to, they arrive at the same end by absolutely disregarding the administration of that measure. The Act to-day, or rather its administration, is as dead as Julius Cæsar. The Act is alive and on the statute-book, but under the present Minister the Act has not been administered, and will not be as long as that gentleman holds his position. He has flouted the desires of the people in the province that returned him, and has flouted the health and prosperity of the community in the administration of this Act and other measures. Take his action in connection with the Saturday half-holiday. I believe the people of the country are favourable to the closing of shops at one o'clock on Saturday; because they recognise under the present system it is not in the best interests of the health of the workers that they should remain in shops for such long hours; and the people generally recognise it is not necessary in the interests of the shopping community, and that it is possible for them to do their shopping, and for the shops to close early on Saturdays. But the Colonial Secretary pays most attention in this matter to the general welfare of the big men, the big shopkeepers, the Brennans, the Foy and Gibsons, and those who are opposed to Saturday closing. He has no consideration for the employees in the shops, but devotes all his attention to the big shopkeepers. One could say exactly the same of the Factories Act. There is no administration of the Factories Act to-day. Charges were made some years ago against the present Administration on the score of want of attention to the Factories Act, and charges were made of sweating that could be avoided by a close administration of the measure. A select committee was appointed to investigate; and while we could not get concrete instances of sweating to the extent which the charges had indicated, still we found instances of sweating. And even under the Act as it stands to-day, if administered, that sweating could have been avoided. We urged as a committee, representative of both sides of the House

but the majority of which came from the Government side, that the Act should be amended in order to give the administration an opportunity of more closely protecting the health of those unfortunate girls and children employed in our factories. But we find that although the report was unanimous, and urged certain reforms, that report has been absolutely disregarded and nothing has been done. We pointed out the utter impossibility of one or two inspectors administering the Act throughout the State, and especially we urged that a lady inspector should be appointed for special services. But we find that nothing has been done, and to-day the Factories Act is not, in my opinion, as closely administered as it was when that inquiry was sitting. Again, we find an application of exactly the same administration in connection with our hospitals; we find the Minister totally disregarding the lives and the health of the people in the back country. We find that his desire is not to grant increased hospital facilities, that he has no desire to offer greater protection to the lives of those who are pioneering in our back blocks. Rather does he desire to close up the hospitals already in existence. Our population is increasing and the accidents in our mines are increasing, yet the Minister, although a mining representative himself, indicates that he intends to reduce gradually and surely the subsidy given to these hospitals, with the result that they will be compelled to close, and we will have centres in the back blocks with no hospital accommodation. We will have an opportunity of speaking on the Padbury bequest, because when we succeed with this no-confidence motion the Ministry formed from this side of the House will have to deal with that matter; but the administration of that by representatives from this side of the House will be totally different from the proposals of the Minister who, I trust, will only be there for another few short days. I desire to criticise the administration of the immigration vote which is placed under the control of this particular Minister. We find generally the whole of this expenditure is from loan funds; the details in connection with immigration car-

ried out by the Colonial Secretary are paid for out of loan funds. We find he claims that the money is being expended in getting farm labourers; yet to-night we heard the Premier ridiculing some of the immigrants that have been secured by this policy, and pointing out that they had no experience of farming. Only a few nights ago we were told that the immigrant had to declare, and even demonstrate, that he had had some farming experience in the old country. To-night the Premier, to defend himself against the attacks of the leader of the Opposition, said openly that these immigrants had no farming experience; and he said that although on the one hand the Government claim to bring only farm labourers into the country, when they come here they have to serve an apprenticeship. It is this apprenticeship which is the most pernicious part of the policy. No wonder the big farmers are advocating the establishment of labour bureaux in the agricultural districts. They find there is a glorious opportunity of getting cheap labour. They take these men irrespective of their qualifications and put them on their farms, and, like the Premier, they propose to pay on results, and they are the judges of the results. These poor unfortunate immigrants are engaged by the farmers to be with them for a given term, and the farmers say, "You do not know much about the game, you will have to serve an apprenticeship, and during the serving of that apprenticeship you will get little or no wages." If they get 5s. a week they are very well paid.

Mr. Underwood: According to the farmers.

Mr. JOHNSON: This policy of advertising the resources of the State, misrepresenting the State to a very great extent, reminds me somewhat of the bona-fide section in our Licensing Act. If a man has a thirst and wants a drink badly he has to tell a lie to get one. We find exactly the same thing in connection with the immigration policy. Lecturers are sent throughout England telling stories and painting pictures that are not borne out by facts, misrepresenting the possibilities of the State and showing

pictures that are not truly representative of Western Australia; and after painting a glowing picture they tell these men, "You want to get out there, it is a glorious country, but you have to say you are farm labourers." It is only a matter of form, somewhat like the bona-fide section, for the immigrant to go in and be questioned. He is asked, "Are you a farm labourer?" and he says, "Yes," and he immediately gets assistance and comes to Western Australia. We find he has absolutely no knowledge of farming whatsoever, and he is put on as an apprentice. It is cheap labour for the farmers of this State. Right here I want to lay a charge against the Ministry and particularly against the Minister for Railways because they are loading up the railway system with immigrants, the same as the tramway company tried to load up their system with immigrants during the industrial trouble. We find in our railways that the Australian is dismissed, his services are dispensed with, in order to make room for immigrants. The new arrival is placed on the railway system, and the Australian, in some cases with large experience and who has been in the department for some time, is dismissed in order to create the vacancy. One could say a great deal more in connection with the administration of the Colonial Secretary's department, but I want to pass on. I want to say a little now in connection with the want of activity on the part of the Attorney General. The hon. member is usually asleep in the Chamber, but he may possibly wake up for a few moments. I think he sleeps half his time in his department. I want to ask him why it is he has not passed an amending Arbitration Act. Why is it month after month, year after year, we find the president of the Arbitration Court pointing out that it is absolutely impossible to successfully administer the Arbitration Act? Only last Thursday reference was made to it. Time after time he has appealed to the Administration to pass an amending measure; time after time they have disregarded his request, and time after time they have been responsible for bringing about industrial trouble or industrial

strife in this State. It has been said that we, the workers, are responsible for it; but we are only responsible when we find we cannot get justice or we cannot get consideration from that measure. Take the recent tramway strike, or tramway trouble—strike if you like—why was that trouble brought about? Simply because we went to the Arbitration Court and told the court of the injustice that was being done by the tramway company to the workers in that industry—that the company were making the minimum wage the maximum. We asked for protection, but we were told distinctly and definitely by the president of the court that he could not protect us; that, while he had no desire to see the minimum made the maximum, still, wrong though it was in his estimation, he had no power to protect us. Yet we are told, when the Arbitration Court will not protect us, we have no right to protect ourselves. We would not be men at all unless we entered a protest. The worker under the Act as it stands to-day has only one opportunity or one way of entering his protest. We adopted that by ceasing work as a protest against injustice. The Arbitration Act was passed at the outset to overcome difficulties of this description, but we have found by the administration of the measure that it has not proved absolutely sufficient to cover all the difficulties that meet both the employer and the employee. In order to overcome this the Administration have been asked time after time to amend the Act. They refused to do it. The opportunity has now gone, because the Act will be amended by gentlemen from this, the Opposition, side of the House. However, I lay this charge again, that the Administration are responsible, and they alone, for the tramway trouble and several other labour troubles that have taken place in this State. I want to have a few words to say in connection with the late tramway trouble and in connection with the fine that was inflicted on me for aiding, or because I was supposed to be aiding or abetting a strike. I have no desire to try to shield myself, nor any desire to refuse to accept the responsibility for any of

my actions, but I want to say that the verdict in this particular case was distinctly vindictive, and I will proceed to prove my statement. We find there was a grave difference of opinion as to my guilt on that occasion. Two gentlemen sat on the bench. One declared that I was guilty of aiding and abetting a strike; the other gentleman declared otherwise and, in giving his verdict, delivered it absolutely on the evidence that had been produced. On that evidence he declared that it should not be called a strike under the interpretation placed upon a strike by the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Where there is a difference of opinion I am prepared to admit the opinion of the police magistrate should prevail; but it was absolutely vindictive, seeing that there was a difference of opinion, for the police magistrate to fine me the maximum penalty. At the outset of the case he said he could not hear it because I had already been prejudged in the Full Court, but after argument by counsel representing me he said he was prepared to proceed with the case. Then after the evidence was heard, in delivering his judgment, he started out by saying he was not going to be influenced by the opinions expressed by Mr. Justice McMillan, but he immediately started to quote and he quoted time after time from the Full Court's decision to justify his own verdict. He was not going to be influenced by it, but he absolutely quoted it to justify his verdict. If he was not going to be influenced by it then he had no right to quote it; but if he quoted it, after saying he would not be influenced by it, it shows that he was vindictive. Apart from that, the fact of his imposing the maximum penalty where there was a difference of opinion on the bench demonstrated that it was a distinctly unfair and unjust verdict; and being satisfied that it was unjust and unfair, I decided I would not pay the fine. There was an alternative of two months' imprisonment for non-payment; and as it was my only way of entering a protest, I decided I would rather do the two months' imprisonment than pay an unjust penalty; but instead of proceeding to imprison me, they decided to make me

pay the penalty by placing the bailiffs in my house. It has been stated by the Press that the bailiffs were put into the Trades Hall; if they had been put into the Trades Hall they would have stayed there, because nobody would have taken any notice of them; but I was notified that, if I did not pay, the bailiffs were to be put into my home the next day; so in order to protect my wife and family, I was compelled to pay this absolutely unjust penalty. It may be asked, "Why did you not appeal?" but I had already been judged in the Full Court and found guilty.

Mr. Holman: Shame!

Mr. JOHNSON: Found guilty on an ex-parte application where there was not the slightest evidence, absolutely no connection of any description between myself and those taking action in that court; but I was declared to be guilty of doing something in the nature of a strike, and I am asked why I did not appeal from the police court to a court where I had already been prejudged. I had no right of appeal. Consequently there was only one way of entering my protest, and that was to go to Fremantle, but the Ministry of the day were not game enough to attempt to put me there and they decided to sell up my few sticks, to harass my family in order to compel me to pay a few pounds. But what was the action of the Ministry in regard to the tramway company? If a member has a political meeting and he anticipates there are likely to be some ugly questions asked, or that there is going to be any opposition, he sends to the Police Department for a policeman to protect the meeting against a riot or anything of that description, and if he does so he is told he may have the police protection but he must pay for that special protection. If there is a picnic, a railway picnic, and we ask for special police protection, we have to pay for it; we have to pay for this or for any special service rendered by the police. In the past it always had to be paid for by the persons making the application; but what do we find in connection with the tramway company? They asked for special police protection to protect blacklegs on the tramway cars, two on each

car, and yet we are informed by the Ministry of the day that they are not enforcing payment.

Mr. Scaddan: Every one of them has a free pass.

Mr. Bolton: That is for the police protection.

Mr. JOHNSON: I want the Attorney General to deny that the Police Department sent a bill to the tramway company for the use of these policemen and that the tramway company refused to pay the bill and it was written off by the Ministry of the day. I have been informed that this is correct, and it should be correct, because the regulations state that Captain Hare shall send in those bills for special services rendered by the police to any individual or company. Consequently Captain Hare, carrying out precedent, carrying out the regulations, the established practice, should send the bill to the company, and I am informed it was sent in, but the company refused to pay it and it was not enforced by the Ministry. Where the worker is persecuted by an unjust judgment, which is enforced even although it means selling up a man's few sticks, yet in connection with the Tramway Company a just claim is written off by the Ministry of the day.

Mr. Holman: They can pay it and make it worth their while.

Mr. JOHNSON: I will leave the Attorney General at that. One would pass on to the Minister for Works, but one cannot criticise that gentleman as far as administration goes, because he has done nothing. I do not think he will have the opportunity of doing anything, so consequently I will let him rest. Now we come to the Lands Department. I desire to offer some little criticism of the maladministration of that department. I have done it before and I have been challenged. I went through a board of inquiry into statements I made in this House, and I was able to prove absolutely more than I had stated, with the result that the officer was passed out of the service. My statements of that time, like my statements to-night, were not made against an officer. I had no desire to victimise the officer when speaking on the matter before. My desire was to cast reflection at

the administration of the department, because after all we, as members, must hold the Minister responsible for anything that happens in his department. It is true we are justified at times in drawing attention to the actions of special officers, but generally speaking, when we criticise a department we criticise the Minister, and he should take the responsibility of dealing with the officer without compelling a member of Parliament to go through an inquiry and so cast the responsibility on the officer in order to whitewash the Minister. I have said, and I want to repeat it to-night, that the administration of the Lands Department during the "continuation" Government has not been a success. We had Sir Newton Moore as Minister, and time after time we had to criticise his department. Then he had sense enough to realise his want of capacity and he put the member for Northam in the position of Minister for Lands.

Mr. Underwood: That was to prove there was someone worse than he.

Mr. JOHNSON: And he has been successful, for bad as Sir Newton Moore was the present Minister is distinctly worse. I am beginning to think that, with the changes of Ministers in that department, things are getting decidedly worse with each change. I am beginning to wonder whether we should not devote our attention to getting a new under-secretary and see if we could not obtain a strong administration and reforms from the under-secretary's chair.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Get some younger man to take the position of under-secretary.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes, if we could get new and young blood in that chair we might get that administration which we have failed to get from the different Ministers who have controlled the department during the "continuation" Government. First of all I want to criticise the administration of the Minister for Lands and Agriculture in connection with the expenditure of the vote passed in this House for the establishment of export freezing works at North Fremantle. That vote was severely criticised in this Chamber, and more especially criticised by the Press and the pas-

toralists and producers of this country, but we found that the Minister, in order to get the vote through, laid special attention on the fact, and led this House and the country to believe, that he wanted the vote in order to establish freezing works and abattoirs for the export of lambs. Those of us who criticised said the export of lambs was decreasing, and that we had not arrived at the export stage. That statement was ridiculed by the Minister for Lands, who pointed out that we were producing considerably more lambs every year, and that because of the increasing production of lambs the export would increase. He pointed out that a thousand or two had been sent away the previous year, and that consequently the increase would bring about the export of thousands more. As a matter of fact we find that the export has decreased, and that last year it absolutely ceased, not one head being exported. At the same time we find the price of lamb per pound to-day is higher than it was two or three years ago. In my home we have paid this year as high as 9d. per pound for lamb; that was the only occasion we did so, for we have not been able to pay such a high price since.

Mr. Bolton: Want of money or lamb?

Mr. JOHNSON: We could not afford to pay that price for meat. The price makes it absolutely impossible to export lambs, consequently the evidence brought forward by the Minister has fallen to the ground. There are no lambs to export now, so he turns round and absolutely reverses the position. He is not going to establish abattoirs and freezing works, but he starts at the other end and establishes sale yards. I am making this charge, that the yards will only go to help to build up the meat ring that has been the curse of this country, and has been established at Robb's Jetty for years past. We find that the stock is taken to North Fremantle and sold there. It is killed there, for it has to go into the private abattoirs held by the ring.

Mr. Angwin: Where is it killed when it goes to Midland Junction?

Mr. JOHNSON: At Midland Junction there are private abattoirs, and there are also similar establishments scattered around Perth and Bayswater. It is possible for the owners to slaughter their cattle, not under the best conditions I admit, but to slaughter them in private abattoirs or sale yards controlled by men outside the meat ring. The reverse is the case at Fremantle, for the main abattoirs in and around Fremantle are controlled and owned by the cattle kings who have been representing the meat ring of this country.

Mr. Angwin: Cattle go from Robb's Jetty and are sold at Midland Junction.

Mr. JOHNSON: Some cattle go from Robb's Jetty for sale, but that is during the Kimberley season. We all know that during a few months of the year all the cattle received here come from the North-West. They are landed at Robb's Jetty and some have been taken to Midland Junction for sale. I have no objection to these cattle staying at North Fremantle, and I have no strong objection to sale yards being established there, but I do object to their being established there before Government abattoirs are constructed. The sale yards being established there now are provided in order to assist the meat ring that has been a curse for so long. I have this charge to make against the Minister, that not only did he establish the yards in order to assist the ring, but he absolutely interfered with the only opposition the ring possibly could get in this country, the opposition that was created by the sales held in Midland Junction. We find that the Minister, not content with establishing yards to come into competition with those yards that during the next week or two will be municipalised—he knows it has been the established policy of the Midland Junction municipality for 12 months past to establish municipal yards—but he has fixed the same day of the week and the same hour for the sales at North Fremantle as at Midland Junction. I contend that by coming into competition with the municipal concern at Midland Junction and by taking their very day and hour, he clearly indicates that he

created the yards in a vindictive spirit in order to harass and hamper the Producers' Union and the sale yards at Midland Junction in the interests of the great meat owners in and around Fremantle. I want to say a little in connection with a few items of administration or mal-administration of the Lands Department. First I want to deal with the administration of the immigration vote as from an agricultural or lands point of view. The pamphlets issued in London and published under the direction of the Government absolutely misrepresent the position, and in cases are distinct falsehoods. The statement contained in the pamphlet that special areas are set aside for special communities is wrong. When it was written it was known by those responsible that it was absolutely incorrect. Then it is stated that one can get 160 acres of homestead farm and, in addition, 2,000 acres of conditional purchase land at 10s. an acre. In the first place it is a lie to say one can get 2,000 acres in addition to 160 acres of homestead farm. One cannot get it, and the Minister knows it well. It is absolutely misrepresenting and misleading immigrants who come from the old country. Then one cannot get good agricultural land at 10s. an acre here. That is another lie circulated in the old country and misleading immigrants. One would not care if that publication had come out a considerable time back, but it is dated in June and July last, and has been circulated since then. It was circulated during the time the then Premier was at Home. He knew the statement was absolutely incorrect, and yet we find that it was not withdrawn or cancelled from the pamphlet until the cable was sent by the present Premier as the outcome of the charges made by the leader of the Opposition. Now we find it will be withdrawn. And yet we went to the expense of sending the then Premier to the old country to try and revise the immigration policy and put the Agent General's office in order. Still that circular was published and distributed, and no effort was made to put the misstatements right. As an outcome of that the party known as the Clarke party,

composed of Mr. Clarke and family, Veitch and others, were induced to come to this country. They were misled by the representations made, they came to this country as a result of the advertisements, and the circulation of the statement that special areas had been set aside for the establishment of special communities. They were distinctly told in the old country that they could come to Western Australia as a party, and that they could get areas close to one another and farm as a community. These people were encouraged to sell their farms in the old country, and they sold a considerable amount of their stock, but they brought with them a lot of their pedigreed stock, and it was brought here because of the representations made to them by Sir Newton Moore, together with the circulation of the pamphlets which have been referred to. When they came to Western Australia they were told that the statements were wrong, and that they could not get a special area. The Premier tries to pass this affair over by saying that they are a good family. I want to testify to that also, and to declare that they are the best agriculturists I have met since the immigration policy of the present Government has been in force. We are told that this Clarke party is a fine class of immigrants, and that they are typical farmers, and that Mr. Clarke himself is a fine old gentleman, and that they have been fixed up, or that a promise has been made to fix them up. I want to know, however, who is going to pay this unfortunate party for the expense of keeping their family and stock while they have been waiting to get fixed up by the Government who have misrepresented the position to them in the old country. I venture to assert that it will take anything from £20 to £30 a week to pay the expenses of this party, the family and their stock. Yet it goes on week after week that these unfortunate people are put to this expense, and the Minister for Lands lies back in his chair and sleeps or grins because he brought these people out under misrepresentation, and now declines to meet them fairly and see that justice is done to them. It is true that he passed the matter over to the *Daily News*, and it is true that Mr. Love-

kin interviewed them, and that Mr. Lovekin said they were a fine class, but that they ought to give the Government some time to fix them up. Mr. Lovekin I venture to say did not offer to contribute to the expense that they were put to while been kept waiting. This family have been badly treated by the Government, and I claim that this one action alone is sufficient to condemn the administration of the Lands Department and the present Minister if we had nothing else to bring against him. Those people were misled and then put to great expense in this country, and they have had little or no consideration from the present Administration. I believe it is just that these men should receive an area, but at the same time I want to point out that if it is given to them it is distinctly unfair to the people of our own State. If special areas can be set aside they should also be set aside for the miners in our own State. If the Government do this, it is wrong, and if they do not do it, it is a gross injustice, but I think, although it may be wrong, these immigrants have a claim against the Government, and in the interests of the agricultural industry this family should receive early consideration at the hands of the Government. They have suffered wrong enough, and something should be done to recoup them for the delay they have been forced to incur owing to the misrepresentation in the old country, and want of activity on the part of an incompetent Minister. Let us look into some other cases of administration. Take the case of an application for a block of land by a gentleman known as Lilly. A gentleman named Spriggott applies for a block of land and he goes to the station-master I think at Doodlakine—which by the way is becoming a notorious place—and induces him to witness an application form. This station-master was not an officer appointed to witness forms, consequently the application was informal. It was not correctly lodged, and it was possible for Mr. Spriggott to say anything because the station-master was not appointed to take applications, and consequently could not interrogate Spriggott. The result was that the station-master could not certify that the application was

correct, and Spriggett could make any representation he liked. I do not infer that Spriggett said anything that was untrue, but the fact remains that the application was wrong. Another application was put in by Lilly and his application was refused and that of Spriggett was granted. It is pointed out that this is wrong, and although this gentleman makes repeated application for justice, and being the only applicant legally speaking, he could get no satisfaction until he placed the matter in the hands of his solicitor; he is forced into an expense of that description before he can get justice. Now I understand that after incurring this expense the grant of the area to Spriggett is to be cancelled and Lilly is to get it. The fact remains that Lilly has been put to this expense, and he has been delayed and harassed because the Minister has not administered his department as he should have done. There is another case that I want to bring under the notice of the Minister, and this reflects to an extent on an hon. member of this Chamber, the member for Roebourne, Mr. Osborn. We find that Mr. Osborn applied on the 30th June last and was granted an area at Geetarning of about 2,000 acres. One block was under Section 55, residence, and the other under Section 56, non-residence, and there was a homestead farm. Mr. Osborn evidently became dissatisfied, or he got special information that there was better land available somewhere else, and he applied absolutely correctly for the amendment of his application, and for a transfer from Geetarning to Kuminin area, and he it said to Mr. Osborn's credit that he applied for the very best block in the Kuminin area. That is evident by the fact that he applied for the dearest block on which the Agricultural Bank advances the maximum amount. To amend his application he would have to amend 1,000 acres under Section 55, residence with the homestead, and the other, under Section 56. When he goes before the Land Board for the amendment, the Land Board refuses to grant him the block he applied for under Section 55, but they grant him the block he applied for under Section 56 providing that he applies for it under Section 55.

That decision of the Land Board was invalid, because at the time they granted Mr. Osborn the 1,000 acres under Section 55 he had another under Section 55 at Geetarning. It is impossible for any man to hold 2,000 acres under the same section. To cover up the blunder of the Land Board or the Minister, for the Minister has to take the responsibility, the area at Geetarning that really belonged to Mr. Osborn was transferred illegally to Mr. Raisbeck. On the 9th the land belonged to Mr. Osborn, and on the 13th the land was granted to Mr. Raisbeck. This area should have been gazetted. It was impossible for the area to be gazetted between the 9th and the 13th, and there was no opportunity for anyone to make an application, but I want to ask the Minister how did Raisbeck know that the area was open for selection?

Mr. Collier: He had a friend at court.

Mr. JOHNSON: He must have had a friend at court, and he must have been informed that the member for Roebourne had got the land illegally from the department. At the time it was granted, the member for Roebourne had two blocks, and Mr. Raisbeck was granted the area four days after the time it had belonged to the member for Roebourne. Mr. Osborn could not transfer the land himself to Raisbeck because he had only had the area for two and a-half months. If the Minister agreed to the transfer he did what was absolutely wrong. To-day, legally speaking, the block at Geetarning belongs to Mr. Osborn, and it has also been granted to Mr. Raisbeck. Mr. Osborn also owns, according to the decision of the land board, another 1,000 acres under the same section at Kuminin, and I want to know how it is that an hon. member of this Chamber or anyone else can hold two blocks under the same section, and how Mr. Osborn and Mr. Raisbeck can own the same block. The point I want to make is this: one of the applicants—and there were 35 applicants for this block that the member for Roebourne got—was a genuine settler who had sold his farm and come to this State on the advice of our Melbourne agency. His name is Mr. Molloy, and he was an appli-

cant for this block, and realising the injustice that had been done protested against it by petition. He appealed against the decision of the land board to His Excellency the Governor, and since the petition had been presented Mr. Molloy has been waiting patiently to find out what the result is. He knows by the reading of the Act that the land cannot belong to Mr. Osborn, and as one who has appealed against it he has the opportunity of securing it, but we find that the Minister is absolutely disregarding that petition, and as far as I can gather, absolutely nothing has been done. I want an explanation in connection with this particular transaction.

The Minister for Lands: When was the petition handed in?

Mr. JOHNSON: That is just it: the Minister does not know anything at all about his own department. I have given the date that Mr. Osborn got the Geet-arning area, that was the 30th June, and somewhere about the 9th September the Kummimin area was granted. I cannot certify to the correctness of the dates, but they are near enough for the Minister. Reference has been made to-night to Myers case, a case of dummying, and if you, Sir, have read the papers you know something about this particular transaction. I am not satisfied with the reply given or the details submitted in attempted refutation of the charge made by the leader of the Opposition, but I do not propose to go any further into this case. There is a good deal more to be said in connection with it, but other hon. members know more about it than I do, and, consequently, I will leave it to them. Another matter I want some explanation upon is this practice of accepting £1 deposit for areas of land in order to secure them from the applications of other people. I have had instances quoted to me, and the Minister no doubt will know of a number, where an application is made for a block of land, but the applicant is informed that it is not open to selection, that a prior application has been lodged and £1 deposit paid. That £1 deposit is illegal under the Act, yet it is practised in

the Lands Department to-day, and I want an explanation of it. I want to know how it is that if I apply for a block I have to pay the full fees in accordance with the Act—quite right, too—while there are others who can pay £1 deposit and protect the land from selection by other people. Then I also want to point out to the Chamber something I was not in possession of until quite recently, namely, that the flora and fauna reserve upon which we prided ourselves as being a glorious area of forest, something as a stand-by for the people of the State, has not been made a Class A reserve. I was always under the impression that that area was absolutely safe, that it was impossible for the Minister to fritter it away; but I find it is not so. The Minister promised when we went to the expense of building a railway to open up that country, that it would be declared a Class A reserve, and I have no hesitation in saying that the Minister should have immediately created it a Class A reserve. Yet nothing has been done, and in my opinion it is absolutely unsafe to leave this flora and fauna reserve in the hands of the Minister any longer to fritter away in the granting of areas.

The Minister for Mines: Who first granted an area of it?

Mr. JOHNSON: I did. And I would grant an area again to small, struggling mill owners who were endeavouring to compete against the combine.

The Minister for Works: You could not do that with a Class A reserve.

Mr. JOHNSON: But in those days there was no railway communication and the area was not opened up; it was only possible for small mills to be erected there, and I granted the area to some people who had a small mill in the vicinity. They had practically cut out, and if we had not given them the area we would have limited the competition. As the result of our action we have to-day a privately owned concern successfully operating against Millars' Company.

Mr. Bath: They had the reserve before, but the combine brought pressure

on the James Government and it was taken away from them.

Mr. JOHNSON: However, the hon. gentleman can refer to that phase of the question later. I want to point out that Millars' recently established in close proximity to this area one of the most expensive mills that have been erected in the State. This, too, in an area almost if not absolutely cut out. I thought there was absolutely no danger from the establishment of that mill, because I believed that before they could get an area of this flora and fauna reserve it would have to come before the Chamber, and hon. members would have an opportunity of protecting the country against the expansion of this combine. But we find now that we have absolutely no protection whatever, and that the reserve is absolutely at the mercy of the Minister, who could grant an area of it without consulting members as to their desires. That reserve should be put under Class A, and I trust that one of the first acts of the new Ministry will be to so protect it against being fritted away by Ministers now that it has been opened up by railway communication. Reference has been made to the securing of a certain area by a Mr. Court, and something has been said of a member of this Chamber having offered it for sale. I have no grievance against that member for offering it for sale; the grievance I have is the fact that Mr. Court's application was put in two or three days too late.

Mr. Scaddan: One day.

Mr. JOHNSON: Well, it went in after applications had closed. There were other applications for the area and though Mr. Court was late, still on the instructions, I understand, of Mr. Farmer, the application was admitted and was sent on to the land board, and Mr. Court, the man who was late, secured the land.

Mr. Scaddan: With Mr. Farmer as chairman of the board.

Mr. JOHNSON: However, this is a matter of such importance that the passing reference and wave of the hand given to it by the Premier is not sufficient. We

want further information, and the Minister will be called upon to supply it. If the Minister wants another case for his pencil let him take that of Mayford, who journeyed to Northam to secure an area of land. In the beginning he was informed the land was vacant, but when he arrived at Northam he was told that one McCorry had secured it. Mr. Mayford made inquiries and found that McCorry was not 16 years of age, and that he had made a false declaration and was not entitled to hold land. Mr. Mayford made complaint to the Lands Department, and it was found that McCorry was under 16 and was not entitled to secure the land. Yet up to date—and this happened some time ago—as far as I can gather, Mr. Mayford has received no satisfaction. I want to know how it is all these cases are going on? We have had a few given in detail by the Premier to-night, and while a few of these are brought under my notice there must be scores of others. Consequently I say these cases go to prove that we have not a competent Minister in the Lands Department. Then there is another block near Woolundra.

The Minister for Lands: You must remember there are 45,000 of them.

Mr. JOHNSON: A gentleman in this town, hearing there was an area open for selection in that district, applied for it. When he made application he was told it was not available, that it had been granted. A day or two afterwards another man made application for the same block and secured it. The amusing part of the whole affair is that the first applicant, who was told that the land was not available, has it in his possession to-day for sale for £350. It seems that the second applicant secured the land which had been refused to the first, and put it in the hands of the first applicant for sale for £350. I want to say a little in connection with that Watheroo area, which was thrown open for selection recently.

Mr. Heitmann: You can speak feelingly on this.

Mr. JOHNSON: I do not know. I am like the member for Roebourne; I

am applying for an amendment. But so far as my amendment goes it will be fair and square. Now, what can we see in connection with Watheroo area? There is no doubt that the member for Subiaco, if he knows anything about land, will agree with me that the whole of the valuations placed on that land are absolutely ridiculous. The area is not the high class it was represented by the Minister and an officer of the Lands Department. That piece of land was absolutely boomed. But apart from the booming, I absolutely decline to take the valuations placed upon those various blocks as being the valuations placed upon them by the officer classifying the land. I am of opinion that the land was so successfully boomed that the prices placed on it by the classifying officer would have demonstrated that the boom was not justified, and the Minister, in order to justify the booming of the land, increased the prices of the various blocks, he himself not having visited it. I decline to believe that any practical man could place the values on those blocks which were placed on them by the Minister. We find that various men have thrown up their blocks. Personally I am trying to get rid of the one allotted to me. I did not get the block allotted to me with my eyes shut. I applied in the first place, and I claimed that the cutting up of that particular area was too small—all the blocks were too small. The Agricultural Department lays it down that it is of no use any man taking less than 1,000 acres. In order to get that principle clearly established, I moved a resolution last session to affirm it. The Minister agreed to the resolution and said that if the resolution were not enforced he would guarantee that the land board would be instructed not to grant any area less than 1,000 acres, and that the Lands Department would work in with the generally accepted principle of the Agricultural Bank. But we find that in the Watheroo area not one block comprised 1,000 acres; a number of them were just about 500 or 600 acres in size. Realising they were all too small, but never having applied before, and wishing to get an area big enough, I ap-

plied for two blocks. I told the land board—and they agreed with me—that one block was too small to absolutely guarantee success. I applied for the block granted to the member for Subiaco.

Mr. Bolton: So did I.

Mr. JOHNSON: I told the land board, and they represented to me that possibly they would only grant single blocks. I admit that the block secured by the member for Daglish—that is the truest word I have spoken to-night—I admit the block granted to the member for Subiaco was one of the best in the area, and owing to the mission land being, according to the *Gazette*, open for selection, it was possible for the man who got that block to extend his area. I told the board that if they granted me that block I would take it and endeavour to increase my area, but that they were not to grant me the other block, because it was impossible to make a living on it. It is two-thirds sand plain, and poor sand plain at that. But it was granted to me. Throughout this country I have been abused as securing one of the best blocks in the area. To-day I am absolutely kicking myself that the land board granted it to me and beat me for £6 or thereabouts. I did not want the block, never did want it, and now I am trying to protect my £6 by applying for a transfer or an amendment of the area to some other locality where I can get about 1,000 acres of decent land on which I can make a success of farming. The point I want to make is that this land was unjustly boomed and that the price is distinctly unfair. If the Ministry do not reduce this price it is absolutely impossible for these unfortunate men struggling on the area to make a success and pay their way. I will not give much advice to the member for Subiaco in the future, but I do advise him to get rid of his area at an early date or to extend it, otherwise he will be a failure in farming as he has been in politics. I do not desire to give any more details or any more instances of the want of attention on the part of the present Minister controlling the Lands Department; but after all, we are told by that influential journal, the *West Aus-*

italian, that the more instances we give of maladministration the more evidence we give of successful administration. They say, "Judge the Lands Department by the number of the blunders."

Mr. Heitmann: If they were all blunders it would be a huge success.

Mr. JOHNSON: That is exactly what we were told by the leading article in the journal recently. Was ever a more ludicrous statement made! But it was not made in the form of a statement, it was made in the form of an argument. The argument was that we are to judge the successes of the Lands Department by the blunders that are made. Before leaving the Lands Department, I want some explanation from the Minister as to how it is we have lost the services of that qualified gentleman, Professor Lowrie. It is passing strange that only a few short months ago the Minister was claiming great credit for the fact that he had secured the services of so valuable a gentleman.

Mr. Foulkes: And that his arrival would increase the value of the land by £1 per acre.

Mr. JOHNSON: I am not going into details, but the fact remains that the Minister was claiming special credit because he had secured the services of that gentleman. Yet, to-day, when we have only got that gentleman, highly qualified as he is, one of the best authorities in Australia, just got him used to Western Australia and able to establish the industry on a firm footing, just when we had begun to feel the advantage of his appointment, we find he leaves us and goes to another State. Sufficient explanation has not been given. As a matter of fact I have seen no explanation, and I am inclined to think that the going of Professor Lowrie is due to some action on the part of the Minister. I want the Minister to explain.

The Minister for Lands: You are quite wrong.

Mr. JOHNSON: Well, I want the Minister to explain matters. It is a great loss to Western Australia. I would have liked to see the Minister leave the State. I am distinctly sorry to see a highly qualified gentleman like Professor Lowrie leave

it. The Premier, in speaking, criticised the leader of the Opposition for referring to a Redistribution of Seats Bill that he had never seen; but we know that many caucuses of the Government party have been held to consider this particular measure, and it is an open secret that the measure is being framed, not with a desire to give adequate representation to the people of the State, but rather to gerrymander the electorates to prevent the Opposition from gaining a majority at the next general election. There is only one way to get an honest redistribution of seats under the present Administration, and that is for the matter to be referred to special commissioners, as is done by the Commonwealth Parliament. We, as a party, are not opposed to a Redistribution of Seats Bill. We recognise, and it is generally recognised in the State, that a redistribution should be made before another appeal to the country. But what we object to is a redistribution of seats being made for party purposes rather than to give proper representation to the people. We know from the caucuses that have been held and from the information gained that the present Government are framing the Bill as a party measure to increase the strength of their party, or to prevent the party on the Opposition side from getting a majority, and it is because of that we criticise the Redistribution of Seats Bill. But it is wrong to say that because of this criticism we are opposed to a redistribution of seats. Again we are told that it was only an oversight on the part of the Premier to leave out of his policy of Bills to be passed this session, as outlined to the House, the Bill for the reform of the Legislative Council; but the fact of its being left out when those Bills were being outlined to the Chamber is clear evidence of the seriousness of the Ministry in this regard. It is a sort of secondary consideration to them. For five years continuously they have been promising this measure of reform of the Legislative Council, but I am inclined to think that they have neglected this too long, and that their opportunity has gone, and that the Bill that will be introduced will be a Bill for the abolition of the

Legislative Council. I am satisfied that the people of the State to-day want the abolition of the Legislative Council. They do not want the reform proposed by the Ministry. They recognise that the £25 qualification is as bad as and not worse than £15 qualification. The same arguments that can be advanced against a £15 qualification can be advanced against a £25 qualification. While in the past the people were content to take some measure of reform, ever so little, they are not content to take that to-day because they have some other method of getting justice. They recognise now that they can allow the Legislative Council to go on as it is doing and that they can gradually, but surely, transfer the method of control to the Federal Legislature, where we have two Chambers representative of the people. The reason why the Federal Parliament's administration of affairs in Australia is growing is because of the fact that the Legislative Councils are in existence. There is only one way of stopping that growth. Personally I am opposed to it, but I will always support it while our Legislative Council is in existence. While we have a section of members representing a section of the people in the position of blocking the general progress and prosperity of the whole of the people, then I say in the interests of the people we are justified in going to the Federal Parliament for that protection that we, as representatives in the State, should be able to afford the people. But the people are not so anxious now for the reform: they say what they want is abolition and if they do not get it then gradually and surely by referendum they will extend the Federal control. What has been the policy of the present "continuation" Government? Their planks are these: 1, land alienation; 2, railway construction; 3, immigration. I would ask any hon. member what is left after taking those three points out? Without them the members of the Ministry could not deliver a speech. All speeches delivered by Ministers consist of land alienation, construction of railways and immigration. The land alienation has been demonstrated to be a scandal by the

instances quoted by the leader of the Opposition and a few quoted by myself. We find that in their land alienation policy they are not doing justice to our lands, that the administration of the department is a scandal, and that the sooner it is taken out of the hands of the Government the better for the people of the State. Then as to their railway policy, that is outlined by the speech read by the Premier to-night and made by him at the time he criticised the policy of the then Premier and now his colleague, the Minister for Works. Then there was the speech delivered by the present Minister for Works with regard to that question. It was one of the truest things he ever said. In that speech the member for Subiaco gave the lie direct to the Ministry in connection with their claim that they initiated the policy of agricultural railway construction. That speech is, thank goodness, on record and cannot be denied, seeing that it was delivered by one of the Government's own supporters. Apart from that we find the Premier, in his criticism of the then Government policy, ridiculing that policy and for that very policy he is now claiming he should receive special credit and consideration for having introduced it. The Daglish Government proposed that those railways should be constructed after having been submitted to a special board of advisers appointed by Act of Parliament, who would report to Parliament. Year after year we have criticised the Ministry's agricultural railway policy, not because we were opposed to the policy, but because special areas were singled out for consideration to the detriment of other areas. As a matter of fact we know, and it was common knowledge, that all the railways for years past led to Bunbury. Now that Bunbury is absolutely served we find the Ministry of the day adopting, in a limited sense, the policy outlined by the Daglish Ministry, and which was ridiculed by the present Premier. A board has been established, but that principle is only one-half the one outlined by the Daglish Government, and one-half what is required by this country. The board is established by Cabinet and re-

ports to Cabinet. The board we want is one established by Parliament and to report to Parliament. We want this railway advisory board to be as free to criticise as the Auditor-General, or the Public Service Commissioner. We want it to be the servant of Parliament the same as the Auditor-General, and until we get that we will not get a fair consideration given to the agricultural areas of the State. Take immigration, another plank of the Government's platform. The Government claim that the immigration policy has been a success, because they are introducing into this country men with capital, men with experience, who go on to the agricultural areas. The Premier to-night distinctly stated that was absolutely incorrect. In all the instances he gave he clearly proved that the men introduced to this country were not experienced agriculturists. He went to the extent of ridiculing Mr. Moor. Why? Because he had the temerity to criticise the present Administration. We know of other instances where, when it suits the Government adversely to criticise an immigrant, they turn around and say he was not an agricultural labourer and had no experience, while in the next breath they claim special consideration for their policy, because it has meant the introduction of agricultural labourers. Again, in connection with the immigration policy, when one points out where an immigrant comes into competition in the towns when he should be working in the agricultural areas, if he were brought here under the policy outlined by the Government, we are told he is not an immigrant, and why? According to the Colonial Secretary, because his passage was not paid by the State. What is the difference? Is a man not an immigrant who is induced by pictures painted by the ex-Premier when in London, by lectures delivered by Mr. Ranford and others, by pamphlets distributed misrepresenting the conditions altogether of Western Australia, simply because his passage is not paid? These men are induced to come here, and whether their passages are paid or not they are immigrants in the true sense of the term. We find, however, that in reply to statements made by myself and others as to a number of immigrants

working on the trams and working on the railways, and other places, Ministers say through the Press that on inquiries being made it is found they are not immigrants, because their passages have not been paid.

Mr. Collier: Because they pay their own way.

Mr. JOHNSON: Yes. All these men have been induced by representations made by the representatives of the Government, or by the ex-Premier, to come here, and are immigrants in the truest sense. Those men are brought here by misrepresentation; they are told they will be met on the boat with open arms and that employers will be ready to employ them. They are told the minimum rate of pay is 8s. a day, and that generally the conditions of the worker in Western Australia form a veritable paradise. They are brought here, and on arrival at Fremantle they find they cannot get employment, with the result that they are gradually but surely taking the places of workers in the industries in the towns. At first they are picked up by the Government agent, and if they complain they are sent to the agricultural districts. They are put on by agriculturists as apprentices, and they find they are only paid 5s. or 10s. a week and, not having sufficient to live on, being dissatisfied with the wages compared with what was represented to them in the old country, or as compared with what they received in the old country before being induced to come here, they gradually drift back to the towns, with the result to-day that I make this statement, and say it advisedly, that the immigrant is gradually but surely taking the place of the Australian worker in the towns. While the British immigrant is coming in at Fremantle, the Australians are leaving Fremantle. They are gradually and surely being squeezed out. When we make these criticisms we do not make them with any desire to cast a reflection on the immigrant. I have no grievance against the immigrants; they are Britishers, and as such I will give them my hand of welcome. I criticise because these unfortunates are being brought here under misrepresentation, and having been brought here under misrepresentation they have my sympathy, and one is forced to

criticise in order to try and get the Ministry to realise their blunders and alter their methods. Consequently we find that the lands administration is lacking, that the railway construction is only the adoption of other people's policy, and that the immigration policy is a failure. The three main planks, or the only planks of the platform of the Government have been proved in this debate to have been absolutely stolen or badly administered, and for that reason we have launched this no-confidence motion which I claim hon. members on the Ministerial side of the House to a great extent will be forced to support if they use their judgment: but it is possible that the whip will crack and that party influence will be brought to bear. As a matter of fact the *West Australian* newspaper, which is running this Government, which is apologising every morning for the blunders of the Government and exaggerating their successes, dictate to hon. members on the Ministerial side, and this morning this newspaper told them that they must not speak, that they must remain silent during this debate. The article was inspired by the Ministry, who realise that if these gentlemen speak, their own convictions will guide them, and they will be compelled to criticise the present Administration. Although hon. members have spoken one way, and have voted in another way, it is too near the general election to do that now, and if they got up to speak they would have to criticise the Government and having done that they would be compelled to support the motion. We know that the majority of this Chamber are against the present Administration, and we know that the majority realise the incapacity of the present Ministry, and they know that the Premier is the same gentleman that the people of this country demonstrated they had no confidence in in 1901. There is no change now, and the people know that this Ministry cannot be left alone, and that they will not administer the affairs of the State with justice to all, and consequently while the Ministers by lip phrases say they represent all sections and that they are going to administer justice irrespective of all parties, we know that this is only a

lip phrase, and we know that in actual practice it has not been so in the past. In the present Premier we will not have that successful administration which we had under Sir Newton Moore. I claim that we are justified in bringing forward this motion in order to give the members opposite an opportunity of voicing their opinions, and of voting according to their convictions. It is possible that having been dictated to by the *West Australian* and having the whip cracked around them they will say "We know they are wrong; we know that they are not administering the affairs in the best interests of the State, nevertheless we will stick to them and chance it at the next general elections." I want to warn those hon. gentlemen that they have the opportunity of saving their skins on this motion. I notice the member for Swan is grinning; he is one I am making special reference to. The people of his constituency have no confidence in the present administration and if he represents the views of his constituency he will be found voting with this motion. If he disregards the motion and votes according to his own particular interests, disregarding the opinion of his constituents, he will get short shrift when he goes up for election early next year. There are two more members opposite who are shaking; the member for East Perth has been shaking ever since the debate started; he is so shifty that he has been jumping about from seat to seat, and I would not be surprised if there is a seat vacant on this side of the House, to find the hon. member jumping over here. I will give him credit for that. That hon. gentleman realises his position; he has a conscience and recognises that the people of his constituency are supporting the motion and he feels as a representative of the people that he should follow them. Recognising that, the hon. member should vote in favour of the motion. The hon. member for Geraldton is a little more indifferent. He owns a little farm which he has to develop, and he says "I will go on and stick to the present Ministry, build up my farm and get ready to go farming when the general elections are taking place." He is not anxious to continue his political career.

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

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

On motion by Mr. Troy, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 12th October, 1910.

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

QUESTION — BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, MURRAY RIVER.

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

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

QUESTION—ZAMIA PALM ERADICATION.

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

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

QUESTION—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ON CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

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