

**Legislative Assembly,**

Wednesday, 22nd July, 1914.

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

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY—PRESENTATION.**

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform hon. members that I waited on His Excellency the Governor this morning, presented the Address-in-reply, and received a reply in the following terms:—

Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly. In the name and on behalf of His Most Gracious Majesty the King, I thank you for your address. Harry Barron, Governor, 22nd July, 1914.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.**

*Mr. Carpenter and Previous Deficits.*

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle): In speaking on the Address-in-reply I stated that the deficit of the previous Government had at one period reached £400,000. I was speaking from memory, and, being challenged by the leader of the Opposition, I have since looked up the records. I find that I was not quite accurate, the actual sum being slightly under the amount named. In 1909 it stood at £396,086.

*Mr. Dwyer and York hotel, Dangin.*

Mr. DWYER (Perth): In reference to the questions regarding Quairading and Dangin, which I asked yesterday, and the member for York's intervention in the matter, I received this morning the following letter from the Quairading and District Progress Association, Quairading, dated 20th July, 1914:—

Dear Sir,—The townspeople of Quairading desire to thank you for your pertinent questions in the House *re* Quairading and Dangin. We hope satisfactory answers will be forthcoming. Yours thankfully, A. G. W. Loudon, Hon. Sec. and Treasurer.

I hope the member for York will now be quite satisfied that his presumption that certain information was received by me in my professional capacity was purely presumption, and nothing more. If there is anything to be regretted in regard to the questions in reference to the person who transacted this commission, the only one who is to blame on the score of public attention having been more forcibly drawn to the subject than it would otherwise have been, is the member for York himself. My questions simply referred to statements of fact which had come under my notice in my public capacity.

**PAPERS PRESENTED.**

By the Minister for Mines: Report of the Department of Mines for the year 1913.

By Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Return showing the transactions of the Stock Trading Department (ordered on motion by Hon. J. Mitchell).

**QUESTION—TIMBER CUTTING PERMITS.**

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (for Mr. A. A. Wilson) asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the Government, at the end of this month, to cancel all permits to cut timber on Crown lands for other than Government requirements and Government trading purposes? 2, If so, what

arrangements have the Government made to protect the sleeper-cutters and carters who may be affected by the loss of their work occasioned by the above intention? 3, If the Government intend employing the men affected, will they pay the rates existing at the present time at the various centres?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The Government are prepared to buy sleepers from those who are affected by the decision. 3, The rates are fixed by the Arbitration Court, which will be duly observed, and should there be any special circumstances in any area justifying an increase over these rates they will receive consideration.

#### QUESTION—GRANT FOR PARKS.

Mr. McDOWALL asked the Treasurer: 1, Has any portion of the grant of £4,000 *re* parks and recreation grounds, shown in the Estimates to June 30th, 1914, as having been allocated to King's Park Board and coastal and goldfields grounds been paid to any of the respective boards or councils? 2, If so, how much and how distributed? 3, When can the Coolgardie council expect to receive their portion?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied: 1, Yes. 2, £2,875, distributed as follows:—King's Park Board £2,300, Naamup £100, Melville Roads Board (for Point Walter Reserve) £100, Mundaring Weir Reserve £50, Monger's Lake Board £250, Kalgoorlie Roads Board (Foundry Reserve) £50, Kanowna £25, Total £2,875. 3, No portion has been specially allotted with the exception of that allocated to King's Park and Monger's Lake, but I am at present remodelling the conditions under which such grants are made, and when this is complete the claims of Coolgardie will receive consideration.

Mr. Bolton: And others.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Whisper "and others" please.

#### QUESTION—POLICE CONSTABLE CAMPBELL.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: 1, Was an election held during 1912 amongst members of the police force to

elect two of their members to the Police Benefit Fund Board? 2, Was that election conducted by the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin)? 3, Were Constable Campbell and Sergeant Moore elected at that election? 4, Did Campbell head the poll with a substantial majority? 5, Was Campbell transferred from Norseman to Perth in July, 1912, for the purpose of appointing him to the board? 6, Has Campbell since been appointed to the board? If not, why not? 7, Was Sergeant Moore, who came second on the poll, appointed to the board? If so, why was he appointed when Campbell was not? 8, Was an election held in the police force in the following year, 1913, to fill Campbell's place? 9, Did the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin) at the second election receive Campbell's nomination from two sources, viz., from Campbell himself by registered letter, and from the Fremantle branch of the police association, and refuse to accept either and would not allow his name to go on the ballot papers? If so, why? 10, After Campbell's election and transfer from Norseman to Perth did he remain from July to December, 1912, in Perth, waiting for his appointment to the board, which did not eventuate? 11, Did the commissioner state, in evidence before the select committee appointed to inquire into the retirement of Captain Hare, that he had a reason for transferring Campbell from the metropolitan district? 12, What reason had the commissioner for transferring Campbell to Wickpin in view of the fact that he was elected a member of the Police Benefit Fund Board? 13, Was the Minister consulted in regard to this transfer? If so, did he concur? 14, Seeing that Campbell polled an absolute majority of the votes, why did the Minister ignore such election?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes; as returning officer. 3, Yes. 4, Yes. 5, Yes. 6, No; Cabinet considered it inadvisable. 7, Yes; but not until after a second ballot had been taken for the purpose of electing a representative, *vice* Campbell. 8, Yes. 9, A nomination was received from Campbell himself, but there is no record of one having been lodged by

the Fremantle branch of the police association. The nomination was not accepted, for the reason given in reply to No. 6. 10, Campbell was stationed in Perth doing police duty from 1st July, 1912, to 9th December, 1912. 11, The Commissioner stated in his evidence that he found it necessary to transfer Campbell from Perth, and removed him to Wickiepin. 12, Campbell was transferred in the interests of the department. 13, Yes. 14, Answered by No. 6.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why was it inadvisable?

The PREMIER: The authorities do not go into details.

#### BILL—MELVILLE PARK TRAMWAYS.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### BILLS (8)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Kondinin-Merredin Railway.
- 2, Nyabing-Pingrup Railway.
- 3, Kukerin-Lake Grace Railway.
- 4, Busselton-Margaret River Railway.
- 5, Dwarda-Narrogin Railway.
- 6, Cottesloe Municipal Rates Validation.
- (Introduced by the Minister for Works.)
- 7, Electoral Act (1907) Amendment.
- (Introduced by the Attorney General.)
- 8, Plant Diseases. (Introduced by the Premier for the Minister for Agriculture).

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the Hon. J. MITCHELL leave of absence for two months granted to Mr. A. E. Piesse on the ground of ill-health.

#### PAPERS—POWER STATION EQUIPMENT, CONTRACTS.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [4.48] moved—

*That all papers in connection with the purchase of machinery and materials for the new Power Station, and also contracts let in connection with the work, be placed upon the Table of the House.*

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): I second the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) [4.49]: I must protest against the attitude adopted by the leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I am not surprised at it coming from you, but let it go; it is a formal motion.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's position as leader of a great party in this State, very likely, does not entitle him to depart from the usual procedure in asking for the production of papers which is tantamount to asking us to make public the contents of these papers without giving some reasons. I have been anxious to hear the ground on which the hon. member is desirous of having these papers laid upon the Table. Is it for business purposes, to suit his own line of business? Is it because there is a public demand for these papers? Is there any suspicion that anything has happened which require the light of day to be thrown upon it? As the member moving for these papers, I think the leader of the Opposition is called upon to give some reasons, and until he does so, I am not in a position to say whether or not it is desirable that the papers should be produced. I expect the hon. member to give his reasons.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex—in reply) [4.50]: It is very refreshing to hear the Premier criticising me because I did not speak in support of a formal motion for papers which members of this Chamber are entitled to have, and which ought to be placed on the Table without any comment whatsoever from the Premier. These are papers about which the people of Western Australia ought to be informed.

Mr. Bolton: Who are they? You do not represent them.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: These papers contain information about large contracts entered into by the Premier when in London last year, and should have been given to the public. It is true that last session, in response to my questions, lump sum amounts were stated as being the expenditure in connection with certain contracts.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You do not think that there can be anything wrong with these large contracts.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am not prepared to say anything right or wrong about the contracts, but it is wrong for the Government to hide this information from the people. It is in keeping with the policy which the hon. member for Forrest has supported during the past three years. It is about time that this system of secrecy was stopped; it is about time the electors were taken into the confidence of the Government in regard to all large transactions of this kind; but because I have the temerity to move for the papers I am chided as a school boy by the Premier, and the Premier maintains that I have no right and should give reasons. It is my right to see the papers and the Premier should be the last man to deny me.

The Premier: You can go and see them at any time.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier knows that I cannot.

The Premier: I say you can.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is the right of all hon. members to see the papers and it is the right of the people outside to know the terms of these contracts, what they amount to actually in fact, and who were the persons who tendered for the supply of the machinery and plant for the power station, amounting to several hundred thousand pounds.

The Premier: I gave you all that information last session.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier did not, but he gave certain lump sum amounts and the name of the firm to whom the contract has been let. Who were the other firms asked to tender in competition with the successful firm? We want to know, and I am only exercising my right by asking in the name of the people of Western Australia who have to foot the bill, for this information. The Premier seems to think it quite a wrong action on my part to endeavour to get some information.

The Premier: You are only arguing now.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am arguing against the Premier's secrecy and his policy of hiding everything.

Mr. Bolton: A policy of hush.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, of hush.

Mr. Harper: And bluff.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, and bluff. The Premier had ample time with his colleagues to formulate his plans with regard to this generating station and to call tenders both here and in the old country in the ordinary course of events, as all tenders have been called heretofore for large equipments of this description.

The Premier: Now you are giving some reasons.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There is no reason in the Premier; he cannot appreciate reasons.

The Premier: I am trying to get some out of you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Instead of taking the obvious course and following the rule laid down by all previous administrations, the Premier hopped off to London on a pleasure jaunt at the State's expense.

The Premier: It was not so expensive as your jaunt which was paid for at both ends.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There was no reason for it to be expensive.

The Premier: I went on business; yours was only a jaunt.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The reports from the old country did not show that the Premier did much business, excepting to enter into these contracts quietly. The reports dealt with his visits to different portions of the old country and his attendance at social and political gatherings and such like. I admit that he went home on business to place these contracts.

Mr. Harper interjected.

The Premier: The rules of the House will not allow me to tell you what I think about you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We want to know what these contracts are which have been entered into so privately. The Premier has given as his only excuse that time would not permit him to call tenders in

this State as well as in the old country. Let us see what the contracts are.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They called for tenders.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No tenders were called in the ordinary way by public advertisement, so that all who wished to tender could do so. I believe that tenders were called in a sort of way. Certain firms were asked to tender.

Mr. Bolton: Like the Teesdale Smith contract.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Certain firms were asked to tender privately, and the Premier, I presume, decided where the contracts would be placed.

The Premier: A serious indictment against the Government, is it not?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, it is a serious indictment.

The Premier: What about your Cook crowd?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is very much more serious than the Teesdale Smith contract. In this case £300,000 or £400,000 worth of contracts were let quietly away from Western Australia by the Premier, and we know nothing about them. What objection is there to these papers being seen?

The Premier: No objection; you can see them any day you like.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: What objection is there to publicity?

The Premier: I did not raise any objection.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then why is the Premier creating all this trouble about it? Everything has to be hidden; everything of importance into which the present Government have entered has to be kept quiet until it is dragged out by some means or other. There were agreements last year which were unearthed after many months, all sorts of contracts, sleeper contracts, powellising contracts, cattle contracts with huge companies all entered into quietly and privately, and the Government, instead of coming to the House and announcing—"We have entered into this particular contract; here it is for the information of the public generally," keep it quiet until someone

raises trouble and it gets into the Press, and many months afterwards these contracts are made public. I want it to be clearly understood that I am not seeking any ulterior advantage in asking for the production of these papers. I do not say that they are not all that they ought to be, but I do demand that the public who have to pay for the work have a right to know what the contracts are. We should be placed in a position of having the confidence of the Government and being able to see for ourselves what these contracts are, and exactly upon what lines the Government have placed the orders.

The Premier: We did not always get that from you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes; always.

The Premier: No, we did not.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Whenever the hon. gentleman asked for information from me in my public capacity, I granted it if there was no objection.

Mr. Bolton: But you raised objections.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: There were always objections.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If there were objections on the score of public policy, I briefly and concisely stated the objections and on many occasions the Premier acquiesced in the objections raised. We did not treat the hon. gentleman in the childish fashion in which he always seeks to treat me when I ask for information. We treated him with due courtesy; we recognised his right to ask for information, and if we had legitimate grounds for refusing to supply a portion or the whole of the information, we placed those grounds before the House, and in the majority of cases the Premier acquiesced in them. I do not know that it is necessary for me to labour the question. The Premier has asked my reasons for moving for the production of these papers. The reasons are obvious. We have a right to these papers and the public have a right. The Premier talks about insinuations of suspicion in the matter, but I say there is no suspicion at all. Furthermore, we want to know the reason which actuated the Premier in giving this contract privately. He said it was due to lack of time.

The Premier: That statement is incorrect. I did not give the contract privately.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We know that the contract was not given publicly, and that no one in the State knew about it. He immediately goes on to make insinuations concerning myself. He asked whether I wanted to know for business reasons, and if my friends had anything to do with it. I might say that personally I have no interest whatever in the matter, and so far as I know none of my friends have any interest in it either. But there are numbers of people in Western Australia who are interested in contracts of this description.

The Premier: Who are they?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There are all the manufacturers and the agents representing Home firms, who would have liked to have had an opportunity, together with our local manufacturers, of tendering for some portion of the work. There are hundreds of tons of iron work in connection with the undertaking, which might easily have been constructed in the shops in Western Australia. Times out of number these hon. gentleman opposite have taken me to task because I sometimes indented some requirements of the State, and they charged me with ordering locomotives, which have indeed actually saved the position so far as we are concerned.

The Premier: Did you call for tenders for these locally?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We called for tenders for everything.

The Premier: You say that with your tongue in your cheek.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I remember how the Premier took me to task for importing locomotives, and for not building them in the local shops, and I also remember that he has only increased these orders instead of adopting his own precepts and building them locally. He knew very well that our works were not in those days capable of handling such constructional undertakings, but he has since had ample opportunity of making the necessary provision. I also remember that he has taken me to

task on the hustings, and indeed on the floor of the House on innumerable occasions for placing orders abroad, and when we remember all these things it must be perfectly obvious to everyone that I am entitled to ask for the result of his negotiations in the Old Country in connection with the work. We know we have plenty of manufacturers in this State who would have been only too glad to have turned out a portion of the work. I contend that our local small iron works ought to be supported whenever we find it possible to do so, but we find that these are ignored times out of number by hon. gentlemen opposite, except when they are on the hustings. We find, too, that iron work was imported for Albany the other day from the Eastern States for some wharf construction, and that no one locally was given a chance of tendering for the requirements of the Government, and, therefore, of employing the workers of the State. It is just about time that the joke, if it be a joke, is terminated, and that we had some serious consideration given to the question as to where we can best help our own people, even if it be only to help representatives of importing houses. These people have to pay the taxes of the country, and, further, they contribute to the expenditure which would be incurred, and yet they never get any opportunity, if the Government can help it, of tendering to supply the requirements of the State and to get some little profit out of their undertaking.

The Premier: Why should they contribute to the Treasury money they get from the Treasury? What about the 2½ per cent. preference that you gave them?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why should the hon. gentleman himself contribute? He draws what he gets from the Treasury and yet he has to contribute to the Treasury.

The Premier: We have established industries to employ men, that you were opposed to.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. gentleman has done nothing but close down industries ever since he was in power. A previous Administration established a foundry in the metropolitan area,

and assisted to establish wagon shops in Rocky Bay. To-day the Government are closing them down and are starting in competition with these institutions by means of their State works.

The Premier: The industry is not closed down.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did my best to assist local industries, and certain works were established in my regime; now they are being closed down by my friends opposite.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I say that the Government have done nothing to encourage citizens to develop these industries and have done nothing to extend the avenues of employment in the State. I am sorry that my indignation makes me speak very warmly.

The Premier: Nobody cares if you get annoyed.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is time that the Premier preserved the dignity of his office. If he has just grounds for refusing to supply the information asked for, let him state those grounds, so that we may be in the position to judge whether they are just; and if they are not just, let him supply the information.

The Premier: —

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier cannot speak again to the motion.

The Premier: Can I make an explanation?

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

The Premier: It is the first time I have heard that I cannot make a personal explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier can make a personal explanation, but he cannot speak again to the motion.

The Premier: I do not propose to do so now.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	22
				—
Majority against	..			13
				—

## AYES.

Mr. Harper	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Monger	Mr. Male
Mr. Moore	(Teller).

## NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Bolton	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Price
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gill	Mr. Swan
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Walker
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Underwood
Mr. McDowall	(Teller).
Mr. McLeod	

Question thus negatived.

# MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR EXTENSION, ROYAL COMMISSION TO INQUIRE.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle) [5.10] moved—

*That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a Royal Commission be appointed to consider and report upon the best means of extending the Fremantle Harbour.*

He said: In moving a similar motion last session I went very fully into the subject, and I do not propose to traverse very much of the ground this afternoon. The leader of the Opposition on a former motion in this connection moved certain amendments, with a view to extending the motion to include other harbours of this State. I knew at the time that that extension was quite unnecessary, as there was no question as to the importance of extending these other harbours.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It was a very serious question.

Mr. CARPENTER: It was remarkable that the hon. members for these districts got up and protested against the attempt to extend the motion to these other ports. The fact remains that since that time in most cases the intention of the Government has been declared as to these harbours, and I take it that on this occasion there will be no question whatever of widening the terms of this motion.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No declaration has ever been made by the Government.

Mr. CARPENTER: The Government have gone to those ports and submitted their plans.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There have never been any plans before the House.

Mr. CARPENTER: I hope the Government will eventually do this in connection with Fremantle, that when they have made all the necessary inquiries, and have decided upon the scheme, either the Minister or the Premier will go down to Fremantle and lay the proposal before the residents in the same way as is being done in other places.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Should not the proposal first come before the House?

Mr. CARPENTER: That is all I intend to say about the amendment to the proposal last session. I only want to say to-day that the matter, which was urgent when I previously spoke about it, has become still more urgent to-day. We have now reached an acute stage, and I for one regret very much the delay which has occurred in regard to some pronouncement being made upon this important subject. I recognise that the Government in dealing with this proposal having some peculiar difficulties to contend against, and it was because I knew that they were peculiar that I requested the appointment of some body which would make an impartial investigation, so that the House and the country might know what reasons were actuating the Government in coming to any particular decision on the matter.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What was peculiar about them?

Mr. CARPENTER: I do not want to go into the whole question. The hon. member knows quite well that there are several schemes—

Hon. Frank Wilson: So there are at Bunbury.

Mr. CARPENTER: Suggested for harbour extension at Fremantle, and each of these has its supporters. The case of Bunbury is altogether different. If there was more than one scheme proposed for Bunbury, still there was no great difference of opinion. In fact, I was assured

by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) himself, that what the Government proposed to do, what they have declared their intention of doing, has given all but universal satisfaction to the residents of Bunbury. There is no comparison between Bunbury and Fremantle in this regard.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I do not believe that is correct. I believe you have been misinformed.

Mr. CARPENTER: If we may judge from the reports appearing in the Press of the recent visit of the Minister for Works (Hon. W. D. Johnson) to Bunbury, and of the manner in which he and his proposals were received, surely there is fair evidence that what I have said concerning the Bunbury harbour is correct. However, I was saying that I recognise that in this particular matter there are some peculiar difficulties to be contended against. What I am most anxious for is to know whether the Government are making sufficiently full inquiries to enable them to come to a correct decision. I am well aware that the members of the Ministry, like members of this House, are to a large extent dependent upon the advice of their expert officers in matters of this kind.

Mr. Monger: The Government have got the Minister for Works. What more do they want?

Mr. CARPENTER: While I am prepared to admit my own dependence upon the opinion of men who know more about these matters than I know myself, still, in this case, with different schemes, different proposals, and a wide difference of opinion in reference to those schemes and proposals, I am particularly anxious that the expert officers who make recommendations, and who advocate one scheme as against another, should at least give us satisfactory reasons for recommending what they do recommend and for opposing what they do oppose.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why should they not do that with regard to Bunbury and Albany?

Mr. CARPENTER: I do not want to go back to Bunbury again. I have already dealt with Bunbury.



Hon. Frank Wilson: You have not.

Mr. CARPENTER: If the hon. member wishes to indulge in carping criticism just for the sake of it, I shall have nothing to say.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I want to keep you on the track.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am on the track all the time, and I hope the hon. member will keep somewhere near me. It has recently been stated by an hon. member of another place that he supports a certain proposal on the ground that it was recommended by the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor. That fact the hon. member in question, Mr. Holmes, stated, was quite sufficient authority for him to pin his faith to what is known as the up-river extension.

Hon. Frank Wilson: And what are you supporting?

Mr. CARPENTER: As Mr. Holmes's statement represents a type of advocacy which is general, I may just say, in reply to that gentleman's utterance, that while I have all respect—as I am sure every member of this House has—for the memory of the late Mr. O'Connor, and for his ability as an engineer, I still think the fact should not be overlooked that the recommendation which Mr. O'Connor made was put forward many years ago, and to meet the conditions of that period rather than those of the present time and of the future. I have seen the original plan which was prepared by Mr. O'Connor for the first Fremantle harbour works, and it is remarkable that the harbour proposed by him at that time had a width of only 800 feet. Criticism was directed against that proposal, and wiser counsels prevailed. It was pointed out that a width of 800 feet would not be adequate for the business which might be expected to come to Fremantle, and eventually the present harbour of a width of just over 1,400 feet was decided upon. I only refer to that, however, to show that at that particular time many of our public men, and also the responsible officers of the Government of that day, did not apparently realise what the business of this State would rise to be and what would be required in the way of harbour

accommodation. Indeed, it is very questionable whether we to-day, having seen the developments of recent years, having seen the expansion of trade, fully realise what the next 10 or 20 years have in store for us. Therefore, when advocates of the up-river extension pin their faith to that scheme because it was proposed by the late Mr. O'Connor, it is only fair to inquire whether, when that scheme was propounded, there was any clear idea of what would be required after the completion of that particular section of harbour accommodation.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Are you against the up-river scheme?

Mr. CARPENTER: I have declared, more than once, that personally I favour an outer harbour, or an extension outwards; but, as I have already stated, I am not an expert; and, as I want the best opinion and want the reasons which the experts give for making their recommendations, I am asking that some body should be appointed for the purpose of ascertaining from the advocates of all the schemes the reasons which have actuated those advocates in making their recommendations. One factor, in particular, has altered the position entirely from what it was even ten years ago; and that is the construction of the large ships which we know are on the water to-day and are being constructed. If we may accept the testimony of naval architects, the size of ships is certain to become still greater as time goes on. Speaking generally, we may say that the shipping which is now coming to our chief port is double the size of that which was provided for when the present harbour was first proposed. I have heard many opinions to the effect that while the vessels of 20,000, 25,000, and 30,000 tons burden, which have been constructed to-day may be used for the trans-Atlantic trade, they will not come to Australia. Now, in my opinion, he would be a bold man who would persist in making that assertion. Hitherto it has been common to conclude that the size of ships trading to Western Australia will be governed by the depth of water in the Suez Canal. Even if that were so, we know that the Suez Canal is

being deepened to 40 feet. However, the size of vessels coming to Western Australia is no longer governed by the limitations of the Suez Canal. The Cape route is becoming more and more popular. Not only cargo steamers, but, as we know, passenger steamers, and large passenger steamers, are coming here via South Africa. As I stated last session, we have the testimony of Lord Pirrie, the leading member of the firm of Harland & Wolff, to the effect that in his opinion it will not be long before we have boats of 80,000 tons on the water. It is well known, of course, that vessels of 50,000 tons burden are already built and afloat; and although these leviathans may not come here immediately, there is no reason to conclude that ships of 30,000 tons or more will not be coming to Australia via the Cape within the next few years. All around Australia people are faced with the same difficulty, and are making efforts to deepen their harbours and to provide for the coming of these large ships. There is a danger of being governed by preconceived ideas. I am bound to say that among those who have been asked by the Government to express an opinion in this connection, there are some men who apparently cannot get away from their preconceived notions on the subject. Like Mr. Holmes, to whom I have referred, they still adhere to the contention that because Mr. C. Y. O'Connor advocated certain proposals, we should still carry on the harbour works, or extend the harbour works which he began, on his lines. It does appear to me that these gentlemen have altogether shut their eyes to the fact that to-day there are conditions which, had they existed in the time of the late Engineer-in-Chief, would have been taken into consideration by Mr. O'Connor. As a matter of fact, it is common knowledge that that gentleman reported favourably on outer harbour accommodation. I believe I am correct in saying that he had plans prepared for harbour accommodation in Cockburn Sound; but the Government of the day, considering, and rightly considering, that that location was too far distant from Fremantle, asked Mr. O'Connor to sug-

gest outer harbour accommodation nearer to the town.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Mr. O'Connor was responsible for the present harbour.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am quite aware of that. I presume that Mr. O'Connor drew the scheme in accordance with instructions which he received from those in power at that particular time. I was saying that, to my knowledge, he submitted one proposal for harbour accommodation at Cockburn Sound. I think I am right in saying that Mr. O'Connor was asked even before Sir John Coode, to prepare a scheme of harbour accommodation near to Fremantle; and **there** was then a proposal for harbour accommodation at Owen's Anchorage; but eventually, as everyone knows, a **proposal for the harbour as it exists to-day** was submitted and adopted. I repeat, however, that I question very much whether, if the Government and the experts of that day had had the knowledge which we possess of the immense growth in the size of ships, they would have decided to come inside the river at all—whether they would not then have begun a scheme which would have admitted of gradual extension, and which would have given no cause for anxiety, no matter what size vessels might attain. Reverting to the subject of officers having their preconceived opinions, I may say that I am supported in this contention by the present Minister for Works (Hon. W. D. Johnson), who realises the truth of what I have stated. Last session I quoted some remarks made by the Minister for Works when introducing the Public Works Committee Bill. I shall not quote the whole of those remarks again, but I propose to read one extract—

To get the best possible advice from an expert it is necessary to cross-examine him. It does not do to allow him to make a statement which may be based on a wrong conclusion. There is only one way to avoid that, namely, to bring the expert before a committee and see exactly how he has arrived at his conclusions. The details can be conveyed to Parliament instead of as

under existing conditions merely conveyed to Cabinet.

I commend that utterance to hon. members as the statement of a Minister who has experience and who knows what he is talking about. The Minister for Works realises his responsibility in submitting statements to this House on the mere *ipse dixit* of the officers whom he asked to report.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That does not apply in this case.

Mr. CARPENTER: The Honorary Minister imagines that because he thinks so, other people think so as well. The hon. gentleman is well known as one who is—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Obstinate.

Mr. CARPENTER: The hon. gentleman has supplied the exact term. It is one of the dangers I want to guard against, the danger of the man who is obstinate in his opinions, and who will not open his eyes to any evidence except that which will suit himself. We know from experience that men of this stamp have on previous occasions committed the country to a large expenditure because they would not see both sides of the question. I want to avoid that and in spite of the obstinate opinion of the hon. member, I say there are many people who hold opinions which are different from his.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Not professionals.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am not going to say that, because there are those who do not happen to agree with him. I want both sides to be heard. I have quoted the statement of the Minister for Works because he knows something of the difficulty, and he told the House that he submitted the reports because a certain officer had recommended them and could give no further evidence. Another matter I would like to draw the Premier's special attention to is that when officers have been consulted with reference to this work and have given their approval to some particular scheme, it is almost too much to expect, when you submit other schemes to them, that they would give an unbiassed opinion on them. Most of us are human

and we know that among professional men there is sometimes what we call professional jealousy, and once an engineer has made a recommendation it is almost too much to ask him to forego his own opinion and say that another proposal is better than his own. The Government are in the position that having once got a recommendation from the Engineer-in-Chief, and the Harbour Trust Commissioners, it is almost useless to expect those same gentlemen to consider other proposals and admit that they are better than those originally suggested.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They are reasonable men.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am putting forward a fact which must have been recognised by the Honorary Minister that once a man has committed himself to a proposal he does not like to admit that someone else's proposal is a better one, and that that one should be accepted. I want to say in conclusion that I am fully aware that the Government have made some inquiry even since I last brought this matter before the House, and the only question that concerns me is has that inquiry been complete enough to warrant the Government in coming to a decision. The first proposal which was submitted by the Engineer-in-Chief was a recommendation to deepen the existing harbour to 36 feet. I have no doubt that when that recommendation was made it was thought that that depth would be sufficient for some years to come. But while that work was being put in hand, and before its completion, further inquiries were made, and I believe the Government to-day are convinced beyond all possible doubt that 36 feet will not be deep enough. There must be a depth of at least 40 feet in order to accommodate the boats which will call at Fremantle within the next few years. That being the case it is quite possible that before the depth of 40 feet can be provided, further evidence may be forthcoming to prove that even that depth will not meet requirements, and that still deeper water will have to be provided to accommodate the vessels of the future. When we remember that the entrance to the Fremantle Harbour is somewhat nar-

row—being only 400 feet wide—and that the banks of the channel are of sand or soft limestone, and with the enormous weight of the moles resting on those banks, we have to consider whether the deepening of the channel to 40 feet or more will endanger the moles. That is a question which I suppose the Government will get some information upon from its engineers. I merely refer to it to show that while we are extending the harbour to meet the requirements of the next five years, evidence is piling up that before that time there will be a demand for deeper water, and we shall be faced with the proposition to provide much greater accommodation. All these things will need the fullest inquiry, and I am anxious that the Government shall do the right thing. I believe they are anxious to do the right thing, but no one can tell what the right thing is until an exhaustive inquiry has been made into the merits or demerits of every scheme which is worthy of consideration. Until that is done I contend that any scheme involving the expenditure of two or three million pounds should not be undertaken. I believe that the Premier is prepared to make some statement in regard to the matter, and I hope that he will do so. I was disappointed on a previous occasion when no Minister spoke on a motion of a similar nature which I moved. The silence was interpreted as a kind of indifference towards this matter, but I want to be honest and say that there is no indifference, so far as the Premier and his colleagues are concerned. As a matter of fact the Premier's public utterances on the question amount to an assurance to those who thought that there was a possibility of some step being taken without due consideration. I hope that the matter will be further considered, and that the Government will see their way clear to adopt the suggested method of inquiry into the harbour question, or some other which will be equally effective, and to give us the fullest information on the subject.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) moved—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion negatived.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex): [5.45] I view with some surprise the Premier's refusal to reply to the member for Fremantle. It is quite true that the motion before the House is an important one, but the Premier has had ample notice of the intention of the hon. member to submit it to the House, and it would have been right and fair for the Premier to say whether or not he intended to accede to the hon. member's request.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We want to see work done, not appoint commissions.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: A similar motion was moved by the member for Fremantle last session on the 15th October, and it lingered on until the 18th December, the adjournment of the debate having been secured by a Minister. Subsequently the Premier discharged it from the Notice Paper as one of the slaughtered innocents.

Mr. Taylor: It was the proper thing to do with it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not think it was. The Government should say yes or no in regard to the motion; they should declare whether or not they are prepared to agree to the appointment of a Royal Commission, and if they are going to oppose it, no doubt they will give some just grounds for their opposition. Unfortunately up to the present we have had these motions cast on one side without the slightest grounds. I protest against this, not only on the hon. member's account, but on my own account also. It is wrong that motions should be treated in this arbitrary fashion and thrown on one side without any reply whatever from the Government. This question of harbour extension is one of the most important that could be taken in hand by any Government. If we wish to see the natural wealth of the country properly developed, if we wish to see the commerce and trade expanded, as no doubt hon. members individually all wish to see, harbours are absolutely essential, are just as important, perhaps more so, than railways; for our railways can be of very little avail if we have not

facilities for getting our produce beyond the coastline into the markets of the world. This being so, I hold that the member for Fremantle is perfectly justified in bringing this question forward once more, and I wish to point out to the Premier that had he accepted the motion moved last session, with my amendment attached—that a Royal Commission be appointed to inquire into the proposed extension of the Fremantle harbour, and also the other harbours of the State, namely, Geraldton, Bunbury, Busselton, and Albany—the House to-day would have been in possession of a valuable report based on evidence, with recommendations which possibly would satisfy everybody on this important question.

The Premier: How can you tell that? Have we not had Royal Commissions appointed by your Government—

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No, no Royal Commissions at all on this question.

The Premier: Have not Royal Commissions made reports which your Government failed to carry into effect.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I said that possibly we would have settled this all-important question once for all. At any rate I am satisfied that hon. members would have been in a position to come to some sound decision as to what these future harbour extensions ought to be. To-day we have no information with regard to Fremantle, or with regard to any of our proposed harbour extensions. It is true we have had hints from the Premier that he personally is in favour of an up-river extension. The hon. member who moved the motion referred to visits paid by the Minister for Works to Bunbury and Albany, and expressed a devout wish that the Minister might likewise visit Fremantle in the near future. The Minister goes off with a plan in his pocket, consults someone—or does not consult anyone at all, but says "That is what we intend to do; take it, or leave it." And the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) says it is the supreme happiness of his existence that the

Minister has visited Bunbury—three years after these gentlemen took office.

Mr. Munsie: Your Government never did anything for the Bunbury harbour.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Why, we built it, from its inception. It must be remembered that in point of export, Bunbury is the third or fourth port in the Commonwealth. We built that harbour.

Mr. Munsie: You built the Fremantle dock also.

Hon. J. Mitchell: No, you built half of it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: To-day the House has nothing to go on. We are calmly asked to shelve important business of this description and, I suppose, to trust in Providence and our friends who occupy the Treasury bench. I am not prepared to trust either in Providence or the occupants of the Treasury bench in regard to these matters. Providence, I believe, helps those who help themselves, and the sooner we deal with this question on proper businesslike lines the sooner will we get a satisfactory solution of the requirements necessary for handling the trade of the State. Last session I suggested that the other harbours should be included in the motion. Of course my proposal was flouted, as usual; but the hon. member's motion was treated in perhaps a worse fashion. It was not jeered at openly, but it was shelved, and afterwards sacrificed at the close of the session. Presumably we are to have a similar experience this year. What have hon. members to go on? What do we know about the Government's proposals in regard to the Fremantle harbour? Indeed, one might ask, have they got any? Up to the present we have only the Premier's indirect admission that he personally is in favour of an extension up-river. I also am in favour of that, but my opinion has no more weight than that of the member who moved the motion. We should have experts to decide the matter once for all, so that we may know we are embarking on a proper scheme.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you want to bring in experts from outside?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not care where they come from.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It will cost the State a lot of money.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not care what it costs. It is much better to spend the few thousand pounds necessary in order to get a properly considered scheme.

Mr. Swan: Then you have no confidence in the local officers?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is not a question of having confidence. The hon. member interjects in his boyish way that because I say "Bring in experts to give advice" I have no confidence in the local officers. In any case, what experience have the local officers had in harbour construction? Is the expert knowledge of this work wrapped up in Western Australia? What experience in other places have those officers had? However, the first thing to do is to give the hon. member his Royal Commission, and put the best available ability on that commission. Then bring some experts from the other States, if you like, and, again if you like, one from the Motherland.

Mr. Taylor: You brought an expert from the Motherland, to advise on the Fremantle harbour, and it cost this country £200,000.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes. We brought an engineer from Home, to advise us in regard to the dry dock. He advised us, but unfortunately his advice was wrong.

Mr. Taylor: And now you desire to plunge the country into a similar experience.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No, not at all.

The Premier: Do we not rather pride ourselves on the Fremantle harbour as it exists to-day?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I believe we do.

The Premier: Well, was it not a local officer, the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, who designed and carried out that work?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, but unfortunately he is dead and gone. If he were here to-day probably we would soon be able to settle this question. But is that any reason why the Premier should

withhold the settlement of the question? Why has he withheld it for the last 12 months, indeed for the last three years, or since he has been in power? We have no information in regard to Bunbury or Albany; we do not know what schemes are projected; we have never seen a plan; we have no information in regard to the proposals for Geraldton. All are equally important, and all might just as well be submitted to a proper inquiry by means of a Royal Commission. The hon. member, in moving the motion, said we did not or could not realise what the next 10 or 20 years had in store for us. That is perfectly true. He then went on to enlarge upon the increased size of vessels during the past decade. It has been enormous. The increase in the size, both of cargo and passenger vessels, has been marvellous during the past 10 years; and whether or not we have come to the limit for the time being of the size of vessels to be constructed is a moot question.

The Premier: In view of the developments in aeroplanes we may not want harbours at all presently.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not know whether we will be able to carry cargo by means of aeroplanes. If we get to travelling by aeroplanes ourselves it will be as much as we can hope to see.

Mr. Taylor: If you would come down out of your aeroplane and get on with the question it would be better for the country.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If the hon. member went up in an aeroplane he would get a better knowledge, or at least acquire an improved view, of the requirements of the country.

The Premier: He will eventually go up.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member said we did not know what is in store for us. We all admit that. But it is all the more reason why we should have this matter settled. Are we to sit back and do nothing because we do not know what is going to take place in the next 10 or 20 years in regard to the increase of tonnage? Are we not to deal with the facts as we find them to-day? Is it not obvious that we must deal with the position promptly? We have already new

lines of steamers coming out to Western Australia or which will be shortly initiated, very largely in excess even of the mail boats that now visit our ports.

Mr. Carpenter: Two have already passed our doors.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And we know that on occasions vessels have passed the chief port of Fremantle because of the fear that there was not sufficient water to accommodate them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): No, they could have been taken in.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But their captains would not come in.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They went into a harbour having a lesser depth of water.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Nevertheless the skippers would not take the responsibility of coming into Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Why did they go into a harbour having a lesser depth?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It does not matter; they would not come into Fremantle.

Mr. Taylor: Was it depth of water that prevented them?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: So far as I can understand, yes.

Mr. Taylor: That line of steamers does not call in at Fremantle.

Mr. Bolton: And arrangements were made before they left Home that they should not come in here.

Mr. Carpenter: They wanted to come in, but could not get an assurance as to the depth of water.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Two large steamers wanted to call at Fremantle, but they went on, giving as their excuse that they required a deeper draught of water than was there obtainable.

Mr. Taylor: And they called in at a port having a lesser draught.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That does not matter. They were afraid to come to Fremantle because the depth of water was not sufficient. I assume the hon. member argues that we need not worry about this question of harbour accommodation, that we had better let things go on. "Why trouble?" he would say, "Do

not grant facilities for future expansion. Your country is all right. Leave your harbours as they are and Providence will take care of them." That is evidently what the hon. member suggests, to judge by his persistent interjections, and to judge also by what has been the policy of the Premier and his colleagues up to the present on the question of harbour extensions. We do not forget their promise on the hustings that they were going to do things; we were to sit back and look on while they performed. Since then they have done a fair amount of talking, but the harbours are as they were. They have done nothing after being three years in office. Fremantle is just as it was when we left office excepting for a little building which was initiated during our term.

Mr. Bolton: There is too much hush; they do not tell you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I wish they would be more frank and take the House and people into their confidence so that we would know exactly what they intend to do.

Mr. Bolton: The people do not want more "Frank."

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The people will be howling for Frank to come back again. The hon. member referred to the late C. Y. O'Connor. It is quite true that the late Mr. O'Connor, as engineer in a public department of the State, had plans prepared for an outer as well as an inner harbour. It is quite true that Sir John Coode reported and recommended an outer harbour in preference to opening up the river, but Mr. O'Connor's ultimatum was that the harbour should be constructed inside.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He disagreed with Sir John Coode.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That is so, and even then the Government of the day—it was about the year I arrived in this State—appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the relative proposals of an outer or inner harbour and the Royal Commission decided to support Mr. O'Connor and construct the harbour which we at present enjoy. Because an

engineer draws up several schemes according to instructions, it is not to say that any one of those schemes is of his recommendation or that he has pinned his faith to it.

Mr. Bolton: I have heard it disputed that he formulated any scheme for an outer harbour.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: A scheme was drawn up under instructions but he favoured the inner harbour. He pinned his faith to it and in my opinion he did the wise thing. But are we to hang up the extension of the harbour and prevent the removal of the bridges which now circumscribe the area used for harbour purposes? Are we to hang up the whole expansion of Fremantle because we cannot come to a decision, because the Government will not face the position and give a decision, or obtain advice to enable them to do so?

Mr. Munsie: You would criticise them no matter what they did.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Possibly I might; I certainly would not be afraid to do so. It is my business to criticise the Government; that is what I am here for, and I will do so, no matter what hon. members think. The Government are in the position of responsibility. I am not here to decide this question; I am here to ask that the information be given to the House and the country—which information the Government persist in refusing to give—and to criticise them for not having come to a determination on this important question. I support the hon. member in his motion that some inquiry should be instituted at once, in order that we might get the right scheme and carry it out as speedily as possible.

The Premier: You will never get a Royal Commission satisfactory to both of you, because you hold different ideas. You want the harbour to come to Perth, and he wants it to go to Rottnest.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It does not concern me what opinion the hon. member or the Premier holds, but it does concern me that this State is being retarded in its progress by the Government, that the people of this State have not the facilities which they require to carry out

their trading propositions, and that the commerce of the State is likely to be crippled in the near future if we do not deal with them. It concerns me that in the very near future we may see the larger vessels which are now being built and utilised in other parts of the world, coming to Australia and passing our very door because we do not provide them with proper harbour facilities which they may safely use. These are points which must not be forgotten. If the Government had done their duty last year, this inquiry would have been instituted and to-day instead of being in the dark and knowing nothing of the Government's intentions, not only as regards Fremantle but Bunbury, Busselton, Albany, and Geraldton, we would have had well thought out schemes and a recommendation of one sort or another with evidence supporting it as to what we should do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We are doing the work, and making deeper water for these vessels to come in.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Making deeper water! The Government are not doing anything further than was done when the harbour was constructed, except a little dredging.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You stopped it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We were dredging at Bunbury and Albany continuously, and at Busselton and Geraldton.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Not at Fremantle.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is very bad form for the Honorary Minister to infer that we did nothing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You stopped the lot at Fremantle.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Honorary Minister knows full well that the harbour at Fremantle is largely due to our efforts.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) interjected.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member rakes up that futile charge which is so erroneously, and I think designedly directed against me on occasions, of



squandering money. The hon. member's Government have squandered £80,000 on the dry dock.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They could not help themselves.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Government could help it. I spent only £40,000 on it when I was in charge of the Works Department, but the present Government, with the benefit of my experience to guide them, carried it on and spent another £80,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Because you started it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Those hon. gentlemen who profess to be so fair and honest continually charge me with having squandered this money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You started it and we continued it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! This discussion is entirely irregular. The motion does not refer to the dock.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is a matter of inquiry into harbour extension.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question of the dock is not under consideration.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is portion of the harbour and I suppose will be included in it.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not embodied in the motion.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I presume that we can refer to the harbour. We cannot discuss the motion unless we do, and wharves and docks are portions of the harbour.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion proposed is—"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a Royal Commission be appointed to consider and report upon the best means of extending the Fremantle harbour." The discussion has now turned entirely to the question of money expended some time previously on an altogether different proposition.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I was only answering an interjection.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I did not make the interjection.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, you did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The leader of the Opposition might respect my ruling, instead of insisting that he is right and I am wrong. I have pointed out that the motion before the Chair is not being discussed by him. I will not say anything further, except that hon. members must, as far as possible, discuss the motion.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The member for Fremantle said that what he wanted to know, amongst other things, was whether the Government are making any research as to the best means of extending the Fremantle harbour. I think he has ground for complaint if he is not aware of this. We have no means of knowing whether the Government are making any research as to the best method of extending the harbour or otherwise; yet immediately after making this statement, the hon. member offered a half apology to Ministers for their neglect in this respect. I wish he had driven his point home with greater force. He is always half apologetic when he makes a charge against the Government, and I do not think his electors will thank him for his efforts unless he goes to the full extent of his criticism and condemns even the Government behind whom he sits, when they neglect what is obviously their duty. What research have the Government made with regard to the proposed extension of the Fremantle harbour? We know nothing of it. They may have had reports from their departmental engineers, but if they have, the reports have been pigeon-holed and will remain there to be unearthed. I presume, at some future date when it is convenient for the Government to tackle the question in earnest. In the meantime, anything which will be an obstacle in the way of this important matter being settled definitely and permanently is adopted in the usual off-hand style of the Premier. The hon. member must not try to urge the Premier beyond his pace, but I think he will be justified in taking up a much stronger attitude and going so far as to refuse to support the Government unless he receives some satisfaction. Other hon. members have to some extent, at any rate, had a certain amount of consideration extended

to them. Other hon. members situated exactly the same as the member for Fremantle, after dinning it into the Government year in and year out until Parliament is moribund and we should not be considering questions of this importance, have been appeased by the production of certain plans, the details of which are known only to the Government, the hon. members concerned and a select few who have been taken into their confidence.

The Premier: Why do you not say we are spending too much money?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Government have never spent too much money; they have squandered it, thrown it away.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister: That is how you fell in just now. You thought I made an interjection when you used the word "squandered."

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Other hon. members have been treated differently from the member for Fremantle. He cannot even have the satisfaction of having plans taken to Fremantle so that he might be conversant with the proposals of the Minister for Works, voicing the decision of Cabinet, in order that those who are concerned in the increasing trade of the principal port of the State—

Mr. Dwyer: We are all concerned in that.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I know we are. I say that those who are concerned in the increasing trade of the principal port of the State might, with him, be the favoured few who should know the Government's intentions.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Before the tea adjournment, I had almost got to the finish of my remarks in connection with the motion. The hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter), in moving it, used one very strong argument, namely, that he maintained that there were peculiar circumstances in connection with the port of Fremantle which did not exist elsewhere in the State. I am not prepared to admit that that is so, or to concur in his views so far as that is concerned. I do, however, admit that there are peculiar circumstances at Fremantle

in regard to harbour extension. These peculiar circumstances require very closely looking into, and it is idle for any Government to put off the evil day, and refuse to face the difficulties, whatever they may be, and have them settled. Naturally, there must be peculiar circumstances when we have one section of the community of Fremantle and district strongly in favour of outer harbour accommodation, and another section of the community of that district strongly supporting an inner harbour extension. But that does not, to my mind, exonerate the Government for refusing to make a move, and to have a definite decision arrived at. I have looked up some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Fremantle last year, and he was very bitter against the Government, of which he is a supporter, because they had not taken action in the direction of appointing a Royal Commission, which he had recommended. Nearly two years ago, so he said, on the 15th October of last year, he took steps in this direction, so that you see for nearly three solid years the hon. member has been urging the Government to get this important question settled, and he was pretty strong in his condemnation of the lethargy and lack of enterprise on the part of the Government in this connection even 12 months ago. He made use of language which amounted to an emphatic protest against the attitude of the Government. He said, referring to some other matter arising out of an interjection made by the hon. member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George)—

What I am more concerned about is as to whether the present Government, or the officers of the present Government, have made an estimate which is up to date. We are in the dark on this question in that we do not know what the Minister proposes to do. Whether the Minister proposes that this work shall be a step towards the up-river scheme, we do not know, and neither do we know what such a scheme would land us in. We have no means of judging whether it is a fair thing to sanction the expenditure of this money, knowing that it will involve an outlay of one

or two millions. We know nothing about it. We have not been able to consider the matter because it has not been submitted to us.

Therefore, I submit for the consideration of the House that we have an indictment against the Government as strong as anything which has been hurled from this side of the Chamber. This is an important matter concerning the people of Western Australia, but they know nothing whatever about it. It is not a matter which is confined to the few inhabitants even of Fremantle or the surrounding districts. It is not even confined to shipping interests or exporting interests, but it is a matter which concerns the whole of Western Australia, and I suppose the whole of Western Australia can continue to be concerned so far as the Government care. The hon. member argued that engineers should be asked to give reasons for or against the different schemes. I agree with him that that is a legitimate request. The departmental experts employed by this State are entitled to submit any scheme that the Government may suggest. They are entitled to go further and give their recommendations upon the different schemes, and certainly I am with the hon. member for Fremantle that in doing so they should express their reasons pretty concisely and fully, so far as necessary, as to why one particular scheme out of numbers of schemes should be adopted. Has this been done? We do not know. The hon. member for Fremantle said 12 months ago that he did not know anything about the intentions of the Government. Whilst he pleads that the Government are anxious to do the right thing, he condemns them utterly right throughout his speech on this and previous occasions. No doubt the Government wish to do the right thing, but they do not do the right thing by holding back, and refraining from getting proper advice as to the best course they should follow. They cannot be doing the right thing by refusing to give the hon. member the inquiry he wants. Certainly they are not doing the right thing in hiding from this House, or the country, even if it may give them some considerable ease from criticism, the plans which they purpose adopting for this ex-

tension of the Fremantle harbour, in addition to the extension of the other harbours of the State. It is all very well to be imbued with right motives, but we want something more than that. We want actions; we want deeds. The commerce of Western Australia is in danger of being crippled. We want facilities for export, for accommodating the ever-increasing number of steamers which must of necessity visit our shores, just as they are visiting the shores of the other States of the Commonwealth, but all this work is being neglected, notwithstanding that the hon. member for Fremantle has year after year brought up the question. If he presses the motion to a division, which I hope he will do, I am satisfied he will get a fair measure of support from hon. members on this side of the Chamber. I intend to vote with him. I would sooner, however, have seen the scope of the inquiry enlarged. I believe it is of so much importance that all hon. members wishing to see Western Australia progress and advance, and hold her own with other portions of the Commonwealth and other parts of the Empire, will support the hon. member in getting this inquiry made, so that we may have the matter settled once and for all.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [7.38]: I would just like to say a word or two on this question because it is one which concerns the whole of the people of Western Australia and particularly the primary producers. Our wheat field is becoming larger and larger year by year, and it is most important that we should get the most favourable shipping rates. Unless our harbours are brought up to date this will be impossible. We have heard from time to time that if the harbours at Fremantle, Bunbury, Geraldton and Albany are improved they will provide a natural outlet for the producer. I should like to see the hon. member's motion widened so that we may have the best possible expert advice with regard to all the harbours of the State. This is a matter of the utmost importance. We want our freights from these outer harbours to be as low as possible to the

markets of the world. Every disadvantage in regard to the marketing of produce has to be borne by the producer and not by the merchant. It is often thought that the merchant pays any additional freight on the cargo. As a matter of fact it is the man on the land who pays.

Mr. Munsie: What about the consumer?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There is every reason, I think, for the Commission to be appointed. The wheat yield has increased considerably during the past seven years. It has grown from a couple of million bushels to 14 million bushels, and I believe that if this season turns out good we may expect 20 million bushels. If we have 300,000 or 400,000 tons of wheat for export it goes without saying that the slightest saving on freight becomes an important matter. This saving will be impossible without the provision of proper harbour facilities, up-to-date facilities to induce vessels to come here for freight. It is known that the wheat of the East has for years brought more than wheat in Western Australia. The primary cost was due to the shipping in small quantities to various ports. We must consider what is best to be done with our various out-ports. The hon. member in introducing the motion gave expression to a good idea, but I think he used a very lame argument, probably because he is sitting behind the Government. He might have made his case very much stronger. I venture to think that if the Honorary Minister (Mr. Angwin) had been sitting here he would have put up a good case for the extension of harbour facilities at Fremantle. I believe that if it is possible to use the rivers you must use them both at Fremantle and Bunbury, and that if the rivers can be used they should be rendered fit to accommodate shipping. If the rivers can be used our duty is to see that they are used. No harbour can be quite as safe, of course, outside the river as it is inside. Even at Fremantle there will be difficulties outside the river. An argument has been used against the depth of the water there. It is impossible to say what depth of water will be required, say 10 years hence. If there is sufficient

draught at Fremantle for shipping this must certainly be brought into the river. At Bunbury the Government are going on with an outer harbour scheme to cost £250,000, in extending the mole and raising the height of it, and protecting the wharf, which they propose to put on the inside of the mole. Before this is done we should have the best possible expert advice upon the question of opening up the river there. I venture to say that whilst the people, or some few of the people who have been made acquainted with the intentions of the Minister for Works may approve of the scheme, the great bulk of the people expect to see a complete scheme for harbour extension. It is no good spending £100,000 in improving the present harbour, when probably in the near future we shall be faced with the question of doing something inside the river. There can be no question about it that the cost of inquiry is a wise expenditure, whether it be in connection with laying down a railway or building a harbour. Often in Western Australia we find great works completed without proper inquiry. Members opposite criticised the making of trial surveys in connection with railways. Such trial surveys are exactly similar to the inquiry which is now asked for before we enter upon large expenditure in connection with harbours. Hon. members will realise that an expenditure of a million may be faced quite airily by inexperienced Ministers. The member for Fremantle is quite sure that a Parliamentary Committee can satisfactorily examine an expert. He says that the advice of an expert without examination by inexperienced men is not satisfactory. I venture to say that this House is not prepared to endorse the scheme approved by the Minister for Works, without some inquiry first being made. I know, of course, that the House will pass the vote which the Minister requires; and I am quite certain that we shall see as little of the plans in connection with these harbours as the people of Albany and Bunbury have seen.

Mr. Underwood: Do you think they are satisfied?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: They are certainly not satisfied. However, the member for Fremantle merely asks for an inquiry into the work before it is undertaken. The Honorary Minister, by way of interjection, said the cost would be too great.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I did not. I said we had spent sufficient on inquiries.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I maintain that the expenditure would be well justified.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I have no faith in outside experts.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We do not ask for that faith. We say that we have faith in outside experts, and no faith in the Minister. An hon. member said we have already had advice from Sir John Cooke, which proved faulty. It does not follow, however, that because mistaken advice resulted from that inquiry, there would be an erroneous result again.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We have had an inquiry by Mr. Keale of New South Wales.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: My friend the leader of the Opposition was against the advice of Sir John Cooke. The leader of the Opposition believed that Fremantle should be provided with a floating dock, and not a graving dock. It is absolutely no fault of his that his advice was not followed in that matter. I am quite prepared to hear the Honorary Minister argue that if that advice was right then, it is right now; but I am not so certain that the advice will be right now that we have had a change of Government. I agree to vote for the proposal of the member for Fremantle, and I hope the scope of the Commission will be widened. We are faced now with considerable responsibility, and we must meet that responsibility promptly. I observe that the Minister for Works (Hon. W. D. Johnson) has just come into the Chamber.

Hon. Frank Wilson: His troubles.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, his troubles. He went down to Albany with a few plans and said to the people there, "Make your selection, gentlemen." They have made their selection, but they have not got their harbour. The Minister for

Works travels about with harbour schemes in his pocket, but that is about all the people see of those schemes. When it comes to putting a scheme into execution, it is another matter altogether. In any case, the member for Fremantle has to-night moved a perfectly good motion. The various works can be no longer delayed, and therefore I hope the Government will agree to the proposed Royal Commission. I trust the Commission will be composed of experienced engineers, because the inquiry, unless it is made by qualified men, will be useless. We know that we have already had a Commission to inquire into certain work at Fremantle in connection with the bulk handling of wheat. That Commission has reported, but no move has been made by the Government; nor have they given any indication of their intentions in regard to that matter. Of course, it is quite right of the Government to resist the appointment of the Royal Commission which is now asked for if they have no intention of going on with the harbour scheme. In connection with the bulk handling of wheat there has been inquiry, and the country is now waiting for the Government to move. It will be well if the Minister for Works, when replying, will let us know the intentions of the Government in that connection. At any rate, I hope that the river schemes will be persevered with at Bunbury and Fremantle, and that before any expenditure is incurred, expert advice will be taken. At Albany and Geraldton there is no river, unfortunately. At Fremantle, however, we have the river, and it is only a matter of extending the works already there. Of course, we must have depth of water.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) debate adjourned.

#### RETURN—STOCK TRADING DEPARTMENT TRANSACTIONS.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [8.51] moved—

*That a return be placed upon the Table of the House showing 1. Total number of cattle and sheep purchased?*

*by the Stock Trading Department. 2, Total amount paid for cattle and sheep respectively. 3, Total numbers sold and amounts received for same. 4, Total number of cattle and sheep on hand and amount paid for same.*

He said: Earlier in the afternoon the leader of the Opposition moved for some information, and in doing so provoked the wrath of the Premier. I do not know whether I am going to incur the displeasure of Ministers in asking for this information.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You will, for a certainty.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I probably shall; but, all the same, I am going to ask for the information.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This information should have been given when I asked for it in the form of a question. However, Ministers thought fit to make me move for a return. Really, the answering of the question does not require a return at all. The information I asked for is of public interest; there can be no gainsaying that. Without authority from Parliament, Ministers have entered upon a large trading concern, a highly speculative business, in which the country may lose thousands of pounds. They have, of course, had particularly fortunate markets to sell on during the last few weeks. We were told by the Minister for Lands (Hon. T. H. Bath) that the Government had laid in a large stock of cattle and sheep. All the same, I think that when the actual result comes to be probed it will be found that the losses incurred by the Government in this connection have been somewhat serious. Ministers, of course, treat this question of losses very lightly indeed. They are quite indifferent to the question of profit and loss. The other day we were supplied with a return of stock sold through the State butcheries. The turnover for the quarter, I noticed, was £5,000. That was just equal to the amount of loss on the State steamers for the same quarter, so that the whole of the turnover of the State butcheries would be required to meet the loss on the State

steamers, leaving the Government, of course, to pay through the Stock Department for stock purchases.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What has this motion to do with the State steamers?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The State steamers were bought to further this business. However, quite apart from the State steamers, I want to know what the result of this trading has been. Ministers have entered into many agreements. It is quite true that we have not been allowed to see the agreements in this House, and that we have no knowledge of the provisions contained in some of the agreements. The Government when selling to the Stock Department do so with the idea of reducing the price of meat. We find that the Government have a buyer, and that this buyer goes to every auction and bids against the ordinary butchers on the open market, with the result that the price of stock is increased. The price of stock being increased, the benefit goes, as the Honorary Minister knows, to the producers in the North-West.

Mr. Munsie: What about the small men who get a few head into the market as well?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I will deal in a few minutes with the small men who get a few head of stock into the market. We heard about them yesterday.

Mr. Male: You heard about them last session, too.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Before going on to the small men, may I say that the public will want to know what was the result of the purchase of cattle from Farquharson? This information was asked for previously, but I should like to know now what the Stock Department paid for those cattle and what those cattle realised. We know that the Government paid something like £6 a head for the cattle, and we know that they sold some of the cattle down as low as a few shillings over one pound. We know that the deal was a sorry one, because the cattle proved, when they arrived there, to be poor and diseased. The Government had them at Thompson's Lake, and the detention of them caused

almost a public scandal. Was the loss on them £2,000 or £3,000? We want to know, anyhow, what was the loss on this one deal.

Mr. Underwood: You told us what it was.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I wish the hon. member would pay some attention to what is going on and not interject so much. We know, too, that there was a contract with the Bovril Co. for 2,000 to 3,000 head of cattle per year for two or three years. That contract has never been laid on the Table of the House. During last session the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male) referred to that contract as follows:—

I want to see the copy of the contract for the reason that report says that that contract has been drafted in the very best interests of that squatting firm, and the only logical conclusion I can come to is, therefore, that it has been drafted in the very worst interests of the State.

Mr. Male: So it was, absolutely.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Those words have never been contradicted.

Mr. Underwood: What is the use?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Nothing has been said to controvert the argument put forward by the member for Kimberley. It is quite true that the matter was ventilated in the public Press at the time. We learnt also at that time that these cattle sold down to as low as £3 5s. and £3 2s. 6d., cattle that were bought at £3 15s. and which of course were carried down here at a cost of about £2 10s. Six pound five shillings for cattle sold at £3 2s. 6d.—just half what they cost. This is according to a report published in the *West Australian* of the 16th October, 1913.

Mr. Munsie: Sure to be true, then.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The report states—

At the weekly stock sale at the North Fremantle yards yesterday some 300 plain quality Government bullocks were put up to auction, and 270 of them sold at figures averaging £4 per head. The lot represented a shipment brought on the latest trip of the "Kwinana," the last of the year's shipments by the Gov-

ernment from the Bovril Estates. Since nothing was to be gained by keeping them on the hoof, they were thus placed on the first available market. There was a good attendance of buyers, but the bidding was certainly in favour of those whose business instincts led them to close the deals. After the first few sales, in which some of the beasts realised £5 5s. and £4 7s. 6d. per head, prices fell away, and several pens were sold at £3 10s., £3 5s., and £3 2s. 6d. Finally two pens for which no higher bids than £2 15s. and £2 12s. 6d. were offering, were passed in. Moving on, the auctioneer protested that the animals would be cheap at £6 per head, and asked for a start at anything ranging from £4 to £5, but in many instances buyers were disinclined to assist him further than to make repeated offers of "fifty bob." Some of them considered that Government stock, the property of the people, should be sold at the people's price. "Knock them down," said one man who had bid £2 10s. "They belong to us you know." Eight bullocks, in better condition than those which preceded them, were sold for £6 12s. 6d., and 12 others, highest priced for the day, sold at £6 15s. Discussing the sale, the Government auctioneer, Mr. Cairns, said that the explanation of the poor prices was that there was no demand for plain quality beef. The market had been overstocked by Monday's sale of 500 cattle ex "Kwinana," from Messrs. Farquharson Bros.' station, in the Victoria River district. The condition of Wednesday's market arose through a desire on the part of the Government to get the animals killed. The fact that so far the supplies from the Bovril Estates had been more or less affected by pleuro-pneumonia, rendered it necessary to get the animals ready for quick sale.

If the Government had got from the Bovril Company 2,000 head of cattle per year for two or three years, and if they had sold the cattle at these rates, of course they must have made a very big loss. At any rate, so far as this shipment is con-

cerned, which I suppose would be a fairly large shipment, there would be a heavy loss. I wish to point out, too, that when this contract was being made, Mr. Cairns who is the expert in the meat business and has charge of the Government freezing works, warned the Minister of the danger of pleuro. But of course the Minister did not take the slightest notice of the warning with the result that the Government made a bad deal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Who told you that?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I will tell the Honorary Minister when he gets me the information.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Is it true?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Where did you get it from?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I got the information from some person who read the file while it was on the Table of another place. I did not, as the Minister suspects, get it from Mr. Cairns or any other officer of the department. I do not seek information from public officials, the Minister ought to know that. The fact remains that Mr. Cairns offered Ministers good advice, and they acted contrary to it. The agreement provides that the cattle are to be of fair merchantable quality and condition, and of the specified weight calculated on an average basis. It also goes on to say that should any dispute arise with regard to the quality, condition or weight, the purchaser shall nevertheless receive and take delivery of such cattle and make due payment as agreed, and such dispute shall be referred to arbitration. I am quoting this from the agreement which was read to the Legislative Council by the Colonial Secretary last year. Here is an agreement which is entirely one-sided, entirely in favour of the Bovril Company. The Government are compelled to take the cattle; they are bound to take what they do not want, and to pay for them, and in the event of a dispute they can only get their money back by arbitration. When this question was referred to in the other place, that is to say, when the papers in regard to the contract were asked for, the

Colonial Secretary replied that it would be improper for him to give out at that stage the case for the Government. That is what they always say when they are cornered so as not to disclose information. The Colonial Secretary went on to explain that the Government contended that they were protected under the agreement, and that the agreement made provision for the settlement of disputes between the Government and the Bovril Company by arbitration. The question is, did the Government go to arbitration, or was there a settlement? If there was a settlement we ought to know about it. In this wonderful agreement there were none of those details which we expected to find when stock is purchased. There was neither sex nor quality mentioned, and the number of stock varied from 2,000 to 3,000 head per year. The agreement was entered into in an haphazard fashion, and it was certainly against the best interests of the country. There were pleuro cattle sent to Yandanooka. These had been purchased by the Stock Department presumably with the idea of being sent to auction in the metropolitan area. The member for Irwin (Mr. Moore) asked some questions in regard to these pleuro cattle, and the Minister replied that while traces of pleuro had been discovered, it could not be termed an outbreak. May I say that this matter discloses another weakness in allowing the Stock Department to become traders. They flout the law which is rigorously applied to other people, and they do this because it suits them. I believe the stock were landed at Geraldton and driven through clean country at Yandanooka.

Mr. Underwood: What has all this to do with the motion?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I can understand that it does not matter to the hon. member whether there is a loss or not.

Mr. Underwood: There is a loss of time while you are rambling all round the country, out of order.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The cattle should have been put into quarantine and not allowed to move from the quarantine area through clean country. We want to know



now what the result of this deal has been. We know that the herds belonging to other people were placed in jeopardy, just to suit the Government's bad purchase. Then we hear that 5,000 sheep were bought and that a thousand of them were lost. I have no authentic information in regard to that, and the public want to know how far the Government have lost up to date. Then, too, it is to be remembered that the handling of cattle is a very expensive item, and that apart from what the Government have to pay for cattle, there has to be faced a considerable loss in commission, trucking, and feeding. We are entitled to know what all these amounts come to and what the results of the sales have been. If the people were deriving an advantage as the result of all this there would not be so much objection to it, and we should not be so concerned as to the results of the transactions.

Mr. Bolton: Oh, yes, you would.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We know that the conveyance of the stock from the North must have cost a great deal of money; we know also that the Government are sending down stock purchased by the department in a privately owned steamer. If that is so I would like to know whether the Stock Department will be compelled to pay the higher freights charged on those steamers. All this information ought to be given, and it will be disclosed if the return I am asking for is supplied.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You shall get it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is a wonder the Minister did not give it to me long ago, and save me the trouble of making this application for it. The Minister has stated that we can have the information we are asking for; that is very good of him. There is not very much need, therefore, for me to say more. I will spare the Minister further criticism because he has offered to furnish the information I want. I hope that the inexperienced Ministers have gained experience by their stock trading transactions up to date, and I trust that in future agreements they will

see that the State gets, at least, a fair deal, and that the price paid for stock is not more than that stock is worth, and that the conditions under which the stock are to be supplied are as fair to the Government as to the vendor. It is only right that Ministers, controlling the affairs of the people, should be just as careful as if they were looking after these matters for themselves. They have no right to take undue risks; the agreements should be carefully prepared, and the position such that there should be a reasonable chance of making a profit on the transaction. I am particularly pleased that the Minister will let me have this information, and I hope he will furnish it at once, and not, as often happens, weeks after the application has been made.

Mr. SPEAKER: Last session I drew the attention of members to the manner in which motions were worded. Members were in the habit of asking for a return, and in moving the motion they imagined that they had the right to discuss every detail of the subject in connection with the return they were endeavouring to obtain. The remarks of the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) were not altogether regular, but that hon. member was only following the practice which has grown in this House for the past seven years. The fact remains however, that the discussion was irregular. If the hon. member had moved a motion to the effect that in the opinion of the House the operations of the Stock Trading Department were not in the best interests of the country, that would have enabled him to have discussed the matter in a general way and in the manner he did. Strictly speaking, the hon. member's speech was not one which should have been made in connection with the motion he moved. I am going to ask hon. members in the future, if they want to discuss a subject thoroughly and fully, that they submit their motions in the form which will enable them to do so.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: May I explain that I submitted this in the form of a question, and that it appeared on the Notice Paper as a motion for a return.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will recognise that the question was altered to a motion for a return because it could not be permitted to appear as a question.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) [8.13]: Before you, Mr. Speaker, addressed the hon. member, I had wondered what it was that the hon. member required. I see from the Notice Paper that certain information is asked for. I got that information for the hon. member with the view of laying it on the Table of the House, but there has not been one word throughout his speech dealing with the contents of the motion as it stands in the hon. member's name. There is nothing there about buying cattle without the authority of Parliament—which I deny, because Parliament voted a sum of money for the purpose.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He gave you reasons why you should furnish this information.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It could not be found out by the motion on the Notice Paper. Further, there is nothing about Farquarson's cattle. I wish to reply to one or two of the hon. member's arguments. On several occasions questions have been raised with regard to the purchase of Farquarson's cattle, which unfortunately developed pleuro. It is not generally known that the agents, who principally deal in cattle, notified the manager who was acting for the State at that time, that, under pressure from outside, they would be compelled not to again purchase cattle for the Government. They were boycotted. It was necessary that some cattle should be purchased, and these cattle were supposed to be of fair quality. The shipment was purchased at £6 15s., and next day some were sold at £3 15s.; but, unfortunately, pleuro broke out in the herd after a few weeks at Thompson's Lake, and consequently the whole deal resulted in a slight loss.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Were they clean when you got them?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): As far as I know, yes. The return I have prepared is in accordance

with the motion on the Notice Paper, and I may inform hon. members that the amount paid by the Stock Trading Department for cattle and sheep was £52,189 19s., and the amount received for cattle and sheep sold, £57,573 5s. 3d., or a credit balance of £5,383 6s. 3d. In addition to that, also in accordance with the motion on the Notice Paper, we have cattle on hand to the value of £14,829. So a lot of the information which the hon. member asks for in his speech is not included in this return at all. This return is made out strictly in accordance with the motion on the Notice Paper.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What profit have you made?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The motion does not ask for that.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But I do.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The motion asks for the total number of cattle and sheep purchased by the Stock Trading Department, and the answer is, cattle 7,479, and sheep 21,501.

Mr. Elliott: Up to what date is that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Up to to-day's date, 22nd July, 1914. The second question is the total amount paid for cattle and sheep respectively, and the answer is, for cattle £35,112 12s. 9d., and for sheep £17,077 6s. 3d. The third question is the total numbers sold and the amounts received for same. The answer is, cattle sold 5,535, sheep 12,755; and the total amount received £57,573 5s. 3d. Question No. 4 asks for the total number of cattle and sheep on hand and the amount paid for same; and the answer is, cattle on hand 1,718, amount paid for same £6,181; sheep on hand 7,555, and amount paid for them £7,284. It is unnecessary for me to say more. I trust the return will be satisfactory to the hon. member, and that he will take it as correct, for it is from the officers of the department.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [8.19]: If ever there was an explanation given by a responsible Minister which was calculated to evade the point and

mislead the public, it is the figures which the Honorary Minister has just read out. He knows well that those figures are not correct, so far at least as the inference he has placed upon them is concerned. He would have us and the country believe—

Mr. Underwood: On a point of order. A member of the House has to accept the assertions of another member. The Minister has asserted that the figures are right, and I claim that the leader of the Opposition is out of order in refusing to accept the statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know that in a debate of this character an hon. member is entitled to take another hon. member's statement. I am sure no hon. member is called upon to take another hon. member's statement in debates when a return is called for if he cares to dispute it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He cannot dispute this statement, because it is correct according to the officers of the department.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know of any such debate in which hon. members have accepted other hon. members' assertions. I am afraid I can never expect that unanimity in this House.

Mr. Bolton: But on occasion an hon. member has denied an assertion, and you have insisted upon acceptance of that denial.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in an instance such as this. An hon. member makes a statement, and another hon. member says he has other views in regard to it. I cannot control such views.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I have not disputed the Minister's figures, but I protest against the inference he has placed upon them, and which he conveys to the House, which is that there is a profit of something like £18,000 on his cattle department. We know there is no such thing.

Mr. Underwood: How do you know it?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I know it from the prices they have been getting for the cattle, and the prices paid for them. The member for Pilbara wants to

emphasise the point that this profit has been made. He also wants to mislead the House and the people. Why should we not have the correct position? It is all in keeping with the policy of the Government to hide and hush and refuse to let the people know.

Mr. Munsie: If the figures showed a loss you would accept them at once.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The figures do not show a profit, and the Minister has no right to put that inference on them. The member for Northam has a perfect right to get the information, but the Minister has no right to infer that there is in reality a profit. I protest against this undignified policy of bluffing and hiding, and of flouting members of the House, as I was flouted prior to the tea adjournment. I protest against Ministers refusing to give information and, on the infrequent occasions when they do give figures, putting a wrong construction on them.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [8.23]: I desire to enter a strong protest against the attitude of the Opposition in regard to these matters. They are continually putting up questions and motions for information, and when they get the information they practically tell the Minister that he is a liar. That is what it comes to, and nothing else. I wish to protest against members repeatedly making these assertions about Ministers. If the leader of the Opposition can prove that the figures are wrong, let him do so. Let him show where the Minister has made a false statement. To get up again and again and infer that the Ministers are telling untruths is not only lowering the dignity of the House, but is a scandal to those who do it.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley) [8.25]: The attitude of the member for Pilbara is amusing. One would think the leader of the Opposition had given the Minister the lie direct.

Mr. Underwood: So he did.

Mr. MALE: Nothing of the kind. What he did say was that the figures were misleading to members and to the country. It was unfortunate that the motion was put forward as a question in the first

place, and not as a motion, and it was also unfortunate that the question was not worded as clearly and distinctly as it should have been to get the information which the member for Northam desired to obtain.

Mr. Munsie: You blame the Minister because the member for Northam did not ask his questions properly!

Mr. MALE: I blame the Minister for not giving to the country the answer which was desired. I admit that the Minister did give the answer literally and according to the questions, but it is unfortunate for the country that he did so, and it is unfortunate for the Minister also. It would have been better had the Minister been a little plainer in his answers.

Mr. Munsie: He answered every question asked.

Mr. MALE: I admit it.

Mr. Munsie: What more do you want?

Mr. MALE: A good deal more. I think I can explain a little that the Minister did not explain. The Minister was asked the number of cattle and sheep purchased by the Stock Trading Department. He has answered that question, and I believe as correctly as the books of the department will allow him. We have the number of cattle given as 7,479, and I believe those are the figures. Indeed I have no right to doubt the figures, for I believe they are correct. The hon. member also asked for the total amount paid for cattle and sheep respectively. It is unfortunate that the member for Northam should have put it in that way. He made a mistake.

Mr. Underwood: Do not blame the Minister for that.

Mr. MALE: It is unfortunate that he did not ask for the cost of the cattle and sheep respectively, and not for the amount paid. There is a considerable difference.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss that.

Mr. MALE: The question is the total amount paid for the cattle.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss something which the mover of the motion did not include in the motion.

Mr. MALE: The second paragraph refers to the total amount paid for cattle and sheep respectively. The Minister has replied as to the actual first cost of the cattle, purchased, we will say, a couple thousand miles from Perth. He has given us the first cost of those cattle at Wyndham, and not at Fremantle, where those cattle were sold. There is a vast difference between the two costs.

Mr. Bolton: Did not the member for Northam know the difference?

Mr. MALE: It is not for me to answer.

Mr. Bolton: Providence has been nigardly with him if he did not know the difference.

Mr. MALE: The Minister answered correctly in a literal sense, but it is misleading to the public when the Minister gives us the cost of the cattle at Wyndham. Why did he not give us the actual cost of the cattle at Fremantle? It is obviously not what the questions were intended to obtain.

Mr. Munsie: That is a slur on your colleague.

Mr. MALE: I do not deny that. I am not hidebound like hon. members on the Government side who have to obey the dictates of their council and caucuses. I am free to criticise members on this side of the House if I wish to. In order to obtain the information which we require and which apparently it is not the wish of the Government to give us, I will move an amendment.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Will two tries be enough?

Mr. MALE: The Minister was quite within his rights in giving the price paid for the cattle at Wyndham, but it was necessary to add to that price all the freights, and fodder, selling and handling charges in order to compare it with the amount realised. I move an amendment—

*That the following words be added at the end of paragraph (2):—"and the freights and charges of every kind in connection with such purchases."*  
If we obtain this information—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will get that in the balance sheet when it comes out.

Mr. MALE: I have not the slightest doubt we will get lots of things in the balance sheet. Last year we got balance sheets and it was almost impossible to tell what they meant.

Hon. Frank Wilson: We will get them 12 months hence.

Mr. MALE: The total amount paid for the stock—

#### *Point of Order.*

The Minister for Works: On a point of order, I would like a ruling as to whether the amendment is in order in view of the fact that a definite motion asking for certain information was tabled. That definite information has been given, and I claim that if further information is required after that which was asked for has been given, it must be made the subject of a separate motion. I maintain that an amendment to a motion which has already been complied with is not in order.

The Attorney General: It is clear that as the information has been supplied, we cannot go behind the motion. No hardship will be done, inasmuch as the additional information can be asked for either by question or in the shape of a separate return. I do not see that it is necessary to amend the present motion; in fact, it cannot be amended, because the answer has been given.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Cannot it be amended?

The Attorney General: A direct question has been asked and the answer has been given, and the additional information can be asked for by way of a question.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The Attorney General and the Minister for Works are entirely wrong in their contention. A motion has been submitted, but it has not yet been passed or rejected.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): And you made a bloomer.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The motion is in the hands of the House and it can be amended in any direction which the House

wishes. The fact that the Minister has, in the course of his reply, given certain information has no bearing on the question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): If I had not given it, you would not desire to alter the motion.

Hon. Frank Wilson: When the motion is carried in its present or amended form, at the discretion of the House, it will be the duty of the Minister to lay the return on the Table. Any statement he makes here is made in the course of debate, and has nothing whatever to do with the motion or with any amendment which might be submitted.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The procedure adopted in this House has been that once a Minister has agreed to present the return moved for, no alteration has been made to the motion.

Mr. Speaker: My ruling has been requested and I can only say that, as the motion is still in possession of the House, any amendment which is relevant to the motion must be admitted.

#### *Debate resumed.*

Mr. MALE [8.35]: I now move the amendment which I have already read. Not only this House, but the country generally—

Mr. Bolton: Especially the stock owners.

Mr. MALE: Especially the stock owners and consumers, and more especially the taxpayers who have to foot the bill, should be given some idea of what is going on. We know that £3 15s. per head was paid for certain stock purchased at Wyndham. If it is given out that this was the cost of the cattle, and undoubtedly it was the cost at Wyndham, and that the cattle were sold at a considerable advance on that figure, the country will naturally conclude that the Government have made an enormous profit. We know this is not the case, but that in regard to three of these shipments last year, the Government must have lost £1,000 on each shipment. I do not want the impression to go abroad that the Government are making large profits when they are doing nothing

of the kind. It will be much better for us and the Government if the country know exactly what is happening.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will get the balance sheet in a few weeks.

Mr. MALE: We were promised balance sheets last year and we got them just as the session was closing. Some of them were not audited and none of them conveyed the information which was required, not sufficient information to enable us to pull them to pieces and obtain such particulars as we now require. If the Minister supplies this additional information, we shall be able to ascertain what the hon. member for Northam desires.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore): I second the amendment.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam—on amendment) [8.39]: When I framed my questions I thought they could be followed up by any other question which might be necessary.

Mr. Bolton: Someone else had to find it out.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister would not give the information by way of reply to questions, and I had to move for a return. The Minister has been very smart; he has apparently gone to his officers and said—"Let us give the information asked for" and he has endeavoured to convey to the public the impression that a large profit has been made. If I had embodied in my motion the amendment moved by the member for Kimberley, the public would have been told by the Minister that a profit had been made. The Minister in making his statement, particularly after my remarks in moving for the return, knew that the fullest information was required. He knew that we wanted to be informed of the total cost of this stock. Some of it has to be charged with freight to Yandanooka, in addition to the freight and charges from Kimberley, and under the motion as moved, the Minister could have given the full information including the amount paid at Kimberley and the charges to Yandanooka and back again to Perth.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I do not profess to be a thought-reader.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is absolutely wrong for the Minister to give information as he has done. The wisecracks on the Government side did not know that an amendment could be moved, and it has caused consternation in their ranks. I hope the Minister will agree to the amendment. Of course he can defeat it if he desires, but I trust he will not do so. We want information which will show the result of this trading. If the amendment is rejected, the public will be able to read into the refusal the desire of the Government to hide their transactions.

Mr. Bolton: Hush again.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The public will read into their refusal just what the Minister wishes to avoid. It is a little awkward for the Minister—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Not for me, but for you.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is awkward for the Minister to supply further information which will entirely destroy the impression he has endeavoured to convey, the impression that a large profit has been made.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You did not think that we had over £20,000 to pay the expenses.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It will cost a lot more than £20,000 to convey 7,000 head of cattle from Wyndham to Fremantle, to say nothing of the other charges.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): All of them were not purchased at Wyndham.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Government should agree to the amendment. The information presented is useless, but the additional particulars asked for will make the return very useful. The Attorney General has said that we have no right to ask for further information.

The Attorney General: I have not said anything of the kind.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not discuss the Attorney General's remarks, but the amendment.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am discussing the amendment. Objection has been raised by the Minister for Works and the Attorney General to the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: That objection has been over-ruled.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope the Ministers will be reasonable; if they are not, it will be a good deal worse for them than if they give the information.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That is a threat.

Mr. Bolton: Yes, a threat: good enough.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker) [8.45]: I would undoubtedly vote for the amendment if there were no other way of getting the information desired, but no information is excluded, and a simple question put on a business paper to-morrow will secure the information—I do not say expected—desired. The hon. member must know that the Minister who has been speaking to the motion to-night did not know that it would appear in this from to-day, as he has already told the House, and surely his word must be accepted. He had never seen the question before until it was submitted to him for approval at the office, with the answers already obtained. Now let us see what the facts are. The accusation is that the hon. member has been purposely misleading the House.

Mr. Bolton: It was said deliberately.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is not one single question there but is answered directly to the question put forward. There is not one of these answers that is not a legitimate answer to the question as it is worded.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The Minister refused to let me see the answer.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member can see it at any moment. It will be on the Table. The hon. member has inferred that he only put this in the form of questions. Very well, supposing they had been kept in the form of questions, could anybody have moved an amendment to the questions?

Hon. J. Mitchell: And asked further questions without delay.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is just what can be done now. The rea-

son why this is put in the form of a return is that, according to the customary rules of the House, whatever requires the obtainment of figures and tables is put in the form of a return and not in the form of a question. That is the usual custom. It is often done at the direction of Mr. Speaker. The questions that have been asked and put on the business paper have been ruled by Mr. Speaker to be returns, and they go in the form of returns afterwards. This is a case of this type. I submit that every one of these questions has been directly and pertinently answered. The answer has been put before the House. The transaction, so far as that motion is concerned, is completed. The request has been complied with.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No.

Mr. Bolton: Yes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The motion is in the hands of the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That does not alter the fact that this question is worded---

Mr. Male: On a point of order, must not the Attorney General speak to the amendment? He is speaking to the question, and is contending that the questions are answered. I think that the Minister should be confined to the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Attorney General is seeking to show that the amendment is not necessary, and in his opinion is not required.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is precisely the view I take. Here is a completed transaction, questions asked, answers given. There is an end to it. But the hon. member wants further information. He is quite at liberty to get it, but there is a proper way to ask for it. I am weary of listening to the perpetual bluffs of the leader of the Opposition. One might expect something better from one who professes to be the leader of a great historic party in the House and outside it. One naturally expects that the hon. member would not act ridiculously and vulgarly, especially after the lectures he is so fond of repeating to this side of the House. I am submitting that if we reject this amendment we

shall preserve the right and duty of both sides of the House to accurately word the questions that they want answered, and not on second thoughts, and when they have got their answer, find that they were not smart enough, or cute enough, or clear enough, or direct enough, to get what they wanted.

Hon. J. Mitchell: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Now the hon. member is departing from the question. He must discuss the amendment. When the question was raised previously the hon. member was discussing the reasons why the amendment was not necessary. He is now departing from that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am saying that it is a dangerous practice if an amendment of this kind—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss that. I will admit the amendment. The amendment is now under discussion. The matter of whether a dangerous practice is introduced cannot be discussed here.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With all due deference, I submit that it is my duty, if I can, to convince this House that it would be an unwise and dangerous precedent to admit this amendment, and having to vote upon it and accept it because it will open up that process. I am giving reasons why this House should reject this amendment, so that, if it be rejected, it will teach hon. members on either side of the House to be more careful in the wording of their motions.

Mr. Male: The amendment has been declared to be in order, and Mr. Speaker has given his ruling.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Speaker's ruling—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have read the amendment and that is the subject under discussion. I cannot allow discussion on the principle of whether an amendment should be introduced or not. I will allow a discussion if the hon. member desires to convince the House that the information required is contained in the motion and that the amendment is not necessary.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is precisely what I thought I had been discussing. It is the point I have made. I want now, before I resume my seat, for I think it is unnecessary to prolong the debate on this point, to say that by rejecting this amendment we deprive the hon. member of no right, and that the proper course to take is to ask a question when the information that the hon. member desires will be supplied. I think the hon. member has made a huge blunder, even according to his own colleagues. The whole of the time of the House has been wasted simply because the hon. member had not the foresight to ask the question in such a way as would give him what he desired to enable the hon. member for Kimberley to pull us to pieces, to use his language.

Mr. SWAN (North Perth) [8.53]: I am sorry, but I must oppose the amendment, for the reason given by the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male), namely in the interests of the taxpayer. I have no desire to deprive the other side of information; in fact they require a great deal more information than they are asking for, and upon many other questions as well. I have this reason for thinking that we should oppose the amendment, in addition to the interests of the taxpayer, that I feel that even now the hon. members for Northam and Kimberley do not know what they want. I want to make a suggestion to them, as a member of the "caucus-ridden party," the Labour party, which does a considerable amount of its work in caucus, that they should call a caucus meeting and appoint a sub-committee, and in that way save a great deal of the time of the House. If we defeat the amendment and there is a Liberal caucus called to-morrow, they will probably know next time what they want, and will submit a motion accordingly, when I shall be pleased to support it.

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont [8.55]: I think there is no difficulty at all in members of this House knowing what they want. There is, however, a difficulty in their knowing how to extract the informa-



tion from the Ministers. If Ministers were as perfectly straightforward in giving information on what we want, as we are in asking for it, there would be no difficulty about the matter. Unfortunately the Honorary Minister did not give the information in a straight-out manner and then say nothing more about it. If he had, there would have been none of this trouble, but he was so anxious to flap his wings and crow on the grounds that he had been a little bit smart, that he made the mistake of stating that the Government had made £5,000 profit on the transaction.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I did not say so.

Mr. WISDOM: I hope we shall hear something more about that £5,000 profit.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	20

Majority against .. 11

#### AYES.

Mr. Harper	Mr. Moore
Mr. Letroy	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Male	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Elliott
Mr. Monger	(Teller).

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Munle
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Price
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gill	Mr. Swan
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Walker
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Underwood
	(Teller)

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) laid the return, as ordered, on the Table.

Resolved: That motions be continued.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I call on the next motion, I wish to say that I desire hon. members, in the discussion of motions, to follow the direction which I gave on the last motion, namely that members should discuss motions in ac-

cordance with the terms in which they appear on the Notice Paper.

### RETURN—STATE SAWMILLS AND POWELLISING PLANTS.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [9.3] moved—

*That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing (1) The total amount expended to date upon (a) the State saw mills; (b) the Powellising plants. (2) The estimated cost of completion. (3) The date when tenders were called for the plant and machinery. (4) The name of the lowest tenderer and amount.*

He said: My request for this information was originally put in the form of a question. I asked for certain information which I was well satisfied the department concerned could give in half an hour by referring to their records, if the Government were willing to give the House that information.

Question passed.

### RETURN—UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT LANDS.

On motion by Mr. B. J. STUBBS (Subiaco) ordered: "That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing (1) The situations and areas of the various parcels of land granted to the University Endowment Trustees under Section 4 of 'The University Endowment Act, 1904.' (2) The areas of such lands that have been leased under Section 7 of 'The University Endowment Act, 1904,' or Section 15 of 'The University Act, 1911,' the period of time and the purpose for which such lands have been leased, and the amount of revenue which the Trustees or the Senate have derived from such leases."

### MOTION — COMPASSIONATE ALLOWANCES, MRS. PENNEFATHER AND Mrs. DOOLEY.

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont) [9.7] moved—

*That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Government should*

*—having regard to the special circumstances of the case—grant to the widow of the late R. W. Pennefather, who has been left in straitened circumstances, a suitable compassionate allowance.*

He said: I hardly think I need enlarge on this motion, on which I feel sure I shall have the sympathy of the House. Apart from the ordinary question of a compassionate allowance, the case has some special features, which, despite the objections to creating precedents of this nature, will cause hon. members to realise that there is a claim for special treatment here. Undoubtedly, a distinct hardship was occasioned to the late Mr. Pennefather in the first place by the failure of one Ministry to honour the promise or undertaking of the preceding Ministry. It is well known that the late Mr. Pennefather was appointed to an acting Supreme Court Judgeship by the Government of the day, and that it was thoroughly understood that in the ordinary course of events the acting appointment would be confirmed. In those circumstances Mr. Pennefather was led to abandon entirely a lucrative legal practice, which he was never able to recover. The succeeding Government, unfortunately, for reasons it is not for me to enter into, did not confirm the acting appointment of Mr. Pennefather. As a result he found himself, his practice being gone and his health somewhat impaired, in not the very best of circumstances. Had it not been for the failure of the succeeding Government to carry out the undertaking of the previous Government, or even had it not been for the acting appointment, there would have been no necessity for this motion, because Mr. Pennefather's practice previously to his acting appointment was quite sufficiently good to allow of his providing for his family. However, the practice was never regained; and the small savings Mr. Pennefather had been able to make were swallowed up during a long term of illness—illness which I think was considerably aggravated by the anxiety and worry resulting from his disappointment and from the loss of his practice. His widow and

child to-day are left absolutely penniless. For these special reasons I ask the House to agree to the motion. From expressions of opinion I have had from members of this and of another place, I feel that I can confidently submit the motion.

Mr. DWYER (Perth) [9.10]: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion. Like the mover, I feel sure that the House will give due consideration to the public services of Mr. Pennefather, both in his capacity as a member of Parliament for a number of years, and in his capacity as acting Judge for a considerable period. It was agreed by all that his duties as a Judge were carried out most satisfactorily in every respect. I do not think that a single one of the decisions given by him while acting as Judge was reversed. There is no doubt that the present unfortunate position, in a pecuniary sense, of his family was brought about by the failing health of Mr. Pennefather during many years, and by the fact of his practice having been ruined. Not only did the cancellation of his acting appointment ruin his practice, but it was, in my opinion, a great factor in ruining his health also. He was not able to apply himself to his practice with the same vigour as of old. I trust the House will agree to the motion, and so place on record an acknowledgment of Mr. Pennefather's public services.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [9.12]: Whilst at all times desirous of assisting those in need, I still believe it is the duty of any public institution, and especially of Parliament, to refrain from creating a precedent which may involve the country in heavy expenditure at future times. Ever since I have come to years of maturity I have held the opinion that equal opportunities should be granted to all members of the community, and I am perfectly willing at the present moment that the widow and child of the late Mr. Pennefather, who, as the mover said, have been left penniless, should receive the same consideration as would be granted to any other widow and child left in similar unfortunate circumstances. No matter what position the late Mr. Pennefather may have held, his widow and child

are no worse off than the widow and child of any other man who leaves no property, irrespective of what that man's station in life may have been.

Mr. Dwyer: But compassionate allowances are granted to civil servants.

Mr. FOLEY: It has never come to my knowledge that any widow or orphan has been turned away by a department controlled by the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin). I refer to the Charities Department. In the interests of the State, and of the people of this State, I consider that no different treatment should be meted out in this case from what would be accorded to the widows and orphans of those who held lowly positions. I would have liked this case to be brought under the notice of the Honorary Minister, when the widow and child would have received the same consideration as is extended to all other widows and orphans. That is my view because I believe in equality of opportunity and because I am a member of the party holding the same belief. I intend, therefore, to vote against the motion.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [9.15]: I hope the day is far distant when the Parliament of Western Australia will refuse reasonable assistance to the destitute dependents of men who have served the State. Mr. Pennefather served Western Australia truly and well for many, many years. In the early days, he was a Minister for three or four years with Sir John Forrest. The late Mr. Pennefather gave his best services to Western Australia, and, unfortunately, he suffered from a serious illness for many months which culminated in his decease. For several years before the end came he had been unable to follow his profession or to earn what was necessary for his family to subsist upon. His widow and one child are now left without means.

Mr. Price: What is the age of the daughter?

Mr. Wisdom: About 14 or 15.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I think the least we can do is to pass a motion which will indicate to the Government that, in the opinion of members of the House, the matter should be taken into favourable consideration. As to precedents they are

innumerable. We have always been in the habit of granting some compassionate allowance to the widows and orphans of public servants.

The Minister for Works: That is part of their emoluments.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And also to members of Parliament who have served their country.

The Minister for Works: Quote one instance.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Mrs. Illingworth.

The Minister for Works: It was given to Mr. Illingworth.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: What is the Minister for Works quibbling about; I could prove it if we turned up the records of the House. However, I hope the debate will not develop into a wrangle. It is far and above the question whether I can quote an instance or not; it is a matter of doing justice, and if hon. members will cast back their minds they will remember that a compassionate allowance was made to Lady Barlee. Is it not meet that we should recognise the services of hon. members of this Chamber or of another place? Are we not too prone to condemn public men after they have given the best years of their lives to the service of the country, and after they have borne the brunt of the battle of political affairs? I do not think members occupying Ministerial benches will refuse assistance on this occasion if they are satisfied that assistance is necessary.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker) [9.22]: If it were merely a bare question of doing justice the Government would be compelled to object to the passing of this motion. This is not a case entirely of justice or one really of charity. There can be no doubt about it that the late Mr. Pennefather had a hard and trying life. He was severely punished by being exalted into one of the highest positions that a gentleman can obtain in this State and cruelly deprived of it. There are, however, thousands suffering from injustice, thousands who have been wronged, thousands who have been ruined in health, and thousands who have had to go to

their graves leaving widows and children to mourn their fate and to suffer, but we cannot help them all, and if we are to be uniform, we must refuse to help a case because it comes within our most intimate knowledge, because if we help that one we ought to help all. If the late Mr. Pennefather's widow and child are to be assisted on principles of justice, then every member of the other Chamber and of this Chamber departing this life, and leaving dependants ought in like manner to be assisted. Scores who have been connected with this Chamber have passed away and have left their dependants in misfortune, but they have not been recompensed.

Hon. Frank Wilson : Under similar circumstances they ought to have an allowance.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Perhaps so. I only wish to point out we are on dangerous ground, and we might be making, as an hon. member put it, invidious distinctions. Wherever people are left in misfortune, as the widow of Mr. Pennefather, I think it is our duty to do what we can to help them. I only want to let the House know where they are going, and what it possibly may mean. If it be an instruction from this House that the Government shall make some allowance in this case, members can rest assured that the Government will not neglect that desire so expressed. We do not want to do this thing from the impulse of the moment. We want to do it, knowing that it may possibly be construed into a precedent within no distant time from now, and that it may prove dangerous. Out of respect for my spirit of resentment at the injustice the man has suffered in his lifetime, which has caused his family to be left in want, out of respect for a man who had a distinguished public career—I knew Mr. Pennefather personally, and I knew his integrity of character, I knew his great ability. I knew his faithfulness to any post he had the honour to occupy, and I know that cruel wrongs were done to him in the betrayal of what amounted to a sacred

promise, and I know that in consequence his health gave way, and he suffered dispirited and broken-hearted, and passed away, and even lived a portion of his life crippled and unable to do battle with the world—my sympathies go out to him, and although it will be my duty as a protest against making a precedent to vote against the motion. I by no means wish the House to follow my example in that respect, if the desire of members be that the widow and child of the late Mr. Pennefather shall have some assistance given to them to tide them over the ill-fortune which has fallen upon them.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [9.26] : I regret that the Attorney General, although sympathising with this motion, has made up his mind to vote against it. The hon. gentleman need not fear establishing a precedent, because it is an exceptional case. Mr. Pennefather was more than a member of Parliament. The Attorney General fears that possibly in the future dependants of all members of Parliament who pass away will receive assistance from the State. Mr. Pennefather's position was entirely different from that of an ordinary member of Parliament. He served for four years as a Minister of the Crown, and I had the honour to be a colleague of his. Consequently I knew his worth, and I knew the value of his advice in matters he was able to deal with as a member of the legal profession, and when that advice was sought by Cabinet. The late Mr. Pennefather served the State faithfully and well, and it will be agreed that a great many of the duties which he was called upon to perform were onerous and that the position was not altogether a bed of roses. There are precedents for the proposal contained in the motion. The widow of His Excellency Sir Frederick Broome—although that gentleman had left the State for many years prior to his death—was granted an annual allowance by Western Australia and that too, under responsible government. Then in the Crown Colony days there was another precedent established when Lady Barlee, whose husband had left the State

for some years, was also granted an allowance.

The Minister for Works: Sir Frederick Barlee was not a member of Parliament.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: Undoubtedly. He was Colonial Secretary and leader in the old Parliament for many years. He had actually severed his connection with the State for many years when he died, but his good services to the State were recognised when his widow was left in straitened circumstances. The case of Mr. Pennefather is similar to those I have mentioned. He occupied the position of Minister of the Crown for some years, and although he did not die in harness as a Minister he died in harness as a member of Parliament. I know from my knowledge of Mr. Pennefather that it must have assisted in damaging his health. He felt very keenly the position he was placed in and his health not being very good at the time I think it did assist to bring him into the condition in which he was for some years past. I hope the House will deal more than sympathetically with this matter. It is not a large amount, and although Mr. Pennefather was a private member of Parliament at the time of his death, yet we should remember that he was a Minister of the Crown for many years. I am quite in accord with the principle that the State should offer assistance to those who are left behind by public servants, just as, in the case of a private employer, when an old, trusted employee passes away it is the duty of that employer to help the widow. In the same way I think the State should do the same when a man has faithfully served the State for a number of years. In such circumstances the State should offer some allowance to the widow, if it be necessary, as in the case of Mrs. Pennefather. I really hope the Attorney General will change his mind in this matter, and will leave our friends on the Government side to support the motion.

Mr. GILL (Leederville) [9.32]: I wish to move an amendment to the motion. Hearing the statements put forward, one cannot help feeling that it is not to the

credit of the State that when those who have given their time, their health, and even their lives in the interests of the State, pass away, their widows should go begging. There is no doubt Mr. Pennefather suffered great hardships in Western Australia, and unfortunately his widow is now suffering similarly. But while we are dealing with this case it would be just as well to bring under the notice of hon. members another case, which will be fresh in their minds—the widow of one of our late members who recently departed this life, is in extremely straitened circumstances. She has three very young children to support, and it would be a graceful act on the part of the House and the country to give her some slight assistance. I allude to the widow of the late member for Geraldton, Mr. B. W. Dooley. Although Mr. Dooley did not serve the country in Parliament for a great number of years, he was an old public servant. He had for years served the country faithfully and well, and had he died while working in the railway service his widow would have received a fair compensation. But, having been elected to Parliament, he forfeited that right, and in the end left his widow absolutely penniless. It is a most unfortunate case, and one that might well receive the consideration of the House. With the object of including the case of Mrs. Dooley, I move as an amendment—

*That the motion be altered to read as follows:—That in the opinion of the House it is desirable that the Government should—having regard to the special circumstances of the cases—grant to the widows of the late R. W. Pennefather and of the late B. W. Dooley, who have been left in straitened circumstances, suitable compassionate allowances.*

Mr. Monger: Why not bring forward a separate motion?

Mr. GILL: It is not necessary. I think the feeling of the House is in favour of giving some little assistance to those who undoubtedly need it. We do not desire to see those widows and children going round the country begging, and I hope the House

will give fair consideration to the motion and the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: As the hon. member desires to move the amendment, I would suggest that he move that after the word "Pennefather" the words "and to the widow of the late Mr. B. W. Dooley" be inserted.

Mr. GILL: Yes, that will suit my purpose.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) [9.37]: I support the view taken by the Attorney General in impressing upon hon. members the serious precedent they are establishing in bringing forward motions of this description. The very fact that the amendment has been moved is an illustration of how dangerous it is to single out one case for special consideration. I take up the attitude that if we are going to grant compassionate allowances to widows of members of Parliament we should have a definite vote as an indication to all that they will get equal justice. It is a very delicate matter discussing a motion like this. We know the excellence of the work done by the late Mr. Pennefather for the State, and also that of the work done by the late Mr. Dooley; but after all, it is very difficult, under the system of party Government, to go into these questions and say that equal justice will be meted out to all. We have to view the work done by individual members in the light of the political views they hold. There may be those who feel that one member has done good work, and that it should be fittingly recognised, while others may view that work in a different light altogether; and if we have these motions constantly coming along we will drift into the habit of discussing the relative merits of work done by individual members. We have to look at this question from a broad view, and we should not let sympathy run away with our judgment. The motion is a dangerous one, and much as I sympathise with those in distress—the circumstances of both these widows are well known to me—at the same time I feel it is not a matter which should be brought forward in a motion of this description. Rather should we take

a broader view, and say definitely that the time has arrived when we should establish a fund and make it general, so that the widows of members of Parliament shall receive consideration whenever the circumstances warrant it. But it is wrong to come along with motions like this, singling out individual cases. I have been a member of Parliament for a number of years, and it has been my sad misfortune to know of other members who have passed away, yet I do not know of any previous motion of this description.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Were their dependants left in want?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know of cases equally as hard as those mentioned to-night. I have known cases in which the member of Parliament himself should have received consideration. I have in mind one or two cases at the present moment, cases in which, after good services had been rendered by the member, his health broke down and he was left in straitened circumstances. If we are going to extend sympathy we have to look right around, and see whether it should be limited even to members of Parliament. It has been said that to give widows of servants of the State compassionate allowances is part of the contract, part of the Public Service Act.

Hon. Frank Wilson: A retiring allowance is not a compassionate allowance.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A compassionate allowance is provided for by the Public Service regulations, and the regulations must be in accordance with the Public Service Act. We know perfectly well that items go on the Estimates as compassionate allowances, but we know that those items are for the purpose of giving to the widow that which the husband was entitled to at the time of his death.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Oh, no.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will refresh the hon. member's memory. Sometimes a public servant passes away just when he is entitled to long service leave, while others die at a time when, if they had lived, they would have been entitled to other grants or considerations.

In order that we might transfer those considerations to the widow we put them on the Estimates in the shape of compassionate allowances.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No, never. It never appears as a compassionate allowance. The grant is given as a matter of course.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That cannot be. It must be given either by a vote on the Estimates or by Executive Council.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is just given the same as any wages due to the deceased.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not want to argue the point, because it is one of those things one does not like to say too much about. But the hon. member knows of scores of public servants who have passed away, and whose widows have not received any consideration.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I do not know of them. In any case, perhaps they did not require it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We know of cases where it is required.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Well, why say that I know of them?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member must know. There are men in the field working as officers, but who are not under the Public Service Act, although they do equally good work as those under the Act. If they were to pass away their widows would get no consideration. If we are going to do it in one case, we should make it general, at least, as far as Parliament is concerned and I take up the same attitude in regard to public servants. If we are going to give it to one we must give it to another. It is one of those difficult questions we should not deal with in piece-meal fashion. Either it is good to make it general, or it is not. If not, we should not make it at all. I am going to oppose the motion because it is a dangerous precedent, and because I take strong exception to the singling out of one or two cases where it has not been a general principle. If the hon. member will bring forward a motion to make it a general principle, I

will be prepared to give such a motion my support, but I am not prepared to support the singling out of cases as has been done to-night, and allow my sentiment to run away with my judgment, when I realise that it is unfair to the State as a whole.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [9.45]: I regret the necessity for a motion of this kind. I am sorry the Attorney General and Minister for Works have adopted the attitude they have. In the Estimates for the year 1912-13, page 27, we find compassionate allowances under the headings of "annual" and "final." Item 17 reads, "Mrs. Dunn, widow of the late J. P. Dunn, discoverer of the Wealth of Nations Mine, £100." I knew Dunn before he discovered the mine. He made a good deal of money out of it, married, and then continued prospecting, and he died penniless. Not one voice was raised against this item in the Estimates. Item 18 reads, "Mrs. Knight, widow of the late C. W. Knight, of the Lands Department, £135." We heard no objection to that. Item 19 reads "Daughters of the late Hugh Connolly, messenger, Public Works Department, £157."

The Minister for Works: That was for his long service leave.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Minister's statement only confuses the issue. If the regulations are so clear that a public servant is entitled to certain emoluments, they should not appear on the Estimates as compassionate allowances. In the year I have quoted we passed £1,446 under the heading of "final" and not a word was said against the vote. Now, however, the Attorney General and Minister for Works say we are establishing a dangerous precedent. To my knowledge we have passed compassionate allowances in the Estimates for 13 or 14 years, and I have yet to realise that a dangerous precedent has been established. The House should consider the services rendered by the late Mr. Pennefather. It is idle for me to emphasise them, but I am one of the few members, now in the House who occupied a seat when his position was not honoured by the Government of the day and

his appointment as acting judge was cancelled, and he had to fall back on his practice which he never regained. His health failed him, and that is the reason why this motion has been moved. It was my first year in the House and I was led away by the Government to support the cancellation of his appointment. If I had known one-tenth of what I know to-day I would not have supported it, but I voted for it believing that I was doing the right thing. I have since learned that I did something which injured a man who should not have been injured. Realising this, and knowing the difficulties and hardships he endured before his death, I would be sorry not to help those who have been left in such straitened circumstances. I hope the House will consider his services. He was a member of Parliament for 16 years or more to my knowledge, and he had a fine practice before accepting the appointment of acting judge. The amendment will receive my sympathy and support. While members perhaps did not know the late Mr. Dooley so well as I did, they are familiar with the case and they know the position of his widow and orphans. Notwithstanding the opposition from the Ministerial bench, I hope we will deal with this question without any party feeling, and that the Government will be guided by the attitude of the House that some provision should be made.

Mr. THOMAS (Bunbury) [9.53]: I am very largely in agreement with both Ministers who have spoken. One can hardly approach this question as one should, because one is torn by conflicting emotions. After listening to common-sense and seemingly pure justice in the matter, it appears that we will be setting a bad precedent and rushing into a decision, lead by our sympathies, which will have an influence afterwards. If we are to consider the great services of the late Mr. Pennefather—I am prepared to believe they were valuable to the State—there are thousands of others who have served the State equally as well in other capacities.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): His living was taken away.

Mr. THOMAS: Because I am in sympathy with the wrong done to him, I am led by sympathy in this matter, but why should we extend sympathy to members of Parliament only? Why not to other men who serve the State well?

Mr. Taylor: There is not a member of Parliament in the list I quoted.

Mr. THOMAS: Mr. Pennefather was a Minister for four years. If his services are to be recognised and his widow compensated, we must recognise every other Minister who serves the State for four years and make provision for his widow also.

Hon. Frank Wilson: So we should.

Mr. THOMAS: So we should for every other man.

Hon. Frank Wilson: So we do.

Mr. THOMAS: We are not making any provision. We are making a special concession to one class of the community, and it can only be said that we are doing this because we are led by our sympathies as he was a member of the institution to which we have the honour to belong. I am satisfied we are setting a bad precedent, and I am afraid of this sort of thing, because in America an enormous sum has to be provided every year for pensions. No doubt it started in a small way, but it goes on from generation to generation, the stream increases and it seems to be never-ending. If we listened to the sweet voice of charity, we would give to everyone. There would not be a poor woman or a starving child in the community.

Mr. Taylor: There is not.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is a reflection on the Government of the day if there is.

Mr. THOMAS: I think I know of some. While I agree that Western Australia is probably one of the most prosperous countries on earth there is some poverty left yet. I have expressed my objection to the precedent; I am satisfied that we are taking a very serious step, but having voiced my objection, it is my intention to support the amendment.

Mr. Dwyer: What a keen sense of public duty!



Mr. THOMAS: It does not often fall to my lot to agree with the brilliant ideas of the hon. member; in fact, I generally disagree with them, but I was trying to illustrate the product of my brain and the feelings of my heart. If I were to analyse my action in cold reason I would not be doing the right thing.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Then you have no right to do it.

Mr. THOMAS: I intend to be led by my sympathies. I do not honestly feel that I can cast a vote against these two ladies who may be in sore distress, and much in need of whatever the Government are prepared to give them. The reason why I do not cast a silent vote is, because on the one hand I have the honest conviction that although we might do the right thing we would be setting up a precedent, while on the other hand I intend to allow my charitable instincts to lead me to do justice to the widow who may be in want.

Mr. DWYER (Perth) [10.2]: I simply wish to say that as a seconder of the motion I desire to support the amendment that the widow of the late Mr. Dooley should also receive a compassionate allowance. My sense of public duty is different from that of the hon. member for Bunbury, and leads me to think that if the relatives of men who have done service to the State, and have done it faithfully and honestly, are left in want these relatives deserve something from the State for the public duty rendered by those who have passed away. I do not subscribe to the narrow view of the Minister for Works in dealing with this question. I think if men have given good service to the State we should not consider on which side of the House they have been heard, for politics should end with the grave. It is said that the precedent we establish will be a dangerous one. I do not consider it is dangerous in either of the cases mentioned. I would simply point to the Estimates which have been passed year by year, as showing where the widows of not only public servants, but the relatives of persons out of the public service, have received such allowances. The point at

issue is this: the near and intimate relations of people who have rendered service to the State should, if left denuded of means of living by the death of these men, who probably if they had not rendered those services to the State would have been able to leave them a great deal better off, should be provided for by the State. It often happens that a man in rendering services to the State thereby destroys any possibility of amassing wealth or money for himself. I have no hesitation in saying that in the case of the late Mr. Pennefather, through his rather chequered career, if this gentleman had not taken the public positions which he did, he would have left his family and widow in such a position that an application of this kind would not have been necessary. Similarly, had not the late Mr. Dooley left one department of the public service to take part in another portion of the public service, namely on the floor of this House, his family would also have been left better off. I support both the amendment and the motion.

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont—on amendment) [10.6]: I favour the granting of compassionate allowances both in the case of the relatives of the late Mr. Pennefather and of the widow of the late Mr. Dooley. From this point of view the cases are similar. I am also very willing to vote for the amendment. With regard to the vexed question of establishing a precedent, I do not think that any dangerous precedent is involved. If we were making a hard and fast rule that the widow of every member of Parliament should be granted a compassionate allowance in the future, the position might be different. Why, it might be asked, do we not grant compassionate allowances for every prospector?

Mr. Taylor: This has been established for over 23 years.

Mr. WISDOM: And to every old inhabitant, and to every explorer, because I see that there are instances of compassionate allowances having been granted to some of these persons. There is no such thing as a hard and fast rule

when every case is taken on its merits and considered by the House from that aspect. In this case I do not consider that any dangerous precedent is formed.

Mr. PRICE (Albany) [10.8]: Both my sympathies and my feelings of justice prompt me to support the amendment and the motion. If the late Mr. Pennefather had never entered public life there is no doubt that he would have died under very different circumstances. In the same way, if Mr. Dooley had not entered this Chamber, his widow would have been in very different circumstances when he died. It seems but just that in neither case should the widow be penalised because her husband had entered the Parliament of the State. That is what would happen if we opposed either the amendment or the motion. I am at one with the hon. member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) in regard to what he said about a precedent. I can see no dangerous precedent connected with this matter. I do, however, wish to take exception to a remark of the hon. member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) who has referred to starving women and children in this country. If he knows of any such cases it is his duty to bring them under the notice of the Honorary Minister, who has charge of that department. I am surprised that any hon. member should find it necessary to state in this House that he knows of even one case of the kind in this State. I am sure it is only necessary for the case to be brought under the notice of the Honorary Minister for an immediate remedy to be applied.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) [10.11]: There is no doubt that the carrying of the motion will form a precedent.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And a very good one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): In a matter of this sort affecting cases known to members they are likely to be led away by sympathy more so than with cases they may not know the whole of the circumstances of. There is no doubt that if Mr. Pennefather had not been served unfairly and

unjustly his widow would not have been left in the position she is in to-day. If he had not accepted the office offered to him by the Government, I believe accepted under definite promises, he would have been very much better off. There is no doubt that he lost his business through the action which was taken at that time, which was the means of ruining his health and putting him in the unfortunate financial position he was in when he died. There have been many cases that the Government have had to deal with in making compassionate allowances. The hon. member for Perth (Mr. Dwyer) has mentioned a few. In a very large majority of these cases the services rendered have entitled the relations to some allowance from the State. In many of those cases assistance was entitled by virtue of long leave due, and in many other instances the Government, in considering the matter, have granted to the widows an amount equal to what the husband was entitled to by way of long leave. So far as my colleagues are concerned, I am confident that they are as sympathetic as any other members of this House in regard to giving compassionate allowances, and even in regard to the amendment which has been moved. But they have many cases to deal with and to weigh many considerations, and no doubt they look at the matter with more care. Because of the number of cases that have to be dealt with, they have to give the most careful consideration to each one. I was surprised to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Bunbury. As far as I am aware there are no starving children in Western Australia and no starving women. As a matter of fact the State is paying over £380 a week to assist women and children, fatherless children and those whose fathers are laid low by sickness. There is no need for there to be any starving children in Western Australia. I am confident that every hon. member will uphold the actions of any Government in taking care that there are no starving children in this State. I feel sure that I shall

have the support of my colleagues in carrying out the wishes of hon. members in regard to this matter.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Geraldton) [10-15]: While not desiring to make a long speech so late in the evening, I do wish to place on record that I support the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The amendment is under discussion.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I am also delighted to give my support to the amendment. It is especially pleasing to me to do this, because both Mr. Pennefather and Mr. Dooley were representatives of the Victoria district. I knew both gentlemen very well, and from my personal knowledge of them can testify to the good and useful service both gentlemen rendered to the State in their respective spheres. I do not think we need have any fear of the bogey of creating a precedent. As the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) pointed out, it is not a legal process, but a compassionate allowance, that is here in question, and every future case will be considered on its merits. It may be said that a precedent has already been established on the Estimates, in the form of moneys voted for compassionate allowances. I am entirely in sympathy with the motion and the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Question as amended agreed to.

*House adjourned at 10.18 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 23rd July, 1914.*

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

### QUESTION—PRISONER'S RELEASE, ROBERT BENNETT.

Mr. GEORGE (without notice) asked the Attorney General (1) Was Robert Bennett released with the authority of the Governor-in-Council; (2) If so, will the Attorney General lay the papers on the Table of the House? (3) Does the Attorney General intend to make any statement in regard to the report appearing in to-day's issue of the *West Australian* of an interview in Melbourne with Colonel Hoskins of the Salvation Army, which conflicts materially with the speech of the Attorney General on Thursday last?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: (1) Robert Bennett was released on my recommendation by His Excellency the Governor, whose prerogative it is to exercise pardon on the advice of his responsible Ministers, and in this case I was the responsible Minister. The action was purely my own, that is to say, it was taken without consulting my colleagues or consulting anyone but the facts. If there be any blame, or any credit, whichever it may be, it is mine. (2) It is not customary to lay papers of this kind on the Table of the House unless it be through the medium of an Address to His Excellency the Governor. They are his papers and the act was his. (3) I have no objection to making a statement in regard to the matter. What I stated last week is in writing, that is to say, I have the agreement of the Salvation Army in writing over the signature of Major Head, and not only have I that in writing in the letter he sent to me, but I have it in his interviews with me in the