

Mr. Latham: These are only suggestions.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The paragraph continues—

—and towards the expenditure in respect of such service, the Dominion of Western Australia shall make a just and equitable contribution—

Mr. Latham: You know that that is being done now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The proposition is extraordinary. The paragraph concludes—

Provided that nothing in this provision contained shall preclude an agreement between the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments concerning the defence by sea of the Dominion of Western Australia.

I could go on reading similar extraordinary suggestions. My knowledge of Parliamentary affairs tells me that the responsibilities and actions of Parliament in regard to such matters, if covered by a statute, are governmental responsibilities. There has never been the slightest indication of the views of the people on these matters. Who told the committee that they could make such suggestions? I trust the amendment will be carried.

Amendment put and negatived.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

Preamble:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I shall not attempt again to induce the Government to delete the names of the members of the committee, though the repetitions are unnecessary and ridiculous. I have done all in my power to get a decent Bill.

Preamble put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [10.56]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 22nd inst.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.57 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 22nd May, 1934.

	PAGE
New members	307
Question: Railways, freights and fares	307
Bill: Secession, 1R., Standing Orders suspension, 2R.	307

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

NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members, elected at the biennial elections, held since the previous sitting, took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll:—Hon. V. Hamersley (East): Hon. H. Seddon (North-East): Hon. C. H. Wittenoom (South-East): Hon. H. S. W. Parker (Metropolitan-Suburban): Hon. E. H. Angelo (North): Hon. H. Tuekey (South-West) and Hon. J. George (Metropolitan).

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, FREIGHTS AND FARES.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Have the Government noted the statement that appeared in the "West Australian" of the 10th May, dealing with the substantial increase of railway revenue in New Zealand and indicating that passenger revenue increased by £129,033 and freight revenue by £165,468? 2, The increase in the passenger revenue is interpreted as a vindication of the Railway Board's policy of reducing fares and its decision to make holiday excursion fares operative all the year round. 3, In view of the financial position of the State railways, will the Government urge the Commissioner to give reduction of freights and fares a similar trial here?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The whole matter is under consideration.

BILL—SECESSION.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.45]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the second reading of the Bill to be moved at this sitting.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Standing Order 422 reads—

In cases which, in the opinion of the President, are of urgent necessity, any Standing Order of the Council may be suspended on motion duly made and seconded, without notice, provided that such motion be agreed to by an absolute majority of the whole of the number of members.

I am not going to set myself up as an authority to determine whether the motion is urgently necessary, but it is the wish of the Chief Secretary that the Standing Orders be suspended.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) I do not intend to oppose the motion, but would it not be better to suspend the Standing Orders to permit of the Bill being passed through all its stages? I do not think there is any likelihood of that being required at the present sitting, but it might facilitate the passage of the Bill at a later stage. I understand that, in addition to this Bill, there is only one matter to be brought before the House, and if we are in a position to pass the Bill through all its stages, it might be possible to end the session early and allow members from distant provinces to return to their homes.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am not prepared to say at this stage whether it is urgently necessary that the Standing Orders should be suspended to enable the Bill to be passed through all its stages, but I am prepared to say that it is the Minister's desire to move the second reading at this sitting. I am prepared to stretch a point to that extent.

Question put.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There being 20 members present and no dissentient voice, I rule, without dividing the House, that the motion has been carried by the requisite absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.49] in moving the second reading said: In the first place, I hope to be permitted to turn my attention from the Bill and tender my congratulations to those members who, having presented themselves to their electors, were successful in gaining a renewal of confidence, and, in the second place, I should like to offer

words of welcome to all the new members. I am adopting this unusual course because otherwise I should have no opportunity to make such references until next session. In the past the biennial elections for the Council have been followed by a session of Parliament, and the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply has afforded opportunity to offer congratulations and words of welcome. Mr. Tuckey and Mr. George have made their first entry into the field of politics, and it will be the effort of all to assist them in every way to gain a knowledge of the procedure of Parliament. Mr. Angelo and Mr. Parker have already had experience. Up to 1932 Mr. Angelo had been for nearly 15 years a member of the other place, and he comes here with all the experience that that means. He should be very helpful in our discussions. Mr. Parker's election means another lawyer for the House, and here, where there are often differences of opinion as to the precise effect of clauses of Bills, we shall have the benefit of the interpretation of two legal minds. Mr. Parker has also served a term in another place, and his entry to the Chamber is noteworthy by reason of the fact that in this House his distinguished father rendered great and lengthy service to Western Australia and was once Leader of the House. I regret that at a time like this, when I am called upon to offer congratulations, my mind should be oppressed with the thought that my able and loyal helper in the House—the Honorary Minister—is lying ill in hospital suffering from the effects of a serious accident which occurred during the performance of official duties. We all hope that Mr. Kitson's recovery will be speedy and complete.

Dealing with the Secession Bill, we have reached another stage—probably the final stage so far as our Parliament is concerned—in implementing the will of the people as expressed at the referendum on secession taken at the general elections last year. Parliament has already gone some distance in that direction. Parliament appointed a Joint Committee of both Houses to recommend what action should be taken with regard to the preparation, completion and presentation to the proper authorities of the Case for Secession. A recommendation was made; Parliament approved it, and the committee have finished their task. It is necessary, from the advice we have received, that the Case and the accompanying address and petitions should

be covered by a Bill. Hence this measure has been submitted for parliamentary approval. It has passed another place, and it is now here for similar endorsement.

I draw members' attention to the introductory memorandum attached to the Bill. This fully outlines the circumstances leading to the introduction of the measure, and it also sets out the reasons for, and the effect of, the various provisions of the Bill. The method of procedure adopted by the Government in submitting a Bill is essential by reason of the fact that the Parliamentary authorities in England must be fully satisfied that the petitions and the Case for Secession are properly authenticated by the constitutional representatives of the people. The petitions and the Case for secession have been prepared. The petitions will be presented and the Case for Secession will be published in England in order to give effect to the result of the secession referendum taken on the 8th April, 1933. That referendum was taken under the authority of the Secession Referendum Act, 1932.

In order to satisfy the Imperial authorities, the petitions must be signed, on behalf of the people of Western Australia, by duly authorised representatives selected by the authority of an Act of Parliament. The same thing applies to the Case for secession, which, when published in England, will be accepted by the Imperial authorities as an authentic document only if authorised by the State Legislature. In that event the most effective and conclusive authenticity will be that given by an Act of Parliament.

In view of the importance of the question, it is essential that one or more persons be authorised, not only to deal with the matter of the presentation of the petitions, but also to transact all incidental business that may be necessary to insure that the petitions, when presented, will be properly considered. The most suitable way to satisfy the Imperial authorities that such persons are properly accredited will be the fact that they have been appointed under, and are exercising functions, authorised by an Act of Parliament. I have stressed this point in order to convince members that the mere passing of a motion would not be satisfactory. Investigations and inquiries made by the Crown Law Department show that the passing of a Bill is necessary. The presentation of the petitions for consideration by the Imperial authorities will undoubtedly raise a question of a constitutional and Imperial character

probably unique in British history, and it is advisable that the people of Western Australia and the British Parliament should regard the matter as of the greatest importance. The best way to impress the Imperial Parliament is by fortifying our actions with the authority of an Act of Parliament. Such a course will also be the most effective way to cause the Commonwealth authorities to realise the importance of the step we are taking.

The special preamble to the Bill necessarily recites in full detail all the preliminary steps antecedent to the preparation of the petitions and the Case for Secession. It is essential for the reason that the measure, if passed, must be submitted to the British Parliament and the British authorities. They must be made constitutionally cognisant of the purpose, scope and object of the measure.

Before further proceeding with my arguments in support of the Bill I will explain its clauses. Clause 1 of the Bill is merely the "Short Title" and identifies the Bill with the Secession Referendum Act, 1932. Clause 2 approves and authorises the Case for Secession being printed and published. Although the Case for Secession was prepared under the authority of a resolution of both Houses of this Parliament, the persons who comprised the committee which prepared it were not members of this Parliament, or in any way under the control of Parliament. They were appointed formally by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council; but the fact does not give the Case for Secession the necessary authenticity, and it is essential that it be properly authenticated before it can be accepted by the British authorities as a fully accredited document. Owing to the quantity and volume of the matter contained in the Case for Secession, it was not feasible to make it part of the Bill. Sub-Clause (1) of Clause 2 is for the purpose of authorising the submission to the proper authorities of the Case for Secession as laid on the Table of the House. Sub-Clause (2) of Clause 2 authorises the printing and publication of the Case for Secession both in Western Australia and beyond the State. This Sub-Clause is also necessary for authenticity.

It has been explained in the memorandum annexed to the Bill that the Case for

Secession cannot be included in or form part of the petitions because the Parliamentary rules and orders in England do not permit it. It has been decided to distribute copies of the Case for Secession to each member of the British Houses of Parliament, as well as to responsible bodies and persons among the British people. It is considered that this will educate and stimulate the interest of members so that they may be enabled to understand and deal competently with the petitions when they come before them.

Clause 3 provides for an address to His Majesty, as well as separate petitions to the House of Lords and House of Commons. The opening addresses of each petition will vary in conformity with a prescribed form of address and are not subject to alteration, but the subject matter of the petition is the same in each case, and is a matter for approval by this House. The form of the Address and the two petitions are set out in full in the 1st and 2nd Schedules to the Bill. Although the subject matter of the Address and the petitions are open to amendment if this House so desires, I would ask members to abstain from amending them, as the Secession Committee prepared these with great care and after much deliberation and in such a manner as to make the particular facts and propositions contained therein to run coincidentally with, and in conformity with the subject matter contained in the Case for Secession. It is, therefore, obvious that the greatest care must be taken before attempting to amend or interfere with the subject matter contained in those petitions, lest by so doing, they should in any way suffer in their relationship with the Case for Secession. If any amendment be made to the subject matter of the Address and petitions, the result may be to prevent the submission of some of the facts and propositions contained in the Case for Secession.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Involve a review of the whole Case.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Clause 3 provides for the approval by Parliament of an Address to His Majesty and separate Petitions to the House of Lords and the House of Commons in the form of the appropriate opening address set out in the First Schedule and the subject matter as set out in the Second Schedule to the Bill.

Clause 4 authorises the preparation of the Address and applications in the form prescribed in the previous Clause and directs that they be written by hand under the supervision of the Clerk of Parliament, in order to comply with the rules and orders of the Imperial Parliament. Clause 5 prescribes and authorises the persons to sign the Address and the petitions on behalf of the people of Western Australia and proposes to include the representatives of all political parties. Clause 6 provides for the presentation of the Address to His Majesty through the ordinary official channels, which are prescribed and defined by the Imperial authorities and cannot be departed from. Sub-clause 2 of Clause 6 deals with the manner of the presentation of the petition to the House of Lords and House of Commons and must necessarily be in accordance with the rules or requirements of the parliamentary authorities in England and cannot be prescribed by this House.

The ordinary practice of the British Parliament is that public petitions can only be presented to either House by a member of such House. If on presentation it is "received" by the House it will then be laid on the Table of the House until, by a resolution, the petition is referred to the Standing Committee on Petitions of the House for consideration, examination and report. With the exception of the Corporation of London and Dublin, no person whomsoever has any right to appear in person at the Bar of the House to present a public petition, although either House can concede this special privilege to any person by a resolution of the House. Upon being informed of the procedure, the Government, having regard to the seriousness and importance of the matter, then instructed the Agent General to use all proper means to procure in the British Parliament, the granting by each House of the special privilege to enable the petitions to be made in person at the Bar of each House by some duly authorised person on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

The Agent General has been conducting negotiations to that end with the Parliamentary authorities in England but finality has not yet been reached. Sub-clause 2 is therefore framed in such language as will cover any manner of presentation which may be approved by the British Parliament. Sub-clause 3 of Clause 6 authorises the Treasurer to appoint four persons as a delegation, to

present or cause to be presented, the petitions in accordance with the decision of the British Parliament. The Government are of the opinion that the delegation to be appointed should comprise persons to be sent from this State and in addition, the Agent General. It is necessary also that the delegation should be strongly representative, as in the first place there is more likelihood that the British Parliament will permit the delegation to present the petition at the Bar of the House, and secondly, in order to impress upon the members of the British Parliament and the British people, as a whole, the seriousness and constitutional importance of the matter. The Government will give careful consideration to these two important aspects when selecting the personnel of the delegation.

Another important matter that must be taken into consideration, is the fact that the delegation must also include some person or persons competent to handle the Case when it goes before the Committee on Petitions for consideration and examination as that Committee has all the powers of a Royal Commission; it can summon witnesses and take evidence on oath. The deliberations of the Committee will undoubtedly take a considerable time and all the official reports, statistics, etc., referred to or quoted will have to be made available to and be placed before the Committee as evidence. Arrangements have already been made for the collection and arrangement of all the evidence. It will be obvious that the necessary and competent person to conduct this part of the business in England will have to remain for some time, but once the petitions have been presented the remainder of the delegation can return to Western Australia.

The Government are of the opinion that two competent persons on the delegation should remain in England. The matter of remuneration and allowances is one that cannot be satisfactorily fixed in this Bill, but must be left to the discretion of the Treasurer.

Clause 7 gives the persons authorised to present the applications the necessary authority to transact matters in connection with the Case. Failure to confer the necessary authority to enable the members to meet anything unforeseen, which must inevitably arise, may cause endless trouble, delay and expense, and so long as the powers and authorities conferred are limited to the doing of things necessary to ensure that the

Petitions may be duly presented and considered, the delegates cannot in any way commit the State or the Government to any obligation, but may possibly mean the avoidance of delays and expense.

As the delegation whilst in England will also be compelled to incur certain expenses in the employment of stenographers, typists, etc., and as it would be inconvenient and vexatious to have to seek approval for every item of expenditure before it is incurred, provision is made to enable the delegates to incur expenditure up to an aggregate amount of £100. If it is desired to exceed that amount it will be necessary in every case for them to obtain the prior consent of the Treasurer.

Clause 8 provides for the necessary appropriations from Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet all the expenditure which will include expenses in connection with the preparation, completion and presentation of the Address and the petitions and the completion and publication of the Case for Secession, and also allowances, expenses and remuneration to any person for services rendered, as approved by the Treasurer.

The First Schedule contains the forms of the opening addresses of the Address to His Majesty and the petitions to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament. These forms are, generally speaking, established forms and therefore should stand as printed. The Second Schedule contains the subject matter to be embodied in the Address to His Majesty and the Petitions to the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and as I stated before, except in case of obvious necessity, should not be altered.

There are some members of this House who are firmly wedded to the preservation of the Federal bond. In considering the Bill they should realise that their duty is a simple one, and that its performance does not involve inconsistency of principle on their part. The people of Western Australia have, in a most emphatic manner, expressed a wish, by referendum, to withdraw from the Federation, and it seems to me that the only way satisfactorily to give effect to that wish is to do what the electors were told would be done if the vote were in favour of Secession. The electors were not left in doubt on that

point. In the Press, and from almost every public platform, the assurance was given that if the Secession vote were carried, His Majesty the King would be addressed and the Imperial Parliament would be petitioned to permit Western Australia to withdraw from the Federation.

I do not set myself up as a model of political propriety, but 34 years ago I was faced with a somewhat similar delicate situation in connection with the Commonwealth Enabling Bill, and I still feel, after that long lapse of time, that what I did then was the right and proper thing to do in the circumstances.

I had been summoned by a joint select committee of both Houses to give evidence on the Bill. In my evidence I attacked many features of the measure, but when it came to the question of the Bill to the people I supported the referendum without, in my opinion, any loss of principle. It was on the occasion of my first speech in the Legislative Council, on the 23rd May, 1900. A few sentences will convey an idea of the stand I took. I said:—

It appears to me the question we are called on to consider is not whether it is advisable for this colony to enter Federation or whether it would be injudicious to do so. If that were the subject of debate I should certainly proclaim myself as opposed to Federation under the Commonwealth Bill, because I consider the measure bristles with dangers to the progress and prosperity of the colony. We are, however, called on to decide no such question. What we have to discuss is whether we shall allow the people of this colony to exercise the franchise on this question, or whether we shall attempt to rob them of their undoubted birthright.

And at a later stage I said:—

The people may approve of the Bill if it be remitted to them, and the result, as I said before, may be disastrous; but far better our material interests should suffer than we should deal a blow at political freedom. We can only strive to deprive these people of their rights; we could not succeed for any length of time. This House, if it attempted to restrict the liberties of the people in dealing with this question, would soon pave the way to its own inglorious extinction.

Later, when the Bill was before the people, I spoke and wrote against it, and on polling day voted against it, because I felt that a number of its provisions when put into operation would have an injurious effect on the interests of Western Australia. "Jump Jim Crow!" some individuals said—that is, some

individuals whose intellects were too narrow to grasp the fact that the principle involved in each case was entirely different. Whatever may be the attitude of those who opposed the Referendum Bill when it was before the House in 1932, there is no justification for opposition from any other quarter. Those who voted for the Bill in the first place or who acquiesced in it by their silence, have no decent alternative now, so far as I can see, but to do what the great majority of the electors who voted for Secession expect them to do, and what the documents covered by this Bill are intended to represent. There may of course be differences of opinion as to the Case which accompanies the Bill. It would be astonishing indeed if the product of any human brain or of a dozen human brains, even if trained to the highest degree of perfection and working in unison, could please everybody who examined the result of their labours. And here we have a volume of 480 pages, dealing with a controversial subject and open to the censorship of friend and foe alike.

"Oh that mine adversary would write a book!" These words, taken from their context, with injustice to Job, are frequently used to warn budding authors of the unseen dangers that lurk in their path. Nowadays the most a would-be novelist or poet has to fear is that his productions, instead of getting a notice, good or bad, in the Press, will find a place among the litter that goes to the rubbish tip. It is different when politics are the theme. Even the weakest effusion which appears in print, provided it has a party bias, provokes a reply of some sort and very often of similar futility. When the objective is one of great importance, when the writer shows skill in preparing the ground for battle, when the ability he exercises in arranging his fortifications threatens to bring many recruits to his side, then an indirect tribute is paid to him: all the big literary guns among the opposing forces are brought into action, and an attempt is made to demolish the structure which he has erected.

The Case prepared by the secession committee, though a matter of grave public concern, has so far enjoyed a singular immunity from attack. Nor has it been treated with the contempt that silence betokens. It has been commented upon by the leading newspapers of the State, and not one has thought fit to criticise it adversely. No matter what their views may be on the ques-

tion at issue, all appear to be in accord that the committee appointed have done their work with thoroughness. The Press have viewed the Case from the proper angle. They have not said, "This should have been put in, and that should have been left out, an amendment is required here, and another there." They have taken the broad view. They have recognised the fact that the men handling the question were well qualified for the task they had undertaken, that the greater part of the volume consists of facts and figures drawn from official documents whose accuracy cannot be controverted, that the grievances ventilated have been the basis of claims made by the State for several years past, and that the fair thing to do, the commonsense thing to do, was to judge the committee's work in the bulk, not in parts, and so avoid a method of forming a judgment which would lead to confusion unless by a miracle all the critics were wise and could think alike and impress the whole community with a sense of their wisdom.

There must be some members who disagree with parts of the Case and parts of the Second Schedule. There are a number of Federalists in the House who, if the Bill and the Case were submitted for consideration without the backing of a referendum, would fight them tooth and nail. It should be remembered that the Case and the Second Schedule to the Bill represent what the committee consider to be the views of those who supported Secession when the referendum was taken. They do not represent the views, and are not intended to represent the views of those who proved to be in the minority. All we are asked to do is to see that the petition, the addresses and the Case of the victorious side go before the proper authorities. It should be borne in mind also that the Case for Secession as prepared by the committee will not be accepted as evidence. The Crown Solicitor advises me that it is a document more in the nature of a statement of claim or of a counsel's brief, and that it must be supported by evidence before the Committee on Petitions, who have power to summon witnesses and take evidence on oath.

If we tamper with the documents—in other words with the statement of claim—we may seriously interfere with the plans of the committee and perhaps hinder them from submitting evidence which they may regard as of the first importance. Furthermore, it would, if I have analysed the position cor-

rectly, make the Case the Case of this House and not the Case of the committee which endeavoured to voice the views of the secessionists. That would create a situation unfair to those members whose support of the Bill is dictated solely by a desire to give effect to the will of the people.

I hope the Bill will have a speedy passage through this Chamber. Nothing can be gained by amending it, unless some serious defect be discovered in its provisions, some defect that has escaped the notice of the parliamentary draftsman. If any of us were to submit amendments to it or to any of the accompanying documents, altering their character, we should find that our ideas of what was right and what was wrong would be just as provocative of criticism as anything now in the Bill or in the papers I have laid before the House. The best way, indeed the only safe way, is to accept the Bill as prepared by the Crown Solicitor, and the Case as prepared by the committee appointed by Parliament. There is a danger, a great danger, that if any other course be followed, we shall have lengthy discussions of a highly controversial nature, with unsatisfactory endings, and we shall lose sight of the fact that our duty, apart from our individual opinions, is merely to provide the machinery whereby the expressed will of the electors shall be made known to His Majesty the King and the Imperial Parliament by the most effective means, and in keeping with the pledges given when the verdict of the electors was sought during the general elections last year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.30]: I had hoped before rising to my feet to have heard some remarks that would have had a bearing on the views of the minority in this case. We have listened to the Chief Secretary, who put forward the case for the majority, but I had hoped to hear some remarks concerning the views held by the minority. Unfortunately that has not been so. I agree with most of the contentions that have been advanced by the Leader of the House as to the petitions, etc., and I intend to support the second reading. I feel that a few remarks from me will relieve me from the charge of apparent inconsistency. The Chief Secretary referred also to this point of view. I feel I must express myself somewhat on the lines that the

Leader of the House suggested some of us would be feeling. It is well known that I have never favoured secession, and do not favour it now. My view is that the majority vote on the question of secession requires me to assist the secessionists in the presentation of the petitions. I do not propose, therefore, to make any attempt to amend the Bill, or to support any amendment that is brought down. I have not changed my views on this subject. I reserve to myself the right to join with others in protesting to His Majesty the King and the British Parliament against the dismemberment of the Commonwealth, which is the object of the majority who voted on the referendum. I am looking upon the vote for secession and the presentation of the petitions as two separate acts. The referendum vote answers the query as to whether the individual favoured secession from the Commonwealth. On the other hand, the presentation of an Address to His Majesty and of petitions to the British Parliament are separate acts fraught with the graver issue of dismemberment. If the referendum vote had a significance for Western Australia only, as a domestic matter, I would be with it a full 100 per cent. But the intention, as revealed to us, goes much further. It affects the whole of the people of the Commonwealth as Australians. We know that 70,000 Western Australians voiced their disapproval, and as one of the 70,000 I feel that when the petitions are being presented, the voice of the minority should be heard. When one weighs up the fact that the minority voice consists of 70,000 people in 200,000, one must agree that the tribunal to which the Case is being referred should have placed before it the views of those 70,000 persons. The Leader of the House has not given us any indication of what will be done with respect to the voice of the minority being heard. To me the petitions carry the matter a step further than the vote for secession, particularly in view of the fact that His Majesty the King and the British Parliament are being approached as a tribunal, and as the voice of the 70,000 Australians in question is not to be heard. One of the reasons why I am addressing the House to-day is to comment upon the apparent discourtesy of the Premier in failing to receive a deputation which desired to lay the minority case before him. I am satisfied that the petitions will fail on the ground of our having already been granted full rights of nationhood, and secession becoming a domestic matter. I am

also satisfied that they must fail because Western Australia cannot make out a case against the Commonwealth for special legislation. The Federal and State statistics prove that legislation passed by the Commonwealth Government has not had a detrimental effect upon the growth of population in Western Australia, or upon its secondary industries. This can be seen by a review of the statistics on population based on the period that has passed since Federation began. In 1903 the population of Western Australia was 226,995, and in 1932 it was 421,609, an increase of 86 per cent.

Hon. A. Thomson: It might have been 800,000 if Western Australia had not been in the Federation.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Let me now turn to the statistics dealing with the hands employed in factories. It is of no use to suppose a thing. The statistics prove that Western Australia has advanced in this respect under Federation, and that the population has increased at a greater rate than is noticeable in any other State of the Commonwealth. The argument advanced by Mr. Thomson is beyond the bounds of reason.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Are you suggesting our population is what it is because of Federation?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I want to show the number of hands employed in our factories. It has been held that the State has been kept back by reason of the competition from the Eastern States against our industries. In 1900, when Federation first began, there were 11,166 hands employed in our factories. In 1930 the number had increased to 20,374, an increase of 82½ per cent., and in 1932, after the effect of the slump had been felt, the number of hands employed in our factories was 14,227, an increase of 27½ per cent. compared with 1900. The "Quarterly Statistical Abstract" issued by the Government Statistician for the quarter ended 31st March last shows that we are gradually getting back to the position that existed in 1930. This publication says—

Index numbers represent the trend of employment in factories and works, compiled on the basis of monthly returns specially collected from establishments which furnish approximately 35 per cent. of the total employment in secondary industries. The annual mean employment for the year 1929-30 has been taken as a base equalling 100. The index number for 1930-31 fell to 77.

I would quote from the table that is given on page 36 of the publication, and will deal with the first three months of the years 1932, 1933, and 1934. In 1932 the figure for January was 65, for February 68, and March, 72. In 1933 the figure for January was 82, for February 83, and March 83. In 1934 the figure for January was 89, for February 90, and March 93.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Those are all sustenance people.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I am showing the number of hands employed in our factories. The figures indicate that, in spite of all the disabilities that are claimed to lie at the door of Federation, our secondary industries also have developed. They are now moving out of the slump, and regaining normal conditions. Let me now take the census period for all the States of the Commonwealth from 1921 to 1932. In the case of Western Australia the population increased from 332,732 to 438,948, an increase of 31 per cent.; Queensland increased from 755,972 to 947,789, an increase of 25 per cent.; New South Wales increased from 2,100,371 to 2,601,104, an increase of 23 per cent.; Victoria increased from 1,531,280 to 1,820,360, an increase of 18 per cent.; South Australia increased from 495,160 to 580,987, an increase of 17 per cent.; and Tasmania increased from 213,780 to 227,605, an increase of 6 per cent. Over the period of 12 years Western Australia has advanced in population in greater ratio than any other State of the Commonwealth. It can truthfully be said that Federation has not been the detriment to the advancement of Western Australia that has been asserted.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It shows that the dry rot has affected the other States as well as ourselves.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The figures I have quoted must confound all critics, who claim that Federation has been a blight and a retarding influence upon Western Australia's development. That has been the burden of the song throughout the secession movement. The Government Statistician also reveals the fact that over the 10 years between 1921 and 1931 the manufacturing establishments within the Commonwealth increased from 17,113 to 21,751, an increase of 27.10 per cent. Western Australia's manufacturing establishments in-

creased in the same period from 1,063 to 1,455, an increase of 36.88 per cent. Surely further evidence that Federation has not retarded the development of this State, as has been said, cannot be required. If we take the number of employees engaged in factories over the period of Federation, we find the same refutation of the oft-repeated statement, a statement that is thus proved to be baseless. The point the primary producer must bear in mind is that the home market is always his soundest and best market. Never must the development of the home market be neglected in any State or country.

Hon. A. Thomson: We have a long way to go to catch up to the Eastern States in the matter of the home market.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I have already quoted the figures with regard to our secondary industries for the years 1900, 1930 and 1932. I am at one with the secessionists in agreeing that the cost of Federation requires to be curbed, and that special attention should be given to those customs duties that affect the pastoral and agricultural industries. Secession, however, will not bring about what is needed to meet that situation. Thank God we shall never get secession.

Hon. W. J. Mann: You are referring to amelioration.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The amelioration will come from another quarter altogether. The same remarks apply equally to the State's expenditure, especially the loan expenditure. It is appalling to realise that practically half of our revenue goes in paying our interest bill. If the borrowed money were all engaged in reproductive work we could take the position calmly, but a little research will enable anyone to grasp the fact that a large portion of the money is frozen. I ask members to carry their minds back to the last session, when the representatives of the primary producers in this House spoke in favour of a reduction in the cost of production, and yet they spoke in support of a loan that was going to increase the interest bill of the people and burden also the cost of the development of our primary industries. Western Australia's borrowing period is of a much shorter duration than that of any other State in the Commonwealth, because of its activity in public works. And yet we find

that the per capita indebtedness of this State is about double that of Victoria, and exceeds that of any other single State in the Commonwealth. Against that we have a per capita taxation lighter than that of any other State. Surely these facts disclose that the disabilities that we are all charging at the door of Federation are groundless, and disprove the charge. They should cause us to turn to the better management of our own affairs, and to endeavour to correct them here as well as in the Federal sphere. If this were done, it would be found there would be no occasion for a petition to England to secure for us relief from the yoke of Federation, that we could work in harmony with all the States and would secure for Australia the future development it is natural for this country to follow. I do not desire to deal with any portion of the Case, but wish to assist the Minister to the end that the Case may be passed from this House to the Imperial Parliament. I thought, however, it would only be right that I should not allow this occasion to pass without expressing my views with regard to the minority.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Elliott, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 22nd May, 1934.

	PAGE
Bill: Constitution Acts Amendment (Temporary),	
Standing Orders suspension, all stages ...	316
Adjournment, special	326

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

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (TEMPORARY).

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [4.33]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to permit of the in-

troduction and the passing through all its stages of the Constitution Acts Amendment (Temporary) Bill at this sitting.

HON W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [4.34]: Surely we should have some knowledge of what the Bill contains. It is not customary to ask the House to suspend the Standing Orders without having a knowledge of the subject matter to be discussed. I have no idea of what it is. Surely we should be informed of the nature of the Bill, and its urgency.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn—in reply) [4.35]: The Title of the Bill discloses that information. Also, if the Standing Orders are suspended and the Bill is introduced, it will become the property of the House.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: This is a most extraordinary procedure, and I enter my protest against it.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is a dissentient voice. This being a Bill for an amendment of the Constitution, it requires an absolute majority, and so a division must be taken.

Division taken, all members present, with an exception, assembling to the right of the Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: There was only one voice opposed to the motion, and I have now satisfied myself that an absolute majority is voting with the ayes. Therefore, there is no occasion to proceed any farther with the division, and I declare the question carried.

First Reading.

On motions by the Minister for Police, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR POLICE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [4.38] in moving the second reading said: It is desirable that I should recount the circumstances that have rendered the Bill necessary. When Parliament passed the Lotteries (Control) Act in 1932, Mr. Clydesdale, the present chairman of the Lotteries Commission, was assured by the Government, and also independently, that notwithstanding that he was a member of Parliament, he could accept the position