

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 23rd September, 1964

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### HOUSING AT HAZELMERE

#### *Blocks, Houses Built, and Future Programme*

- Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:
  - (1) How many blocks are held by the State Housing Commission at Hazelmere?
  - (2) How many houses have been built at Hazelmere by the State Housing Commission?
  - (3) Are any houses likely to be built in the near future?
  - (4) If not, why not?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Four scattered half-acre blocks.
- (2) Two war service homes.
- (3) Yes, after subdivision.
- (4) Answered by (3).

### FAUNA PROTECTION

#### *Future Plans and Existing Organisations*

- Mr. BRADY asked the Chief Secretary:
    - (1) Are any plans in existence for protecting the State's fauna?
    - (2) Is it intended to arrange a national park for fauna similar to Kruger Park in South Africa?
    - (3) What organisations (if any) are operating in Western Australia to protect the State's natural fauna?
- Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:
- (1) Yes. By virtue of the provisions of the Fauna Protection Act, 1950-1954.
  - (2) No. Western Australian conditions require a modified approach.
  - (3) The Fauna Protection Act is administered by the Fisheries Department. The Fauna Protection Advisory Committee, also, has certain statutory, as well as advisory responsibilities.

**ALMA STREET SCHOOL, FREMANTLE***Condition of Basketball Area*

3. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Works:

Relevant to the reply to my question 6 of Thursday, the 17th September, 1964, that architects Brand, Ferguson and Solarski and Consolidated Constructions were responsible for installation of the basketball area at Alma Street State School, Fremantle—

- (1) Is he aware that during the recent rain puddles of water lodged in the depressions therein?
- (2) That immediately prior to inspection of the completed job two contractor employees were noticed sweeping water from the depressions and off the area?
- (3) That subsequent asphalt filling has been attempted?
- (4) That this asphalt on a recent warm day was being "walked" into the school accommodation on the pupils' feet?
- (5) Is he further aware that Public Works Department architects insist and Public Works Department employees ensure proper levels and materials are used to obtain proper drainage of playing fields and other areas in school grounds?

*Use of P.W.D. Labour*

- (6) If the answers to the above questions are in the affirmative, will he insist that Public Works Department labour is used in all future work of the type mentioned?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) to (3) Yes. The architects inspected the basketball area at the completion of the contract and noted the faults.

A semifinal certificate was issued on the understanding that the surface would have to be regraded at the end of the maintenance period. Difficulties were experienced with the site and it was considered that a better final finish would be obtained by re-topping in December, which is the end of the maintenance period.

Subsequently it was decided to do some patching as a temporary measure only.

- (4) No. If this is so, action will be taken to alleviate this disability until the resurfacing is done.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) No.

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE***Purpose, Meetings, and Amendments*

4. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Speaker:

- (1) What is the purpose of the Standing Orders Committee?
- (2) How many times per year has it met since he has been chairman?
- (3) What amendments or suggested amendments has it made to Standing Orders during this time?
- (4) What is the procedure to be adopted by a member of Parliament who requires to make a suggested amendment to Standing Orders?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) replied:

- (1) To provide machinery for effecting changes to Standing Orders. Standing Order 410 provides authority for the creation of this committee.
- (2) Never. The last time this committee met was in 1954 when Speaker Rodoreda was chairman.
- (3) See answer to (2).
- (4) Consult the Speaker.

**STATE SHIPPING SERVICE***Minimum Notice Required for Loading Cargo*

5. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) What is the minimum notice required by State ships for the loading of—
  - (a) freezer cargo;
  - (b) general cargo?
- (2) Does he consider the notice time excessive?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) Between two and four days before the vessel's departure.
- (b) (i) General consumer goods received through wharf transit shed—10 days, but could be less dependent on accessibility of storage space during loading operations for particular port of destination.  
Vessels are mostly loading for up to 10 ports.
- (ii) Building materials—up to one month but could be less as per (b) (i) above.
- (iii) Petrol products and other inflammables—By arrangement with shippers, depending on availability of the special storage space required for these commodities.

- (iv) Goods received through cargo terminus—Normally 24 hours, but under present congested conditions—48 hours.

Special consideration is always given to late orders of a special nature.

- (2) It is the considered opinion of the management that these periods are necessary under the present circumstances. The situation is continually under review.

### SCHOOL HOSTEL AT PORT HEDLAND

*Report by Mr. Duncan*

6. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has a report been made by a Mr. Duncan of the Country High School Hostels Authority on the school hostel situation at Port Hedland?
- (2) Did Mr. Duncan confer with the local shire prior to making his report?

*Tabling and Effect of Report*

- (3) Will he table the report?
- (4) What effect will the report have on hostel facilities being made available at Port Hedland?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) The report was made to the chairman of the Country High School Hostels Authority.
- (4) The report indicated that buildings would be available but that there were doubts about the number of potential boarders.

### NINE MILE, PORT HEDLAND

*Suitability for Farmlet Subdivision*

7. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Will he have a suitable agricultural officer make an inspection of the area at Port Hedland, known as the Nine Mile, situated on the town common, with a view to ascertaining its suitability for farmlet subdivision, for the purpose of poultry farming, pig raising, and market gardening?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (3) A report will be obtained as soon as possible regarding the agricultural possibilities of the area.

### VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE AT PORT HEDLAND

*Delay in Gazettal*

8. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the fact that a volunteer fire brigade has been formed at Port Hedland but is unable to function until gazetted, will he ascertain why the gazettal has been delayed, and take steps to expedite same?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Technical description is to hand from the Lands Department and the Fire Brigades Board is now arranging for gazettal of the Port Hedland fire district.

### HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES

*Maintenance, Repairs, and Supervision at Wittenoom*

9. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Who is responsible for the maintenance and repairs to the State homes at Wittenoom and what is the method of supervision?

*Agreement between Commission and Australian Blue Asbestos*

- (2) Will he table a copy of the housing agreement between the State Housing Commission and Australian Blue Asbestos?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Australian Blue Asbestos Ltd. under an agreement between the commission and the company. Periodical inspections are made by a commission supervisor.
- (2) A copy will be made available to the honourable member for his confidential perusal.

### AIR SERVICE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*Application by Trans Australia Airlines*

10. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier:

- (1) Will he ascertain if it is a fact that Trans Australia Airlines made approaches to the Department of Civil Aviation within the last two years for permission to operate an air service in Western Australia?
- (2) If such an approach was made and refused, will he make representations to the Minister for Civil Aviation and request that Trans Australia Airlines be allowed to operate in this State?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) I understand that such an approach was made last year.
- (2) and (3) The whole question of civil aviation will require close examination in the light of the announced intentions of the Commonwealth Government in respect to air navigation regulations.

### AIR ROUTES

#### *Passenger Fare Per Mile*

11. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Transport:

What is the passenger fare per mile for the following air routes:—

- (a) Perth-Adelaide;
- (b) Perth-Melbourne;
- (c) Perth-Sydney;
- (d) Sydney-Melbourne;
- (e) Adelaide-Melbourne;
- (f) Perth-Carnarvon;
- (g) Perth-Roebourne;
- (h) Perth-Port Hedland;
- (i) Perth-Wittenoom;
- (j) Perth-Derby;
- (k) Perth-Wyndham;
- (l) Perth-Darwin;
- (m) Sydney-Darwin?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (a) 6.1 pence (4.9 pence\*)
- (b) 6.2 pence (5.0 pence\*)
- (c) 6.5 pence (5.4 pence\*)
- (d) 6.6 pence (5.4 pence\*)
- (e) 6.4 pence (5.5 pence\*)
- (f) 7.3 pence
- (g) 6.0 pence
- (h) 6.9 pence
- (i) 8.1 pence
- (j) 6.2 pence
- (k) 6.1 pence
- (l) 6.1 pence
- (m) 7.5 pence (6.2 pence\*).

\* Tourist fare rate, available only on certain flights.

### HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES

#### *Building Programme for North-West Towns*

12. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

What is the building programme for State houses in the following towns for the current year:—

- (a) Port Hedland;
- (b) Roebourne;
- (c) Onslow;
- (d) Wittenoom;
- (e) Marble Bar?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (a) Seven commission houses—nine for other State Departments and two for a Commonwealth department.
- (b) No commission houses, but, subject to review, three for other State departments.
- (c) Two commission houses.
- (d) No commission houses—one for another department.
- (e) No commission houses, but subject to review, two for other State departments.

### BUILDING BLOCKS AT PORT HEDLAND

#### *Availability*

13. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) How many blocks are available for private building in Port Hedland and what are the lot numbers?
- (2) When will an auction be held for the sale of these blocks?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Six lots (Crown Land) are available for private building, being Lots 474 to 479 (inclusive).
- (2) An auction sale for the whole or any one of the lots is dependent upon inquiries received by the Lands Department.

### PACKED MEATS

#### *Expiry Date for Consumption*

14. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Health:

Would he have his department consider the advisability of promulgating a regulation requiring meats sold in small packs at food and grocery stores, etc., to be marked with a date indicating a deadline at the expiration of which such commodity is not to be sold to the public—similar to the practice adopted in respect of canned powdered milk?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Yes. Arrangements have already been made for this matter to be discussed with the Food Technology Association and the Local Government Association.

### GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AT KALGOORLIE

#### *Use of Vacated Premises*

15. Mr. EVANS asked the Premier:

- (1) Subsequent to the transfer of Kalgoorlie departmental offices to Maritana Building in Boulder Road, what is to become of the

vacated offices at the rear of the Hannan Street public buildings and adjacent to the Kalgoorlie Police Station yards?

- (2) Would he please consider making one of these offices available to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Apex Club for use as an administrative centre?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The existing timber and iron buildings will be demolished prior to the construction of the new police station and gaol.
- (2) Consideration will be given to the use by the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Apex Club of one of the buildings on a short-term lease.

### SWAN RIVER

#### *Responsibility for Reclamation*

16. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) In connection with the carrying out of the Kwinana Freeway project which commenced in August, 1957, and was completed in December, 1959, during which period 1,514,407 yards of spoil was dredged, what quantity of spoil was dredged subsequent to the assumption of office by the present Government?
- (2) Of the total of 42 acres of reclamation of the Swan River which the Freeway project involved, what area was reclaimed after the Hawke Government relinquished office?
- (3) Just as the responsibility for the total area of 42 acres of reclamation may fairly be placed upon the Hawke Government because the present Government was obliged to complete the Kwinana Freeway, should not the latter be held responsible for the reclamation of not less than 40 acres between Barrack Street and the Causeway if it proceeds with the plan for the Mitchell Freeway traffic interchange?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) 167,835 cubic yards.
- (2) As mentioned in my reply yesterday there is no record of the area of reclamation carried out, but it would not exceed two acres.
- (3) No. Reclamation for future road needs between the Causeway and Barrack Street will be in accordance with the Swan River Conservation Act, and be subject to approval of Parliament if the area is greater than 10 acres.

### FISH IN WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WATERS

#### *Weight of Catches*

17. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

What was the weight of fish caught in the following areas for the year 1962-63:—

- (a) Shark Bay;  
(b) Geraldton;  
(c) Fremantle;  
(d) Mandurah;  
(e) Busselton-Bunbury;  
(f) Albany?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

	Scale Fish lb.	Other (including Crustaceans) lb.	Total lb.
Shark Bay	2,348,000	910,000	3,258,000
Geraldton	160,000	11,938,000	12,098,000
Fremantle	713,000	9,258,000	9,971,000
Mandurah	920,000	152,000	1,472,000
Bunbury-Busselton	1,132,000	174,000	1,306,000
Albany	4,413,000	2,000	4,415,000

### MEXICAN POPPY

#### *Infestation of Gascoyne River Area*

18. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware of the large area on the Gascoyne River that has become infested with Mexican Poppy?
- (2) What steps, if any, is his department taking to eradicate this noxious weed?
- (3) If no action is being taken, is it considered that this weed will not become a pest on the Gascoyne River?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Pastoralists are being encouraged to control it on their holdings, but when it occurs over extensive areas of pastoral land, eradication is difficult from both the practical and economical aspects. Some control measures in the plantation area have been organised by the department.
- (3) No. It already occurs in a number of places along the Gascoyne River and in other parts of the north-west.

### BINGO OR HOUSEY-HOUSEY

#### *Illegality*

19. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is he aware of the article appearing in *The West Australian* of the 22nd September, 1964, headed "Bingo Ousts Knitting"?
- (2) If so, can he advise if the game described as bingo is in reality similar in character to the game

known in this State as housey-house; and, if so, is the game of housey-housey illegal in this State?

- (3) If the game of bingo is the same as housey-housey and is illegal, will he undertake to have a close surveillance made of the matter, bearing in mind the recession in the textile trade in this State and Commonwealth?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The game known in England as bingo is believed to be a similar game to housey-housey. The playing of that game is unlawful in this State.
- (3) Housey-housey, in common with other gaming activities, is receiving constant attention by the members of the Police Force.

#### DECENTRALISATION POLICY OF GOVERNMENT

*Application to Supply of Bricks for T.A.B. Offices in Albany*

20. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is it the Government's policy to assist decentralised industry wherever possible?
- (2) If so, how does he reconcile his Government's action by the supplying of cream bricks from Midland Brick Works at a price of 43s. per 100 on site, as against cream bricks supplied by Albany Brick Works at 24s. per 100 on site, for the erection of Totalisator Agency Board offices, Albany Highway, Albany?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The matter is being examined as it is Government policy to make maximum use of suitable local materials.

Present information is to the effect that the Albany office was built by an Albany builder and as much Albany labour and materials as possible used in its construction.

The architects did not consider the quality of local bricks met with the specifications required. This aspect will be followed up by the Department of Industrial Development, as it is Government policy to try to help local manufacturers to comply with necessary standards and meet required specifications, if such specifications are reasonable.

#### DRUG STILVOESTROL

*Banning*

21. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that the New South Wales Agriculture Department has banned the use of the drug Stilvoestrol—used to de-sex and promote growth in chickens—on the ground that it may cause cancer in humans?
- (2) Will he check to ascertain whether this drug is used by poultry growers in this State; and, if so, ensure that its continued use is banned immediately?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes, the ban is Australia-wide.
- (2) In this State the ban became effective as from the 1st July, 1963, and supplies of the drug are not now obtainable except on veterinary or medical prescription for therapeutic purposes only.

#### COMMONWEALTH BURSARIES: ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

*Inclusion of Technical Drawing*

22. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) In view of the fact that technical drawing was not included in the 1964 list of subjects for assessing students' results for Commonwealth scholarships, but has been included in the 1965 list, is it not a fact that some students could have been prejudiced thereby?
- (2) Why was the subject not included in the 1964 list?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) No. Students intending to proceed to the Leaving Certificate would normally be sitting for the Junior examination in eight subjects.

The Commonwealth scholarships will be awarded on passes in English and five other subjects from a list of 28 subjects. Students doing technical drawing as one of their subjects will still have seven other subjects that may be used for assessing marks.

- (2) The decision as to what subjects should be included for purposes of assessing students' results for Commonwealth scholarships was made by a committee representing Government schools, non-Government schools, and the Public Examinations Board. When making the decision for 1964 the committee decided to exclude all accredited subjects (including technical drawing) since marks were needed in order to obtain aggregate scores.

Students who were doing internal courses for accredited subjects would have been prejudiced if, in the last few months of their course, they had been forced to change to an external syllabus in order to obtain marks.

23. *This question was postponed.*

### WATER RATING PROPOSALS

#### *Cost to Government: Effect of Revaluations*

24. Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) When he introduced the Bill to amend the Country Areas Water Supply Act, he said that the new water proposals would cost the Government an extra £31,000 a year. Is not this statement only correct provided net annual valuations remain as they are at present?
- (2) Assuming—
  - (a) that those country towns that have not been revalued for three years or more were now revalued, and
  - (b) valuation upgrading occurred on a scale comparable with the increases which have taken place in the towns of Merredin, Kellerberrin, Cunderdin, and Narrogin following recent revaluations what would the new rating proposals then cost the Government?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) and (b) Nil. However, information in the hands of the department indicates that future revaluations will not be increased in the same proportion as was the case in the towns quoted.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### STATE ENGINEERING WORKS

##### *Transfer of Machines to Private Enterprise*

1. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What machinery is to be taken away from the State Engineering Works and made available for use by a private firm?
- (2) What is the name of the firm which is to benefit?
- (3) What is the reason for the Government's action?
- (4) What conditions are to be applied to the transfer of State assets?

- (5) Is it intended to apply this policy of reducing the capacity of the State Engineering Works progressively?
- (6) Is it the ultimate objective of the Government so to depreciate the value of the works as to permit of the disposal of the undertaking at a ridiculously low figure?

Mr. WILD replied:

I would like to thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for giving me prior notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows:—

- (1) to (4) The Minister for Industrial Development has today announced the conclusion of negotiations for the establishment of a modern forging industry in Western Australia and has given details of the project.

A very satisfactory arrangement has been made to incorporate the old forging plant of the State Engineering Works with the new and modern plant to be established immediately west of Cresco Fertiliser Works.

The other participants are Daniel Doncaster and Sons Ltd. of Sheffield, England and Hadfields (W.A.) 1934 Ltd.

The Government will participate in the new venture by receiving fully paid shares for the agreed value of the plant and land. These shares will carry full voting rights and the Government will also have the right to appoint a director.

- (5) and (6) No. The action being taken in this case is considered to be in the interest of the State. Satisfactory arrangements have been made in respect of the three tradesmen employees who may be affected.

#### INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

##### *Mr. Commissioner Kelly's Illness*

2. Mr. DAVIES: Industrial Commissioner Kelly was unable to continue to sit on the Industrial Commission for a period from the 10th August, 1964. Can the Minister for Labour inform the House for what period Mr. Commissioner Kelly was ill?

Mr. WILD: I would like to thank the honourable members for giving me prior notice of this question.

Mr. Commissioner Kelly was absent from the Arbitration Court from and including Monday, the 10th August until Monday, the 17th August, on which date he resumed duty.

## **BILLS (4): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING**

1. Used Car Dealers Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Craig (Minister for Police), and read a first time.
2. Rights in Water and Irrigation Act Amendment Bill.
3. Water Boards Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Wild (Minister for Water Supplies), and read a first time.
4. Long Service Leave Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney, and read a first time.

## **BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Bovell (Minister for Lands), and transmitted to the Council.

## **CLEAN AIR BILL**

### *Report*

Report of Committee adopted.

## **GOLDMINING INDUSTRY: STABILISATION AND EXPANSION**

### *Appointment of Parliamentary Committee: Motion*

**MR. BURT** (Murchison) [4.53 p.m.]: I move—

That in view of the refusal of the International Monetary Fund at its meeting in Tokyo last week, to agree to any increase in the world price of gold, and bearing in mind the tremendous importance of the gold mining industry to Western Australia and the difficulties which the industry is facing due to rising costs of production, an all-Party Parliamentary Committee be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

In Tokyo, on the 9th September, which was two weeks ago today, the International Monetary Fund disallowed a move made by a number of member countries to increase the price of gold from 35 dollars per fine ounce, which has been in existence since 1934. Australia's case was handled by the Federal Treasurer, Mr.

Harold Holt. Naturally the countries which were most concerned were those which produce gold; namely, South Africa, Canada, Ghana, Rhodesia, the Philippines, and others.

In Mr. Holt's report on the meeting he had these rather disturbing things to say—and I quote from a cable which he sent from Tokyo on the 9th September—

The fund requires each of us to supply a substantial proportion of its assets in gold. Yet in our studies of the problem of international liquidity and possible means of ensuring that it will increase sufficiently in the years ahead, it seems to be assumed far too readily that the supply of gold will prove adequate to needs and that the price of this metal, fixed at dollars 35 to the ounce 30 years ago, should be held at that value. There has been no discussion whether steps should be taken to increase the supply of the metal that provides the foundation, as well as the greater part of international liquidity at present.

On page 102 of the fund report for 1964 there is a table of the value of world gold production, gravely disturbing in its implications. It illustrates the dramatic decline in gold production in almost every country of the world since 1940. If we leave South African production out of the table, we find that the value of free world production of gold has slumped from U.S. dollars 772 million in 1940 to U.S. dollars 399 million in 1963. Some may take comfort from the fact that the total value of free world production has moved from dollars 1,264 million in 1940 to dollars 1,360 million in 1963. An increase of this dimension in the production value of any commodity would be regarded as modest enough over an interval of 23 years, but detailed examination reveals that, with the notable exception of South Africa, whose value of production increased spectacularly over that period from dollars 492 million to dollars 961 million, of the remaining ten major producing countries listed, only one, Ghana, has shown an increase, and this only a marginal movement from dollars 31 million to dollars 32 million. The combined value of all the others has shown a sharp decrease. Of the countries not listed individually but grouped under the heading "Other," the value of production has declined from dollars 157 million to dollars 65 million.

We would have been discussing this question of international liquidity much earlier if gold reserves had not been propped up by South African production, which has more than doubled in value over the past ten years. But even in relation to that



source of supply, the fund report has a sombre comment. It says on p. 103 that "South African production will have nearly reached its peak in 1964 or 1965 thereafter it may level off for a few years, and subsequently decline."

Australia produces about 2½ per cent. of the world's gold, and most of it is mined in this State. Now let us have a look at what the goldmining industry has meant to Western Australia, even if we leave out the tremendous debt which we all owe to this industry, firstly, for putting the State on its economic feet towards the end of the last century; and secondly, for rescuing the State from the depths of the depression in the early 1930s, when the rest of the Commonwealth was practically economically inert. I hope that fact will never be forgotten. If we ever have another depression—and naturally we trust we never will—and the goldmining industry is not with us, I do not know what will happen to the economy of this State.

To get down to present facts, the industry produces £1,000,000-worth of gold every month, year in and year out; and nearly all of that is exported. To do this nearly 5,000 men are directly employed. How many men in addition to that number who would indirectly owe their employment to the goldmining industry I could not say, but the number must run into some hundreds. This is because no industry makes such an impact on other industries in the metropolitan area and elsewhere as does the goldmining industry.

When a new mine is brought into production the effect is felt immediately by foundries, machine shops, the timber industry, the rubber industry, the chemical industry, and so on; and, without any delay, money is available which creates direct employment for large numbers of men throughout the metropolitan area of the State. So if the evil day should ever come when the industry completely folded up it would be a sad story indeed for numerous men living throughout the suburbs of Western Australia.

Apart from that, of course, there is an extremely solid community of about 20,000 souls directly dependent on the goldmining industry in Kalgoorlie and Boulder. Unfortunately there are very few other towns in the State that owe their existence to the industry; in fact, only the towns of Mt. Magnet and Norseman are really in existence because of the goldmining industry. Other towns which boomed in the early days, and again in the 1930s have gone.

Most of the mines that have closed since the war in the more remote towns have done so because of the diminution of their ore bodies. This is by no means the case on the Golden Mile where the ore reserves are as good as, if not better than, they were before. This is the last bulwark of the goldmining industry; and

unless something is done, and done quickly, even Kalgoorlie is faced with extinction because of rising costs which cannot be passed on to the price of the metal produced.

Practically every other industry in existence can pass on its rising costs, for whatever reason, to the product which it sells, but the goldmining industry must absorb its costs and battle it out by trying to invent cheaper methods of producing the metal.

So my purpose in proposing that an all-party committee be formed is to enable every avenue at its disposal to be thoroughly explored, so that the industry may not only be maintained but, if possible, expanded.

As members know, the Federal Government introduced legislation in 1954—the Goldmining Industry Assistance Act—which brought into being subsidies for certain goldmines. Briefly, the formula for determining the subsidy payable to large producers of ore on each ounce of fine gold produced amounted to three-quarters of the excess of the average cost of production per ounce over £13 10s., with a maximum rate of £3 5s. per ounce. That subsidy is still in existence. Small producers receive £2 8s. per ounce up to a total of 500 ounces per annum; and that subsidy is gradually reduced by 1d. per ounce to a total of 1,075 ounces that have been produced in one year, when the subsidy ceases altogether.

But several contingencies are written into this Act, and the most obstructive is that set out in section 12. This restricts the profit allowed a large producer to 10 per cent. per annum on his capital which is used by that producer to produce gold, if he is to receive the subsidy. This section has resulted in most of the major mines receiving no subsidy at all because their capital structure, which was formed in the early days, is taken at book value and is naturally very low indeed. They cannot qualify for any subsidy because, with a limited 10 per cent. on their capital this results in a very small figure indeed. Accordingly it is most essential that this Act should be liberalised so that those qualifying for assistance may participate on a more equitable basis.

The other Act introduced by the Federal Government was introduced as recently as 1962, and is called the Goldmines Development Assistance Act. That allows certain producers to receive a subsidy for work they carry out on development which might be in excess of the development which they undertook in a certain base year, with the maximum restriction of 4s. per ton of ore produced.

Those two Acts are the means by which the Federal Government assists the goldmining industry in Australia, Papua, and New Guinea. Honourable members must understand that when the importance of the industry is realised, together with its

effect on the nation's economy, remembering always that every ounce of gold produced can be immediately transformed to 35 United States dollars without any worry of stock-piling or a drop in price, it is obvious that the goldmining industry is not receiving the treatment it deserves.

The subsidy under the Goldmining Industry Assistance Act totalled last year £570,000. This was the amount paid to goldmines in Western Australia. Since the Goldmines Development Assistance Act came into being two years ago three different mining companies have received a total of £79,000. This is really chicken feed when we consider the subsidies received by other industries from the Federal Government.

During my speech on the Address-in-Reply some weeks ago, I said that the dairying industry in Australia receives nearly £14,000,000 every year. Although profits from goldmining are free from income tax, all those employed in the industry naturally have their taxation deducted from their wages; and in the year ended last June, Western Australian employees in the goldmining industry paid a total of £617,000 in income tax. So it can be seen that the amount received by the Taxation Department last financial year was well over the amount of subsidy paid out to the whole of the goldmining industry. That taxation was paid by the employees of eight different companies operating in this State, including the Sons of Gwalia, which closed at the end of last year.

Therefore the main purpose of the committee which I propose should be formed would be to strive by every possible means to obtain greater assistance for the goldmining industry from the Federal Government. It is well to know that both Acts I have mentioned expire in 1965; that is, next year. It is obvious, therefore, that early action must be taken to ensure their re-enactment on a far more realistic and equitable basis.

The Chamber of Mines will undoubtedly be sending a delegation to Canberra to discuss the re-enactment of the two assistance Acts; and this committee of course will support it to the hilt, and might indeed obtain a better hearing from the Federal Treasurer than would a private delegation.

Mr. Jamieson: From where did you get the idea of the committee? Was it from the *Kalgoorlie Miner*?

Mr. BURT: I got it from the Labor Party after they visited Kalgoorlie, but you were so long winded about moving it that I decided to go ahead.

Mr. Jamieson: I am glad you acknowledged it.

Mr. Graham: You would be far better stirring up Bob Menzies than making a speech here.

Mr. BURT: The whole purpose of this motion is to stir up the Federal Treasury.

Mr. Graham: The Liberal Party, both Federal and State need stirring up.

Mr. Brand: That's not what Mr. Whitlam said. He said somebody else wanted to be stirred up.

Mr. Graham: Who was that?

Mr. Brand: The Labor Party and the Leader there.

Mr. Graham: Your boys did the job yesterday.

Mr. BURT: While companies are engaged in searching for oil and minerals, very little exploration has been undertaken for gold in recent years. Admittedly, all discernible gold deposits have been developed, and if they are economic propositions they have been mined out. But there must be a great number of rich ore bodies that could be found which are at a sufficiently shallow depth, though not visible on the surface, to allow them to be economically mined at today's price of gold.

New prospecting techniques have been evolved together with the use of technical equipment which can locate sulphide ore bodies within drilling depth of the surface. The only mining company in Western Australia that has shown a keen interest in looking for more ore bodies has evolved a technique which it is putting into practice south of the Sons of Gwalia mine; and by using this type of electronic equipment it has discovered a sulphide ore body two miles south of the Sons of Gwalia mine; and it is in the process of drilling it. Whether it contains any gold only the drill will tell. That is the type of technical prospecting that has come into being all over the world.

At Mt. Isa, which is one of the greatest copper mines in the world, the main ore body was not apparent on the surface. The prospectors who discovered the Mt. Isa mine found a silver-lead ore body of not great dimensions, and after a great deal of difficulty this was floated and a company commenced the production of silver and lead from this particular ore body. It was only some years later when some lateral drilling or crosscutting was being done that they discovered the top of what has since turned out to be one of the greatest copper lodes in the world.

That was extremely good fortune, but it only goes to show that there must be a number of ore bodies which give no sign of their existence on the surface. Accordingly, highly technical prospecting can and should be done around most of the old goldmining towns of Western Australia which are now pretty near defunct. I refer to towns like Morgans, Lawlers, Sandstone, Wiluna, and others.

The Great Fingal mine at Day Dawn, which I consider has one of the most promising gold ore bodies—unfortunately

a little too deep for economic expansion today—is a case in point where scientific methods of deep drilling were successful. I must pay a compliment to two former Ministers for Mines who are now on the Opposition benches—and I refer to the member for Merredin-Yilgarn and the member for Boulder-Eyre—for having the courage to tackle the job of deep drilling the Great Fingal mine. It was a very successful operation, and it proved—at too great a depth to be developed today—that the Great Fingal ore body has repeated itself in values at depth and I hope one day we will again have a big producer on the site of what was once one of Australia's greatest gold-mines.

The State Government has made substantial advances to assist gold exploration by subsidising these drilling ventures on a pound for pound basis with interested companies, and by diamond drilling Crown lands. I do not consider this is sufficient, and a more vigorous approach must be made to encourage private companies to undertake prospecting for gold. The Geological Surveys Department—which I would like to say is very highly regarded throughout Australia—will, I hope, adopt more modern techniques in its prospecting investigations.

The word "prospecting" reminds us of the individual exploratory work done by the prospector in the past 70 years. He opened up the vast interior of Western Australia, and to him we owe a tremendous debt. Regrettably, the prospector is a member of a dying race, because he has discovered practically everything he can discover, and there is very little incentive given to induce him to leave the comforts of his home and go into the remote areas on what might well prove to be a costly and unrewarding experience.

The prospectors' allowance is still paid by the department, but few of the prospectors avail themselves of it. Suggestions have been made to offer prospectors an allowance equal to the basic wage, but I do not think that would encourage any genuine prospector to go out; it would probably lead only to abuse by those who want handouts for doing nothing.

There are still weekend prospectors in most mining towns. Those people are employed locally from Monday to Friday, and spend Saturdays and Sundays going into the bush to search for gold. Every encouragement should be given to them. In fact, the Mines Department has done a great deal towards this by providing portable compressor outfits, together with machines, etc.; and these are greatly appreciated by weekend prospectors in nearly all districts; but the most efficient type of prospecting undertaken today is the application of scientific methods by big mining companies, and it will be a

great day for Western Australia if a new prospect can be discovered within the not too distant future.

If this motion for the appointment of an all-party parliamentary committee is carried by this House I propose it should conduct whatever investigations it considers to be appropriate, to ensure that the goldmining industry is not only fully maintained at its existing level, but is also given every opportunity to expand.

To achieve that, I suggest the following terms of reference be adopted as a basis of inquiry:—

- (a) The effect of the Federal Government's subsidy on the goldmining industry and the consideration of a more realistic approach to the granting of subsidies, so that those who qualify may participate on an equitable basis; and
- (b) The encouragement by both the Federal and the State Governments of companies to pursue a vigorous policy of exploration for new gold ore bodies, with special consideration to modern prospecting techniques.

If this motion is carried I shall move a consequential motion that the proposed committee consist of six members, being one member from each party in both Houses.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Is there a seconder to the motion?

Mr. MOIR: Mr. Speaker,—

Mr. BOVELL: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! Is there a seconder to the motion?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I second the motion.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [5.21 p.m.]: I listened with great interest to the remarks—

#### *Point of Order*

Mr. BOVELL: On a point of order, I thought I had moved for the adjournment of the debate.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order! I called for a seconder to the motion, and the honourable member for Mt. Lawley seconded the motion. Then the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre got to his feet.

Mr. BOVELL: I think it is a most unusual practice to be adopted, in that the Government does not get the adjournment of the debate on a motion such as this.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): That is the normal procedure. In this House it has always been the practice, and I believe it is the practice in every other House of Parliament, for any member who catches the Speaker's eye to get the call. When the Minister did not rise again I

naturally gave the call to the honourable member who was on his feet—the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre.

Mr. BOVELL: I think, Mr. Speaker, that I should have been given the call, because you sat me down, and the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre was anxious to catch your eye. It was the object of the Government to have the debate on this motion adjourned.

Mr. TONKIN: Is the Minister in order in addressing you on this matter, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Every honourable member of this Chamber may rise on a point of order, but whether I sustain it is another matter. What the Minister for Lands has said is quite correct. I did sit him down, because I called for a seconder, as it is the normal practice to have a motion seconded before the debate can be adjourned. If a motion is not seconded it will lapse, and there will be no need to move for the adjournment of the debate.

The position is quite clear. The honourable member for Mt. Lawley seconded the motion, and the next honourable member I saw on his feet was the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre, and I gave him the call accordingly. In my experience that is the procedure which is followed by all Parliaments. It is unfortunate this has arisen, because I know it is the usual practice for the Government to get the adjournment of the debate on a motion such as this; but to do so the member of the Government must be on his feet.

Mr. TONKIN: In connection with this point of order, what Standing Order is being contravened?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I do not think there is any Standing Order involved. It is a point of procedure and usage. The honourable member for Boulder-Eyre may proceed.

#### *Debate (on motion) Resumed*

Mr. MOIR: I am rather surprised that the Minister for Lands raised the point of order, because the motion before us is a private member's motion. It calls for the appointment of an all-party committee. Surely that is not a question to be decided on the lines of the Government and the Opposition. I think the Minister desires to make everything a political issue. I sincerely trust that course will not be followed by the Minister's colleagues: to have this motion treated as a political issue. I can assure the House it will not be treated as a political issue by those on this side of the House.

I listened with interest to what the honourable member for Murchison had to say. In his outline of the goldmining industry he was very factual. I was also interested in his admission that he had

been inspired by the resolution which was carried by a Labor Caucus meeting at Kalgoorlie on the 15th August last. The resolution was to the effect that the meeting expressed its regret and disappointment at the failure of the recent Federal Budget to make worth-while assistance available to the goldmining industry; and that we should press in Parliament for the appointment of a committee of all interested parties to take a case to Canberra on the present state of the industry, by way of a deputation.

It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Evidently it appears that the honourable member for Murchison sees very much eye to eye with the Labor Party in this matter, as he has seen fit to move this motion. I cannot say I altogether compliment him, because in a way it looks as though he has taken the opportunity to jump ahead of the Labor Party on this line of thought.

In reply to his statement that he had been waiting for four weeks, I would remind him that the Labor Party did take action, through one of its members in another place who brought forward a motion that certain things be done in order that the position of the goldmining industry today would be presented at the meeting of the International Monetary Fund held recently in Tokyo. That motion was agreed to by the Government, and I understand that steps were taken accordingly.

Naturally when we have one line of action in progress we do not follow up with another line immediately. In this instance we allowed a little time to elapse, to ascertain the effectiveness of the action taken, and whether action would be taken on a governmental level to do something about the matter, with a view to impressing on the International Monetary Fund members the importance of increasing the price of gold. Unfortunately no success was achieved.

I agree with the motion before us up to a point, but I consider it to be too restrictive. It should be wider in its effect; and at a later stage I intend to move an amendment which I shall outline now. I consider that for the motion to be effective the proposed committee of inquiry should have represented on it nominees of the Chamber of Mines, which organisation is vitally concerned; and nominees of the unions, the members of which are engaged in the industry and are also vitally affected.

We have seen in recent days how vitally concerned are the workers engaged in that industry, because they have suffered a reduction in the remuneration that is paid for the work. They have suffered a reduction in one material respect.

Mr. Court: Did they not receive an increase overall?

Mr. MOIR: I shall deal with that when speaking to a subsequent motion.

Mr. Court: The net take-home pay went up. That is what matters.

Mr. Tonkin: It went up by 3s. 10d.

Mr. MOIR: I did not know the Minister for Industrial Development had Irish forebears. Evidently he has, because the people who are affected think it is an Irishman's rise!

Mr. Court: Will they not receive more money in their pay envelopes?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): That matter should be debated later on, and not on this motion.

Mr. MOIR: Like other people, I spent a large part of my working life in the mining industry in one way or another. Before I entered Parliament I was very closely connected with mining for many years. Over the years the mining industry has had cause for concern, because it has been confronted with many crises; but through generous assistance from Government sources it has been able to weather the storm.

It is that particular point to which I wish to refer. When one recalls the difficulties of the Big Bell mine, the mine at Bullfinch, and the Sons of Gwalia mine, one will realise that these mines were once flourishing concerns. They used to provide employment for large numbers of workers, and they maintained substantial country towns and centres which contained all the amenities that could reasonably be expected in outback areas. Indeed, they must have had quite an influence on Western Australia, if not on Australia as a whole. It is deplorable that those mines—and, indeed, some of those towns—have ceased to exist because it is no longer profitable to mine the gold.

It is true that some of those mines were assisted to a very big extent from State Government sources. Here I must state that I feel very proud of the party to which I belong because when it was in office it gave very substantial and generous assistance to those mines, thus enabling them to remain in operation for years longer than would have been possible, taking into consideration the true economic circumstances.

We know that the Bullfinch mine received very substantial assistance from the Hawke Labor Government. I think it was far in excess of £200,000. I remember that during my term of office I obtained an amount of £100,000 for that mine. The same applies to the Sons of Gwalia mine. I think the amount of money advanced by the Labor Government of the day was somewhere in the vicinity of £247,000. This was, of course, made up of various sums given to the mine from time to time to keep it in operation. In the case of the Sons of Gwalia mine, I believe that if

the Government now in office had given assistance on the same generous scale, the mine would have been operating today, and would be likely to operate for a good many years to come. However, that assistance was not forthcoming and the mine was allowed to cease operations.

Mr. Burt: Where would the gold come from?

Mr. Hawke: From the ground.

Mr. MOIR: Out of the ground, of course. That is where it would come from. If the honourable member for Murchison is trying to imply that there is no further gold in the ground, he should learn a little more about goldmining, because then he would know there is a lot of gold there. It does, of course, drop away in grade and is more costly to produce.

What we have to remember is that when a mine closes down, it is almost impossible to ever open it up again. While a mine is operating there is always the possibility that the grade may increase or advantage may be taken of new processes which are being developed all the time and which cut the cost of production, thus enabling the mine to carry on.

We know that great strides have been made in the goldmining industry, even in very recent times, to reduce costs. Those honourable members of this House who have been fortunate enough to see the operations of the Western Mining Corporation at Kalgoorlie would have seen how the old Hannans Reward mine has been rejuvenated, and it is now producing very substantial tonnages under the most economic system that has ever operated in this State.

The average rate of production of the mines which this company operates at Kalgoorlie is five tons per man per day. At this particular mine, with the new processes being used, the production is 50 tons per man per day, which is a rather staggering increase in production. It is true that the grade is something under 3 dwts. Many a mine in the past has had to close down when mining 3 dwt. ore because it was not economical; but this company will be operating a very handsome paying proposition—provided the grade is maintained at that figure—because of the new methods being employed.

I am not suggesting for a moment that the methods used in that mine could be applied to just any other type of mine. It is a mine with a very wide and fairly lengthy ore body, and it lends itself to the particular type of mining which is being carried out and to the particular type of machines being utilised, machines which could not be utilised in other types of mine. The type of mining being undertaken at this mine could have been undertaken at Big Bell and Wiluna. If those mines had been kept open they might today have been operating on a payable basis.

In regard to aid for the mining industry, it was very interesting to read the following subleader which appeared in *The West Australian* on Thursday, the 17th September, this year:—

#### Aiding The Gold Industry

Like its predecessors, the Tokyo meeting of the International Monetary Fund remained deaf to appeals for an increase in the fixed price of gold, which has been unchanged at 35 dollars an ounce since 1934.

The stubborn opposition led by the United States seems to mean indefinite deferment of the hopes of the producing countries that are struggling to sustain their gold industries against the increasing pressure of costs. Yet there is no evidence that the I.M.F. is seriously concerned at the problem created by the small increase in the supply of monetary gold compared with the expansion of international trade and payments.

If it delays a price rise until there is an acutely embarrassing scarcity of the metal it will be too late to save many existing mines. For Western Australia the only immediate alternative remedy is to convince the Commonwealth Government of the urgency of greater aid by way of subsidy.

With the livelihood of the big community on the Golden Mile at stake—

And this is important—

there should be no further delay in adopting the W.A. Parliamentary Labor Party's proposal for an all-party committee to examine the problems of the industry. There is no need, however, for the Commonwealth to wait for that.

If Treasurer Holt was so convinced of the need for a higher gold price when he argued the case in Tokyo, the Federal Government should now institute its own inquiry into the most effective and equitable forms that increased aid for the industry could take. There is a national interest in preventing its stagnation and creeping death.

I think that is a very good article indeed.

We all know that the mining industry itself has over the years taken steps to reduce costs and increase production. This has been achieved to a certain extent. The industry has received the co-operation of the workers in the industry, who have done everything possible to assist the goldmining companies to operate their mines more economically and successfully than has previously been possible. I think the results of such co-operation are quite apparent when we look at the figures.

However, there is only so much and no more that the people in the industry can do. So, as in the past, it seems to me that only governments can come to the

assistance of the goldmining industry. The State Government should do all it can to assist the industry by helping the weaker members in it to carry on; and the Federal Government should give very substantial assistance also.

After all, when we ask ourselves why the price of gold is pegged, and why it has been pegged for many years, we know that it is because of international politics. We know the struggle that has been going on between the various big powers in the world, and we know that gold has played a big part in that struggle—gold and the control of international finance. It is a matter of policy on the part of some of the big countries—and particularly America—to keep the price of gold where it is; because if they agreed to an increase in the price they would immediately appreciate the value of the gold stocks held by the various countries which are in opposition to them in an international sphere.

In other words, the goldmining industry is being made the plaything of international politics. If it is the policy of these countries to do this and to peg the price of gold, surely to goodness the people in the industry should not be expected to bear the consequences! They should not have to bear losses; the workers should not be expected to accept decreases in wages; and the owners of the mines should not be asked to accept lower profits.

It is a matter for governmental intervention; and it appears to me that the Commonwealth Government, while going along with the policies of the big countries in the western world, is quite content to do so as long as it is done at the expense of someone else—in this instance, at the expense of the gold industry and those in it. I do not think anyone can contradict that.

We know very well that all other commodities in the world where a cost structure is involved have followed the natural commercial bent. When the costs rise, the price of the commodity rises accordingly, and the people who buy those goods have had to pay more for them. But not so in regard to gold, because we know the price of gold is being maintained at a certain level for the sake of international politics.

However, the people who earn their living from the industry and those who have money invested in it should not be called upon to make sacrifices that no other section of the community is called upon to make.

Mr. Cornell: It will soon be cheaper to put gold into superphosphate instead of copper.

Mr. MOIR: It might be better if they gave us gold fillings in our teeth. I think I have outlined the attitude I take to this matter. While the motion of the honourable member for Murchison is commendable, if it passes in its present form it

will achieve exactly nothing, because we are all aware—at least those of us who have a knowledge of the industry are aware—of the problems, and we know what would save the industry.

Other industries in Australia are subsidised—and subsidised heavily—by governments—and, indirectly, by the people—to keep them going, and we know it is only on a government level that anything can be done to assist the goldmining industry. As I have pointed out, a certain amount can be done at State Government level; but I am perfectly well aware that the State Government's finances are restricted, and that the only people who can give the necessary assistance to the industry are the Federal Government.

While members of Parliament may have a general knowledge of what is required in the industry and of what the problems are, they have not an expert knowledge. That is why I say the motion should stipulate that representatives of the Chamber of Mines and of the employees who work in the mines should be included in the committee. Those people would be able to bring expert knowledge to the committee and could discuss with the other members of the committee the various methods that should be used, and what is required; and the committee could then go forward with one voice, secure in the knowledge that it had the full facts and an unshakeable case to place before what I would say should be the Federal Government.

#### *Amendment to Motion*

For that purpose, I move an amendment—

After the word "committee" in line 11, insert the words "together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines of W.A. and employee organisations whose members are engaged in the goldmining industry."

#### *Point of Order*

Mr. BOVELL: On a point of information, could the mover of the motion and the Government have a copy of the amendment?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I cannot provide one forthwith.

Mr. BOVELL: I think we should be provided with a copy.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I have the amendment only in handwritten form. I do not know whether the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre can assist at all; whether he has any other copies.

Mr. MOIR: Yes; in order to calm the Minister for Lands, I will undertake to write out another copy, or two other copies, if he so wishes.

Mr. Bovell: I want one, and I am sure the mover of the motion wants one.

*Debate (on amendment to motion)  
Resumed*

MR. BURT (Murchison) [5.48 p.m.]: I am not going to agree to the amendment.

Mr. Moir: Why not?

Mr. BURT: I moved that an all-party parliamentary committee be appointed to look into the question of exploring means by which the goldmining industry in this State can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future. It is quite in order for the Chamber of Mines and other authorities to make inquiries into the stabilisation of the goldmining industry.

As I have already pointed out, the Chamber of Mines invariably sends a deputation to the Federal Government every two years when the Goldmining Industry Assistance Act comes up for consideration, and without any doubt it will send a similar deputation to Canberra next year.

My thoughts on the matter are that an all-party parliamentary committee can do a great deal of valuable work in obtaining information concerning the problems which confront the industry—not only in relation to subsidies, but also in respect of ways and means whereby expenditure on production can be reduced to a minimum; and, as I said when moving the motion, in regard to assisting in the exploratory investigation of new ore bodies.

I was interested to hear what the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre had to say about the Sons of Gwalia mine. It is true that previous governments have all given assistance to this very old and famous mine; and, indeed, the present Government gave every assistance when it was asked to do so.

I would like the House to know that during the latter part of last year the technical officers of the Sons of Gwalia mine found there was no more economic ore left underground—and I would like to say that during the past two or three years they have made every possible investigation geologically to discover more ore. When they found at the completion of a drive on one of the levels—I think the 17 or 18 level—that the rich pipe of gold which had kept the mine going, together with the large bulk of lower-grade that was being produced, had cut out, then there was nothing left to keep the mine alive.

Mr. Moir: A lot of mines would have closed down if operations had ceased because a drive ran into a blank spot.

Mr. BURT: I do not think any other mine has had the thorough geological investigation that the Sons of Gwalia received over the past 10 or 12 years when it was apparent that the main ore body was diminishing in value as it went down. I will grant that there is quite a large quantity of 1½ dwt. to 2 dwt. ore; but even the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre would realise that that is completely uneconomical today.

The Government is doing its utmost now to find additional ore in the vicinity of the Leonora-Gwalia district. The diamond drilling which is being undertaken by the Western Mining Corporation has just that point in view, and it is being subsidised by the Government. I am satisfied that should the technical officers of the Sons of Gwalia find there are other avenues which could be explored in the hope of discovering more worth-while ore in the Gwalia district, the present Government will be behind the proposition when it comes to financing it.

Getting back to the price of gold, which has remained stable since 1934 and which, of course, is the reason for all the concern expressed in this State over the goldmining industry, I would like to read some of the remarks made by one of the leading Treasury officials of the United States of America. He gave an address before the 66th National Western Mining Conference and Exhibition at the Denver Hilton Hotel, Denver, Colorado, on the 7th February, 1963. The address is headed "Treasury's Gold Policy," and Mr. Howard said—

I welcome this opportunity to talk to you because, for one thing, it gives me an opportunity to see so many friends I have known for so long a time. I first visited Denver in 1934, shortly after joining the Bureau of the Mint, and it has been my good fortune to come here several times a year since.

I understand that your invitation was extended to me so that the Treasury would have an opportunity to restate its position on gold. In response, I want to say that the Treasury's policy on gold has remained the same since 1934, when Congress passed the Gold Reserve Act. Although the technique of carrying out the policy under different Administrations may vary, the basic policy has been the same under both Democrats and Republicans. Our basic policy has been—and remains—one of centralizing the gold reserves of the country in the hands of the Government under the jurisdiction of the Treasury and maintaining a fixed price of 35 dollars an ounce for gold.

Mr. Fletcher: What year was that?

Mr. BURT: That was in 1934. Previous to that year, when the United States was in the depths of the depression, it was forced to devalue its currency on several occasions and that, of course, took the price of gold from the Australian price of £4 5s. per fine ounce through varying prices until, at the commencement of World War II, it stood at roughly £10 15s. an ounce. Since then we, ourselves, have had to devalue our currency, and the price

is now £15 12s. 6d. Australian. The last occasion that we devalued our currency, by 44 per cent, was 1949. To continue—

Having worked in the gold and silver field during my entire Government career, I believe that I well understand your problems. I know that you, as producers, are interested in bringing out of the ground a ton of material for which you can obtain a price, on the basis of the metal or metals therein, that will offset your cost of mining the ton of material. I know that because mining is an extractive industry, many things enter into the picture in addition to the price you obtain for metals. One problem is that the metal content of the ore body is not inexhaustible, and it eventually "peters out."

The history of gold mining in the United States demonstrates that this problem has played an important part in the gold mining industry. We know that gold mining was once a flourishing industry in Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia. And any one of us could relate, as if it were yesterday, the story of the many once great mining areas here in the West. You may recall that we have had mints for the coinage of gold in Charlotte, N.C., and Dahlonega, Ga. Also, a mint for coining gold and silver at Carson City, Nev., and assay offices at Seattle, Helena, Salt Lake City, Deadwood and Boise. These went out of existence years ago because of the drying up of ore bodies, the cost of production and the price of gold. I do not believe anyone present would contend that these mining areas should have been kept open through subsidy or a higher price for gold—that would have interfered with the monetary role of gold. Nor do I believe anyone would contend that today there should be a subsidy large enough to reopen these fields. All of us can agree, therefore, that our policy is clear and right when we apply it to these events of the far distant past. But our perspective changes when it affects us here and now.

The position of the United States of America as the buyer of all the gold of the free world is very different in respect of its own production of gold in comparison with its attitude towards other countries which are producing gold as fast as they are able to so that they can sell it to the United States. Mr. Howard goes on to say—

There is another problem, as well, that arises from the very nature of mining. Many mines involve more than one metal. And the decrease in the price of one metal increases the importance of the revenue from another.



*Point of Order*

Mr. JAMIESON: I rise on a point of order. My point is that the honourable member is not speaking to the amendment. As I understand the amendment, it reads "together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines of W.A. and employee organisations whose members are engaged in the goldmining industry." Is the honourable member in order in explaining further the various aspects of the goldmining industry and in not speaking to the amendment before the House?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I am always reluctant to place too much restriction on members. I would agree that the honourable member has, perhaps, been allowed a fair amount of latitude. I do not wish to interfere too much with his speech, but I ask the honourable member to take note of this objection.

Mr. Brand: So long as this applies to every honourable member.

*Debate (on amendment to motion)  
Resumed*

Mr. BURT: I am endeavouring to show, if possible, why the United States Government has not granted an increase in the price of gold; which, after all, is the foundation of my motion. If you will allow me, Sir, to quote this extract a little further—

Mr. Brand: I think it is very relevant.

Mr. BURT: It is indeed relevant and can give some reasons why America is not interested in increasing the price of gold. This report by the United States Senate Committee goes on to say—

No doubt some of the arguments today for a greater return from gold in by-product mining result from a decrease in the price of another metal. But I do not believe we should blame gold for an unprofitable situation when another metal is at fault.

These, then, are two problems caused not by external circumstances but by the character of mining itself. This, of course, does not change the larger picture, in which gold production in the United States has been on the wane while Free World gold production has been waxing strong. In the United States, production reached its peak in 1940, when it amounted to 170 million dollars. In 1961 U.S. production amounted to only 55 million dollars. Free World gold production on the other hand has increased from 738 million dollars after World War II to 1 billion 220 million dollars in 1961. During the 10-year period 1951-1961, Free World gold production increased 45 per cent. Preliminary figures for 1962 indicate a further increase in Free World production and it is predicted that there will continue to be an increase for many years to come.

As it now stands, based on 1961 figures, United States gold production is only 4½ per cent. of Free World production.

Many have predicted that a subsidy would cause United States gold production to increase enough within a few years to offset our decrease in gold stocks. In the past five years this decrease has amounted to nearly 7 billion dollars. That is a lot of gold. As it is difficult to predict production at some higher price, let's look and see what happened in the United States in 1934 when the price of gold was increased 69 per cent. At a time when labor and supplies were at their cheapest, when ore dumps and tailing piles that had been in existence for years were reworked, when the dredge really blossomed—many gold-bearing streams in the West that could be worked with a dredge were worked—gold production slightly more than doubled. Recently, in commenting on one of the proposed subsidy bills, the Department of the Interior indicated that a 100 per cent. subsidy would about double today's gold production. Yet if such subsidy were given and we doubled our gold production it would take this increase well over one hundred years to replace the decrease in the gold stocks in the past five years.

A subsidy, in short, cannot solve the problem. And it would present a very real danger to our dollar.

That is one of the reasons why the United States will not subsidise its mines. In other words, it is considered by people in that country quite senseless to subsidise the production of a metal which they themselves are going to buy from other countries; and I suppose in that regard they are pretty right. However, we—and no doubt every other gold-producing nation in the world—realise that without a subsidy our mines will go completely out of existence and eventually, of course, nobody will be able to sell any gold to the United States of America and the stocks of gold in Fort Knox will gradually be depleted.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think the honourable member had better get back to the amendment. I know he was not given a copy of it straightaway.

Mr. BURT: No; I do not have a copy.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): In that case I think the honourable member had better have my copy, which is the only one I have.

Mr. BURT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fletcher: Read it out!

Mr. Brand: Keep reading it out!

Mr. Hawke: Well, until a quarter past six, anyway.

Mr. Bovell: There's a breathless hush in the Chamber tonight!

Mr. Jamieson: We will pause for a commercial.

Mr. BURT: I was trying to make out what this "eleven" was, but I see it is in inverted commas. The amendment reads as follows:—

After the word "committee" in line 11, insert the words "together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines of W.A. and employees' organisations whose members are engaged in the goldmining industry."

I have already said, Mr. Speaker, that I desire the appointment of an all-party parliamentary committee and that it should be just that. I would remind members of the Opposition that probably they also had that in mind when they spoke of it a few weeks ago. There was no mention of a representative from the Chamber of Mines after the Labor Party's visit to the goldfields. They did not say then that they wanted a committee consisting of representatives of the Chamber of Mines, union representatives, and many others. I would suggest that that brainwave has only been evolved during the proceedings in the Chamber this afternoon.

I repeat that an all-party parliamentary committee consisting of one member from each party in this Chamber, and one member from each party in another place, could prove to be a very efficient body, well capable of hearing a case from the other side, because if we do admit members of the Chamber of Mines, which represents the employer-organisations in the mining industry, and union officials who represent the employees in the industry, we would have very few other bodies to consult. If the committee that I suggest is appointed it would be practically a committee formed among ourselves.

I think the whole object of an all-party parliamentary committee, formed for the purpose of investigating the problems of the goldmining industry, is to hear evidence from those who are interested; and that would include, naturally enough, mine managers, technical officers of the mining companies, representatives of the miners, and other sections of persons engaged in the industry such as prospectors, small mineowners, battery managers; and, in fact, anyone whose livelihood relies on the goldmining industry.

There are a number of mines in Western Australia which have closed since the end of World War II. The honourable member for Boulder-Eyre instanced the Big Bell goldmine. In my original motion I did refer to one mine which did not close down, I consider, because of the diminution of its ore body. That mine was the one worked by the Big Bell Mining Company which left a very large ore body undeveloped. Admittedly the lode was of low value—somewhere about 3 dwts to the ton. The

company was forced to cease operations because of the rising costs associated with the production and treatment of the ore.

The closure of the Big Bell goldmine was a tragic happening as far as the Murchison was concerned, and from that day the population of the Murchison district started to diminish and it is now only a fraction of what it was before 1955 when the district was booming. Not far from the Big Bell goldmine, however, is the famous Hill 50 goldmine which has remained alive despite rising costs and is still producing gold at a good rate and paying dividends to its shareholders.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think the honourable member will have to get back to the amendment.

Mr. BURT: Very well, Mr. Speaker. I will get back to the amendment by reiterating that I strongly oppose it.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [6.8 p.m.]: Copies of the amendment moved by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre seem to be as scarce as gold in some of the shafts of the Gwalla goldmine. I do not have a copy of the amendment myself, and I hope I can borrow the one from the honourable member for Murchison which was loaned to him by you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Moir: You know as much about the amendment as you know about the motion.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is about as much as the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre knows himself. Probably there are not many honourable members of this Chamber who have a copy of the amendment, and for the information of those who have not I will read the amendment to the House. It reads as follows:—

After the word "committee" in line 11, insert the words "together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines of W.A. and employees' organisations whose members are engaged in the goldmining industry."

Mr. Hawke: What about the figure "11"?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes. The honourable member for Murchison has already enlightened me on that, and therefore I am in the fortunate position of knowing what that means. In this Chamber yesterday evening we had many honourable members on the other side of the House criticising the size of various committees. During the debate on the Clean Air Bill there were certain honourable members who considered that a committee of 14 was far too big.

Mr. Graham: You were one who thought it was not too big.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That is so; and yet we have a change of face among several honourable members of the Opposition this evening.

Mr. Graham: Including the honourable member for Mt. Lawley. Would that be right?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Those same honourable members have indicated that they want a rather large committee to investigate conditions in the goldmining industry.

Mr. Graham: You had better stick to El Cantro and East Perth!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The honourable member for Boulder-Eyre has indicated that he wants representatives of employee organisations who are connected with the goldmining industry appointed to this committee, together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines, but he has given no indication of how many members would be appointed.

Mr. Moir: Neither does the motion. The motion does not stipulate the number of members who shall be appointed to the committee.

Mr. O'CONNOR: But the honourable member for Murchison, whilst addressing himself to the motion, did suggest an all-party parliamentary committee of six members.

Mr. Bovell: That is the point!

Mr. Hawke: What is the point?

Mr. Bovell: That it is an all-party parliamentary committee that the honourable member for Murchison has asked for.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Just to make sure, I will quote to the House the motion moved by the member for Murchison. It reads as follows:—

That in view of the refusal of the International Monetary Fund at its meeting in Tokyo last week, to agree to any increase in the world price of gold, and bearing in mind the tremendous importance of the gold mining industry to Western Australia and the difficulties which the industry is facing due to rising costs of production, an all-Party Parliamentary Committee be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

Mr. Hawke: That is not the amendment.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I feel that an all-party parliamentary committee would be quite sufficient to achieve this object. The members of it could seek assistance or information if they so desired from other groups interested in mining throughout the State, in the Eastern States, or overseas. We all know that the goldmining industry is very important to Western Australia. As has been pointed out, it not only provides a large income from the gold that is exported to other countries, but also it is a great source of employment for many people in the northern part of

the State. In addition, it would be the source of much income for various industries and factories in the metropolitan area producing goods which are forwarded to the goldmining districts.

The price of gold, therefore, is very important to the economy of the State; and, from our point of view, if the price could be increased by some degree it would certainly create more stability in the goldfields area. I consider that an all-party parliamentary committee consisting of six members, as suggested by the honourable member for Murchison, would be quite sufficient to conduct this inquiry. As I have said, its members could seek advice and assistance from organisations such as the Chamber of Mines, or from any of the representatives of other interested organisations, and if that were done the members of the committee could collate the information they had obtained and forward it on to those who desired it.

I cannot see why the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre should insist on including on the committee representatives of the various organisations he has mentioned, because I consider that an all-party parliamentary committee of six members, which no doubt would include representatives of goldfields electorates, would be quite competent for the task.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the Bells. The House may be a little late in resuming this evening because of the picture show that has been mentioned previously.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.40 p.m.*

Mr. O'CONNOR: Judging from the expression on the faces of the members of the Opposition before the tea suspension, I felt certain I had convinced most of them that they should oppose the amendment. I know quite a number of honourable members did not have copies.

Mr. Jamieson: They were looking hungry; not in agreement with you.

Mr. O'CONNOR: That may have been the case. I do not know. But when I suggested that we should oppose the amendment there seemed to be a look of satisfaction on the faces of a number of honourable members opposite, and I thought perhaps some of them would agree to oppose it. Seeing there was a shortage of copies of the amendment, I took the opportunity to type out a few copies during the tea suspension.

Mr. Guthrie: Yourself?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Yes; and you might have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that I delivered one to your table together with the one you were kind enough to loan to the honourable member for Murchison, and which he in turn was good enough to loan me.

I can see no real purpose in including members of the Chamber of Mines and of the employees' organisations on this committee. I think it would be far more satisfactory if we had a parliamentary committee as suggested by the honourable member for Murchison to investigate this position, and to make what recommendations it thought fit in connection with the matter. A committee such as that suggested in the original motion could go into operation much more quickly, and it would probably secure the answers we need in much less time than the committee suggested by the amendment.

I do not think a committee of larger proportions would be of any advantage at all. We must also bear in mind that the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre did not even mention the numbers that should comprise the committee. All he said was that there should be representatives from the Chamber of Mines, and from the employees' organisations. Not being closely connected with the goldmining industry, I do not know how many organisations there are associated with it. We could finish up with a committee of 15, 20, or 25, which would be far too cumbersome.

Mr. Evans: The Minister had no objection to one of 14 last night.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The numbers on this committee could be greater. The honourable member for Kalgoorlie would know how many organisations and how many people are associated with the goldmining industry. I have no goldmines in my electorate and I am not connected closely with the industry.

I feel the motion moved by the honourable member for Murchison is a good one. It is one I would be willing to support; and it is one that should be supported by honourable members of this Chamber—and it should be supported without the amendment.

I was rather surprised to notice that a member of the Opposition did endeavour to pull the honourable member for Murchison into line for digressing slightly from the actual amendment. I thought this was rather strange, and I felt sure the honourable member concerned must have been absent from the Chamber last night when one of his colleagues was speaking on the Clean Air Bill.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I hope this is only going to be a passing reference.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I assure you, Sir, that it will be. After hearing one of his colleagues speaking on the Clean Air Bill it appeared as though he was going to move an amendment to clean up some of the hot air at the races. Had the honourable member been here while his colleague was speaking, perhaps he might have raised a similar point of order at that stage.

As you have asked me, Mr. Speaker, to make no more than a passing reference, I will go no further. I feel certain, however, that the amendment will be of no advantage to the motion. The motion as originally moved is a good one, and I am prepared to accept and support it. The sooner the committee is formed, and the sooner it goes into operation with a view to assisting the mining industry, the better. I oppose the amendment.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [7.49 p.m.]: I am very glad at the course the debate has taken tonight. I was rather surprised that the Minister attempted to adjourn the debate; but fortunately the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre was able to move his amendment. I am sure that the whole Chamber knows the Opposition 100 per cent. endorses the amendment, and in doing so we are not opposing in any way at all the principle outlined by the honourable member for Murchison.

We are not trying to oppose; we are trying to embrace; we are trying to obtain something worth while. I feel that some good could come from what the honourable member for Murchison has propounded; but I also think that a lot more good could stem from the motion if it were amended in accordance with the suggestion by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre—a suggestion endorsed by the Opposition.

I want to say at this stage that the Opposition has been consistent right along in its attempts during this session of Parliament to assist the goldmining industry. During my speech on the Address-in-Reply I drew attention to the fact that in the Speech with which His Excellency the Governor was pleased to open this session of Parliament—a Speech which was prepared for him by the Government—the goldmining industry weighed so heavily on the minds of the Government that in that speech of seven pages this was the sole reference to that industry—

Gold production was over 800,000 fine ounces, . . .

That was only part of the sentence and it went on—

. . . the value of all minerals produced during the year being £21,076,000.

That was the sole reference to the goldmining industry in a Speech put forward by this Government and presented to His Excellency the Governor to read for the formal opening of the State Parliament. Now we are asked to support a motion, which, in its entirety, means there will be a committee comprising honourable members of both Houses of the State Parliament, which will mean one member from each party. The Labor members will be

in the minority and we will be leaving the destiny of the goldmining industry, so far as achieving anything by an all-party committee is concerned, to a majority of Government members. This will be the position despite the fact that in the Governor's Speech only half a dozen words were used in connection with the goldmining industry.

Mr. Burt: I know of no better hands.

Mr. EVANS: We are deeply sincere in our efforts and we are not being political. We want to achieve something; and if we are to make an impact on Canberra there will have to be a show of strength. We know that the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer have shown their hides are tough and it will have to be a show of real strength. Therefore this committee must be strengthened by men from the Chamber of Mines, who are the experts. The motion reads as follows:—

That in view of the refusal of the International Monetary Fund at its meeting in Tokyo last week, to agree to any increase in the world price of gold, and bearing in mind the tremendous importance of the goldmining industry to Western Australia and the difficulties which the industry is facing due to rising costs of production, an all-Party Parliamentary Committee be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

These terms of reference are highly technical and almost solely within the ambit of experts in management and experts in industrial relations which affect the men who turn the wheels of industry in the goldmining field. And yet the honourable member for Murchison wants a committee of well-intentioned parliamentarians!

A committee as outlined by the honourable member could not be classed as an expert committee in the highly technical field of goldmining; but we have men in the industry who are holding their positions as leaders of the industry because they have shown they are experts. We are offering a means whereby we could invite them to join this committee to add strength, lustre, and real ability as regards the highly technical knowledge of the industry so as to have a better chance of making an impact on Canberra.

I mentioned earlier that I wanted to show the Opposition had been consistent. In my Address-in-Reply speech on the 12th August I said—

The time has come when there should be another well organised gold deputation from Western Australia to

Canberra. I say the time has come when the State Government should give a lead to the goldmining industry. It should offer its assistance and make its facilities available so that in Canberra the views of the goldmining industry may be heard.

What better opportunity could the Government have for (1) giving a lead; and, (2) offering its facilities so that the voice of the goldmining industry could be heard effectively in Canberra than by appointing a committee comprising members of Parliament and leaders in their own realms within the industry?

To show that the Opposition has not been in any way inconsistent, on the 15th August the Australian Labor Party held its party meeting in Kalgoorlie, where it was decided, amongst other things, that this party would press for a committee to make an impact at Canberra in this direction. The spokesman for the party at the Press conference outlined that the committee we had in mind would embrace not only parliamentary members, but also leaders within the industry itself.

The Labor Party has not been in any way lethargic in this matter; because, on the 20th August—only a mere five days afterwards—it sponsored a motion in the Legislative Council. That motion would have been sponsored in this House but for Standing Orders, as the Address-in-Reply was in progress and that precluded our having the opportunity. I quote from a cutting taken from *The Kalgoorlie Miner* of Thursday, the 20th August. The motion would have been moved the day before this; and the headline refers to a Labor member in another place (Mr. Heenan). The heading is as follows:—

#### Mining Needs Exponents at Tokyo.

That was prior to the meeting of the International Monetary Fund; and the expounding referred to was the subject of the motion that we should send the President of the Chamber of Mines to Tokyo. That resolution was, in fact, accepted by the Legislative Council, and yet the Australian delegation to Tokyo was going to comprise the Australian Federal Treasurer, who is a parliamentarian, but an expert in economics—or he should be. He would have guidance from his departmental officers. But the Legislative Council, in its wisdom, accepted the motion sponsored by our party that this delegation to Tokyo would be better if it were strengthened by an exponent of the goldmining industry itself.

We feel that not only have we been consistent, but we have also been on the ball. We all know that following the acceptance of that resolution the meeting of the International Monetary Fund in

Tokyo was held, and its decision was devastating for the goldmining industry. The Labor Party took no further action, because it was waiting for the outcome of the Tokyo meeting; and the party tried to convince honourable members in another place that the delegation at Tokyo would be better if it were strengthened by representatives from the industry.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): I think the honourable member is running fairly wide of the amendment.

Mr. **EVANS**: I think we should include these people, apart from parliamentary members. I now come to those people who are extremely important. I refer to the representatives of the workers within the industry. Only yesterday those workers received a very sudden blow when the decision of the Industrial Commission was that the industry allowance shall be reduced from 30s. to 22s. 6d.

I would draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact—in case you try to tell me to leave that subject alone—that even the Minister for Industrial Development saw how close that subject is aligned with another subject that is on the notice paper. However, I will keep away from that subject from now on.

Workers are being called upon to make a sacrifice in the interests of economy in the industry. We do not deny that the margin between the actual cost of production and the price of the product is not so great; but we believe the only effective way of curing the ills of the industry—apart from keeping costs down; and to give the other part of the imbalance—that is, the price of gold—a lift up, is for an all-round committee, one that is capable of making an impact at Canberra.

The industry allowance to which I have referred has been called a prosperity allowance. The Chamber of Mines claims that the allowance is a misnomer, that there is no such thing as prosperity in the industry.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): I do not think the honourable member should continue along those lines. He will have to get back to the amendment.

Mr. **EVANS**: I propose to do so, Mr. Speaker. The men in the industry wish to see a return to prosperity so that the industry allowance is not reduced but restored and enhanced. They have a vital stake in the issue, and they should be allowed to express their views. When the committee goes to Canberra it should not consist only of a group of well-intentioned parliamentary members, but it should represent unity between capital and labour. This is one of the few occasions when we can have such unity.

We are shocked to find that the Government is not prepared to accept the good intentions of the Opposition. We feel that our arguments are logical ones. We have not heard a logical argument to counter the arguments we have put forward. I was amazed when the honourable member who moved the motion replied to the amendment as soon as it was moved. In answer to a question, he remarked that he did not have a copy of the amendment; yet he opposed it.

We do not want any ill-feeling on the matter. We do not want to give any impression that we are divided. If anyone should read *Hansard* regarding the formation of this committee, we would like him to gain the impression that we are united. We should embrace anything which is of value and which is worth while. I suggest that the amendment proposed by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre, and supported by the Opposition, has merit; and I strongly support it.

Mr. **BOVELL** (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [8.5 p.m.]: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity given me to address myself at least to the amendment.

Mr. Tonkin: Is that a reflection on the Chair?

Mr. **BOVELL**: I think my remarks—

Mr. Hawke: It is a thinly-veiled rebuke of the Speaker.

Mr. **BOVELL**: —will be in keeping with parliamentary language. It is quite apparent to me that the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre thought of the amendment on the spur of the moment. He had to write it out for his own information. The usual practice in this Chamber is for amendments to be circulated when they are moved.

Mr. Tonkin: Oh yes!

Mr. **BOVELL**: I again thank you, Sir, for the courtesy you extended me in making the point that at least the mover of the motion and I, as representing the Minister for Mines in this House, should have had a written copy of the amendment.

Mr. Tonkin: Will the Government carry out that injunction in future?

Mr. **BOVELL**: In view of the fact that honourable members do not have copies of the amendment, and that the amendment has not been related to the motion—at least it has not in my hearing, and I was in the Chamber while the debate was proceeding—I will endeavour to do that. Notice of motion No. 5 on today's notice paper reads as follows:—

That in view of the refusal of the International Monetary Fund at its meeting in Tokyo last week, to agree

to any increase in the world price of gold, and bearing in mind the tremendous importance of the gold-mining industry to Western Australia—

with which statement I agree. Continuing—

and the difficulties which the industry is facing due to rising costs of production—

And at this point the amendment takes effect, and the wording will read as follows:—

an all-Party Parliamentary Committee, together with representatives of the Chamber of Mines of W.A. and employee organisations whose members are engaged in the goldmining industry—

The wording of the motion will then continue as follows:—

be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

Mr. H. May: A very good speech!

Mr. BOVELL: The motion—and I have to relate it to the amendment—deals with an all-party parliamentary committee. The amendment brings in other representatives. It is intended by the honourable member for Murchison that the proposed committee should comprise members of Parliament of all parties. In my opinion the amendment is incompatible with the motion.

As the amendment refers to the Chamber of Mines of Western Australia, and its activities cover the eastern goldfields, I will ask your forbearance, Mr. Speaker, in allowing me to give some figures in relation to the goldmining industry, which have some bearing on the Chamber of Mines. I quote as follows:—

Gold for June, 1964. Distribution by districts: Pilbara 200 f.ozs.; Murchison 5,711 f.ozs.; Menzies-Yerilla 1,216 f.ozs.; Broad Arrow 328 f.ozs.; E. Coolgardie 39,399 f.ozs.; Yilgarn 153 f.ozs.; Dundas 8,400 f.ozs.; Phillips River 233 f.ozs.

Hill 50 for 4 weeks to July 28: 15,082 short tons for 5,057 f.ozs.

Among small producers: Yilgarnie Queen—187 tons for 300 ozs. bullion. The leases are worked under tribute arrangement with Western Mining Corporation.

Goanna Patch—W. Trythall cleaned up 51 tons for 33 ozs. bullion.

The Mines Department reports for June 55,883 f.ozs. of value £A873,172.

Total (for 6 months) 340,673 f.ozs. (average 56,778 f.ozs.).

Grand total since 1886: 64,507,367 f.ozs.—£A488,659,481.

For 4 weeks to July 14: Central Norseman, 14,174 tons for 8,701 f.ozs.; Goldmines of Kalgoorlie, 57,901 tons for 11,621 f.ozs.

Mr. Hawke: It sounds like the introduction to the departmental estimates.

Mr. BOVELL: I quote further—

For 4 periods to June 30: Lake View and Star, 228,876 short tons for 50,189 f.ozs.; revenue £632,597; estimated surplus, £106,751 (sterling).

I am surprised at the interjection of the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members opposite. These are vital statistics which are appropriate to the goldmining industry.

Mr. Kelly: They have nothing to do with the motion.

Mr. BOVELL: I agree that the goldmining industry is one of our most valued industries. It brought the people to Western Australia, and I must say that superphosphate and trace elements have kept them here and have enabled the population to be expanded. The goldmining industry is very necessary. The importance of the industry is understood. The figures I have quoted are the most up to date available.

Mr. Kelly: This is not a kindergarten school.

Mr. Oldfield: Speak to the amendment!

Mr. BOVELL: Sometimes when I look opposite I think it is a kindergarten school. I quote as my authority the *Commerce: Industrial and Mining Review* of August, 1964. It is necessary to do all we can to foster the industry; but in this case I think the committee should comprise representatives of Parliament—that is, if the committee is appointed; and I am not committing myself in that regard yet, because that will be a matter for discussion when we get back to the motion. However, I think it is necessary to foster the goldmining industry as much as possible.

Western Australia is the major gold producing State in Australia. I am not quite sure of the up-to-date figures, but I think we produce 3 per cent. of the world's gold production. That is a vast production for a small community like Western Australia. The goldmining industry is either the third or fourth industry in importance—I am not sure which, but I know that as Minister for Forests I quote either the goldmining industry or the timber industry as being the third or fourth largest industry in Western Australia. After wool and wheat, gold and/or timber follows. That shows the importance of the goldmining industry.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think the Minister had better get back to the amendment.

Mr. BOVELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker; you have allowed me a great amount of latitude. However, I think I was quite in

order in quoting those vital statistics so far as the goldmining industry was concerned—in the eastern goldfields—because they affect the Chamber of Mines in Western Australia, which is interested in production.

Mr. Evans: That is why we want its representative on the committee.

Mr. BOVELL: That is quite all right, but the motion is for the appointment of a committee of six members of Parliament, three from each House and one from each party in each House.

Mr. W. Hegney: There are only two parties.

Mr. Evans: The motion does not say that.

Mr. BOVELL: That is the intent of the motion as I take it. The matter is to be dealt with purely on a parliamentary level, and the inclusion of other people at this stage, in my opinion, is not warranted and is not desirable.

Mr. Oldfield: If you had not had those figures to quote you would not have been able to make a speech and you would have had to sit down long ago.

Mr. Bickerton: This is your golden opportunity!

Mr. BOVELL: The honourable member for Maylands cannot make a speech, even by quoting figures.

Mr. Hawke: Has the Minister any figures for the "Jumperdyne Field"?

Mr. BOVELL: I am surprised that honourable members opposite, some of whom represent goldmining constituencies, can be so facetious at a time when we should be most—

#### *Point of Order*

Mr. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, as a goldfields representative, I take umbrage at the fact that the Minister said I had been facetious, and I ask him to withdraw the statement.

Mr. Bovell: If the cap fits, wear it.

Mr. EVANS: I have already spoken and given my views on the matter.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The Minister did not mention any specific member by name.

Mr. EVANS: He referred to members representing goldmining constituencies and there are only three on this side of the House.

Mr. Bickerton: I had 200 fine ounces from my district!

Mr. EVANS: I am speaking of the eastern goldfields.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The Minister may continue.

*Debate (on amendment to motion)  
Resumed*

Mr. BOVELL: To show the importance of the goldmining industry I shall quote a further extract from the *Commerce, Industrial and Mining Review* for August 1964, which states—

A truly international flavour will spice the Seventh International Mineral Processing Congress with technical papers coming from 15 different countries. The congress will be held in New York city from September 20th to 24th, the first time it has convened in the United States.

The world, of course, is interested in minerals, and gold has been the basis of our mining industry. It was the commencement of our mining industry, and I know the Government has every sympathy for it. However, I feel that at this stage the inclusion of representatives other than parliamentary members, as was suggested by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre, would not be warranted, and I oppose the amendment.

MR. BICKERTON (Filbara) [8.19 p.m.]: I would like to make a couple of brief observations on this subject. I can see nothing wrong with the amendment and I intend to support it; also, I am in agreement with the motion. I will not refer to the remarks of the Minister for Lands, or comment on anything he said, because I realise I would be out of order.

Mr. Bovell: I was speaking as the representative of the Minister for Mines.

Mr. BICKERTON: However, I assure him his figures were rather interesting. In regard to this matter some honourable member said that to agree to the amendment would mean increasing the size of the committee. I am not fussy about appointing big committees. I think probably the smaller they are the better; but what the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre wants to do could be done without increasing the size of the committee in any way at all. I think the representatives to whom he referred are essential on a committee of this type and it would be a great asset to have someone from the Chamber of Mines and a representative of the unions who work in this industry. I was under the impression that the gentlemen who sit opposite to us were all one party—that they were members of a coalition party.

Mr. W. Hegney: That is so. In fact they are!

Mr. BICKERTON: It seems to me the distribution of the representation on this committee would be fairer if we had a member from the Government and a member from the Opposition, in the lower House, and a member from the Government and a member from the Opposition, in the upper House, which would leave room—still sticking to the six members as was suggested by the honourable member for Murchison—for two more members, one of



whom could come from the Chamber of Mines and the other from the industrial unions whose members work in the industry. I truly believe they would be a great asset to the committee and the number would still remain the same as that specified by the honourable member for Murchison. If we on this side could get an intimation that that proposition is acceptable an amendment could be moved accordingly.

**MR. KELLY** (Merredin-Yilgarn) [8.21 p.m.]: Unlike the honourable member for Pilbara I believe the Minister for Lands made one or two errors in the earlier part of his speech.

**Mr. W. Hegney**: That is not unusual.

**Mr. KELLY**: He said he failed to find where those on this side of the House who had spoken to the amendment had achieved anything at all; as a matter of fact, he seemed to think we did not know where we were, either on the amendment or on the motion. Of course, the Minister himself skidded all around the ship; in fact, I think he finished up at Goanna Patch, or some place like that. At no stage did he come to grips with the amendment that has been moved by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre.

**Mr. Bovell**: That, of course, is a matter of opinion.

**Mr. KELLY**: The figures the Minister quoted had no relevancy at all to the amendment; and I think he was as far off the track as was the mover of the original motion when he spoke to the amendment.

In my opinion the solution suggested by the member for Pilbara would be the ideal one; because it would give equal representation; and after all, we are endeavouring to do something that will assist the industry. We on this side of the House are perfectly happy to assist in every way possible to bring about a better understanding and a greater degree of assistance to the industry than has been achieved in the past several years. On a number of occasions we have found that we have been left seriously wanting in regard to some activity which would be of assistance to the mining industry of Western Australia, and in the matter of obtaining for it some of the conditions and improvements which have been gained for industry generally and which this industry richly deserves.

Irrespective of which suggestion is accepted—whether it be that of the member for Pilbara or as contained in the amendment—it would undoubtedly improve the motion; because it would provide an all-round committee which had some strength and substance over and above that which is envisaged by the motion itself. The amendment aims at adding two members to the committee; and, of course, both of

those additional members would be men who, in their spheres, would have a tremendous knowledge of everything pertaining to the goldmining industry. They would be men who had spent years and years in the industry and their only objective would be to achieve something for the industry and assist the committee from this Parliament in that direction.

They would bring to the committee not only the knowledge they possess but also the experience they have had over the years; and they would be able to assist greatly with the proposals put forward by the committee on behalf of the industry. After all, how many members in this Chamber, or in another place, have a deep knowledge of the mining industry in Western Australia, other than to be able to quote figures, such as were quoted by the Minister for Lands a few moments ago? They were totally irrelevant to the amendment; but, nevertheless, we know those figures do exist and they show the achievements of the industry in recent times. Those figures were far different from the figures that we have known in recent years, but the statistical side is one that can be well attended to by members of Parliament.

However, when it comes to doing something practical for the industry I think few members of Parliament have the necessary knowledge of the subject. I think members lack the necessary competency to draw up proposals which would make any impression in Canberra.

**Mr. Bovell**: I did try to convey some statistical knowledge, anyway, which is very vital to the industry.

**Mr. KELLY**: I think the honourable member who introduced the motion endeavoured to do just that. I think he achieved what he set out to do; and the motion, as far as it goes, is quite in order. However, I think the amendment moved, or the one suggested by the member for Pilbara, would be more likely to achieve the results that the chamber is trying to achieve. If a committee is to be sent to Canberra it should comprise members who have the greatest knowledge of the industry—all facets of the industry—and not just members with a superficial knowledge; such would be the case if only members of Parliament were appointed to it.

When the Premier goes to Canberra to plead Western Australia's case before the Loan Council, he does not comb the Treasury just to find an individual he can take with him to assist; he takes the best brains available in the Treasury—he takes his Under-Treasurer. There is nothing haphazard about his selection in that regard. Likewise this is a highly important motion, and we should treat it with the greatest amount of care; because, undoubtedly, its effects on the future of the State are vital.

The amendment endeavours to improve the motion and the additional members suggested would greatly strengthen the committee. There is no doubt our only possibility of achieving any success at all in Canberra is to present the strongest case possible on behalf of the goldmining industry—nothing less would be good enough for the industry in its present condition. Every member in this Chamber, irrespective of his politics, should support the amendment as I freely and gladly do.

**MR. GUTHRIE** (Subiaco) [8.29 p.m.]: As has already been pointed out, this motion and the amendment concern an industry on which the very prosperity of Western Australia is built. As the Minister has just told us, this is an industry which has produced to Western Australia £488,000,000 over the years. That is the reason why most of us are here today; because most of us have forbears who came to this State as a result of the economic collapse in the Eastern States, and the discovery of gold in Western Australia. No-one can underestimate or criticise the importance of the goldmining industry to the State.

The motion, and the amendment to it, involve an extremely important principle—a principle concerning Parliament itself. The honourable member for Murchison has moved a motion that an all-party parliamentary committee be appointed. The essence of the motion, and the operative words in it, are that the committee examine and explore means by which the industry can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

There is nothing in the motion which says anything about people being sent to Canberra. It merely seeks the appointment of a parliamentary committee to investigate, and it is open to Parliament to adopt its findings. The motion does not refer to the committee as being a Select Committee. Not having had sufficient time to investigate the position, I am not quite clear as to the status of the proposed committee, or whether it should be appointed as a Select Committee.

It is of great significance that all members of this Chamber are seized with the importance of presenting a united front on this all-important subject for the future of the industry, on which the foundations of Western Australia were built, and of forming an all-party committee. For that reason, and that reason alone, the suggestion made by the honourable member for Pilbara, which was supported by the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn, that it should be broken down to include representatives of the Government and representatives of the Opposition, would be wrong. That would get away from the atmosphere which is created here, of an all-party committee, which means something in the eyes of the public. Such a

committee is representative of all sections of Parliament, and is not broken into divisions of Government and Opposition. For that reason I oppose any suggestion of an amendment.

I now return to the basic principles of the parliamentary institution. The parliamentary derivation goes back to 1215 A.D. when at Runnymede the first charter was written, which subsequently became the first Statute to be written into the Statute book of any Parliament in the world. The principle has gradually developed from that beginning. We have heard it said so many times in this Chamber, and no doubt it will be said many times hence, that Parliament is the supreme lawmaking body—the foundation from which all Government institutions spring.

The motion before us does preserve that principle; but the amendment would negate it. To my mind that is a major principle which must be considered when one examines the amendment of the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre. He seeks to bring in a parliamentary committee with outsiders on it. I do not offer criticism against the outsiders—it does not matter to me who they are—but to bring them in would break away from the principle we have established over the years that an all-party parliamentary committee which meets under the aegis of Parliament within the precincts of Parliament, and operating under the Standing Orders and procedures of Parliament, should not include outsiders. That is bringing in outsiders not in the sense that they will advise, but as executive members with an equal say to that of members of the parliamentary committee. To my mind that is completely and utterly wrong, and it would be a very retrograde and dangerous step.

Already we have heard, and we will hear more when we continue the debate on the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the appointment of an ombudsman, of the shortcomings of Parliament. One of the matters dealt with in that motion is the breaking down of the authority and power of Parliament. Surely we should not further that any more than is necessary! To adopt the principle of bringing outsiders into an executive committee of Parliament is completely and utterly wrong. Furthermore I am left with a doubt as to how such a committee would operate.

A parliamentary committee has certain powers and privileges, but people who are not members of Parliament do not possess those powers and privileges. Just on a very simple matter, such a committee could not even meet in this House without specific approval. Members of Parliament have the right to conduct their meetings, deliberations, and investigations within the precincts of these buildings; but a committee on which strangers have

been appointed would not have those privileges or the protection which is given to parliamentary committees. It certainly would not have the power to call witnesses or other persons to appear before it.

In his enthusiasm the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre will completely destroy the very thing which the honourable member for Murchison has set out to achieve; that is, an effective committee which will investigate the problems referred to, produce recommendations, and maybe go to Canberra or elsewhere. Nevertheless it is a factor which may be taken into consideration. We heard only a short while ago the suggestion of the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn that members of Parliament have no deep knowledge of this subject, and therefore they should have the assistance of representatives from industry. If ever there was an insult to Parliament this is one. Why then should we not bring into this Chamber to sit with us every time we debate any matter people who are experts in the particular field?

We are part of the democratic constitution of this country elected to legislate; we are here to satisfy ourselves by the methods available to us on various subjects; and surely that should apply to a committee of this nature, just as it applies in Parliament! Members of Parliament could deal with the subject matter of a motion, and they could summon witnesses to appear before them; they could examine the problems; and they could get all the required evidence and information. If the argument of the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn is a good one, then neither Chamber of this Parliament should ever again appoint a Select Committee, because it would be quite wrong to imagine that members of Parliament were capable of examining subjects such as crayfishing and chiropractic, unless they had chiropractors or crayfishermen sitting on the committees. I suggest again that the question of principle comes in.

To bolster an extremely weak argument, the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn drew the analogy of the Premier attending the Loan Council, and suggested the Premier did not go without the Under-Treasurer. He suggested that was the reason why members of the goldmining industry should be appointed to the committee proposed in the motion. I have yet to hear it suggested that, when the Under-Treasurer or other advisers who accompany the Premier to Canberra to attend conferences, they go as equals to the Premier. They only go as advisers. Surely that is no reason for suggesting that people outside Parliament should be appointed to the committee proposed in the motion! Surely the analogy is the other way!

If the Premier is able to go to Canberra with advisers, then surely the committee proposed by the honourable member for

Merredin-Yilgarn is able to investigate the problems of the goldmining industry by consulting with advisers and, if necessary, taking them as advisers to Canberra! Certainly they should not be appointed to the committee with equal status to the members of this Parliament, to investigate what is one of our greatest industries.

It has been suggested that the outsiders sought to be appointed to the committee are engaged in goldmining. They might be; but why should we stop at that? There are many people who depend on the goldmining industry for their livelihood, and who are auxiliary to that industry. If we were to follow the principle of having complete representation on the committee, why stop at the representatives of the mines, and of the men working in the industry? One could become fatuous in this sort of proposal.

As I suggested earlier, the basis of this committee is, first of all, to investigate the situation, and then to explore the means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and extension in the future. If I might be pardoned for doing so, I would suggest—without disrespect to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—that that would be a matter of fact, as opposed to a matter of opinion, over which we had some discussion last evening. In the first instance, and in all instances, the purpose of the proposed committee is to find the facts, very much along the lines of any Select Committee that has been appointed. It cannot go beyond the functions of Parliament. Are we in this day and age, when bureaucracy is said to be taking over and to be usurping the functions of Parliament—to the extent that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has moved to appoint a parliamentary commissioner to protect the people from bureaucracy—to abdicate our proper functions, which are to govern the community wisely?

Mr. Evans: Before you sit down—

Mr. GUTHRIE: I shall not be sitting down for quite a long while.

Mr. Evans: Before you leave this subject, would you agree that this is more a motion which seeks to bring about an increase in the subsidy? That is a fact.

Mr. GUTHRIE: The motion does not say that. I am not concerned with what the honourable member for Kalgoorlie might imagine ought to be done; or what the honourable member for Murchison might imagine ought to be done; or what the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn might imagine ought to be done; or what the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre might imagine ought to be done; or what the honourable member for Pilbara might imagine ought to be done. I am concerned only with what I read on the piece of

paper in front of me. I am concerned—without disrespect to the goldmining industry—with the privileges and importance of Parliament, which transcend any industry.

I repeat for the benefit of the honourable member for Kalgoorlie for the third time that I am concerned only with what is written on the piece of paper before me; that a committee be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

I would point out that the object means the purpose, as I understand the meaning of the word. The main objective towards which we are advancing in this motion is contained in the words "examine and explore." I have not available before me the *Oxford Dictionary*, but as I understand the expression, to examine means to inquire into and to ascertain the facts. That would be a fair enough definition.

Now we come to the word "explore". Of course the word "explore", if we looked in the *Oxford Dictionary*, would probably provide us with about 77 different definitions. When consulting that dictionary, we put our money in, turn the handle, and out comes a word. We do not like the look of it, so we put some more money in, turn the handle again, and bring another one out. When we come to the 77th, if it suits us we will use it.

Mr. W. Hegney: You can lose the Minister for Lands, anyway.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Maybe I can, and maybe I cannot. Nevertheless, the purpose of the exercise is to answer the very pertinent query the member for Kalgoorlie put to me, and for which I am indeed grateful.

Mr. Kelly: You have not touched the amendment yet.

Mr. GUTHRIE: I am dealing with an interjection from a very learned member from the goldmining industry on the other side of the House. The word "explore" in this sense, I suppose, means to inquire into. This motion is like so many motions and Acts. The two words probably both mean the same thing when we come down to it.

Mr. Kelly: What about coming down to it?

Mr. GUTHRIE: The idea is to find out the facts, and that is the purpose of the committee. I am quite certain that this House will be extremely responsible in the type of person it appoints to the all-party committee, and that they will be men of great capacity. I do not doubt that the honourable member for Kalgoorlie will be one, the honourable member for Murchison will be another, and either the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn or

the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre will probably be another. I do not know who the others will be.

Mr. Bickerton: Leave room for a farmer.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Yes; perhaps even a farmer; or maybe me.

Mr. Bovell: Don't some have to come from the Legislative Council?

Mr. GUTHRIE: The motion does not say that. Unfortunately I was not in the Chamber when the honourable member for Murchison was speaking; but the motion does not say that. Perhaps it does mean the Legislative Council and maybe we will have to move another amendment to tidy it up. Nevertheless, if members from the other Chamber are to be included there are certain people there who have a very great knowledge of the industry.

This committee will set out to investigate, and I would suggest one of the various organisations which the members of this committee will call before them will be the Chamber of Mines as being the representative of all the great goldmines of Kalgoorlie, and other goldfields. Now, how farcical it could be—how very farcical!—if we had the chairman of the Chamber of Mines giving evidence from the witness box while already someone had appointed his deputy to sit on the committee! Would it not be a farcical situation? Obviously in fairness to the representatives of the mining industry who have to give evidence before this committee, it would be entirely wrong to have one of their colleagues on the committee.

Exactly the same thing applies to the employee organisations. They would have to give evidence; and if they selected for the committee the best person from the Chamber of Mines and the best person from the employee organisations, they would be the people who would be needed to give the evidence before the committee.

I come back to what I said before. We are throwing overboard all the traditional principles—principles of courts of inquiry, Royal Commissions, Select Committees, and parliamentary committees, that have come to us down through the ages—just for what? Nothing very much would be achieved. There would still be nothing to stop the committee—if it is ultimately decided that it should go to Tokyo, Washington, New York, or anywhere else—taking advisers from the industry itself. That is a fairly common practice. It would be no different from the Prime Minister taking his retinue to London.

Therefore, I do for that reason, as well as the other reasons I have given, say it would be entirely wrong to accept this amendment. It could have the effect of rendering completely ineffectual and innocuous the motion and the intention of the mover. Consequently I regret, as I have already said, that I must oppose the

amendment, and I sincerely trust that Parliament, when it votes on this matter, will realise this is not a matter which affects only the industry. It transcends the very principles for which Parliament itself stands.

**MR. HAWKE** (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) (8.50 p.m.): In his long stonewalling effort the member for Subiaco has put up more Aunt Sallies than I have ever heard put up in the 31½ years I have been in this Parliament.

**Mr. Kelly:** They are all headless, too.

**Mr. HAWKE:** We have even had the Aunt Sally put up of the rights and privileges of Parliament being pushed aside because—

**Mr. Guthrie:** That is an Aunt Sally, is it?

**Mr. HAWKE:**—a member of the House has moved an amendment to give representation on the proposed committee to the Chamber of Mines, which represents the goldmining companies, and to the trade unions whose members are employed as workers in various categories within the goldmining industry.

The committee which is eventually agreed to by Parliament, no matter in what form it might finally be approved, will have a tremendously tough job on its hands if the ultimate objective is to obtain from the Government at Canberra the measure of financial, and possibly other, help which would be required to stabilise the goldmining industry and give it a reasonable chance of expansion in the future.

Therefore the stronger we can make any committee which is to be established, the better—the better will its prospects then be ultimately of getting some worth-while results. Now there is no-one in this Parliament, so far as I am aware, who has had in recent years, close and practical experience of and within the goldmining industry.

**Mr. Guthrie:** The honourable member for Murchison surely has.

**Mr. HAWKE:** He has to some extent, and so has the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre and the honourable member for Merredin-Yilgarn—to some extent. However, they have not had the close, continuous contact with, and experience in, the industry which members of the Chamber of Mines have had and which representatives of the appropriate trade unions have had within that industry. So obviously a committee made up of parliamentary members would be very considerably strengthened by the addition thereto of an expert representative of the Chamber of Mines, and another expert representative approved by the appropriate trade unions.

Ultimately, I think everyone must agree, this committee would have to go to Canberra to support the Premier and the Minister for Mines, who would probably lead it as a delegation to the Prime Minister, the Federal Treasurer, and maybe one other Federal Minister. Now, would not such a delegation be far stronger in every way if the members of it had for several months beforehand been active together in an investigating committee within Western Australia?

Clearly, the members of Parliament who might be on such a committee would be greatly improved in their knowledge, greatly widened and strengthened in their outlook, if in all the investigations and examinations of the committee there had been upon that committee as members an expert representative from the Chamber of Mines and another similar representative from the workers within the industry. All the members of such a committee would be working together, discussing together, and working out propositions together, for many weeks beforehand; and clearly, and beyond any shadow of possible doubt, such a committee would be likely to produce results before an approach to Canberra was made, which would be far in excess in value of any proposals which a committee without expert representation upon it would be likely to bring forward. So clearly there is everything to be gained and nothing to be lost by the House agreeing to the amendment as proposed by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre.

There is another reason why this amendment should be accepted by the honourable member for Murchison and his colleagues on the other side of the House. Any decision by Parliament in this matter should be unanimous. It should be a decision with which we all 100 per cent. agree. That is the sort of committee we should try to set up. I think it would be far more effective in its impression upon the public mind, upon the minds of those particularly interested within Western Australia, and upon those who hold power at Canberra, if this House and the other House, if it is later on brought into the business, were unanimously agreed upon the sort of committee which should be set up, and the personnel which would constitute it.

**Mr. Burt:** You made the first move to disagree.

**Mr. HAWKE:** Pardon?

**Mr. Burt:** Your member made the first move to disagree.

**Mr. HAWKE:** This amendment is not a disagreement.

**Mr. Fletcher:** He went to great pains to explain it.

**Mr. HAWKE:** It is a move to improve and strengthen the motion and make the result of it when it is carried, better and

more effective by establishing a more expert committee by putting on the committee as proposed in the motion at least two expert representatives—

Mr. Burt: That disagrees with the motion.

Mr. HAWKE:—two thoroughly expert representatives. Therefore the amendment is in no way a move to disagree with the motion, but a move very greatly to improve it.

Mr. Burt: You might think it is improving it; I do not.

Mr. HAWKE: If the honourable member for Murchison persists in opposing the amendment, then he creates disagreement, and to that extent he creates lack of unity, and to some extent, division; and the responsibility for all of that comes down then upon the shoulders of the honourable member for Murchison and those on the other side who may care to follow him in what I regard as being a very foolish course to be followed in connection with this matter.

Mr. Bovell: Did the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre confer with the honourable member for Murchison in the matter?

Mr. HAWKE: Did the honourable member for Murchison confer with the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre originally?

Mr. Bovell: He put it on the notice paper; and it would have been courteous of the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre, if he were sincere, if he had conferred with the honourable member for Murchison.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister for Lands does himself far less than justice by suggesting the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre is not sincere in the amendment he has brought forward.

Mr. Bovell: I think he would have achieved his objective much better if he had conferred.

Mr. HAWKE: I am moved to think now, in view of what the Minister for Lands has just said, that he is still reeling mentally under the rebuke, if I might use that term, that had to be administered to him this afternoon when he persisted in trying to override your ruling, Sir, and the Standing Orders of the House.

The honourable member for Boulder-Eyre is in this matter, as in all matters, 100 per cent. sincere. He is very closely associated with the goldmining industry and has by far the greatest proportion of the goldmining industry located in his electorate. He is in close touch all the time with the representatives of the industry—both the representatives of the companies and the representatives of the worker—and he is in close touch with the workers within the industry as well. It ill becomes the Minister for Lands to try to float the suggestion that the honourable member for

Boulder-Eyre is not sincere in the move he has made very greatly to try to improve the motion submitted by the honourable member for Murchison.

Mr. Bovell: Why didn't he confer with the honourable member for Murchison?

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister for Lands, by interjection, asks me why the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre did not confer with the honourable member for Murchison. I do not know. All I say in reply is that if in the superior attitude and reasoning of the Minister for Lands, the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre should have conferred with the honourable member for Murchison in relation to any amendment, or the wording of any amendment, which the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre may have thought of moving, then, equally, the honourable member for Murchison was remiss in not conferring initially with the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre in relation to the wording of the motion which the honourable member for Murchison tabled in this House some time ago.

Mr. Bickerton: And also other goldfields members.

Mr. HAWKE: I hope the compromise I have indirectly suggested is acceptable to the Minister for Lands. I support the amendment.

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

#### Ayes—21

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. D. G. May
Mr. Brady	Mr. Molr
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. Evans	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. H. May
Mr. Kelly	

(Teller.)

#### Noes—22

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brand	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Burt	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Court	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Wild
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hart	Mr. O'Neill

(Teller.)

#### Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Curran	Dr. Henn
Mr. Heal	Mr. Crommelin

Majority against—1.

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

MR. BOVELL (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [9.7 p.m.]: I desire to take this opportunity to say a few words on behalf of the Minister for Mines. The honourable member for Murchison has at heart the goldmining industry; and his attitude and action in bringing this matter before the House is most commendable. The

amendment has been dealt with and we are back on the motion, and I intend to read the motion again for the benefit of those honourable members who are interested. The motion, as originally moved, is as follows:—

That in view of the refusal of the International Monetary fund at its meeting in Tokyo last week, to agree to any increase in the world price of gold, and bearing in mind the tremendous importance of the goldmining industry to Western Australia and the difficulties which the industry is facing due to rising costs of production, an all-Party Parliamentary Committee be appointed with the object of examining and exploring means by which the industry in Western Australia can be assured of stabilisation and expansion in the future.

When I spoke on the amendment, I submitted to the House vital statistics which were of great interest. They showed the production of gold at the present time and the overall production of gold since gold was first discovered in Western Australia. Unfortunately the mining industry has its ebb tides, and sometimes the tide flows. In recent years the ebb tides have been more apparent than the flood tides.

Western Australia is indebted to the goldmining industry, because in the latter part of last century the industry did attract people to this State. As a youth, or as a child, I went to the goldfields and lived at Kookynie and Leonora.

Mr. Graham: That will help the motion along.

Mr. BOVELL: It will, I am sure, because I have some sentimental attachment to the pioneers of the goldmining industry as a result of my personal experience. Although I am getting on in years I do appreciate the difficulties which must have been experienced by the pioneers of the goldmining industry. But even in those days—and that was during the first World War—the towns of Kookynie and Leonora were showing signs of recession.

When we look at Coolgardie and see the wonderful buildings that were erected there in the latter part of the last century, we realise the great efforts that the pioneers of the goldmining industry put into the development of this most valuable industry. I emphasise that it was the goldmining industry that brought people to Western Australia; and I believe that because of their coming here in great numbers in those days from the Eastern States, they overwhelmed local Western Australians; and I think that the goldfields areas were responsible for carrying the vote, when the referendum was taken, in favour of the federation of Australia.

So the goldfields pioneers have contributed to the development of this country as a nation and as a State. The proposals

for federation were before my time, but they were viewed with some concern by Western Australians in those days; and it was only after Sir John Forrest, who was Premier at the time, got certain undertakings from those who were sponsoring federation, that he sponsored it in Western Australia. The result was an overwhelming vote in favour of federation, and Western Australia joined in the Commonwealth. Experience has shown, I think, that that has been to the advantage of all concerned. I always say that I am a Western Australian; but in addition I am an Australian.

The motion has much to commend it; and I not only want to commend the motion to the House, but I want to commend the honourable member for Murchison for submitting it. The position of the goldmining industry in Western Australia is very serious. We, as a State, can ill afford to lose the third or fourth largest industry in the State. Every possible means must be taken to protect and foster it.

Mr. Bickerton: How many men are on the all-party committee?

Mr. BOVELL: We have not got any on it yet, but it is proposed that there shall be six. I should like some clarification on that point when the honourable member for Murchison replies.

Mr. Bickerton: It is very hard to support the motion. There may be 50 on the committee.

Mr. BOVELL: Fifty on the committee? I understand that the proposal of the member for Murchison is to have a committee of six.

Mr. Bickerton: I understood you were supporting the motion.

Mr. BOVELL: I am.

Mr. Bickerton: How can you support it without knowing how many men will be on it?

Mr. BOVELL: I am going to ask the honourable member for Murchison, when he replies, to indicate how many members will be on the committee. I think that when he moved the motion he said there would be six parliamentary representatives on it. But I am not quite clear whether those six representatives are to comprise three members from the Legislative Assembly and three from the Legislative Council, or whether it is desired by the honourable member to have six members from the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Bickerton: I am only trying to clarify the position. If the House votes for the motion, which envisages putting three honourable members from another place on the committee, are they automatically bound to be appointed?

Mr. BOVELL: I do not think they are. The procedure would be that we would pass the motion in this House and send

our resolution to another place for its concurrence. If it did not concur we could carry on with the motion and presumably appoint six honourable members from this Chamber.

Mr. Graham: It is a pity the honourable member for Murchison is not present in the Chamber so that he could clarify the position.

Mr. Brand: He will not be far away.

Mr. Graham: He is not displaying much interest in the debate.

Mr. BOVELL: He is only temporarily absent from the Chamber. There are occasions when circumstances arise which do not make it possible for an honourable member to be present in the Chamber, and I would point out that the honourable member for Murchison has been in the Chamber during the whole of the debate on this motion.

Mr. Graham: He has not heard one word of yours. My word, he is missing something!

Mr. BOVELL: He had no idea of what I was going to say, or what the Government's attitude would be towards his motion.

Mr. Graham: Neither did you; you wanted an adjournment of the debate earlier.

Mr. BOVELL: During the tea suspension I made some research, as a result of which I was able to obtain some vital and important statistics on the goldmining industry of Western Australia.

Mr. Moir: Now talk about the amendment.

Mr. BOVELL: We are not talking about the amendment now, but the motion. The honourable member for Balcatta has referred to the absence from the Chamber at the present moment of the honourable member for Murchison who is now just entering the Chamber. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that when I was speaking to the amendment the honourable member for Balcatta was not in his seat. Therefore it is quite appropriate that that should be mentioned.

Mr. Graham: The only difference is that the motion does not happen to be mine.

Mr. BOVELL: That does not matter. The honourable member is referring to the absence of the honourable member for Murchison from the Chamber for a few minutes, but the honourable member for Balcatta was absent from the Chamber for quite a long period when I informed the House of the overall position of the goldmining industry today and quoted vital statistics from the day gold was first discovered, and its value to Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: I heard you were going to speak and that is why I absented myself.

Mr. BOVELL: The honourable member for Balcatta is running true to type! He just cannot take it and so he goes away from the Chamber.

Mr. Graham: The Minister does not know the first thing about the motion.

Mr. BOVELL: I have indicated that the Government is sympathetic towards the proposal. It commends the honourable member for Murchison on his initiative in bringing this motion before the House. When introducing it, he indicated in his address that six members of Parliament would form the committee. I have asked for some clarification of this to be given; that is, whether it is proposed that three honourable members from this Chamber and three honourable members from another place shall comprise the committee, or whether it shall be formed of six honourable members from this Chamber alone. If it is the honourable member's desire that three honourable members from another place shall be appointed to the committee we can send our resolution to another place for its concurrence. I agree to the motion.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [9.19 p.m.]: Honourable members will not be surprised to find that, as the second speaker from the Opposition side of the Chamber, I support the motion. However, you will agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that after perusing the motion as moved by the honourable member for Murchison, one can readily appreciate that it needs a great deal of support. In the earlier part of the debate, members of the Opposition tried to support it by amending it.

Before examining the motion in detail I take this opportunity—which you in your discretion denied me already this evening—of clarifying a statement which the Minister for Lands made when speaking to the debate. He said that honourable members representing the goldmining districts were being facetious. Being one of the four honourable members representing goldfields electorates on this side of the House I took umbrage at that.

Mr. Bovell: I was referring to honourable members opposite, but if the cap fits, wear it.

Mr. EVANS: The Minister referred to honourable members of the Opposition being facetious and I took umbrage at that, being one of four Opposition members representing goldfields districts. I commend the motion, but I feel that, even in its present form, it needs not only commending, but also amending in many directions. If the motion is carried, who is going to appoint the committee? The motion does not make any mention of that. The Minister suggested that the motion, when carried, should be sent to another place for its concurrence, but the motion, in its present form, does not state who shall be appointed.



Mr. Bovell: That will come later.

Mr. EVANS: Why should it come later? Why should it not be presented in clear form in the motion? As was said by the honourable member for Subiaco when reading the document in front of him, I am guided by the words I see. If the motion is agreed to, people will still be groping to find out who will be appointed to the committee. Where are the members of the committee to come from? Are there to be three appointed from this Chamber and three honourable members to be appointed from another place? Or are all the members of the committee to be appointed from this Chamber?

Mr. Bovell: We will find that out after the motion is carried. If the honourable member studied parliamentary procedure he would realise that the motion for the composition of the committee comes after this motion is carried.

Mr. EVANS: Other motions always give some indication of the constituencies of the members who shall comprise the committee, but this motion does not. I naturally support the motion. My views will rest strongly with the committee that is formed. I hope that within the ambit of the terms of the motion it will be as strong as possible and I hope that success will be the fruits of our efforts here this evening and that Western Australia will gain a rich reward. I hope the results gained by this investigating committee will not only be a shot in the arm for the goldmining industry, but also a shot in the arm for the economy of Western Australia.

In my view the committee could achieve a great deal, but not as much as it could have achieved if it had appointed to it other representatives of the goldmining industry. Nevertheless, I consider that the committee is worthy of strong support, and I take this opportunity of expressing my support and my intention of voting for the motion; but I regret that the amendment as moved by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre was not carried for the purpose of strengthening the proposed committee.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [9.23 p.m.]: Briefly, I wish to say a few words in support of the motion. We are certainly voting for something that is very broad, however. Admittedly the honourable member for Murchison during the course of his speech said that he thought the committee would be comprised of three honourable members from this Chamber and three honourable members from another place, but nevertheless we are asked to support something that is not specific, and in my opinion the number of members to be appointed to the committee could be specified. After hearing the dissertation of the honourable member for

Subiaco on the proper way to present various matters, I suggest that he could spend some time with the honourable member for Murchison on this motion and really improve his ideas.

At this stage the goldmining industry is very sick, and whether an all-party parliamentary committee is the answer to its rejuvenation does not really matter. At least the appointment of a committee as proposed in the motion is a beginning and is something towards endeavouring to assist the industry which, as I have said, at this stage dearly needs assistance. It is a great pity that the Commonwealth Government has not seen fit to attend the party of its own accord long before this, particularly in the light of the view it must have of the goldmining industry in the economy of the nation.

My electorate does not embrace a great deal of goldmining, but there are goldmining opportunities existing within it. A good quantity of gold comes from the Pilbara goldfield, but a much greater number of mines would be operating if the price of gold were raised above the level it is on today. If this committee does get established it could possibly do something towards bringing to the notice of those responsible for the continuance of this industry the need for its rejuvenation so that it can flourish, and I sincerely hope it will achieve its objective.

The task of the members who are appointed to the committee would not be an enviable one. There is a lot of hard work ahead of it. No doubt much of the information it seeks is available, but it is a mission that needs the support of every honourable member of Parliament of both Houses and, in supporting the motion, I wish it every success.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [9.26 p.m.]: I did not intend to intervene in this debate; but in support of other speakers on this side of the House who have spoken to the motion I want to say a few words. The importance of the goldmining industry to the State has been pointed out rather clearly to the House. In bringing the motion forward the honourable member for Murchison has, in the words of the Minister for Lands, earned the approbation of the Minister himself. However, I think the Minister might have taken some notice when the honourable member for Murchison, in moving the motion, indicated that he got the idea for his motion from the Labor Caucus meeting that was held on the goldfields recently.

It is very significant that most of the progressive moves emanate from meetings of members of the Labor Party, and therefore it was very pleasing to those on this side of the House to hear the honourable member for Murchison acknowledging that his motion had been suggested by the Labor Caucus meeting.

My only regret is that the amendment moved by the honourable member for Boulder-Eyre did not meet with the success it deserved; but I hope that the committee, when formed—as mentioned by the honourable member for Kalgoorlie, it is not stated who shall form it—will, as an outcome of its deliberations, meet with success; because, having visited the goldfields in August last and gained a closer knowledge of the workings of the goldmines, I am certain that there is a grave necessity for something to be done for the industry very soon. As I said a while ago, I hope the committee will meet with the success it deserves.

**MR. KELLY** (Merredin-Yilgarn) [9.28 p.m.]: I, too, do not intend to take much time in stating the views I want to state on this motion. Naturally any motion that seeks to assist the goldmining industry is worthy of support because there is no doubt that at the present time the industry is at a low ebb. During the last four or five years a number of goldmines have closed down, and at the moment there are one or two that are not in a very secure position.

Unless the appointment of this committee can bring about a decided improvement in the industry the future, in a general sense, holds very little for it. Probably the only exception would be the Golden Mile. During the past three or four years, five mines in the Yilgarn goldfield and one on the Coolgardie goldfield have closed down. We have seen the Sons of Gwalia goldmine cease operations; and although the honourable member for Murchison seemed to be satisfied that no more gold existed at Gwalia, I would point out to the House that the Sons of Gwalia goldmine was in production for over 60 years. On a number of occasions it reached just as low an ebb during that period of time as it had reached prior to its closing down.

Had the honourable member taken time to read the history of the Sons of Gwalia mine from its inception he would find that at the nine level, which was not far advanced in the history of this mine, the geologists said it was finished; that no more gold existed. Finance was found and, after a continuation of effort, it was so successful that by the 16 level the mine was again in value. So its history over the whole 60 years of operation was one of making and breaking. With the advance that had been made with this mine over this long period of time I suggest that even at this late stage it could again have come good had it been given the financial shot in the arm it required.

I well remember that when the first application was made, while I was Minister for Mines, the critics said it would be suicide to keep this mine going. But the

Government of the day came to its assistance, and as a result it was able to continue and pay a profit after the Government of the day had advanced it sufficient money to carry out what it wanted to do. It is a crying shame that this mine with its history should have been allowed to close down without any apparent attempt being made to help it continue its operations.

**Mr. Burt:** Do you know that the directors of the mine wanted to close it two years before they did?

**Mr. KELLY:** I know of cases where the directors of mines have wanted to close them before they should have been closed. The same thing happened at Westonia where two years before the mine actually closed down the directors wanted to move the machinery to somewhere where it would be more profitable, and they decided by their directors' powers to close the mine. For two years the mine developed more ore, and at the time of its closing down it was in a far better position than previously. The manager at the time, who was reputed to have a lot of knowledge of the industry, said he was satisfied that had it not been for the decision of the directors two years earlier the mine could have gone on indefinitely because of new values that were found. So that cannot be brought up as a reason why the mine was closed down.

**Mr. Burt:** There was money available for Gwalia.

**Mr. KELLY:** I am trying to point out that on previous occasions during the mine's development down to 34 and 35 level it had gone through this self-same position when the geologists and those in the know were definite in their ideas that the mine was finished. Yet on each occasion, after being given sufficient assistance to carry it through its difficult period, the mine was brought back into production. The same thing could have happened during the period when the mine was under sentence.

**Mr. Burt:** There was plenty of assistance available for anything on which they could use it in 1963.

**Mr. KELLY:** There was not plenty of assistance available at all.

**Mr. Burt:** There was money available for any exploratory work they wanted to do.

**Mr. KELLY:** Had the mine been able to carry out the exploratory work it wanted to do when it was struggling it would have been able to climb back to the prosperity it knew on previous occasions. It is all very well for the honourable member for Murchison to say that resources were available to it. These resources were not available until well after the decision to close the mine. This has happened all too often.

We have had other mines doing the same thing, simply because they find themselves in an unfruitful patch, and somebody had to supply the capital to keep them going. However, that is beside the point. There is no doubt that the industry is at the crossroads, and if the motion has the desired effect it will at least achieve something for the industry. After having read the motion I feel it is very incomplete, and I think there should be included in it a provision which will make it more worth while. If the House is prepared to pass it in its present form, I presume that the honourable member for Murchison will be able to announce on the passing of the motion all the things that should be done, and that are not proposed to be done by the motion in its present form.

**MR. GUTHRIE** (Subiaco) [9.36 p.m.]: As I indicated when I was speaking on the amendment earlier I am not completely satisfied that the motion contains all the words that the mover and the other members on both sides of the House obviously wish to see in it. I do not pretend to be an expert on Standing Orders, but I do appreciate that where a committee of five, six, seven, or something of that nature, is nominated in a motion it is possible for the honourable member moving the motion to follow on and name his committee. I have a recollection of having done just that myself on the one and only Select Committee for which I ever moved.

I would doubt very much with the time at my disposal for the study of Standing Orders as to whether this motion is capable of reaching the end which members of this House I feel certain wish it to reach, and for that reason I do intend before I resume my seat to move an amendment in the form of an addendum to be added to the motion.

I merely indicate that at this juncture so that members will realise the position if I do not again turn my attention to that aspect. Before I resume my seat I will read the addendum which I think will give the necessary teeth to the motion which members on both sides of the House have indicated it requires.

**Mr. Graham:** Have you copies of the amendment?

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** Yes. I will explain that it is to go at the end of the motion. I would now like to turn to the major purpose of the motion. As I said when I was speaking previously, this is an industry that has returned to Western Australia very nearly £500,000,000 in the course of the history of this State.

As I indicated earlier the reason that I live in this State is that in the year 1894 my father did come here and go to the goldfields, and I lived my early life there. So I have some background knowledge of the goldmining industry. I realise that over the years it has gone through its ups and

downs, and costs have risen and have caught up with the then current price of gold, and this has forced the operators to mine richer and richer ground in comparison with what they were mining; and this has been done to the detriment of the particular mine.

I well remember being told by my father that when difficulties developed at the Lancefield mine at Beria, where I was born, the then operator was forced to mine the pillars that supported the mine. The Lancefield mine went down on the underlay and, subsequently, when it was reopened in 1936—as members of this House will recall; those connected with the goldfields will certainly recollect—it completely collapsed, because the physical support was taken away from that mine. That is an instance of the tragedies forced on the goldmining industry.

I understand, and I believe, that had the Lancefield mine not collapsed it would have continued as a gold producer for some years to come. I am led to believe from information I have received that the great mines of Kalgoorlie are forced to seek better ore, because if they mine as they would like to mine they would be operating on an unproductive and uneconomic basis. It is a great tragedy to a great industry.

I have often wondered what is the real future of the goldmining industry. I do not pretend to be an economist or an international financier, but I must admit I have always found it difficult to understand just what part gold plays in the financial affairs of the world. It always strikes me as somewhat paradoxical to be told on the one hand that the international monetary system could not do without gold, and to be told on the other hand that the international monetary system will not stand an increase in the price of gold.

As a layman that attitude does not seem consistent to me. It would seem to me that if gold is necessary and essential to support the currencies of the world, it would be equally essential I should have thought for the great nations of the world to ensure that goldmining could continue on an economic basis.

I understand from reading the Press that it is not only in this country that the pinch is felt; it is also felt on the great goldfields of the Rand in South Africa where they operate at a much cheaper cost than we do here. So I hope all these aspects will be examined by the committee. I hope it will take the opportunity of making inquiries not only from the industry but from people who can give us a background picture of what gold means, so that it can be put in simple terms, to enable simple people like myself to understand what the future of gold is throughout the world and in this State.

I would hope that this could be a starting point. I have very great fears that in the long run the final decision rests with a

great power overseas. I am also not un-mindful that that very great power overseas gives large amounts of assistance to under-privileged countries; and I often wonder why it bothers so much when an increase in the price of gold will assist one of its true allies—an ally who has always supported it at the drop of a handkerchief.

I do not wish to weary the House, but I will get to the point of what I propose to move as an amendment to this motion. The only way I can see of making the motion effective is to add at the end of the motion as it appears on the notice paper the following sentence:—

The committee shall consist of two members nominated by the Premier and one member nominated by the Leader of the Opposition from the Legislative Assembly, and that the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council for its concurrence, and the Legislative Council be requested to appoint a similar number of members to the committee, making a total of six members.

In explanation, I would point out that the words of the motion moved by the honourable member for Murchison make reference to an all-party committee, so when I refer to two members nominated by the Premier, it is quite clear that the Premier's obligation will be to select one from the Liberal Party and one from the Country Party. The task of the Leader of the Opposition is quite clear.

So far as the Legislative Council is concerned, it is not for us to tell it how it will select its three members. Three members will come from this Assembly, and we are asking the Legislative Council to appoint a similar number to take part in an all-party committee. The Legislative Council can determine its own way of selecting these people. It would be improper for us to tell another place how to go about selecting the three representatives to join this committee, and that they should be one from each party.

Mr. Graham: Why should we suggest even the number if you are so touchy about it?

Mr. GUTHRIE: The mechanics of it are to have an equal number from each House; but we should not tell the Leader of the Council to select two and the Leader of the Opposition in the Council to select one.

Mr. Graham: If the Council elects three Liberal members it will defeat the whole purpose.

Mr. GUTHRIE: The motion provides for an all-party committee.

Mr. Graham: It would be an all-party committee with one Labor member out of six of them.

Mr. GUTHRIE: The honourable member for Balcatta can move another amendment to make that clear. The inference is quite clear that it is to be representative of all

parties and it will mean one representative from each party from each place—a similar number and, I would suggest, a similar type.

I move an amendment—

#### *Amendment to Motion*

That the following words be added to the motion:—

The committee shall consist of two members nominated by the Premier and one member nominated by the Leader of the Opposition from the Legislative Assembly; and that the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council for its concurrence, and the Legislative Council be requested to appoint a similar number of members to the committee, making a total of six members.

Mr. Graham: I wonder if the Minister wants an adjournment of this?

Mr. Hawke: Surely the Minister is not going to support this?

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [9.48 p.m.]: We are in a strange situation here, Mr. Speaker. The amendment is moved to the motion, but the mover of the motion does not say, "Yes" or "Maybe". The Minister representing the Minister for Mines does not say "Yes", "No", or "Maybe", or "Perhaps". The Premier is obviously relaxing, so we can excuse him from saying "Yes", "No", "Maybe", or "Perhaps".

Mr. Graham: He has earned the relaxation.

Mr. HAWKE: The mover of this amendment has very tender feelings towards the Legislative Council. He does not propose to presume that we should suggest to the Legislative Council that it follow the same practice down there in having its members appointed to the proposed committee as he proposes in his amendment that we shall follow here. I cannot see any possible objection to at least suggesting, or at most suggesting, to the Legislative Council that the same procedure be followed down there in principle as is proposed in this amendment to be followed here.

There is some merit in the point brought forward by interjection from the member for Balcatta. This amendment proposes that the Premier, presumably the Premier of Western Australia, is to nominate two members to the committee from the Legislative Assembly, and the Leader of the Opposition, presumably the Leader of the Opposition in Western Australia, is to nominate one from the Legislative Assembly, to the committee. Then the Legislative Council is to be requested to appoint three members to the committee. If we are going to presume to request—going farther than suggesting in this amendment by the honourable member for Subiaco—the Legislative Council to appoint a specific

number, surely we would be justified in suggesting it follow a similar procedure in relation to nominating three members, if it agrees to the motion and agrees to nominate on the same basis as is proposed for the Legislative Assembly.

I do not like this amendment at all really, because it proposes to give to the Government four members and to the Opposition two members. The proportion there, in my judgment, is most unreasonable; and, therefore, unfair. I should think if we had a committee of, say, seven and the Government had four and Opposition three, that would be much fairer and much better in proportion to the total number of members the Government has in the Parliament compared with the total number of members the Opposition has in the Parliament.

However, I think the honourable member for Subiaco might at least suggest in his amendment to the Legislative Council that it follow the same procedure in relation to the appointment of its three members, if it agrees to have anything to do with the motion, as we are asked to do by this amendment in this House. That would at least ensure that the Opposition in the Legislative Council would get one of the three members to be appointed from down there, if the Legislative Council finally agrees to appoint three. If we leave it as it is, it is open to them; and we are sort of suggesting the Legislative Council should conduct a secret ballot by requesting it to appoint three members to the committee and in not laying down any suggestion as to how it may appoint them. I think honourable members there would probably be much happier if we did suggest in this amendment they follow the same line as the Assembly will shortly approve, I presume, in relation to the appointment of the Assembly members.

**MR. BURT** (Murchison) [9.54 p.m.]: I thank the honourable member for Subiaco for bringing forward this amendment. When speaking to my original motion this afternoon I concluded with these words—

If this motion is carried I shall move a consequential motion that the proposed committee consist of six members, being one member from each party in both Houses.

I think what I meant is pretty clear there. Apparently my desire to move a consequential motion was not quite correct and the matter has been adequately covered by the amendment moved by the honourable member for Subiaco. I think members of the House realise that the idea is to have three members from each House, and each member to be representative of a separate party in each House.

**Amendment (to add words) put and passed.**

**Motion, as amended, put and passed.**

*House adjourned at 9.55 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 24th September, 1964

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