

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th August, 1943.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (8).

LAND, PINGRUP.

As to Goddard-Solly Lease.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands: Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House all papers relative to the property at Pingrup formerly occupied by A. E. Goddard, comprising Kent Locations 951 and 388, and the lease thereof or portion thereof, to one S. J. Solly?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Minister for Lands) replied: I will move that the papers be laid on the Table of the House for one week.

On motion by the Minister for Works ordered: That these papers be laid on the Table of the House for one week.

WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

As to Manager's Interest in Private Works.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it a fact that the manager of the Government Meat Works at Wyndham is interested in a meat works, other than the Government one, operating in the North-West? 2, Does the manager of the Government Meat Works sign the cheques of a meat works other than the Government one operating in the North-West? 3, If the answer to No. 1 is in the affirmative, does he consider it right that the manager of the Government Meat Works should have a financial interest in a competing company? 4, If not, what action does he propose to take?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: 1, Only as deputy on behalf of two sons serving in the R.A.A.F. outside the State. 2, Answered by No. 1. Cheques drawn by the Government Meat Works are not signed by the manager. 3, There is no competition between these two meatworks. No cattle treated at the privately-owned works are, or ever were, drawn from areas supplying the Government-owned works. 4, These works are providing a very valuable addition to the war effort and under the circumstances outlined in answer No. 1 it is not my intention to take any action.

SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

As to Insurance against Accidents.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister representing the Minister for Education: 1, Have the inquiries made last February into the question of providing an extension of the insurance cover on children travelling in school buses been completed? 2, If so, has it been possible to effect a better cover? 3, If the answer to No. 2 is in the affirmative, what proposals have been adopted? 4, If the answer to No. 2 is in the negative, what has prevented better cover from being arranged?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The Government has agreed to effect insurance with the State Government Insurance Office to cover injuries sustained by a child while he is being driven to school under a departmental contract, where no liability would attach to the bus driver. The conditions of the insurance are that the accident occurs between the time of leaving the school to enter the bus and the arrival at the child's destination on the route; and that the accident is not caused by any gross negligence or carelessness on the part of the injured child. Compensation payable is £25 in the case of the death of a child, plus medical and hospital expenses up to £100.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

As to Lease of Lawson Flats.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: 1, Is it intended to continue permanently the existing arrangement under which the offices of the Premier, the Minister for Lands and the Under Treasurer are situated in Lawson Flats? 2, If not, how long is the present

arrangement to continue? 3, How much accommodation is the Government occupying in Lawson Flats? 4, For what term has that accommodation been secured? 5, What rental is being paid for such accommodation? 6, What amount of rent has been paid up to 30th June, 1943?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, On the advice of a special committee, departments and records situated in the Treasury Buildings were dispersed last year. The Public Service Commissioner was recently asked to report as to what extent return to the conditions previously existing is practicable. He has advised that the increase in civil defence personnel and in other temporary staffs carrying out wartime duties on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, coupled with the fact that part of the building has been leased to the R.A.A.F. for certain special requirements, and an air raid shelter has been constructed, has reduced the accommodation previously available to such an extent that it is impossible to house all departments where they were previously situated. 3, Nine rooms, covering 3,067 square feet. 4, A twelve months' lease which expired on the 14th March, 1943, thereafter as a monthly tenancy. 5, £598 per annum. 6, £747 10s.

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

As to Supplies to Military Authorities.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What quantity of superphosphate was supplied to the Military Authorities at Hamersley siding this year? 2, Was such superphosphate for use on the property known as "Wilberforce," at present leased to the Military Authorities? 3, What area of wheat was sown for (a) hay, (b) grain, and what area was top-dressed? 4, What amount of superphosphate per acre was granted for the purposes of (a) and (b) of the previous question, and for top-dressing?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: 1, 70 tons. 2, Yes. 3 (a) 320 acres, (b) nil, (c) 2,800 acres. 4, (a) 50 lbs. per acre, (b) nil, (c) 50 lbs. per acre.

GALVANISED CORRUGATED IRON.

As to Supplies for Domestic Use.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Industrial Development: 1, Are there any sup-

plies of 24-gauge galvanised corrugated iron in Western Australia available for distribution to plumbers for domestic tanks and similar purposes? 2, If so, where are these supplies obtainable? 3, If not, what arrangements are being made urgently to bring supplies into Western Australia for the purposes mentioned?

The MINISTER replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, There is an Australia-wide shortage of this type of iron and all production is being absorbed by the Defence Services and the Allied Works Council. Representations have been made through Senator Fraser, with a view to obtaining the release of some supplies for essential civil services in this State.

WHEAT ACREAGE RESTRICTION.

As to Areas Voluntarily Reduced.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Agriculture: To what conference between representatives of wheatgrowers and officers of the Department of Agriculture does he refer in the statement in "The West Australian" of the 4th August, 1943, concerning the right of farmers in subsequent years to plant the licensed area of wheat notwithstanding a voluntary reduction this year?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: A conference held at the Department of Agriculture on 16th June, 1943, to which representatives of the Primary Producers' Association, Wheat Growers' Union, and Royal Agricultural Society were invited.

DEATH PENALTY FOR RAPE.

As to Legislation.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Has he been approached regarding legislation to provide for the death penalty for rape? 2, If not, will he give consideration to this suggestion with a view to action? 3, Has he any information as to whether the New South Wales legislation in this regard acts as a better deterrent than our existing law?

The MINISTER replied: 1, 2, and 3, No.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2.15 p.m.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Premier, ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all motions and orders of the day.

MOTION—COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

THE PREMIER [2.26]: I move—

That the following members be appointed to serve on the sessional Committees during the present session:—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Tonkin and Mr. Patrick.

Standing Orders.—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Doney, Mr. Withers and Mr. North.

House.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Needham, Mr. McLarty, Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Wilson.

Printing.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Thorn and Mr. Triat.

MR. CROSS (Canning): I notice that at the beginning of each session these various committees are appointed, partly by the Premier—

The Premier: No.

MR. CROSS:—and after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. I have been here for about 10 years and have not yet seen or heard of any report from the House Committee or any of the others.

MR. DONEY: I know that some have been submitted to the House.

MR. CROSS: I would like to be informed when such reports are made available so that members may know something of the working of these various committees.

Question put and passed.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,500,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

THE PREMIER [2.32]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1944, a sum not exceeding £2,500,000.

In moving this motion I have to state that the amount which appears in the motion, until the Estimates are passed by Parliament, is required for the following purposes:—

To meet expenditure from—

Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	£2,000,000
General Loan Fund ..	200,000
Advance to Treasurer ..	300,000

The Estimates for the current year are being prepared and will be presented to Parliament at an early date. War conditions have precluded the expenditure of loan moneys for developmental work, and only essential requirements can be entertained. On the other hand, the war has created conditions not prevailing in peacetime with the result that the cost of administering public requirements out of Consolidated Revenue Fund has increased. Consequently the supply needed for the present has been increased by £150,000 to meet the increased payments from Consolidated Revenue Fund. Last year the first Supply Act passed provided—

From Consolidated Revenue Fund..	£1,850,000
From General Loan Fund ..	200,000
From the Public Accounts Advance to Treasurer ..	300,000

Expenditure is closely scrutinised and kept to essential requirements, but increased expenditure under present-day conditions has to be met in regard to civil defence, concession fares to soldiers, superannuation payments on behalf of State employees with the Defence Forces, war damage insurance, increased cost of transport, increased cost of basic wage and cost of supplies, etc. The expenditure for the first three months of last year, out of Consolidated Revenue, not including special Acts, amounted to £1,922,120. Interest and sinking fund payments are permanently provided and are included in expenditure under special Acts. The advance to Treasurer is provided to meet special immediate expenditure that cannot for the time being be charged to votes or accounts.

It was estimated last financial year that there would be a deficit of £33,810. The year,

however, closed with a surplus of £24,436, being £58,246 better than the Estimates. Members may have noticed that there is always a substantial deficit in the accounts for the month of July whereas June is usually a good month. I made inquiries so as to be able to inform the Committee of the reason for this. It is brought about because there is a heavy interest payment in London during July and, although interest is spread over the year, the exchange is not and the cost of the exchange, therefore, falls in July, and the payment last month was over £100,000. Another reason why we have a deficit for the month of July is that we are approximately £60,000 down on our revenue because no payment has been received from the Commonwealth Government for the Commonwealth grant allowed by the Disabilities Commission. I thought members might be curious regarding this phase of governmental finance, and so I have taken the opportunity to explain it at this stage.

MR. WATTS (Katanning): I intend to offer no objection to the passage of the motion because it is obviously necessary that the Government should be authorised to incur this expenditure. The Premier has given us reasons why the amount is greater than that which was contained in last year's resolution, and for the time being those reasons may be taken as sufficient. Any criticism we may wish to offer—and doubtless there will be some criticism to make regarding the Government's financial operations for the year just passed and its expectations for the future—can be better dealt with after the Budget has been introduced. In the circumstances, this motion will receive my support.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

On motion by the Premier resolved—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1944, a sum not exceeding £2,000,000 be granted out of Consolidated Revenue Fund £200,000 from the General Loan Fund and £300,000 from the Public Account.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

All Stages.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages without debate and transmitted to the Council.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 5th August.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [2.42]: Before I address myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I wish to extend to the Premier, publicly as I have done privately, on my own behalf and on behalf of those associated with me our best wishes for many happy returns of yesterday, which, I understand, was his birthday.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Doney: The Premier has never before been 64.

Mr. WATTS: Whatever may be our political views, we have considerable personal regard for the hon. gentleman and shall be very glad to see him remain a member of this House, although we on this side would be much better pleased if he would change sides with us for the remainder of his political career. Perhaps that possibility might not be quite out of court, but doubtless it will be better not to enter upon any discussion of a matter of that kind in too much detail at this stage. I should like to say also how glad we all are to see the Minister for Works so greatly improved in health, and the same observations apply to my colleague, the member for Wagin. It is with great pleasure that we see both those hon. gentlemen able to be present and take their parts in the affairs of the House. I have reason to believe that the member for Roebourne has effected, to some extent anyhow, a very good recovery, and I trust that he will soon be with us and able to take his part in our deliberations. And lastly, I think we all join in expressing regret at the serious ill-health of the member for Nelson. We trust that he may soon be in the happy position of the other hon. gentlemen I have mentioned and be restored to us for a further period.

I dare say that, with a little hard work, it might be possible for me to find something upon which I could commend His Majesty's Government in this State. But I do not intend to exercise my mind in that direction, because of an unfortunate

feature in the political game, if I may call it so, of this country. If out of one hundred remarks of the Opposition ninety-nine represent criticisms of the Government, and one represents commendation, when an election comes round the one of commendation will be referred to, and the other ninety-nine disregarded. Therefore it is wise for me to refrain from making that one commendatory observation, thus saving trouble in the future. With those feelings in mind, my contribution to the debate this afternoon will be addressed largely to reproving where necessary the Government for what we consider to be wrong in its actions and to point out, where practicable, where such action could have been better applied to the particular subject-matter. With that object in view I propose to start off by paying some attention to the Government's attitude, as I see it, towards the State Parliament. That attitude, in my opinion, seems one of resentment against the activities of the State Parliament, from which, be it noted, the Government holds its office, and without the support of which it could not continue in office.

It is my view that during the past few years the Government has not taken anything like sufficient notice of the desires of this Parliament. I know the Government will probably hold, or state, that this Parliament consists of two Houses, one of which is responsible for the democratic institutions of the country being elected upon adult suffrage, and that therefore this is the House to which the Government should pay particular regard. For my part I believe in paying equal attention to both Houses of the State Parliament, because the Constitution lays down that except as regards financial matters both Houses have the same authority. However, in order not to get into a constitutional argument of that character with my friends opposite I shall content myself with saying that my remarks apply particularly to the neglect of the Government to pay attention, or much attention, to the wishes of the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly, which is elected on adult suffrage, is therefore in the opinion of members opposite a purely democratic House. In connection with this point I will not say one word in regard to another place.

Mr. Fox: It would be dangerous!

Mr. WATTS: I will give the reason. There is no necessity for me to do so be-

cause my case is sufficiently strong without it, and will occupy enough of the time of the House if it is restricted to dealing with the Legislative Assembly and without going any further into the question. Even the member for South Fremantle will probably agree, when I have finished, that the sin, if it can be classed as one, to which I have referred is a fairly obvious one. I shall start off in this regard with some reference to civil defence and the lighting and other restrictions imposed by regulation under the Act passed in 1940 by this Parliament.

The Minister for Mines: Cannot you start off at the other end of this bench?

Mr. WATTS: On the 22nd August, 1940, the Minister for Civil Defence quoted in this Chamber an agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments. He referred to the agreed policy of civil defence and said in the course of his remarks that at the conference between State and Commonwealth representatives it had been decided that—

2. In the execution of that policy, the Governments of the Commonwealth and of the States also agree that—(a) The preparation of suitable schemes of passive protection of the civil population and the application of such schemes in time of emergency are essentially a responsibility of each particular State.

In pursuance of that agreement this House adopted the Minister's Bill; and he proceeded, as the responsible Minister, to make regulations thereunder. These regulations were subsequently disallowed by the Legislative Council, mainly on two points—the restriction on lighting of country vehicles, and the restriction on shop-window advertisements. The motion for disallowance appeared also on the notice paper of this Chamber, and there is no shadow of doubt—this will be exemplified by what took place later—that had that motion been discussed here those regulations would have been disallowed by this House. However, the regulations having been disallowed in another place at an earlier time, the motion was never discussed to finality in this Chamber. Anyway, the regulations having been disallowed, the Government, for a reason which I have never been able to discover, took steps to make fresh regulations via the Minister for Home Security. Mr. Lazzarini, who is located in the Eastern States.

Thus the Government of this State began, of its own volition, or as many people believe, purely out of pique because the regu-

lations had been disallowed, the process of departing from the resolution to which it had agreed at the joint conference of Federal and State members—namely, that the application of these schemes was essentially a responsibility of each particular State. This took place, of course, at such a time when it was impracticable for this House to take further action immediately. However, when the House did re-assemble about this time last year, a motion was carried by it calling for the papers in regard to this matter. They were subsequently tabled, and when they were examined nothing was found to warrant the Assembly in supporting the further handing over of State responsibility without sufficient justification to the Commonwealth. On the 16th September of last year this House unanimously carried a resolution expressing the opinion that there was no evidence on the file to show that at any time it was necessary to abandon control by the State Parliament in order to give effect to the desires of the Commonwealth. It was further resolved here that immediate steps should be taken to restore State control.

I say that the resolution in question was carried unanimously for this reason: It was not put to a division, but was carried on the voices, and there was only one speech from the Government side of the Chamber. That was a speech from the Minister for Civil Defence, and if one reads the utterance one cannot find anywhere in it opposition to the motion. In fact, at one stage of his remarks the Minister declared that if this House wanted restoration of State control it had better say so and it could have it. Anyway, that resolution—unless one can regard the Minister's speech as an objection to the resolution, and I do not think that can be done—was carried unanimously. The Government then proceeded to leave the matter, so far as I can ascertain, entirely as it was, making no overt effort to restore State control and offering this House no explanation as to why State control was not being restored. That position continued until a few weeks ago, when, by the mercy of the Minister for Home Security, who is situated in Canberra, we were able to get some relief from the situation. By consent of the hon. gentleman in the East, there was some relaxation of the regulations existing at that time. Thus there is one case I have cited in which the

Government has not taken any steps, so far as we know, to carry out a resolution, one adopted by the State Assembly on the 16th September last without opposition from either side of the Chamber.

The Premier: The legislation was passed unanimously throughout Australia.

Mr. WATTS: I am not concerned with that in the slightest. I maintain that the Government holds its office by virtue of the support of this House. It is quite free to defend its action instead of continuing to adopt the attitude of the Minister for Civil Defence—which is that if we want State control we can have it. A reference to the Minister's remarks will show him using almost those words. We have as yet had no reason advanced to us why the requisite action was not taken to carry out the resolution of this House, from which the Government holds its office. I shall go a little further as to this point of the policy of the Government of this State in taking notice of resolutions passed by this Assembly. The majority of the instances I am about to refer to result from resolutions passed by this Assembly without any opposition being forthcoming from the Government benches. On the face of them they appear to have been carried by very large majorities, or else practically unanimously; and action, so far as I know, in regard to them has been non-existent. We find, for example, on the 27th October, 1937, the member for Canning succeeding with the following resolution:—

That, in the opinion of this House, the Transport Board should be requested to fully investigate metropolitan passenger transport services, including Government-run services, with a view to making a report to Parliament giving recommendations for more satisfactory and improved facilities for the community.

That is approximately six years ago, and I have been unable to ascertain that a report of a comprehensive nature, such as requested by the member for Canning and consented to by this House, has been made to this Parliament. On the 17th December, 1937, the member for Kalgoorlie moved—and this also was carried by the House—

That, in the opinion of this House, the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the case of Frank Evans, deceased, that—(a) The law be altered to give unconvicted prisoners, held under Section 653 of the Criminal Code, the right of appeal to the Supreme Court against further detention; (b) The places in which persons are to be detained during the Governor's

pleasure be stipulated; (c) Lemnos Hospital for returned soldiers be given consideration as a suitable place of such detention.

I find there again an apparently unanimous decision of this House. And there has been, so far as I can ascertain, in the intervening period of 5½ years no action whatever taken in regard to it. When I consider these matters I ask myself, is this a democratic community or is it not? I submit that it is not. This House, elected by adult suffrage, has passed these resolutions, and I submit it is the Government's duty to do—whatever be its political complexion—all it can to carry out those resolutions, or else provide this Chamber with sound reasons why that should not be done. Neither of those things has been done in this regard. I turn now to the 15th December, 1938, and I find the hon. gentleman who is now Minister for Railways, and then was or recently had been a member of the hon. orary Royal Commission on the question of light lands, succeeding with the following resolution:—

That, in the opinion of this House, the recommendations of the honorary Royal Commission on light and poison-infested lands should receive the earnest consideration of the Government.

I have not the faintest notion whether they have received the earnest consideration of the Government or not. So far as the facts and information given to us are concerned, they have not received any consideration at all, because there has been nothing of a public nature to indicate that they have received consideration and most certainly there has been no legislation to carry into effect any of the many reasonable and proper recommendations that were made. Subsequently, in 1939, I find a proposal emanating from the member for Swan in regard to assisting unemployed residents to provide homes for themselves, and the provision of technical assistance to such persons to enable them to build homes if the materials were provided. That motion was carried by this House. If the Government chose to regard this proposal as being unworkable, or if for some other reason it had in the back of its mind no intention of carrying out the terms of such resolution in the event of its being agreed to, it was the Government's bounden duty at that time to tell the House the reason actuating it and not to keep such reason to itself. At any rate the House carried the motion, and

I have yet to find that in the intervening period any definite consideration has been given to the matter or that any proposal of a concrete character has been put before this Assembly.

After two or three attempts, on the 15th October, 1941, this House agreed to a motion in an amended form asking for legislation for the adjustment of the debts of various sections of the community. The resolution was carried in a form different from that in which it was first moved, but the fact remains that a resolution was carried by this Assembly that in the opinion of the House the Government should take immediate action to legislate for the adjustment of such secured debts. Two years have passed and questions have been asked in this House as to the Government's intentions in regard to that matter. Those questions have not received very clear replies. Shall I say they have not received other than evasive replies? The fact remains that no legislation either immediate or otherwise has ever been introduced.

We come now to 1942 when we find that a resolution was carried by this House, again in a form which was not the same as that in which it was originally introduced, requesting an alteration of orders made pursuant to National Security Regulations in regard to liquor trading hours within a radius of 25 miles from the G.P.O. This House considered that question over several days and the resolution was ultimately carried in an amended form; but no action has been taken to carry out the decision of this House, so I must come back to where I was before. Is this a democratic community? It ought to be! We have been led to believe that democracy is the soul of government, particularly in this State. We have been led to believe that the Government is prepared to pay the fullest attention to the decisions of the House, which is elected by adult suffrage and from which it holds its Governmental authority. I could quote many more cases in which resolutions of this House have been carried and, on the face of it, have received little, if any, attention.

Mr. Withers: They are just now due for resurrection, eh?

The Minister for Mines: You could go back many years and find the same thing.

Mr. WATTS: One may go back many years, but that does not alter the principle in the slightest degree. It is the duty of the

Government to get to work on these proposals and let the House know its views on them, and not sit quietly by and allow the House to pass resolutions when no doubt it has a mental reservation that it does not propose to do anything about the matter. I am not anxious to suggest that that is what has been in the mind of the Government but, if it was, that is so much the worse because the Government, if it does not intend to give effect to the decisions of the House, should express its opinion as to the impossibility or impracticability of the proposals. But no such thing was done.

The Minister for Works: Did you read what I said about the slum housing proposition?

Mr. WATTS: I think I did.

The Minister for Works: Have a look at it again.

Mr. WATTS: The slum housing proposition did not deal with the resolution I referred to.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it did.

Mr. WATTS: No, it did not.

The Minister for Works: The member for Swan brought it up.

Mr. WATTS: I see that the Minister is referring to the resolution I quoted. I had in mind something else. However, it is extraordinary that the usual capacity of the Government to defeat a resolution it does not want in this House was not exercised on that occasion. That is really the basis of my charge. Why let a resolution be carried if there is no intention to put it into operation?

The Minister for Works: You contend that we did not express our views.

Mr. WATTS: The Government rarely does. On that particular motion I remember the Minister did so. In so far as is necessary I would qualify my remarks in regard to that motion, but in the majority of instances the members of the Government are conspicuous by their absence so far as the debate is concerned.

The Minister for Mines: You cannot say that about the civil defence motion. I made a good speech on that.

Mr. WATTS: In the only really relevant statement in that speech the Minister told us he was going to do exactly what we asked him to do. But it has not been done, nor has any sufficient explanation been offered as to why it has not been done. I should like to know whether the Government, as a Gov-

ernment, has made any representations to the Federal authorities in regard to the rationing of butter and its effect on small farmers in this State. Many persons who are candidates for the State Parliament are always pleased to explain to the electors how active the Government of this State is in respect to matters which affect farmers and particularly the small farmers, and I am wondering whether the Government has made any representations in regard to this particular matter. I know that the member for Murchison has views on this subject, not in regard to small farmers but in regard to other people in the outback areas of this State, and I trust he will take the opportunity later of saying a word or two on this question.

Mr. Marshall: I will, without any doubt!

Mr. WATTS: Therefore, I do not propose to trespass on the grounds I think he has in mind by making any reference to people such as those. I have had correspondence with the Minister for Customs in regard to this matter. Apparently the intention of the Federal Department—and in this it appears that it is being supported by the Department of Agriculture of this State—is to drive all butter-fat into butter factories. Up to a point one is inclined to agree that there is reason in the argument, but there are many places and people whose production—either owing to transport difficulties or to smallness of output—does not warrant despatch to the factories. There is no question that the result of butter rationing will be that large quantities of farm butter will not be made, on account of the iron-bound conditions that are existent and that a number of small farmers, and particularly their wives, will lose, at this period of the year particularly, quite a substantial sum of money they have been accustomed to have to spend and moreover there may be losses of dairy cattle which cannot easily be replaced.

I know of many cases in which a farmer may manufacture 10 or 12 lbs. of butter a week. Of that, five or six pounds have been used for home consumption and the balance has been disposed of either privately or per medium of some local trader, and everybody has been satisfied. The quantity of cream available from such a place to send to a butter factory is too ridiculously small. Even when it is a little larger the fact that transport is available only once a week and

sometimes not as frequently as that makes it extremely difficult to send cream over the long distances that prevail in some of our districts and particularly in the northern farming areas.

Mr. Withers: They can still dispose of the butter by registering.

Mr. WATTS: If they register they can sell only in exchange for coupons and nobody will give coupons for farm butter if factory butter can be obtained. Of course there are exceptions to every rule, but generally speaking people will not give coupons for farm butter if they can obtain factory butter because the latter is usually regarded as having far better keeping qualities.

The Premier: The Acting Director of Rationing offered to make provision for placing such output.

Mr. WATTS: To send such small quantities over long distances is quite an impossible proposition. Only places with under 20 lbs. of butter are affected because the State law prevents the manufacture of more than 20 lbs. The people to whom I am referring are those who make only five or six lbs. I communicated with the Minister for Customs and received his reply dated the 19th July, 1942, in which he makes two rather extraordinary statements. One is that the Acting Director of Rationing informed him that butter rationing was introduced in order that Australia could fulfil her obligations to export butter to Great Britain. It will be noted that the Acting Director of Rationing informed the Minister. I was one of those who accepted this position as being one of Government policy and yet the Minister says that the Acting Director of Rationing informed him. I should have thought that he would have informed the Acting Director! I was astounded to get that information.

The Minister further stated that if farm butter could be bought without surrendering coupons, the tendency would be for people to buy factory butter to the value of the coupons available and supplement their purchases by the purchase of farm butter. That would mean an increased demand for farm butter which would encourage farmers to make butter rather than send the cream to butter factories. The hon. gentleman, like all other hon. gentlemen at Canberra, obviously does not know anything about Western Australian law or he would not put up

that argument. The State Department definitely restricts the production on any farm. Moreover, it is most unlikely that farmers would be encouraged to make butter rather than send cream to the butter factories because the position now is that, except in those cases where very small quantities are at stake, or where transport has to be made over very long distances, there is no inclination whatever on the part of farmers to make farm butter as opposed to dispatching it to factories. Where the quantities are sufficient and transport is available there is no question that cream will be sent to factories to be turned into butter. I hope the Government will take the opportunity to lend a helping hand to the small people who are concerned in this matter and that it will not rest content with the observations of the Federal Minister for Customs who, on the face of it, does not know too well the circumstances existing in Western Australia.

There was not much in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech respecting the legislative intentions of the Government, so I do not propose to pass any comment on the Speech in that regard. It did contain, however, a wealth of detail regarding industrial exploitation of one kind and another that has taken place, or is to take place, in Western Australia. I regret that there was no reference under that head to the power-alcohol plant in this State. It seems ridiculous to suggest now that no publicity should be given to that particular matter—for security reasons. In the past there has been an inclination on the part of Ministers to refuse to answer questions on that subject, but we have noted that considerable comment has been voiced regarding the plants that are erected in the Eastern States, from which we gather that, according to what has been sent out by transmitters on the other side of Australia, there has been production from those plants. Yet we in Western Australia are not to be told of any progress that has been made in connection with the work in this State and are to be without any information on the matter at all! On the contrary, we find that production has already started in the factories put in hand in the Eastern States. I think we are entitled to know, as the position now stands, what action is being taken in this State regarding this matter.

The Minister for Mines: Some information has been published.

Mr. WATTS: I want to know more about it. It is certainly time we were told something of the progress made with the work. In the past we have had to confine ourselves to considerations of security, but now we understand that in the Eastern States the plants are actively in production. We should take some notice of our own position and ascertain now where we stand. We should ourselves say what we are to hear or not to hear regarding the subject, especially when we note that people in high places in the Eastern States are prepared to broadcast information that in the past we have been told was dangerous to the nation's security. I want now to make some observations regarding a gentleman who is continually broadcasting in this State. He is the leader, or semi-leader, of what he is pleased to describe as the Anti-Fascist League. I refer to a man named Edward Beeby. On several occasions I have listened to his broadcast, and it seems to me that the Government of this State should have given consideration—I shall be pleased to hear what has been done, if anything, in that regard—to taking some proceedings against this person for the statements he has made.

Mr. Fox: And that could apply to others, too.

Mr. WATTS: I am not sure that some of this man's statements are not seditious. On referring to Section 44 of the Criminal Code I find that—

Any intention to effect any of the following purposes, that is to say:—

- (d) To raise discontent or disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects;
- (e) To promote feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of His Majesty's subjects;

is a seditious intention, unless it is justified by the provisions of the next following section.

I venture to say that this man has done more to promote feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of His Majesty's subjects than any other person who has preceded him in Western Australia. I want to know, and I think we are entitled to know, if consideration has been given to that aspect of the matter. We should be told if we are unable to take action against this man in regard to what he has said, which is likely to raise discontent or disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects. If legal opinion has been secured and is fav-

ourable, it seems to me that it is the duty of the Government to take action in that regard. On the other hand, if legal opinion has been taken on the point and it is unfavourable, I shall be glad to be informed what the opinion was, because it seems to me we are up against a very serious difficulty regarding this person.

Mr. Fox: Is he not a lawyer himself?

Mr. WATTS: I think we are entitled to have the information I have indicated.

Mr. Thorn: The member for South Fremantle says that Beeby is a lawyer.

Mr. WATTS: I am not concerned with what he is but with his actions.

Mr. Warner: He was a lawyer at one time, but he was put out.

Mr. Thorn: He was struck off the roll!

Mr. WATTS: I am informed by my friends that whatever he may have been, this man is not now a lawyer. That may be so.

The Minister for Labour: The member for Toodyay said he had been struck off the roll.

Mr. WATTS: I do not know what is the occupation of this man, and I am dealing entirely with what he said on the occasions I have listened to him over the air, and am alleging that by those remarks he is really raising discontent and disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects and promoting feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes.

The Minister for Labour: It is just as well to have in "Hansard" what the member for Toodyay said.

Mr. Doney: You are doing your best to have it included.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

The Minister for Mines: At any rate you need not listen to Beeby. You can turn the knob.

Mr. WATTS: I agree with the Minister that that is the easy way, namely, to switch the radio off. But that is not the best course in the national interests.

The Minister for Mines: Tell us what to do.

Mr. WATTS: To do what the Minister suggests and merely switch off the radio is not a very satisfactory way for the Government of the State to deal with this particular case.

Mr. J. Hegney: The number of people who want to listen in to him is remarkable.

Mr. WATTS: It may be extraordinary that so many people may like to listen to him; that is no new tendency. We will remember that W. S. Gilbert in one of his comedies wrote of—

The idiot who praises in enthusiastic tone
Every century but this
And every country but his own.

That applies equally today, although a hundred years later.

The Minister for Labour: C. O. Barker had a large listening audience.

Mr. WATTS: That is so. However, it is time the Government took action to ascertain whether this man's utterances are within the law. If they are not, it is the duty of the Government to see that the law is enforced. I commend that matter to the consideration of the Government, not in any spirit of criticism but because I think it will be in the interests of all concerned if the people realise that the Government will not tolerate observations of a type that are continually being uttered over the air by this man.

The Minister for Works: He has turned his communistic guns against this Government for all he knows.

Mr. WATTS: But he has uttered sentiments that I think our people as a whole are totally against. Certainly his remarks have been against the prestige of the Empire and the Commonwealth of Nations to which we all belong. The remarks are of a nature that no member of this House—I say that without any reservation whatever—wishes to hear over the air.

The Premier: But is not the broadcast made under license from the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. WATTS: That is most extraordinary if it is true.

The Premier: It is so.

Mr. WATTS: I believe it is with the knowledge of the Commonwealth Government that this is going on.

The Premier: I do not say that, but that the broadcasting is done under a license from the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. WATTS: At any rate, as I have already said, this man persists in deliberately decrying the British Commonwealth of Nations to which we all belong. He talks as though there is only one country in the world that has done anything for the cause of freedom, and that country is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—in other words, Russia. I do not wish for one

moment to depreciate the extraordinarily good work that has been done by the Russian people and the Soviet Armies since the war began. On the other hand, I claim that they would not be in the position they are today and could very easily be in a very bad position, had it not been for the assistance rendered by Great Britain and the United States of America, particularly by Great Britain at a time when that country had very little for its own use and when it had an overwhelmingly strong enemy close to its own shores.

Mr. Fox: Tell us what "The Archer" had to say about it.

Member: They would shoot him in Russia.

Mr. WATTS: When we compare the population of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with that of the major enemies whose countries are a very few miles distant we realise that the latter is five times greater than the British population. I think the British population aggregates 44,000,000 whereas the population of Soviet Russia is approximately 180,000,000. I claim that with such a population and even without the slightest assistance from outside countries, Russia was at least four times better off to deal with the enemy than the British nation was at that particular time, nor do I see any suggestion anywhere that Russia would have been engaged in this war had it not been for the fact that on the 22nd June, 1941, that country was attacked by Adolph Hitler and his Armed Forces. I believe they would have continued, as they were formerly, in a position of neutrality, for which I would not blame them. But when their country was attacked, the Russians defended themselves and when that attack was made the British nation did all it could to assist their Allies. As a matter of interest in that regard, we may notice what the British supplies to Russia have been. The information I shall quote has been supplied by a reputable organisation in the Eastern States, to wit, the Royal Empire Society. From that source we can see what the British supplies to Russia represented, quite irrespective of what came from the United States of America.

We find that within 17 hours after the Germans attacked Russia, the British Government pledged the Soviet the maximum British aid. We find that inside one week 500,000 pairs of boots were despatched to Russia. From the 1st October, 1941, to the

31st December, 1942, Britain sent to Russia 3,080 aeroplanes, 2,974 tanks, 4,000 lorries, 70,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 3,000 tons of medical supplies (including 1,500,000 surgical instruments, over 1,000,000 garments, 500,000 blankets, 150 tons of drugs and 97 x-ray units) and 50,000 tons of Britain's "infinitely precious stocks of rubber." Furthermore Britain supplied a huge quantity of great-coat cloth—"enough was sent in four days to stretch from the Black Sea to the White Sea." In addition, supplies sent jointly with the United States of America comprised 831,000 tons of metal and machine tools, 1,000,000 tons of sugar and 2,500,000 tons of wheat and flour. When we consider the huge convoys that were required to transport these supplies and the enormous difficulties involved in the passage through the Arctic Sea, where the very guns were frozen over and the ice had to be chipped off the decks in the mornings and where the sailor who fell into the sea was assured of almost certain death in water that at times was practically at freezing point, we must recognise the vast extent of the assistance rendered by Britain in particular to our Russian Ally.

In such circumstances, anyone who calls himself an Australian citizen—I do not care who he may be—and proceeds deliberately on every possible occasion to minimise and, in fact, to decry the work that has been done by the Empire for the assistance of the Russians, is not deserving of the slightest sympathy or consideration if he has committed an offence against the laws of this country. There is much more in the Royal Empire Society's report that I could quote. For instance, the British tanks sent to Russia alone were sufficient to equip nearly 15 armoured divisions at the German strength of 200 tanks per division, while the British planes made available were sufficient to equip over 205 squadrons at the German strength of 15 planes per squadron. When we realise these facts, we begin to appreciate in some small degree Britain's effort to aid Russia, quite apart from the supplies that came from America, in which case some of the supplies sent were even greater than those made available by Britain.

When we appreciate all this, we realise what nonsense it is to talk, as some people have been talking, in such a way of the

people of the British Commonwealth of Nations to which we belong and which held the fort during the interval between the evacuation of Dunkirk and the invasion of Russia. Without that fortitude we could not say today whether we could have carried on our free institutions during those perilous years. So I say definitely I am not with him when he goes on in this fashion, and I do not think any thoughtful and loyal Australian citizen wants it either. The trouble is that we have not taken to the people the true information regarding this matter, whereas he is bombarding the public frequently over the radio. I sometimes ask myself, "Where does he get the money to enable him to do it? By what means does he provide the finance to run this scheme?" We have some idea of the cost of radio broadcasting on this substantial scale.

Over the radio a night or two ago a gentleman named Mr. P. J. Trainer stated that those who alleged that there was any relationship whatever in any State of Australia—and I wish the House to take particular notice of the words "in any State of Australia" because I am not referring particularly to Western Australia—between the Labour Party and the Communist Party were mistaken. In essence that is what he said. I have received from New South Wales information regarding certain large posters which are displayed in the city of Sydney. Presumably they were exhibited before the restrictions under the National Security Regulations were imposed on the display of posters throughout the Commonwealth. The poster in question has this caption. "Unite and fight for Labour, for Curtin, for Victory." Then there are two figures with pointing arms, one labelled "State Labour" and the other labelled "The Communist Party." Across them is written the words "United Front" and the arms point to these words lower down—

"Fascist, Fifth Column, Lang, Fallon & Co., Disruption, Yellow Press."

At the bottom in large letters appeared the following words, according to my informant:—

"Issued jointly by the State Labour Party and the Communist Party of Australia."

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Members must refrain from interjecting.

Mr. WATTS: I have sent for a photograph of that poster for the information of

members on the Government side of the House.

Mr. Needham: That bomb of yours is a dud.

Mr. WATTS: There is no question of there being a bomb; I have stated the facts as I have received them. If there is no relationship in this State, there is somewhere else.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WATTS: Coming to another matter of much greater local application, I noticed a few days ago an observation by the Minister for Education, who is also Chief Secretary, that it is the intention of the Government to raise the school-leaving age to 15 years. Subject to the necessary provision being made in order to cope with requirements, I am strongly in favour of the proposal, and always have been, but I have not noticed any enthusiasm for it until quite recently by members on the Government benches. That is the trouble, and that is why I have raised the point. Let us dip a little into ancient history.

The Premier: Oh don't!

Mr. WATTS: It is not too ancient, and there was no war at the time. On the 15th December, 1938, the member for Avon, after presenting the report of a Select Committee on State education a week earlier, moved—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should give effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the educational system of the State.

I have looked up the report, which was quite a good one, and found that recommendation No. 9 was that the school-leaving age be raised to 15 years. This led me to consult "Hansard" and there I discovered that with the exception of the member for Kalgoorlie, every Labour member opposed the motion to adopt the report. The member for Canning was one of the Select Committee and he distinguished himself. He appended to the report, "Mr. Cross dissents from this report and the recommendations." All of them; he made no exception; he did not even exclude No. 9. In "Hansard" of 1938 at page 2811, members will find that the member for Canning even objected to the report being received by the House, although he had previously made himself conspicuous by dissenting from every recommendation.

When the matter was carried a little further and the member for Avon proposed that the House should adopt the report or give effect to the recommendations, every member on the Government side, with the exception of the member for Kalgoorlie, voted on a division in opposition to the motion. Consequently, I place the Government's attitude to the 15 years school-leaving-age proposal in its right perspective. We wanted it five years ago; members opposite did not. They profess to want it now, and I will leave you Mr. Speaker, to form your own conclusion as to the reason for this sudden change of front.

The Premier: Have not the finances of the State improved considerably in the interim?

Mr. WATTS: I have not noticed it.

Mr. Doney: The matter of finance was not the reason the Premier gave in 1938 for opposing the motion.

Mr. WATTS: If the Premier wishes to take up that line of argument we might go through the whole report and see what other things the Government and its supporters objected to and the member for Canning dissented from en bloc. We might well indulge in further research regarding the matter because it will make good reading in certain parts of the country, if not elsewhere. Let us have a little more. I quote the Select Committee's recommendations—

1. That shortages in essential school equipment be provided without delay.

3. That more suitable desk accommodation be provided in rural schools.

4. That inquiries be made as to the feasibility of enlarging school accommodation in selected country centres with a view to the consolidation of small schools.

Even that was dissented from by the member for Canning as representative of the Government.

5. That technical education be extended to rural districts on the lines suggested in evidence given by the Superintendent (Mr. J. F. Lynch).

Mr. Lynch, of course, is an expert witness. And so we can go on. However, the report is there to speak for itself; and it was dissented from in every line by the member for Canning, and eventually rejected by the Government, with the sole exception of the member for Kalgoorlie.

The Minister for Mines: There is a case of what is called "delayed conversion."

Mr. WATTS: It was a very poor response to the recommendations of the committee. I am extremely interested in the observations of Federal candidates, and particularly of Federal Labour candidates, as to what the Commonwealth Government is going to do in regard to education. We know perfectly well that that Government has not one scintilla of authority, under the existing Constitution, to do anything in regard to it at all. But one or two of the official Labour candidates made a real song about it. It seems to me that those candidates must be very short of ideas on problems within the purview of the Federal authorities, which Heaven knows are involved enough! Why cannot the Federal Labour candidates content themselves with laying down their policy and explaining their points of view in regard to matters over which the Commonwealth Parliament has immediate authority, and can take immediate action, instead of dwelling on questions which entail considerable alterations in the Commonwealth Constitution, except as regards making small grants under Section 96 of that Constitution? The attitude of the Commonwealth Grants Commission in regard to our social services has not been encouraging. Our Premier told us that we were being penalised by the Commonwealth Government in this respect.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission penalises us every year because of our social conditions. The members of that body say that various State Governments here, over the years, have built up a set of social and industrial conditions superior to those obtaining in any other part of the Commonwealth, and consequently the people of Western Australia will themselves have to pay for them. To that end the Commonwealth Grants Commission imposes what it calls "penalties," by deducting amounts that would otherwise be included in the Commonwealth grants to Western Australia.

And so, the Commonwealth Government, having no authority, and there being no particular record of anxiety to assist us in this regard, I suggest that all that is in the minds of the people who are putting the loud pedal on this question is a desire to impose upon this State a measure of unification. I cannot conceive how any person who is loyal to Western Australia could possibly vote for any such candidate. I have in mind also what the Prime Minister stated quite recently as reported in "The West Australian"—

I am not going to have a constitutional debate with the States. I feel that I have to get

a mandate from the people before I can discuss with the Premiers the general subject of the powers of the Commonwealth.

The Premier: What is wrong with that?

Mr. WATTS: Quite a lot. The Prime Minister has to get a mandate, and we hold that we should stop him from getting that mandate. I shall quote further from my worthy friend opposite, the Premier of Western Australia. I could not quote the hon. gentleman during last January, February and March, when the House was discussing the Commonwealth Powers Bill, because those utterances appeared in the then current session's "Hansard." Now however, we have got out of that session. I quote from page 1327—

With regard to the effect of the Commonwealth proposals on the social and industrial life of the State, I think it would be disastrous.

The Premier gave other information of an invaluable character to members of this Chamber. He went on to say that it was recognised by the Commonwealth Government that the Federal policy was detrimental to Western Australia. Further on the Premier stated—

Our enlistments have been used to make good the deficiencies in the other States, but we have not participated in the nation's record industrial expansion. Our industries are suffering disadvantages because of Federal policy. Without attempting to give a list of the disadvantages, I desire to mention one or two instances. Gold-mining is the most important industry in Western Australia. To a very great extent it has built up our State economy and was responsible for an increase of population in this country. This industry, which was so important to Western Australia, was singled out in a special way for a special type of tax put on no other industry in the Commonwealth. Irrespective of whether it was profitable or not, the tax had to be paid on every ounce of gold produced. Wheat production is our second best industry, but that has been restricted on a much more drastic basis than has been applied to the other States.

Later the hon. gentleman said—

Under Commonwealth control, shipping space has been misused to send manufactured goods to this State, whereas half the space could have been occupied by raw material and the finished articles could have been fabricated in Western Australia.

Then the Premier referred to the Industry Expansion Commission—

Consider the W.A. Industry Expansion Commission! I thought—and I imagine members of the House considered—that when that commission was formed we would have an opportunity to place our case directly before it, and that it, in turn, would make recommendations

to the Commonwealth Government concerning our disabilities in respect of industrial development. I thought that the Commonwealth Government, because it had appointed that commission, would take serious notice of the recommendations made. I thought the commission would have executive capacity—that was the original idea—to spend money to find out what could be done in the way of industrial development of this State.

I thought that here was an opportunity for tremendous development—the best we had had for years. But I am sorry to say that so far as results are concerned, we have not gained very much from the appointment of this commission. . . . I do not blame the present Commonwealth Government or its predecessor, but it seems that when proposals of this kind get into the hands of administrative officers who do not know the conditions existing in this State, a wet blanket is thrown over them.

I conclude with this most memorable statement—

If these are conditions that exist when we have the advantage of a Prime Minister who is a Western Australian, and we have the advantage of an active State Government in this part of the Commonwealth, and that is the position under the present restricted Commonwealth powers, how will we fare if an unsympathetic majority should assume control in the Federal arena who know nothing about us?

I ask myself, how would we fare? I am definitely of the opinion that these persons who seek a mandate from the Australian people, and who in advance have made up their minds that they are going to have control of this and that, are the very ones that no citizen of this State holding the views expressed on both sides of this Chamber would be justified in lending any support to at the present time.

I have exhausted enough of the time of the House on the various topics that require discussion, but in conclusion I propose to make reference for a few moments to the meeting which was recently held at Fremantle and at which there was so much disorder. I notice that some correspondence has taken place between organisations in this city and the Chief Secretary which has been given some publicity in the Press. I am suggesting to the State Government that it should take up an attitude different from that taken up by the Chief Secretary in the matter. The Commonwealth law does give the chairman of a meeting certain powers. He may ask a police officer to remove an offending person, and it is also provided that the police officer may remove him, but it does not say he shall do so. So far as I can see, there is no offence committed before a person has

been removed. The offence is only committed when a person returns after having been removed, in which case he can be arrested, it appears, without warrant. Therefore, the position is not very sound under Federal law. However, I do not think the State law is as clear even as the Federal law, and it seems to me that legislation should be introduced in this State enabling the chairman of a meeting to take steps to preserve order and decency at a meeting.

The Premier: But the chairman has that power.

Mr. WATTS: I dare say the Premier is right, but that would be only because it happened to be a Federal meeting. I am engaging in criticism of the Federal law and, as I understand the position, the State law does not appear to be as clear even as the Federal law. In the short time at my disposal I have not been able to find any State statute law on the subject at all. I think we ought to have some. I suggest to the Government here and now that it should give consideration to altering the law of this State so as to make it clear that this kind of interference will not be tolerated in the future.

The Premier: Then you will get a lot of disgruntled people complaining about interference with free speech!

Mr. WATTS: Dr. Evatt is very clear on the Four Freedoms, and wrapped up in them somewhere is freedom of speech. I am not ridiculing the learned doctor in this instance, because there is no question whatever that for a lengthy period now we have prided ourselves on the fact that both sides can be heard. We, as a Parliament or as a Government, should not in any way lend any assistance to those who are apparently learning the technique of interfering with free expression of opinion at public meetings. Punishment should be provided for those who so interfere.

The Minister for Mines: That is all very old.

Mr. WATTS: I know it is old, and I do not think it ought to be revived. It went out of existence in this State. We have had for a lengthy period fair play and straight dealing and I think that ought to continue, even if we have to amend the law to secure it. I know that amending the law is not always a cure, but it will at least show that responsible parties in the State are anxious to carry on the good fellowship and reason-

able dealing that have existed in the past in this State.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.54 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 11th August, 1943.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

CHAIRMEN (TEMPORARY) OF COMMITTEES.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with Standing Order 31A, I have to announce that I have appointed as temporary Chairmen of Committees for the current session the following members:—Hon. V. Hamersley, Hon. G. Fraser and Hon. H. Seddon. Mr. W. R. Hall accepted the position of temporary chairman during the absence from the State on Air Force duty of Mr. Fraser on the understanding that the latter, on his return, would be reappointed.

MOTION—COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

As to Election by Ballot.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (2.21): I move—

That the following members be appointed to serve on the Sessional Committees during the present session:—

Standing Orders.—The President, the Chairman of Committees, the Chief Secretary, Hon. C. F. Baxter and Hon. H. S. W. Parker.

Library.—The President, Hon. C. F. Baxter and Hon. E. M. Heenan.

Printing.—The President, Hon. E. H. Gray and Hon. W. J. Mann.

Joint House.—The President, Hon. J. Cornell, Hon. E. H. Gray, Hon. V. Hamersley and Hon. G. W. Miles.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South): I gave notice yesterday that I intended to oppose the motion and, with the consent of the majority of members, to amend it so that we shall have a ballot. I take it for granted that everybody understands that I have no personal objection to any of the members suggested for the committees. They would probably do good work in an honorary capacity, but I do object to our having foisted on us committees in the election of which we have no say. We have the right, Sir, to elect you as President and the right to choose our Chairman of Committees, but when it comes to other committees the members are chosen and appointed for us. I think it will be realised that if Mr. Gray does his work half as well as he is paid to do it, he has quite enough to do.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He is an Honorary Minister.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: He is an Honorary Minister getting paid to do his work, yet he is on two committees. Apparently it is considered that no other member has the capabilities of Mr. Gray. Again, Mr. Baxter is on two committees. No wonder he is ill—when he has so many jobs. The President is ex officio on all committees and Mr. Cornell is ex officio on one committee. As a matter of fact, Mr. Cornell is on three committees, one of which does not appear in this list. He is on the Gardens Committee which I believe is an off-shoot of some other committee. That is not right. I am not seeking any of these jobs. I do not want a seat on any one of the committees, though, if I had to do any of the work, I would do it the same as other hon. members.

My point is that the House should elect committees and not have them appointed and have it laid down that we should do this and that. I have been here 16 years and this sort of thing has gone on all the time. It occurs when we appoint managers to confer with those representing another place. As soon as this House votes against some proposal, the Government decides it wants a conference. It advises us who has been appointed to attend the conference and this House has not the opportunity to select its representatives unless some member asks for a ballot. Ordinarily nobody likes to ask for a ballot because to do so seems to be casting a reflection on members who have been appointed. I believe the work of these committees should be spread amongst mem-