

BILL—LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th September.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. S. Sampson—Swan) [10.10]: I do not oppose this measure. It has been realised for some time that an amendment on the lines suggested was necessary and, indeed, the subject was under consideration. The matter has been fully explained by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum). At the moment there is one inmate in the Hospital for the Insane to whom this will particularly apply. If there was only one such case, it would be ample justification for the amendment, but in future there may be greater need for it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Munsie in the Chair; Mr. McCallum in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 107:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister said the Government had intended to move in this direction. As the Bill seeks to amend only one section of the Act, no other amendment can be included. There are other people in the institution desirous of appearing before a judge. At present a case cannot be brought before a judge unless he has a declaration that the person is sane. There are some inmates who, although they cannot be classified as sane, might be capable of taking care of themselves, and a judge might order their release on probation if only they could be brought before him. The Royal Commission recommended an alteration so that these people could be brought before a judge.

Mr. Money: Surely the decision as to sanity is a medical opinion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Sometimes there is a difference of opinion on the part of doctors. A person may not be absolutely insane but be fit to be discharged, although as the law stands he cannot go before a judge and apply for his discharge. If the law had been amended, as recommended by the Royal Commission, such cases could have been provided for. At present if the authorities of the asylum say a man is not fit to be released he cannot go before the court and apply for his discharge.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am a little doubtful as to whether it will be possible to bring in other amendments at this stage, to cover the cases instanced by the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: You can bring in another Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would not like to see this Bill held up.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let it go. My point is an altogether different one.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will take the risk of letting it go, so as to avoid further delay in dealing with the case in which the member for South Fremantle is interested.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 20th September, 1923.

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

QUESTION—GROUP SETTLEMENTS.*Medical Care and Maternity Cases.*

Mrs. COWAN asked the Premier: 1, Have the Government done anything to provide any kind of medical care for the group settlements? 2, Is it not possible to place this most necessary matter in the hands of the Medical Department to deal with? 3, If not, why not? 4, Have arrangement been made at any of the group settlements to enable maternity cases to receive proper care and attention? 5, If not, why not? 6, Is the Premier aware that the Busselton hospital midwifery ward is closed and that there is no private midwifery hospital in the town to take midwifery cases? 7, When was the Busselton midwifery ward closed, and for what reason? 8, What arrangements are now being made to handle midwifery cases? 9, Is the Premier aware that correspondence addressed to the Busselton hospital on the 7th August asking what medical attention is given there had not been replied to on the 7th September, and probably has not been replied to yet? 10, Would it not be possible to provide one shack at each group where maternity cases could at least be given privacy? 11, Is the Premier

aware that otherwise women must remain in huts which are like one room, and which husband and children must share for sleeping and eating; that these huts are in many instances without windows, and that nothing has been done to make them fly-proof? 12, Has any attempt been made by the Government to secure the services of any trained midwife who may happen to reside on a group settlement, or to provide in any way for the needs of expectant mothers?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, It is in the hands of the Medical Department. 3, Answered by No. 2. 4, No; but provision has been made at Busselton, and consideration is being given to the establishment of a hospital at Margaret. 5, Answered by No. 4. 6, No maternity ward has ever been established in connection with the Busselton hospital. A private maternity hospital was recently closed, but a new building with accommodation for four cases has been registered. 7, Answered by No. 6. 8, In addition to the private maternity hospital, the Government have approved of plans for a maternity ward as determined by the local hospital committee. 9, No. 10, No. A small hospital will be erected at Margaret River. 11, No. The temporary homes that I have seen are comfortable, clean and well kept. Group settlers are self-respecting people. 12, No. Group settlers are in the same position as ordinary settlers so far as medical attention is concerned. There are Government or assisted hospitals in many centres, including Jarnadup, Busselton—the head-quarters of group settlement in those districts. Peel estate groups are near to Fremantle. A subsidised doctor is in practice at Margaret River, who will be available for group settlers and old residents.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Local Authorities (Additional Powers).
 - 2, Lunacy Act Amendment.
- Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Works, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 1 and 13: Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title and commencement of Act:

On motions by the Minister for Works, after "and," line 2, the words "subject as hereinafter provided" inserted; and the words "Provided that this Act shall be in force and have effect only in such parts of the State as the Governor shall, by Order in Council, constitute and define as districts for the purposes of this Act" added to the clause.

Clause 13—Inspector to be notified of accident:

On motions by Mr. McCallum, the following was added to Subclause 1:—"and the name and residence of every person killed or so injured, and notwithstanding any other provision in this Act, no repairs or alterations to such scaffolding or gear shall be made after such occurrence without permission in writing of an inspector or of the local officer of police if an inspector is not immediately available;" and in Subclause 2, after "notice," line 1, the following inserted:—"or makes or allows to be made any such repairs or alterations without such permission as aforesaid."

Mr. A. THOMSON: Unfortunately I was absent when the Bill was in Committee on Tuesday. Would it be possible for me now to move an amendment to Clause 25?

The CHAIRMAN: The Bill was recommended for certain purposes. I cannot accept any new matter now.

Bill reported with further amendments.

BILL—REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th September.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [4.43]: I have listened with close attention to the debate on this Bill, and I have been surprised to find that many members apparently are not treating this as a non-party measure. To my way of thinking, if there is one measure which might be brought before the House to be treated as a non-party measure, it is a Redistribution of Seats Bill. It should be outside the sphere of politics in every way. What appeals to me is that in dealing with the Bill we are not dealing with it for ourselves either individually or collectively as members of Parliament, but for the whole of the people throughout Western Australia. If we are going to do that, then there is no material reason why the Bill should be looked upon as in any way a party measure. Hon. members may recollect that during the passage of the Electoral Districts Bill last session, I spoke and voted against that measure, and gave my reason for so doing, namely, that in the metropolitan area it was generally understood a redistribution on the lines laid down in the Electoral Districts Bill would give that area only 14 seats. I and others contended that we were justified in having 15 seats in the metropolitan area. That is confirmed in the measure before us. In the Electoral Districts Act certain directions were given to the Commissioners. In my opinion they have ably observed those conditions, with the result that we now have a fair redistribution of seats scheme before the House. Whilst I agree that there are in it certain anomalies that might have been avoided, still I believe the Commissioners have done their work well, taking into consideration the whole of the State. Because of

that I will support the Bill. No matter who framed the redistribution, it would have been impossible to please everybody; for, after all, it becomes a parochial matter with members of Parliament. The Commissioners have practically cut my electorate in halves. If I followed my personal inclination, I should urge the restoration of the old boundaries.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Apparently they are satisfied with us.

Mr. RICHARDSON: However, if I am to consider the interests of my constituents, I should be entirely wrong in voting against the Bill, for the numbers of my electors justify the claim that they should have two representatives. I cannot agree with the Leader of the Opposition when he says the Commissioners were inefficient. Had the hon. member left it at that, I might not have referred to it; but he went on to say that the work the Commissioners were appointed to do was merely a job for an office boy. Surely then, if the Chief Justice, the Surveyor General, and the Chief Electoral Officer are incapable of carrying out work not above the abilities of an office boy, it is time the Government took some stand in respect of those gentlemen. However, such a contention serves to show the weakness of the case against the Bill. It must be admitted that the Leader of the Opposition, if he errs at all, errs in his criticism of other people. Remembering that, I am inclined to think he was unable to find any valid opposition to the Bill. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) criticised one member of the Commission on the score of his political feelings.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not criticise him.

Mr. Underwood: No, you merely said he was a bit crook.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Although the hon. member did not mention the name of the Commissioner to whom he referred, it was not difficult for us to arrive at it. Almost in the same breath the hon. member declared that the Bill favoured the Labour Party as against other parties in the House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I said that in my opinion it did.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, I am quoting your opinion. From that it appears that the Commissioner alluded to must follow the Labour Party; for, according to the hon. member, the Commissioner is a very fine man, since he overrode the opinions of the Chief Justice and the Chief Electoral Officer. On the one hand the Commissioner is condemned, and on the other he is praised. However, these criticisms are only so many personal opinions. I desire to enter an emphatic protest against the charge levelled at the people of the metropolitan area by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock). That hon. member went out of his way to say that the people of the metropolitan area were the greatest set of parasites in the whole of the Commonwealth. Webster defines a parasite as one who frequents the tables of the rich,

or who lives at another's expense and earns his welcome by flattery; a hanger-on, a toady, a sycophant. In the face of that, the hon. member says the whole of the people of the metropolitan area are parasites!

Mr. Lutey: He did not say the whole of the people of the metropolitan area.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, I am quoting what the hon. member said. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) took him to task for his expression. More power to that hon. member, for his protest showed that the opinion expressed by the member for Geraldton is not shared by the whole of the Opposition. I am pleased to know that. The member for Geraldton was entirely wrong. Take his own electorate, and the port of Geraldton, where the greatest number of his electors reside: they are in precisely the same position as are the people of the metropolitan area. Probably the hon. member was unduly excited when he made his statement. Still, I regret his attitude, because in the face of the interjection by the member for North-East Fremantle, the member for Geraldton persisted in the same strain, and stressed the point that the people of the metropolitan area were parasites. From Midland Junction to South Fremantle there are in the metropolitan area 85,000 electors. Amongst those people are rich and poor, the employer and the employee. Are we to refer to the whole of them as parasites, toadies, sycophants? Are we to allow that stigma to remain on those people? I am entering this protest because we all know that those people are not parasites, but are actually just as good as the people in any other part of the Commonwealth, and just as essential to the carrying on of the work of the State as are the agriculturists, the pastoralists and the miners.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The member for Katanning said we were living on the backs of the country people; and the "West Australian" declared he was correct in that.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Are we going to sit silent and allow the workers of the metropolitan area to be termed parasites? I do not think any member other than, perhaps, the member for Geraldton, would dream of it.

Mr. Wilson: He did not mean it that way, and you know it.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If he did not, then certainly I do not know what he meant. He used the expression and followed it up, and I am fully justified in protesting against it, for I represent quite a large section of the people of the metropolitan area. So I am going to continue the protest, and I hope publicity will be given to it. If we are to class the people of the metropolitan area as parasites—the inference was that they were not deserving of representation here—shall we not class all people living in agricultural towns, in sea-ports and in mining towns, as parasites also? Those people are trading and following industrial occupations just as

are the people of the metropolitan area. If we allow that sort of thing to pass without protest, we shall require to have another redistribution of seats and cut out the whole of the parasites. The only inference to be drawn from what the hon. member said was that people living in towns are battenng on other people and so are not fit to have representation in this Chamber.

Mr. Underwood: And that must apply to Geraldton.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, and to the people of all other towns. It was laid down in the Electoral Districts Act that community of interest had to be considered by the Commissioners. It would not be good for this State if we adopted the view that the whole of the people have not the same community of interest. It is a silly old bogey and nothing but a bogey, raised in by-gone days when redistribution was being considered. In my electorate I suppose every interest in Western Australia is represented. If that is so, why the need for stressing community of interest? If we are going to make a political bogey of it, why not divide the areas in such a way as to have Labour Party in one, Country Party in another, and Nationalist Party in a third, and make a redistribution on that basis?

Hon. M. F. Troy: With proportional representation?

Mr. RICHARDSON: If we consider community of interest, we must consider the whole of the State. A resident of the metropolitan area that says he has no interest in mining, in agriculture, or in the pastoral industry of Western Australia is not worth keeping in the State. All of us are interested in these things, and many of the people living in the metropolitan area are directly and financially interested in other parts of the State. Because of that, there is a real community of interest amongst the whole of the people. It cannot be successfully maintained that one electorate differs from another in this respect. I admit that more employers than other people may be found in one particular district and more employees in another district, but community of interest still prevails amongst the whole of the people. Because of this, I feel amused when I hear members laying such stress upon community of interest. Let any metropolitan member look around his own district, and he will find employer and employee living side by side. There is a community of interest between the employer and the employee, and it exists in the form that I have mentioned, but it is not something that can be regarded as distinguishing one area from another. The whole State has a community of interest—

Mr. Underwood: So has the whole of the British Empire.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes. We may attempt to use it politically as a factor for division, but it can never be used in any other way. Therefore, the criticism that the

Commissioners did not pay due regard to community of interest rests upon a wrong basis. A lot of figures have been quoted. Immediately a member on the Opposition side placed his figures before the House, he was followed by a member on the Government side who claimed that the figures were wrong. It is unnecessary to deal with a mass of figures. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that the names of quite a lot of people have been left off the rolls and have not been considered in relation to this Bill. It is so in my electorate.

Capt. Carter: Purely their own fault.

Mr. RICHARDSON: But I also know there are hundreds of names on the rolls that should have been taken off. If we could ascertain the actual number of names wrongly retained on the rolls and the number of those eligible to be but not enrolled, the result would be somewhere about fifty-fifty. Therefore we may take it that the figures on which this redistribution is based are practically correct. In the metropolitan area—I am not speaking of the outside areas—it would be impossible for the electoral office to maintain the rolls at top standard, because daily people are moving from one constituency to another. Let me direct attention to the voting in 10 districts at the last election. It is proposed under the Bill to eliminate the districts of Yilgarn, Mt. Magnet, Mt. Margaret, Menzies and Cue. Taking the whole of the figures for those districts including the informal votes, at Yilgarn 768 votes were recorded, Mt. Magnet 899, Menzies 579, and Cue 526. There was no election at Mt. Margaret, but I am giving that district a similar total to Cue's—526—which should be somewhere near the mark. These give a total of 3,298 electors. Let me now show the difference between that and the total for five electorates in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Marshall: My God, you will not make that comparison!

Mr. RICHARDSON: I shall, for obvious reasons. In the Canning district there were 6,849 electors, Claremont 5,638, Guildford 5,429, Leederville 5,592, and Subiaco 4,997, making a total of 28,505. That is approximately nine times the number that voted in the five outer mining districts. It is evident there is need for a redistribution.

Mr. Marshall: On that comparison?

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes. The member for Murchison cannot question those figures.

Mr. Marshall: I shall question them before the Bill passes.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Much as the hon. member would like to question them, he cannot do so.

Mr. Marshall: It is an absolutely ridiculous comparison.

Mr. RICHARDSON: There are members that are ridiculous!

Mr. Marshall: One is on his feet at present.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I happen to be standing on one foot at present; the hon. member

is evidently referring to somebody else. The figures show that the people who actually took an interest in the Parliament of the State numbered nine in the metropolitan area to one in the other districts.

Mr. Corboy: But the conditions under which they record their votes are very different. The people here have a polling booth almost next door to them, whereas, the people in the back country have to travel many miles.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I recognise that.

Mr. Corboy: Your figures prove the necessity for a redistribution, but that is all.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, and the figures cannot be questioned.

Mr. Marshall: Ridiculous!

Mr. RICHARDSON: If any of the complaints voiced by members were well grounded, I should mention that advanced by the member for Mt. Magent (Hon. M. F. Troy). There certainly does seem to be a discrepancy, but all said and done, one discrepancy would not justify us in throwing out the Bill. I have studied the proposed new electorate of Murchison, and have come to the conclusion that it would have been difficult to fix its boundaries in any other way. Without doubt they have been so fixed, apart from any political considerations. Therefore, because of this one discrepancy, the whole Bill should not be condemned.

Hon. P. Collier: Does it not commend itself to your judgment rather on account of there being one particular seat regarding which there is no discrepancy at all?

Mr. RICHARDSON: The Leader of the Opposition, in opposing the Bill, employed some very futile arguments.

Hon. P. Collier: That is no answer to my interjection.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If the hon. member thinks he can put words into my mouth, he is mistaken.

Hon. P. Collier: Say Subiaco, for instance.

Mr. RICHARDSON: My electorate is all right.

Mr. Underwood: Take Boulder, too.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am prepared to take my chance.

Mr. Corboy: Pilbara is all right.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Members from out-back districts have dilated considerably upon the fact of their having to travel great distances, but I am not aware that they travel very frequently. Of course they may do so unknown to me. The number of electors in their districts, however, is uniformly small as compared with the number in a metropolitan district. No metropolitan member makes a personal visit to each individual elector. If he attempted to do so, it would take him four or five months.

Lieut.-Col. Denton: You have a tramway service.

Mr. RICHARDSON: But to visit the home of each elector in my district would take four or five months. With the facilities provided in the outer districts, except-

ing perhaps the North-West, each member wishing to call personally upon his electors could do it in the same space of time. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) laid great stress on this point; it would appear that members outback had to hawk fish to their constituents every morning. As regards visiting electors I think it is fifty-fifty.

Hon. P. Collier: They do the round with fish in your electorate before breakfast.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Then we had better start a fish round. The argument of the member for Leonora will not bear analysis. I compliment the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullaney) on his fine and manly speech. Notwithstanding that he is one of the members—

Mr. A. Thomson: One of the slaughtered innocents.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Yes, he commended the Bill and gave good reasons for commending it.

Mr. Underwood: He is slaughtered.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I believe members as a whole have been genuine in their expressions of opinion, but the outstanding speech of all was that of the member for Menzies. I believe the Bill will be passed; I hope so, because there is no doubt that a redistribution is necessary. We cannot get all we desire, but the Bill does offer something. I believe it contains a few anomalies and a discrepancy regarding the three seats grouped in the proposed Murchison district. This may be overcome, but it would be unwise for the House at this stage to reject the Bill on account of its containing small anomalies. If ever there was a period in the history of Western Australia when numbers counted, it should be the present. We have people arriving in the State in considerable numbers, and probably another redistribution will be needed at an early date, especially for the agricultural districts. I hope sincerely that some of the optimism evinced by goldfields members will prove to have been well grounded. Still, we cannot peer into the future or say with any degree of definiteness that the goldfields population will increase. Every member hopes there may be such an influx of people to the goldfields as will necessitate another redistribution. If that is brought about it will show that the State is prospering. The increase in the representation to the agricultural areas will also indicate that the same state of affairs exists. In the meantime I hope this Bill will be carried.

Mr. WILSON (Collie) [5.15]: I do not intend to give a silent vote upon this Bill. With most members I agree that it is necessary to have a redistribution of seats. I think the three Commissioners who were appointed for the job are just as able, and perhaps as honest, as most other men. I feel, however, that the limited time at their disposal and the instructions issued to them did not give them a fair chance of bringing in an equitable redistribution.

Mr. Davies: What instructions do you mean?

Mr. WILSON: I mean the instructions contained in the Electoral Districts Act which, at the outset, eliminated four of the 50 seats. This left 46 constituencies only to be worked out. I can hardly reconcile the quotas allotted to the North-West seats with those set down for the agricultural seats. Bunbury, for instance, has within its boundaries 3,135 voters, and the four North-West seats together have 3,635 voters. That is to say, the member for Bunbury represents practically the same number of people as do the four members who represent the North-West. There is a difference of only 200 voters, and this represents a glaring inequality. I listened with a good deal of amusement, not to say patience, to the speech of the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). He called himself an onlooker, and said that onlookers saw most of the game. It must be remembered, however, that he is immune from any danger under this Bill. I do not speak as an onlooker, but as one who is to a certain extent an interloper under the Bill. A petition was recently presented to this House from a district of which it is possibly thought I may eventually become the member. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) presented this petition on behalf of the farmers around Balingup and Mullalyup. It is signed by 105 people, all of whom are apparently indicating that they do not want Wilson.

Mr. Davies: Not that. I think they said they wanted Smith.

Mr. WILSON: The petition is also signed by the member for Nelson, and it was drawn up on the 20th August, 1923.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I was only certifying to its correctness.

Mr. WILSON: The petition reads as follows:—

Redistribution of Seats Bill, Nelson Electorate: We electors of Balingup and Mullalyup, sections of Nelson electorate, hereby respectfully petition to have our districts retained in the Nelson electorate. The proposed alteration of boundaries transfers our district to Collie electorate. We are an agricultural community, having no affinity of interest with Collie, which is a coal mining and trade area. There are mining areas in Nelson adjoining Collie, and having affinity of interest which could be transferred in lieu of Balingup and Mullalyup. Your petitioners therefore respectfully petition you to retain Balingup and Mullalyup in Nelson electorate, and your petitioners will ever pray, etc.

Then follow a lot of Scotch names. God knows where they all came from.

The Premier: Did you draw up that petition?

Mr. WILSON: A redistribution of seats is necessary if only to do away with some of the twists and turns in the boundaries of the electorate I represent. This map is a very small boundary exhibit of my present electorate, as it was when passed by this

House in 1911. Members on the other side of the Chamber voted for that monstrosity.

The Premier: I voted for it. It brought you into Parliament.

Mr. WILSON: But I was here before the Premier, and before that Bill was brought in.

The Premier: Then it brought you back.

Mr. WILSON: And it will bring me back again. The people there know a good thing when they have it. This morning, before I had decided to say a few words on this Bill, I thought I would find out if the boundaries set out in the small map I have in my hand were identical with the boundaries set out in the big map hanging on the wall. I noticed that a place named Kirupp was outside the boundaries of the Collie electorate, whereas on the map I have in my hand it is inside. For the first time since this Bill was introduced I went to see Mr. Cooke, the Chief Electoral officer, and he admitted that Kirupp was outside the boundaries of the proposed Collie electorate. That is where the community of interest comes in. Kirupp is practically a timber district, and has been in the Collie electorate for over 20 years. It has now been taken out of it. Not only has this been done, but it is proposed also to attach the Balingup and Mullalyup centres to my district. There is not much in the way of community of interest in an arrangement of that sort. The member will reach his destination on the railway at Balingup, then he misses three stations and goes on to Greenbushes. The member for Collie will have no votes in Greenbushes, but if he goes a mile back he will again come within his electorate in the vicinity of Brown's Mill. There is community of interest between Greenbushes and Collie, but it is being excluded from that electorate, whereas the farming interests of Balingup and Mullalyup, in which there is no community of interest, are to be included in it. To make this appear just, the Commissioners take the farming community of Kirupp out of Collie and put it into Sussex, evidently with the intention of giving the member for that district a bit of a lift in his electorate. Let me take the districts of Bunbury, Sussex, Nelson, and Collie. From my knowledge of those districts I would say that labour, instead of having two seats will, under this Bill, get four seats. I do not complain about that, but I do complain about the community of interest.

The Premier: You are counting your chickens, as they do in Scotland.

Mr. WILSON: I do not count chickens I cannot get out of eggs. I may in this instance get 13 to the dozen; one can never tell one's luck. If an additional seat had to be given it should have been given to the Donnybrook area. Bunbury's quota will be 3,435, nearly its maximum; Collie will have 3,397; Nelson 3,309, and Sussex 3,263, making in all 13,404 electors for the four districts. These four districts could well have been divided into five, and such a division would still have given in each of such five districts a quota greater than those provided

for Beverley, Forrest, Geraldton, Irwin, and Pingelly. They would have been within 199 of Wagin, and be well ahead of the Plantagenet electorate, which is below the quota of those suggested five seats. The Premier says he is going to spend something like £3,000,000 in the South-West. If there is to be increased agricultural productivity down there, it must mean an increase in the population. There is no preparation in this Bill for the people who will go there to earn and spend this £3,000,000.

Mr. J. H. Smith: None of it will be spent in Plantagenet.

Mr. WILSON: I am concerned about Collie. Some of the electorates in the wheat area are at a standstill. On the other hand, Collie is a big industrial centre that is growing every day, just as Nelson is growing. I believe the Sussex electorate is also going ahead every day. No preparation, however, is made for the representation of the new people who will go to those districts. I suppose the Bill will be passed, because the Government have the requisite numbers.

The Premier: You will vote for it?

Mr. WILSON: I will not vote for anything that savours of inequality. I am not built that way. I will vote my own way, and that will be the correct way. Given a free hand, I think the Commissioners would make a very fine job of this redistribution, but they will have to be removed from all the disabilities of the Electoral Districts Act. They should be given a chance of making a good job of which we shall all be proud. In the circumstances, however, and as I consider that a new seat should have been given to the Donnybrook area, I intend to vote against the Bill. I hope the country will do its duty and give it the go-by.

Mr. GIBSON (Fremantle) [5.27]: With other members I am quite satisfied that a redistribution of seats is necessary. Believing that the quotas outlined in the Electoral Districts Act were reasonable, I gave it my support. I thought that if it erred at all, it erred on the side of generosity to the outback and agricultural areas. I should like to assure my friends opposite who suggest that influence may have been brought to bear to secure "cushy" seats for those who supported the Bill, that I am not one of those in that happy position. If the electorate I represent had had its boundaries arranged by my friends opposite, they could not have done a better job from their point of view than the Commissioners have performed. In saying this I have no wish to cast any doubt upon the integrity or intelligence of the Commissioners. I regret, however, they did not take the trouble to visit the various electorates, and see for themselves the result of their conclusions before submitting their report to Parliament. The boundaries recommended by the Commissioners for the North-East Fremantle, the South Fremantle, and the Fremantle seats, will mean not only my own political extinction, which is a very small

matter, but will also mean that those who think as I do in these districts will have no representation whatever in this Chamber.

Mr. Marshall: We do not want to lose you.

Mr. GIBSON: I hope the Bill will yet be referred back to the Commissioners, in the hope that something may be done to obviate the unsatisfactory result I anticipate.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth) [5.30]: It has been extremely interesting to listen to the debate on the Bill. One realises what perfect constituencies we should have had if only we had been consulted in regard to the boundaries, and in respect of what is known as community of interest. I feel that my own constituency could, in this manner, have been made a perfectly safe one for all time. Although many of us are not satisfied with the work of the Commission, I deprecate strongly the criticism that has been levelled against the members of the Commission who dealt with the matter. Two of them are civil servants—indeed the three of them are civil servants—and it would appear that they are not able to do anything that will give satisfaction to this House. I am convinced that the three Commissioners did their very best in this matter and that at any rate they tried to do what was right. I hardly like to think, even, of the suggestion made more than once in this Chamber that influence was brought to bear on one of the Commissioners. The metropolitan area is entitled to many more seats than it has. Three to one in quota has always been regarded as the proportion allotted, that is to say, we in the metropolitan area represent three people to one represented outside that area. That, however, does not give us the one vote one value that we hear so much about in this House. The member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) has just shown us that in many cases it means nine votes for one value. Nevertheless, I think, members are to blame in the matter. I do not know how many helped, as every one of us was asked to help, the Commissioners. The Electoral Department sent notices to members asking them to assist to put names on the roll and to see that they were in correct order. It was in the interests of members to do that, and those who did not comply with the request suffered. In fact, even those who did, suffered, the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) and myself amongst the number, although we did try to help in every way possible. I am very sorry that we cannot have compulsory voting in connection with this Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: A Bill to provide for that could be introduced this session.

Mrs. COWAN: I wish we could do so. As one who has done a lot of canvassing I realise that compulsory voting would be very valuable for stirring up political interest. Compulsory enrolment does not enable us to sit back and say we have no duties in the matter of getting voters on the roll, nor does

it enable us to say that we should not help our electoral officers in the way of getting the electors to do their duty to the country and to themselves. We have heard a great deal directly and indirectly with regard to the amount of favouritism shown in the Bill towards this side of the House. That is not so, because it favours this side so much less than it does the Opposition side.

The Premier: Only the juvenile members of the House have said that.

Mrs. COWAN: We must consider the Bill from the point of view of the general good and accept it as a Bill which is as fair as it can be made. I intend to support the second reading.

Hon. P. Collier: This is a sort of Salvation Army meeting to-day—everybody is testifying. Capt. Carter will now testify.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [5.35]: I intend to accord my support to the second reading of the Bill, but I am not going to testify in the manner the Leader of the Opposition did, by saying that I am faced with the dilemma of impugning the good faith of the Commissioners or expressing my contempt for their competence. I believe that the work of the Commissioners has been done in a truly impartial manner, and if any evidence of that were needed, I can say that, with the exception of the one or two juvenile members of the House, to whom the Premier referred, the general feeling in this House is that the Commissioners did their work with credit to themselves and to this House. I wish it to be clearly understood that I do not regard the Bill as it stands to be a perfect one. Like every other member, I feel that I could have done much better. We have all expressed ourselves, either inferentially or directly, along those lines, but we have all expressed the opinion that a redistribution is necessary, and I suppose there is only one better illustration of that fact, than the electorate I represent, and that is Canning. You can take nine seats under the present distribution, and, adding their total, you do not exceed the electors I have the honour to represent in this Chamber. It is possible to go further and by adding the total of 10 seats under existing circumstances, not approach the total on the Canning roll. Anomalies such as these speak for themselves and cry loudly for redistribution. I have been struck by the divided attitude of our friends opposite with regard to the representation for the metropolitan area. I suppose no sturdier fight was put up by anybody than by certain members opposite, when the Electoral Districts Act was before this House last session, for an increase in the number of representatives in the metropolitan area. Yet to-day we find some members sitting opposite who complain that the metropolitan area will be over represented. But as the Premier suggested by way of interjection, it is not the senior members of the party opposite who are making that complaint. All the same the feeling is there that the metro-

politan area has, under the redistribution, been given too great a representation.

Mr. Munsie: I do not think any members on this side gave expression to that opinion.

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member who sits directly behind the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) did not make himself clear on that point, I am afraid I do not understand the King's English. It is possible also that one or two members on this side of the House will subscribe to the same view. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) put the position clearly when he said that the State was made up of one people, who were banded together as part of a great machine for the development of the State. We are component parts and each one is dependent on the other. The charge that the metropolitan area was filled with parasites does not, of course, bear scrutiny, and is not worthy of any consideration. I am glad to find that no other member followed the line of argument enunciated by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock). The hon. member was speaking without his book. In the town of Geraldton, which is the centre of his electorate, there are people whose businesses and callings are similar to those of the residents of Perth. Therefore, if the charge applies to the capital city, it can apply equally to the town which the hon. member represents. Remembering the anomalies that must exist in a growing State like Western Australia, we must keep abreast of the times, and a measure of redistribution, when submitted, must receive support. I heard the Bill referred to by a member in the corridor as the fairest measure of redistribution ever introduced into an Australian Parliament. I feel that I can endorse the findings of the Commission, although I admit that it would be possible to improve them. But how to effect those improvements I cannot say. I do know, however, that every member must feel that a redistribution is long overdue, and if he votes honestly, irrespective of party interests, he must vote for the second reading. One must realise that, if any party has been favoured or is likely to be favoured more than another, it is not either of the parties joined in coalition on this side of the House.

Mr. Marshall: I suppose you know we are losing three seats.

Capt. CARTER: If we are to believe the member for Fremantle (Mr. Gibson), the party opposite are going to pick up one seat there; if we are to believe the man in the street, the party opposite will pick up another seat in Maylands; if we are to believe what we are told, they will pick up another seat at Karrakatta.

Mr. Corboy: And another at North Perth.

Capt. CARTER: If we are prepared to go on believing everything that we hear, the Labour Party will come back greatly strengthened and will occupy the Treasury bench next year as the result of the redistribution. There can be no ground for any charge of unfairness or gerrymandering. Thank Heaven that word has not been used

in the course of the debate. There can be no such charge made in connection with the Bill, and I am looking for the unusual spectacle of members opposite voting with the Government for the second reading.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [5.43]: I am going to support the second reading of the Bill, but I must say I am sorry that the Commission received the instructions that Parliament gave them last year. I would have preferred to see a reduction in the number of members by 20.

Mr. Marshall: And none in the Legislative Council.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member might himself seek election to that Chamber and try to abolish it. I believe that 30 members in this House could do as useful work as 50 are doing at the present time.

Mr. Marshall: There are 22 country members.

Mr. LATHAM: Possibly the Country Party would do considerably better if the numbers were reduced.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On a population basis?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not think any State such as this could be governed on a population basis. However, if we could get 30 men who would devote the whole of their time to the management of State affairs, we would probably obtain better results than those we are getting to-day.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Would those 30 men give up their farms?

Mr. LATHAM: We would have Ministers who would control the public purse better than it is controlled to-day. I appreciate to the full the difficulty of the task which Parliament last year set the Royal Commissioners to carry out. It is not easy to divide Western Australia into electoral districts which will please everybody. In fact, no Commission could do it; someone would be sure to have a grievance in any case. I do not know that it would be possible to do anything on so elaborate a scale as that which has been done by the Commissioners and show better results. In my opinion, the selection of the Commissioners was a very wise one. What I am mostly concerned about is that sufficient time was not allowed to the Commissioners to carry out this huge work, which could not easily be done from Perth. Effectively to divide this State into electoral districts would involve the necessity for visiting various portions of the State. Still, a good deal of assistance could have been rendered to the Commissioners. They should have been permitted to call expert evidence from various districts of Western Australia. To sit in an office and draw a map such as that we have before us, and in that way obtain a proper redistribution, is quite impossible. If the rolls are made up with the boundaries at present proposed, there will be a variation of between 300 and 400 voters among the various electors. Considerable assistance would have been ren-

dered to the Commissioners if the work of putting our rolls in order had been undertaken earlier. I do not know that any serious attempt was made to put the rolls in order. The only information I have received up to date on that point is a letter addressed to me by the Minister administering the Electoral Department—and I suppose every other member got such a letter—asking me to do certain things. It is very difficult for a member to get out in his district and see that all electors are on the roll. I wonder whether the police officers were also asked to do it.

Hon. P. Collier: They were not.

Mr. LATHAM: I wonder whether the mining wardens and Agricultural Bank inspectors were asked to do something in that regard. I do not say that a house-to-house canvass should have been made, but I contend that a great deal of help could have been given to the Commissioners if only the difficult nature of their task had been recognised.

The Minister for Mines: We have compulsory enrolment.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope some day we may have compulsory voting. Then probably we shall have better rolls. The only thing I know about compulsory enrolment is that some 50 fines were imposed on residents of the town of York for not having notified changes of address. One man who was summoned for not giving his address correctly was living in the same house with his wife. They were living on a corner, and he said the house was facing one street while his wife said it was facing the other. That man was fined 2s. 6d. or 5s. He had not moved from his house all the time.

Mr. Hughes: What is the use of spending money to put people on the roll if they can please themselves as to whether they vote or not?

Mr. LATHAM: I agree that it is time people were made to recognise their electoral responsibilities. Reverting to the Royal Commissioners, I am convinced that every one of the three Commissioners gave his best energies to the State. Another means by which assistance might have been rendered to them was by checking our State rolls with the Commonwealth rolls. Our rolls were in a shocking condition.

Mr. Mann: Do you think the Commonwealth rolls were in a better condition?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, because the postal officers in each town attend to the Commonwealth rolls.

The Premier: How many names are there on the Commonwealth rolls?

Mr. LATHAM: I have not made a count. I do know, however, that in every town where there is a post office, it is the duty of the postal officials to see that the Federal rolls are kept up to date. As regards the State rolls, neither the police nor anyone else has much interest in looking after them, and consequently they are neglected. Although I

appreciate the work of the Commissioners, I am disappointed at the redistribution which has been made. I do not consider that justice is being done to the outlying goldfields. I consider they should have another representative. I doubt whether it is proper to give additional representation to the metropolitan area. Hon. members may laugh, but when they realise the wonderful work which has been and is being done for this State by the men in the outback districts, they will realise the position and feel very keenly indeed that were it not for the goldfields this State would be 50 years behind in point of progress. The mineral prospectors and the miners gave the agricultural area its start, and made Perth the prosperous city it is to-day. If it is at all possible to give an additional representative to the outback goldfields, I will see that they get it. I agree with the comments on the proposed Murchison electorate which have been made by the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) and the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy). Gaseoyne and Roebourne seem two very small electorates alongside the huge Murchison electorate. The quota allowed in that area is 1,879. Murchison has 2,202 electors, Coolgardie 1,850, and Mt. Leonora 1,786. The Commissioners there certainly got very close to the mean if they did not exceed it. In this connection I may echo the words used by the Premier when speaking on last session's Electoral Districts Bill, that the goldfields will come again. Anything we can do to assist the goldfields people should be done. We should give them fuller representation in this Chamber. They should have an adequate opportunity of expressing themselves on the floor of the House even if to that end two additional goldfields members are necessary.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Where are you going to take them from? From the agricultural areas?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know yet where I am going to get them. However, there is very little community of interest between agriculture and mining. Those interests are distinctly different.

Mr. Mann: They are both primary producers.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, of a kind; but it appears to me that no man can rightly represent both. I hope that the boundaries under the Bill will be so amended as to prevent mining people from being pushed into purely agricultural seats. I hope that such mining people will have an opportunity of joining a mining electorate, with which they will have real community of interest. The same thing applies in the South-West. While both are primary producers, the timber interest and the agricultural interest are not alike, and they cannot be blended. If it is at all possible I hope that proper consideration will be given to the Murchison electorate and to that portion of the South-West where the interests are distinct. Going through the

figures, I find that in the agricultural areas there are 13 seats over the mean quota, the surplus being 3,712. Thus the agricultural areas would be entitled to another seat, the mean quota being 2,906. Ten seats, I find, are under the quota; and in those ten seats we find the two new electorates proposed by the Bill—Mt. Marshall, which is 448 below, and Plantagenet, which is 424 below. Taking the whole of the agricultural areas, there are 606 votes over and above the quota which they should have. Turning now to the city seats, we find that these contain in the aggregate a surplus of 3,696 voters. On the other hand, seven seats contain 4,397 under the quota. After deducting the plus of the eight seats from the deficiency of the seven, we find that there are 701 voters under the aggregate total.

Mr. Mann: That is not much.

Mr. LATHAM: No, but it shows that the city seats are being given 701 under, while the agricultural areas have to carry 606 over.

Mr. Mann: That is splitting straws.

Mr. LATHAM: It is a fact, and metropolitan members do not like it. That is why we quarrel. If the figures had been in their favour, I daresay they would have applauded me for quoting the totals. As the figures are against the metropolitan area, metropolitan members object. The metropolitan area has 83,748 voters, which figure, divided by 15, gives a mean of 5,583. I daresay I shall get into trouble, but I will say that if I divided the figure by 14, it would give a mean of 5,910, which would represent an average excess of 327 voters over what the quota is to-day. The figures to-day for the metropolitan electorates are as follows:—Canning 798 over, Claremont 538 over, Guildford 440 over, Perth 485 over, East Perth 467 over, North Perth 232 over, West Perth 408 over, and Maylands 328 over, making a total excess of 3,696. Then we have seven seats with an aggregate of 4,397 under the quota. Subtract from that 3,696, and we get 701. The metropolitan area could well give away this one seat.

Mr. Pickering: Hear, hear!

Mr. LATHAM: I mean it. It would be to the benefit of the State. No injustice would be done, because to-day there are eight seats, each exceeding the quota, if the division be made by 14. If we were to do this we should find within a year or two that we had done the right thing.

Mr. Hughes: Suppose you took that seat from the agricultural areas: What would be the average increase in quota?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not think it would be very much. When we realise the proximity of the metropolitan electorates to the seat of Government, their similarity of interests, and how easy it is for them to reach the heads of departments, it will be seen that even if those electorates had 6,000 or 7,000 electors each they would be very much easier to represent than are the agricultural areas.

Mr. Johnston: Why not give the seat to the Murchison?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not care where it goes; I want to be fair to the people of the State.

Mr. Richardson: You do not care about the people of the metropolitan area?

Mr. LATHAM: They can very well look after themselves. I deplore the hon. member's outlook. I only wish he would travel a little more in the interior, and find out what it is doing for the metropolitan area.

Mr. Richardson: I have been deeper into the interior and I have seen more of the country than have you.

Mr. LATHAM: And the hon. member, realising the difficulties confronting the people in the back country, lives in the city. If he had the big heart required by a man outback he would willingly give away the little I am asking for.

Mr. Richardson: Why don't you give it away from your own electorate?

Mr. LATHAM: I have not even mentioned my own electorate. It has only about 262 electors over its quota, and a large area of land now being selected will bring it over its maximum quota before the election is held.

Mr. Mann: You do not think the metropolitan area will grow at all!

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, I do. But I am not in favour of it. I hope the people coming into the State will get out into the agricultural and mining areas and so help develop the State. No State was ever developed by its cities. We cannot build up our secondary industries, because our primary producers are not sufficient in number. The people of Perth always have command of one member or another. If one be staying at an hotel they come along and get his ear.

Hon. P. Collier: That is attested by the fact that you introduced the Architects Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. LATHAM: As it happens, that Bill is for the benefit of men living in small agricultural towns. The people of the metropolitan area are not giving away anything at all.

Hon. P. Collier: Because they have nothing to give away.

Mr. LATHAM: No; they are living on the people of the interior.

Mrs. Cowan: Do you not think that members on this side are willing to assist you?

Mr. LATHAM: The only assistance I have had from metropolitan members has come from the hon. member herself. She is interested in the agricultural areas, as is shown by her questions to-day, and I know she will come to my assistance by giving away one of the metropolitan seats.

Mr. Richardson: You are optimistic.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am afraid there would be a riot if she did.

Mr. LATHAM: I appeal to metropolitan members to let that seat go to the outback districts. By doing so, Perth has everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Mr. Mann: The metropolitan area has given you a big difference in the quota.

Mr. LATHAM: That was provided for in the Electoral Districts Act. I want to read what the Premier said last session.

Capt. Carter: He is not a metropolitan member.

Mr. LATHAM: No, but the hon. member agreed with what the Premier said, as follows:—

So, under the Bill the quota for the metropolitan seats will be 6,062, as against 7,000, and there will be 14 seats.

That was the understanding on which we passed the Bill last session.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for West Perth must keep order.

Mrs. Cowan: I think there are others equally to blame.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LATHAM: When the member for Leederville assisted in the passing of the Bill, he knew the metropolitan area was entitled to not more than 14 seats.

Capt. Carter: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. P. Collier: You are putting up a good case; you have them all going.

Mr. LATHAM: The Premier had no intention of misleading the Chamber. From the rolls at that date, that was the number of seats to which the metropolitan area was entitled. The Premier was more competent to speak than was the member for Leederville, because the Premier had his officers to advise him. On the figures submitted by the Premier, 14 seats were allotted to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Richardson: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. LATHAM: The mining centres were to have had five seats. I regret to say the number has been reduced to three. One more point: I hope consideration will be given to the proposed names of the new seats. If Karrakatta is not to be the seat cut out for the benefit of the outback areas, I sincerely trust the name will be changed. The seat could well be given away, and its giving would remove the necessity for altering the name. It is not a name that should be given to an electorate. I will support the second reading, but if it be possible to refer the Bill back to the Commissioners or make the necessary alterations ourselves—

Mrs. Cowan: What alterations are necessary?

Mr. LATHAM: The giving of 14 seats only to the metropolitan area, and the addition of one seat to those allotted to the outback areas.

Capt. Carter: You want to be generous at our expense.

Mr. LATHAM: I want to be generous in the interests of the State. No injustice would be done to the metropolitan area if a seat were given away. To-day we have eight members representing electors in excess of the numbers I have quoted, if the division be made by 14. Therefore no injustice would be done. It only means bringing up the other seats to the same average.

Mr. Clydesdale: Suppose you were to give up an agricultural seat: What would be the increase in the quotas—about 130?

Mr. LATHAM: It would be doing an injustice. I have not worked it out.

Mr. Clydesdale: Of course not.

Mr. LATHAM: I thought there was no necessity to do so, that the agricultural areas were so valuable to the State that no member would begrudge them proper representation. I am not asking that you give the agricultural areas an additional seat; I am asking that you give it to those people who made the name of Western Australia by their wonderful work in pioneering.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [7.30]: I have been a little surprised at some of the heated arguments advanced, some in justification and others in condemnation of the Bill. I intend to vote against the second reading. I hope the Government will find a way to refer the Bill back to the Commission. If it cannot be done in the second reading stage, I hope it may be done in the committee stage, because I consider the Commissioners have made mistakes that should be obviated in order to give all parts of the State fair representation. There are two outstanding blots on the Bill. The first is the proposed district of Murchison. Every member recognises that this district is not what it should be. The Commissioners have taken 452 electors from the three districts now constituting the Murchison, and added them to other electorates. Had they retained them, taken about the same number from the Northampton mining district and added them to Mt. Magnet, the quota would have been sufficient to give the Murchison two seats instead of one. The Commissioners would then have got nearer to complying with the condition of community of interest specified in the Act of last session. Some members have expressed doubt as to whether the Commission had any authority to deal with the four North-West seats. While I grant they were not empowered to alter the number of seats, the Act did give them permission to alter the boundaries if they thought fit. There again the Commission have failed in their duty. The largest electorate in the State—considerably larger than even Murchison—is Kimberley; it is furthest from the seat of government and yet it has the largest quota of the four North-West seats. The Commission should be given an opportunity to consider the opinions expressed in this House and to remedy the anomalies that have been indicated. The principal reason for introducing the Bill was to correct existing anomalies. I agree that there are anomalies and that a redistribution is essential. This measure has caused a good deal of concern to members, and also to a fair proportion of the people, who are anxious as to the electorate in which they will be placed, and I do not wish to see a similar discussion rendered necessary in the next Parliament. If

the boundaries as now proposed are adopted, I am positive the next Parliament will be called upon to face the problem of another redistribution. This, however, may yet be avoided. I do not wish to deal with the allotment of seats to the goldfields area, the agricultural area or the metropolitan area; the Commission may have good reasons for their proposals, but I should consider it little short of remarkable if they were able to justify even their scheme for dividing the agricultural area.

The Minister for Works: You cannot call upon them to give reasons.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am not asking for that. They may have good reasons for their proposals. Last year the Premier told us that a margin of 20 per cent. above and below was being provided to give the Commission discretion to adopt a larger quota for a settled area in which there was little possibility of an increase of population, and a smaller quota for an area where there was a prospect of the population increasing. The object was that this redistribution might serve for some years. Let us see what the Commission have done. I shall deal with four seats in the South-West—Sussex, Nelson, Murray-Wellington, and Bunbury—omitting Collie, because at present little is being done there to settle people on the land. The Premier's land settlement policy, which has the backing of every section of political opinion in this House and for which he has outlined an expenditure of £5,000,000, is being given effect to in the districts of Sussex, Nelson, and Murray-Wellington. The quota for the agricultural area is 2,906, the maximum being 3,487 and the minimum 2,325. Of the electorates named, Sussex has been given a quota of 3,263, or within 224 of the maximum; Nelson 3,309, or within 178 of the maximum, and Murray-Wellington 3,387, or within 200 of the maximum, while Bunbury is given 3,432, or within 55 of the maximum. Take some of the older-settled districts of the Great Southern.

Hon. P. Collier: The unprogressive part of the State.

Mr. MUNSIE: I would not say that.

Hon. P. Collier: Comparatively speaking, it is.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Government are not contemplating anything like the activity in the Great Southern that they are in the South-Western portion of the State.

Mr. Latham: The electorates run out a long way east from the Great Southern.

Mr. MUNSIE: But they do not include areas for group settlement. Beverley has a quota of 2,511, or within 186 of the minimum; Pingelly has 2,509, or within 284 of the minimum; Wagin has 2,699, or within 374 of the minimum, and Plantagenet, the new electorate, has 2,472, or within 147 of the minimum.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the pet of the lot.

Mr. MUNSIE: If the numbers had been reversed, the Bill would have been much fairer. If this measure is passed, I am convinced that, even at the forthcoming election, Murray-Wellington, Nelson and Sussex will be above the maximum.

Mr. J. H. Smith: A long way above it, too.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes. The Commissioners who delineated boundaries giving these results did not carry out the terms of the Electoral Districts Act. They have made mistakes and, if possible, the Bill should be referred back to them, in order that the mistakes may be corrected. Let us make another analysis of the agricultural area, this time including Collie. The districts of Murray-Wellington, Collie, Bunbury, Nelson and Sussex together have a total of 16,679 electors. Include Katanning with the four Great Southern districts I have mentioned—Katanning is well up to its quota, 3,090—and together they have a total of 13,281 electors. In other words, there are 3,398 more electors in the four districts that will go ahead than there are in the four electorates that have been proved to be retrogressing. That is not a fair redistribution on a population basis, nor is it fair as compared with the quotas contained in last year's Bill. If anything can be done to alter this state of affairs, by referring the Bill back to the Commissioners to reconsider their decision, I hope it will be done. There is also the injustice to the Murchison district to be considered. The Commissioners, too, should take into account the conditions prevailing in those localities where money is being spent to settle people on the land, so that reasonable quotas may be allowed in such cases, instead of unreasonable quotas such as I have just indicated. In the metropolitan area the Commissioners have done almost the same as they have in respect of the agricultural areas. The only portion of the State that has been treated equitably is the central goldfields. The Commissioners have tried to keep the four seats there within reasonable quotas, and to take into account distance from the seat of government and community of interest. Why did they not go nearer to doing this in the case of the metropolitan area? I do not suggest they should have given an equal quota for every seat in the metropolitan area, for that would not have been right. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) was justly satisfied with his boundaries. He said he would have been satisfied with the old boundaries. The Commissioners have given a quota of nearly 1,000 more electors in the present Canning electorate than they have done in the case of Subiaco.

Mr. Hughes: Fourteen hundred more.

The Premier: Look at their representative.

Mr. McCallum: He is a member of the Opposition.

Mr. MUNSIE: We have a most capable representative in the present member.

Hon. P. Collier: And that is worth more than the difference in the quotas.

Mr. MUNSIE: It is an anomaly nevertheless. In Subiaco there is hardly a spare block of land for further building, and the population can increase only if the deplorable system of flats is inaugurated. On the other hand, in the Canning electorate houses are going up by the dozen every week. But the Canning electorate has been put up nearly to its maximum, and Subiaco has been kept down to 5,000. I cannot understand that sort of arrangement. Mount Hawthorn has a low quota. That is right, because if the place is to go ahead, and there is any amount of room for expansion, there should be provision for an increase in the quota. The present Leederville seat is much more settled than the Mount Hawthorn district, but the quota has been kept down to that of Mount Hawthorn. The Commissioners should be asked to reconsider their decision with a view to their arriving at a fairer redistribution of seats. Some people imagine the districts have been subdivided for political purposes. I do not know whether this was so or not.

Mr. Mann: You do not think so?

Mr. MUNSIE: No.

The Premier: I assure you that is not the case.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not think it is. Two things the Commissioners were asked to deal with were the distance from the seat of government and community of interest. South Fremantle has been brought up to a given point. From the other side of the Fremantle seat the Commissioners have taken the East Fremantle State school and its surroundings, and put it into South Fremantle.

Mr. McCallum: And good Labour votes, too.

Mr. MUNSIE: I know that. This has not detrimentally affected the hon. member's district. Seeing that the Commissioners had a sufficient number of electors for three electorates, why should they go to the east of Fremantle for 700 odd voters and put them into South Fremantle? If they had gone up another street they could have arrived at the requisite quota. They have not really examined the question of distance, or recognised any feature so long as they arrived at the quota by some means or other, irrespective of boundaries. They should be asked to make a better job of the business. I honestly believe they could do so, and could give more satisfaction to all parties, as well as fairer representation to the people in Parliament. I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill. If it is carried, I hope the Premier will find some way of referring it back to the Commissioners to rectify some of the blunders they have made.

Mr. McCALLUM: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	29

Majority against	..	17
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AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lambert
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Munsie

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Broun	Mr. Money
Mr. Carter	Mr. Pickering
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Davies	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Denton	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Durack	Mr. Scadden
Mr. George	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Underwood
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Mann	

(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. McMcCALLUM (South Fremantle) [7.58]: I congratulate the Premier on his successful tactics. It was obvious to members, when the Bill was first introduced, that its fate hung in the balance. From the expression of opinion emanating from members opposite, it was doubtful if it would be carried. The political fates of many members depend upon it.

The Colonial Secretary: Your position is affected to some extent.

Mr. McCALLUM: My position is assured, whether the Bill passes or not. Night after night we have witnessed the masterly tactics of the Premier. He has put up one speaker from his side of the House, or perhaps none at all, and the Opposition have had to carry on the debate. He has, therefore, been able to hold on to the debate by the process of argument, or—

Mr. Mann: Sound reasoning.

Mr. McCALLUM:—by the process suggested by the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), who said, before he would decide how to vote, he wanted some guarantee from the Premier as to what would happen in his electorate—

Mr. J. H. Smith: I wanted it referred back to the Commissioners.

Mr. McCALLUM:—about a certain railway.

The Premier: No one has gained anything of the sort under this Bill.

Mr. McCALLUM: That was distinctly stated by the member for Nelson.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that I asked for any guarantee from the Premier as to a railway.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Nelson has taken exception to that statement.

Mr. McCALLUM: I withdraw it. That was the impression I gathered from his remarks. After making the statement he said, even if he did not get the guarantee he would vote for the Bill as being the lesser of two evils.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has objected to that.

Mr. McCALLUM: I was confused as to his exact meaning, for his statements appear to be entirely contradictory. I am still confused. We have been aware that a number of members on the other side of the House did not intend to support the Bill and the Premier has hung on to it day after day, and week after week, taking division after division and recording the fact that he did not have his 26 members present to vote for it. Now he has shown that the numbers are up and no matter what argument is advanced the second reading is assured. The Premier has been able to gradually weigh down members until he has a sufficient number around him to enable him to put the Bill through. I congratulate him on the success of his tactics, but I cannot quite understand why so many should have changed their views in such a short period. It is the first time that I have known so much unanimity amongst members opposite.

The Premier: They are free and independent.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. McMcCALLUM: The plea advanced by the Premier that the Bill was to be a non-party one seems to me not to carry too much sincerity. It does not matter a fig whether this Bill be non-party or not. It was the other one—now the Electoral District Act—which was before us last session that mattered in that respect. That was the measure that laid down the basis of the distribution, and the Premier was emphatic in making it a purely party Bill when he introduced it. The Bill fixed the basis upon which the people were to be represented in Parliament. That was the very essence of the redistribution, and the very fundamentals of it made it a party measure. The Premier declared, "I will not agree to the Government remaining in office on a redistribution of seats that will be on a purely population basis; I will not agree to the people being represented in Parliament on a basis other than that contained in the Bill," and he added, that if the House dared to alter his proposal, the Government would resign. But when it comes to the mere arranging of the boundaries he declares that whether it means that you take in a little group of electors here or somewhere else, it does not matter. He says, "On the funda-

mentals, I have made the matter a party one and the Government will stand or fall by it." If there is any sincerity in the argument that the composition of Parliament shall be on non-party lines, if there is any genuineness in the stand taken by hon. members opposite, then the first issue should have been a non-party one. The whip was cracked because the fate of the Government was at stake, and the Premier made a clear declaration regarding the Bill we now have before us. That declaration, however, did not matter very much, because the Commissioners had very little discretion and were obliged to act on the lines laid down by the Electoral Districts Act.

The Premier: You said that they exercised too much power.

Mr. McCALLUM: I did not say anything of the sort; I have not said a word about the work of the Commission. I do say, however, that you did not give the Commission much scope; that you gave them practically no discretion; that you bound them down before they started on their work. They were bound to certain principles from which they could not depart, and their report has been limited to that extent. I find a wonderful mixture of reasoning coming from members opposite, and from those outside who give their support to members opposite. There is a conflict of reasoning that I cannot trace to any logical source. This is advanced in support of the intention of Government members to vote for the Bill. It has been advanced that because some members opposite are likely to have their seats abolished those members intend to vote for the Bill which proposes to take away their seats. Those members declare that they are disinterested and broad-minded, that their outlook is national and that their action should be applauded. All this reasoning is put up as a great virtue.

The Premier: I believe it, too.

Mr. McCALLUM: It is claimed that this attitude should meet with public approbation. But when it comes to the Opposition side of the House, we are told that the Bill makes certain seats secure for Labour men. I can claim that for my seat. I do not think any man would be foolish enough to spend money in trying to oust me under the new boundaries. But because I am going to talk and vote against the Bill, and because I urge the House to throw out the Bill, even though it makes my seat secure, that is not to be regarded as a virtue on my part. It is done for political purposes. It is a political object that I have in view when I vote against something that is going to make my seat secure. But when another man votes for something that proposes to abolish his seat, his action is acclaimed as that of a man who is disinterested. Where is the logical reasoning in that?

The Premier: I was just wondering.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is what we have had from members on the other side of the House.

The Premier: No.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier himself has stated more than once that the Bill will favour the Labour Party.

The Premier: No!

Mr. McCALLUM: He has also stated that we in our hearts would like to see the Bill go through.

The Premier: I do say that.

Mr. McCALLUM: Because everyone on this side will vote against the Bill the Premier declares that we want it. He tells us that ours is not a broad-minded outlook; that we are not thinking of anyone but ourselves, our own personal interests. And because we say that every vote on this side is going against the Bill, he declares that we are doing that for a political purpose. There can be no suggestion that a man who votes against a Bill that abolishes his seat is doing that for political purposes. Oh no! The statement is too thin! It will not stand examination for one moment. If members on this side of the House are secure in their seats under the new boundaries, and if, as the Premier has stated, we will be better situated and we still vote against the Bill, how can it be said that we are prompted in our actions by political consideration? What does the Premier mean by political consideration?

The Premier: I did not use the words.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier's supporters gave voice to it and the Premier has suggested that there are reasons why we are voting against the Bill. If there are political reasons, what are they? The only political reasons are the winning of seats, and if the Bill is going to give us seats in this House, if we were looking for kudos and gain, we should all be supporting the measure and assisting its passage. It is because we take the stand that on fundamentals the Bill is wrong, that it is unjust and against the interests of the people, that we intend to vote against it. The Bill has been framed to protect interests; it is not democratic; it merely makes for the representation of interests which will give the present Government continued control. It was framed also with the idea of preventing the Labour Party from assuming the reins of government.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Hughes: The Bill is a policy of insurance for the Mitchell Government.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes. That sort of thing has been attempted before. I have declared where I stand. I stand for one vote one value. I fail to grasp that one man's vote should be worth more than another man's simply because the men live in different localities. If I live in the city to-day and in the bush to-morrow, I shall have no more capacity or intellect or judgment to-morrow than at present. My stand appears to me to be the only stand that can possibly be taken by truly democratic members. I challenge contradiction when I say that no section of any Parliament in Australia has given more sympathetic consideration to the wants of the

country districts than has been extended to them by the representatives of the metropolitan area in this Chamber. I ask country members to quote one instance in which metropolitan members have not given the most sympathetic support to anything intended for the advancement of the agricultural and outback areas of Western Australia. It is argued that if we want development of the country and advancement for the man outback, we must give the country districts more representation here. But sending another Country Party member here does not mean more clearing or more cultivating of land.

Hon. P. Collier: No. It means less, because it takes a man away.

Mr. McCALLUM: Just so. The presence here of an extra representative of the country districts will not promote the development of the country. My experience here has been comparatively short, extending over only 2½ years, but, my district being half town and half rural, ranging from Fremantle towards Mandurah, possibly my experience is typical. It is argued here that city electors have the ear of their member and can easily get grievances remedied and wants attended to. In reply to that I say that those of my electors who live in or near the town have given me very little work indeed. City electors do not look to the Government for nursing and spoon-feeding. But those of my electors who are situated further out have meant easily more than half of my work as a member of Parliament, although they do not number one-tenth of the total of my electors.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is an argument.

Mr. McCALLUM: Is the fact of the man in the country looking for spoon-feeding and wet-nursing from the Government an argument for giving him more representation here? Because the city man has more self-reliance, is he to have less representation here? If that is so, then it is the place of metropolitan members to tell their electors to give up all initiative and go to the Government for everything they want. That appears to be the argument put up by the Country Party. I had not intended to speak on this Bill at all, because it has been so apparent that, despite all protestations as to this being a non-party measure, the whip has been loudly cracked, and that the Premier would not allow a vote to be taken until he was assured that the numbers were here. The real essence of the present decision lay in the previous Bill, the Bill of last session, now known as the Electoral Districts Act. The Government made that distinctly a party measure. Whatever redistribution may be framed under that Act can never be claimed to represent an equitable distribution of seats. No representative Parliament can be elected on the basis of that Act. We can go back to the dark ages, when lords and barons governed the world without any Parliaments; and I say there is

only a degree of difference between such a position and the position which this Bill proposes to create. Under this measure, for an Upper House election the votes on one side of the street in Cottesloe Beach will have twice the value of votes on the other side of the street; West Province electors will have twice the voting strength of electors for the Metropolitan-Suburban Province. Is there any reason whatever why a man living in Fremantle should have twice the voting strength of a man living at Cottesloe Beach? What logical argument can be advanced in support of such a position? How can it be maintained that a man from Roebourne, representing 500 people, shall be the equal here of the representative of 6,000 electors? And this, simply because the member for Roebourne has to voyage a few days by boat to get to his constituency. The member for Roebourne sits behind the Premier, and when the Premier holds up his finger that is sufficient for the hon. member to follow. In that respect the member for Roebourne is, in the Premier's opinion, a worthy representative. If the electors of Roebourne were reduced to even 200 or 300, the Premier would justify the retention of Roebourne as a seat on the ground that the member for Roebourne followed the dictates of the Government.

The Premier: That is a matter of intelligence.

Mr. McCALLUM: Intelligence does not count under this Bill. What is Parliament supposed to be? A reflex of the people?

Hon. P. Collier: We used to think so.

Mr. CALLUM: Is it supposed to be the voice of the people? Are we supposed to be here in order to express the aspirations of the people? Is it people we are supposed to represent? Can the Premier say that this Bill ensures that the voice of the people shall prevail?

The Premier: Of course.

Mr. McCALLUM: Nothing of the kind. The Premier knows that it is certain interests, and not the people, that have dominated the framing of the Bill. It is something without any life in it that dominates the Bill. The people have been only a secondary consideration. What dominates the Bill is something without vitality, something unable to express itself, something that should not receive consideration when it comes to the framing of such a Bill as this. I want to know the opinions of the people. Let the people speak. Once the majority have spoken, I bow to the judgment, whether it be for or against me. I have never asked for anything more; I will never take anything less. But this Bill is dominated by something inanimate, by broad acres, by hushels of wheat, by miles of wire fencing. One member from the North-West said, "We have so many rivers running through our district, and there are so many head of cattle in it, and cotton is grown in it." That is the basis of representation. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) put up as a reason why he should be elected to this Chamber by

500 people the fact that he had had to ride behind six camels. That is the basis on which representation is to be allotted in this Chamber. That is an argument why certain districts should receive consideration over other districts. It is surprising to observe the unanimity prevailing amongst members of the Country Party in one respect. Their hearts are bleeding for the outer goldfields. The whole of their sympathies go forth to those outer goldfields, which, they declare, should have an extra seat. But at whose expense? Not at the Country Party's expense. The Country Party are unanimous in giving away a seat from somewhere else, a seat from the metropolitan area.

Hon. P. Collier: Generosity!

Mr. McCALLUM: Generosity indeed. The Country Party have three to one representation as compared with the metropolitan area.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Mr. McCALLUM: In effect they have. At any rate, it is more than two to one. You do not get away without calculating the North-West seats.

Mr. Teesdale: You have forgotten them for five minutes.

Mr. McCALLUM: Never for a moment.

Mr. Teesdale: Your party gave them to us.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, we gave you but three.

Hon. P. Collier: And you have lost a thousand electors since then.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't take back what you have given.

Mr. McCALLUM: I will not compromise on the democratic principle I adopt.

The Premier: No, you are obstinate about it.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am not so obstinate as is the Premier, who will not listen to reason at all. The Premier can hold his own with all the Scotchmen and Cornishmen.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the trouble in this House—too many Scotchmen and Cornishmen.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am sorry we should be perpetuating the idea that Parliament is to be representative, not of the people, but of interests, and particular interests at that. If it were merely general interests the Murchison would not have been treated as it has been. Compared with the agricultural interests and the North-West interests, the Murchison has been very badly treated.

Hon. P. Collier: And even on that bad basis we have a bad Bill.

Mr. McCALLUM: Nobody has attempted to justify the treatment of the Murchison. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) told us there were a great many railway stations in the electorate, but he has since discovered his error.

Mr. Teesdale: I admit that two of those I included are just over the border.

Mr. McCALLUM: There are but three attended railway stations in the Murchison electorate. The hon. member would describe a bit of a ramp as a station. Either the hon. member's list or the map is wrong. No doubt the hon. member was misled. I should regret it if the control of our domestic affairs were to drift out of the hands of the people of Western Australia, but I am convinced that if this principle is to be perpetuated in the election of members to the House the democratic spirit of the people will revolt; the people will look for other channels through which to express their aspirations. The Bill will keep for all time the government of the State in the hands of particular interests, denying the majority of the people the expression of their ideas.

Mr. Teesdale: You will be able to alter it when you get over here.

Mr. McCALLUM: But the object of the Bill is to prevent us from getting over there, to block the democratic spirit in this party from controlling the country. It is the negation of the principle of self-government.

Hon. P. Collier: This is the way they get round it.

Mr. McCALLUM: It is proclaimed that every adult in Western Australia has a vote for the election of a representative to Parliament, but it is not explained that the votes of those in one electorate are discounted as against the votes of those in another electorate.

Mr. Mann: The same thing obtains in other States and countries.

Mr. McCALLUM: Not in respect of the Federal divisions. We have been told that there is no other country where the opinions of the people have freer play.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This is the only country in the world with plural voting for local governing bodies.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is so, and I doubt whether in any other country the Upper House is hedged in by such restrictions as we have in Western Australia. The Bill is going to give vested interests, specific interests, all kinds of protection in this House, protection to a greater extent than obtains in any other part of the world. Some electorates are to have but 500 electors as against 6,000 in other electorates, or a proportion of 12 to one.

Capt. Carter: What ratio did you fix for the North-West seats?

Mr. McCALLUM: I never had a hand in fixing any ratio. Whatever the sins of the past, I am not shouldering them.

Hon. P. Collier: Our Bill provided three North-West seats, although there were then in the North 1,400 electors more than there are at present.

Capt. Carter: But was it 10 to one, or 12 to one, or what?

Mr. McCALLUM: The man then at the head of the Government is a member of the present Government. Perhaps his malign in-

fluence served to shape the Bill. I am not shouldering his sins.

Mr. Mann: That is a weak reply.

Mr. McCALLUM: Would you ask me to adopt his viewpoint?

The Minister for Agriculture: You are maligning your own colleagues.

Mr. McCALLUM: How do I know what influence they had as against that of their leader? I know the influence the leader of your Government has; he is the Government itself.

Hon. P. Collier: The discrepancies in our Bill were not within 50 per cent. of those in this Bill.

The Premier: Oh yes, they were.

Mr. McCALLUM: In any case, surely we have made some progress since 1913! What has become of the protestations made when the war broke out, of the promises made that the old relationship between employee and employer would never again be known, that Jack was as good as his master?

The Premier: This has nothing to do with the Bill.

Mr. McCALLUM: We were told that the people were going to rule. Surely the ten years that have elapsed since 1913 should have seen some democratic progress! If this Parliament is not to be a channel through which the democratic instincts of the people can find an outlet, there is in Australia another channel through which the people's voice can be heard. To that channel they will turn, probably to the prejudice of the State; because I do not think it would be to the interests of the State that we should have unification. Still, if we are to be denied the expression of the people's views in this House, there is nothing left but to turn to the channel where the people's views can be freely expressed. I am advised that in 1913 the quota for the three North-West seats was 1,800 as against the 900 in the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: A difference of 100 per cent.!

The Premier: Where did you get that?

Hon. W. G. Angwin: From the rolls.

Mr. McCALLUM: We are to allow broad acres to have a firmer grip over the government of the country, broad acres, sheep, cows, and barbed wire.

Mr. Munsie: Not forgetting the camels!

Mr. McCALLUM: That was the argument put up by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale), who said, in effect that he has the right to be here because he rode behind six camels.

Mr. Teesdale: As against the railway that runs you up in two nights and a day.

Mr. McCALLUM: The hon. member, if he likes, can get to his electorate just as quickly as other members can get to theirs.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Almost as quickly as to Fremantle.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, if he cares, but he wants to have one foot on the ground all the time. He is too canny to take risks. The farthest up he will go is on the back of a camel. I am disappointed to find at this stage

of our history that a Bill of this description should receive such support. When it was first introduced, I was hopeful that the democratic spirit would dominate, and that there would be sufficient members on the other side of the House to demand a more equitable redistribution. I do not care what happens to this Bill so long as it does not become law. The whole essence of redistribution was contained in the Electoral Districts Act of last session. That is where the damage was done; that is where the people were robbed of their power to govern. The Act took from them their birthright, their power to elect representatives. It gave to vested interests the power to dominate. It provided in effect that the vote of a person living in one area should be worth many times that of a person living in another area. Human beings were not to count and were not to be the dominant factor. The dominant factor was to be some particular interest that was sure to vote solidly against democratic progress. The numbers recorded in the division a little while ago show that the fate of the Bill is sealed. My seat will be more secure under this measure than it was before, but that does not matter. My opposition to the Bill, however, is regarded by some hon. members as being due to political considerations. I had hoped that this Parliament would lay down a fundamental principle, that no matter which party were in power, when the Government were formed, they could face the community and claim to be in power at the freely expressed will of a majority of the people, and, untrammelled in any way, could represent them without let or hindrance. Under this Bill that is impossible, and on those grounds I oppose it.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.48]: I was on the point of moving the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. P. Collier: I think you should have a chance now.

The Premier: You are democratic, are you not?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, but under this proposed redistribution, I do not know what I shall be.

Mr. Teesdale: You will always be what you are.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) has made an eloquent speech, but I am afraid I cannot support him entirely.

The Premier: I thought you were not the democrat he is.

Mr. MARSHALL: Nor am I the democrat the Premier is, either. Members on the Government side have refrained from advancing any argument in favour of the Bill, but have merely contended that members of the Opposition, fearing political execution, are animated by personal motives. I for one do not fear political execution, although great changes are proposed to the boundaries of the old Murchison district. As yet I can do a conscientious day's work and, if I am not wanted in Parliament, I can earn a good

living outside it. I am speaking on behalf of the people of Murchison, many of them pioneers, who have fostered the industries of the State and who first gave political birth to many members that are now betraying their trust.

Hon. P. Collier: You stand alone in respect of still being able to do a conscientious day's work outside.

Mr. MARSHALL: Undoubtedly, and unlike the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) I shall not require six camels and a buggy to pull me about. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) referred to members of the Opposition having quoted certain figures that had almost immediately been disputed by members on the Government side. Then he proceeded to compare the votes recorded at the last general election in certain metropolitan districts and outback mining centres. I regret that he should have drawn such a comparison. The hon. member is well known on the goldfields. At one time he held a position that necessitated his travelling in the remote parts, so that he should have some knowledge of the conditions prevailing there. By drawing such a comparison, however, he merely proved his ignorance. Should not the people of the metropolitan area, with all the facilities at their disposal, record a better percentage of polling than the people in such districts as Leonora or Murchison? Between Peak Hill and Mount Egerton, a distance of 110 miles, there is no polling booth, and electors who desire to vote must provide their own facilities to travel to a booth. From the central point of that area, it would mean a journey of 55 miles.

Capt. Carter: How many electors would there be in that part?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know, but they are intellectual beings.

Mr. Underwood: Are there any at all?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) knows better than that. The use of such a comparison would warrant the voting out of the Bill. The member for Subiaco demonstrated that he had no idea of the adversities against which the people in the remote parts of the State have to contend. He said that representatives of the outback districts could visit their electors in the same space of time that he could visit his constituents. I do not know whether it is worth while commenting on such remarks, or on his reference to fish. From what I can judge, it was all a matter of stinking fish. I repeat my regret that the hon. member should have employed such a comparison. I knew him before either of us had won a seat in this House and I gave him credit for possessing better judgment. The member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany), too, was—

Hon. P. Collier: Heroic.

Mr. MARSHALL: More than heroic; he deserved the Victoria Cross.

The Premier: Stick to the Bill; what have you to say about that?

Mr. MARSHALL: I shall get to that later; we have a long way to go yet. The member for Menzies implied that those who opposed the measure did so on personal or party grounds. While the hon. member may be commended by some for his heroic attitude, he should remember the people that have kept him in Parliament for so many years.

Hon. P. Collier: He changed over to save his own political skin.

Mr. MARSHALL: Those same people will bring to him political execution. I consider his attitude pure cowardice. He is voting to reduce the Parliamentary power of the people that have kept him in Parliament for years. He said it did not matter to him whether the Bill went through or not; he still had a fighting chance. In one breath he favoured reducing the voting power of the people, and in the next breath he said if the Bill went through he would ask the people he had deserted to support him. If I am any judge of miners and prospectors, the member for Menzies, as a politician, is finished. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) was responsible for the best wild beast show I have witnessed in this Chamber. He produced one sheet of figures and then another and, when his arguments were refuted, he pushed them into a drawer and pulled out another lot of figures. If a member quotes one lot of inaccurate figures, no reliance can be placed upon anything he says. The member for Roebourne said there were 19 railway stations in the new Murchison district and it would be possible to get through the district in no time. There are actually three railway stations, and the district covers a greater area than that of most of the electorates. The hon. member used figures that were absolutely inaccurate and, when he was challenged, he pocketed them. The inference to be drawn from his argument was that those people that had been sufficiently courageous and industrious to settle in the remote parts of the State should receive no consideration whatever. He said there were only 20 or 30 people out there. According to him they should not be represented in Parliament. They were foolish to go outback, and I do not know that he is not right.

The Premier: The member for South Fremantle said that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The member for Roebourne did.

Mr. Teesdale: Anything will do.

Mr. MARSHALL: There is one little spot of which the member for Roebourne has a considerable amount of inside knowledge. He was careful, however, not to mention it. It is probably one of the few spots about which the hon. member could have spoken freely.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you mean spot lager?

Mr. MARSHALL: I mean the Zoo.

Mr. Teesdale: Tripe. Give us something fresh and original.

Mr. MARSHALL: This is very original.

Mr. Teesdale: It is Billingsgate.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member and others argue that this Bill will overcome previous anomalies, and give better representation to the people in Parliament. It will not do that. When the Electoral Districts Bill was before the House I said it would not overcome these anomalies. I was correct in that. The member for Roebourne is here.

Mr. Teesdale: Very much here.

Mr. MARSHALL: He is here by the will of 246 electors.

Hon. P. Collier: Twenty less votes than Percy Branton obtained.

Mr. MARSHALL: Percy Branton stood for the Perth seat, and obtained 293 votes, 47 more than the member for Roebourne, but he lost his deposit and went to goal. This Bill does not overcome one of the anomalies.

Mr. Hughes: The electors of Roebourne are the best advertised electors in the State.

Mr. MARSHALL: I really thought the member for Roebourne would have been more generous in his attitude towards the Murchison. He knows that the present Murchison electorate compares favourably with his own. He knows the difficulties confronting anyone who wishes to get round the Murchison electorate. I have at my disposal no better facilities for doing this than the hon. member has for moving round his own electorate. When a member of Parliament leaves the railway system he has to pay his own cost of travelling. The State provides the State steamers to enable the member for Roebourne to reach the principle centre of his electorate.

Mr. Teesdale: We have to pay.

Mr. MARSHALL: He does not have to pay for the actual transit of his carcass. He is carried free.

Mr. Teesdale: I insure that.

Mr. MARSHALL: When I consider the pros and cons of the position I really think it is the cheapest carcass carried on the North-West. The railway terminus in my electorate is at Meekatharra, the most easterly portion of it. To get to the district I have to pay my own travelling expenses just as the member for Roebourne has to. He will not argue that it is more expensive for him to travel in his electorate than it is for me to travel in mine. And yet he takes up an attitude detrimental to electors living in the same sphere of life as those he represents himself. His attitude caused me great surprise. He said, "The vote of my electors is worth a little more than four times as much as the vote of your electors." He has 500 electors, and the area of his district is between 50,000 and 60,000 square miles.

Mr. Teesdale: Be fair.

Mr. MARSHALL: I will give him the benefit of the doubt. The electors in my district live very close to those in his, and live under similar conditions, but are more remote from the capital. The member for Gascoyne and he tried to side-track the issue of communication, and had nothing to say about the

aerial service. I had occasion last week to write a letter to Onslow and received the reply in three days.

Mr. Underwood: It cannot be done in three days.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the letter had gone to Meekatharra it would have taken almost as many weeks to get a reply.

Mr. Teesdale: You sent a special up.

Mr. MARSHALL: No. The aerial service brings Roebourne and practically the whole of the North-West territory into closer communication with the capital than the Murchison.

Mr. Teesdale: It takes bills up very quickly.

Mr. MARSHALL: Evidently the hon. member makes them mount up.

Mr. Underwood: And it brings cheques down more quickly.

Mr. MARSHALL: The rolls should have been made up before the boundaries were readjusted. In the basis of operations given to the Commission last year it was laid down that they had to take into account community of interest, means of communication, distance from the capital, physical features, and the existing boundaries of districts. I shall not go over again all that has been said concerning the South-West and the wheat belt, but I wish to compare the Gascoyne, Leonora and Murchison seats. Gascoyne has 1,057 voters.

Mr. Angelo: Fourteen hundred.

Mr. MARSHALL: They are not on the roll. I am giving the figures used in making up this redistribution. There are as many people off the roll in the Murchison district as there are in the Gascoyne. In order to be fair to the three electorates I have mentioned I have taken the most central point on their northern boundaries, and run a direct line thereto from the seat of government.

Mr. Angelo: You would not have a person within 200 miles of your centre.

Mr. Chesson: You would not have anyone not on the coast.

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member is wrong. I may not have anyone within 200 miles of that point who has not more intelligence than the hon. member.

Mr. Underwood: Your argument is that this being so they should not have a vote; is that it?

Mr. MARSHALL: I am not arguing with the hon. member. The distance of the Gascoyne from the seat of Government is 510 miles, and the area of the district is 50,000 square miles.

Mr. Angelo: Did you say 510 miles?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes, as the crow flies.

Mr. Angelo: We are not crows.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Leonora district has 1,736 voters. It is 620 miles from the seat of government, and comprises 120,000 square miles. Nearly every member who has spoken about the Murchison has expressed the opinion that it has been unjustly dealt with. I do not wish to elaborate on that. The Murchison has

2,202 voters, twice as many as the Gascoyne, four times as many as Roebourne, and half as many again as Leonora. The distance from the seat of government is 830 miles, and it comprises an area of 122,000 square miles. No wonder the member for Roebourne looks cunning.

Mr. Teesdale: He is chloroformed.

Mr. Corboy: Politically!

Mr. Underwood: You are taking the North-East angle.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am taking a direct line from the seat of government. Anyone can check my figures from the map.

Mr. Angelo: There are not more than 10 people in the eastern half of the district.

Mr. MARSHALL: Members representing the North-West have the use of the State steamship service, which may not be as rapid as the railway system to Meekatharra or the Murchison. The steamship service, however, is supplemented by a rapid aerial service. The member for Gascoyne can reach Geraldton by motor from Carnarvon in a day.

Mr. Angelo: You are wrong. It takes four days. You have to go through the Upper Gascoyne.

Mr. Corboy: You must make a lot of stoppages.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is done repeatedly by people living adjacent to Carnarvon. The hon. member's boundary comes down pretty well to the lead mines which are only 28 miles from Geraldton. The possibility of travelling from Carnarvon to Geraldton by car in 24 hours is a very simple matter, besides which there is the aerial service as well as the steamship service.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Underwood: You cannot drive a motor car over the map.

Mr. MARSHALL: From what I can gather several motor cars have been driven over the hon. member. I contend, with all due respect to the people in the metropolitan area, that they are over represented now. There are 80 members of Parliament in this State and nearly all live in Perth, more or less. I have always noticed that whenever any matter affecting the welfare of the metropolitan area has come under notice in this Chamber all members have taken a special interest in it. On the Address-in-reply nearly every member made some reference or other to the metropolitan area. Therefore I am justified in saying that the metropolitan area has a representation of 80 members.

Mr. Hughes: And what do we ever get out of it?

Mr. MARSHALL: A very good livelihood at the expense of the ratepayers. Some people also acquire the right to study law at the expense of the ratepayers. I do not say that the people in the metropolitan area should not have representation; I declare that they have it and that they are very well represented.

The Minister for Mines interjected.

Mr. MARSHALL: If anything were required for Mr. Lawley the Minister for Mines would not hesitate to raise his voice in support of it.

Mr. Hughes: What about the Lord-street tram?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MARSHALL: I suppose the member for East Perth overlooks the fact that the Minister for Mines has a motor car. It is true that on matters of vital importance to the metropolitan area almost every member gives it his support.

Mr. Hughes: That is why we have been drinking mud instead of water for the past three years.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the hon. member has been drinking mud it has proved invigorating in his case.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep to the subject before the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: Before the Commission had any right to start on the readjustment of the boundaries, the Premier should have gone to the expense of getting the rolls thoroughly revised and brought up to date. Every member, however, has complained about the state of the rolls. Some members have said, "You will find such and such a number off the roll and that number will compensate for those who are not legitimately on the roll." Such an assertion cannot be proved. There are very few on the rolls who are not entitled to have their names there. But I have known of cases where names have been struck off the roll, when those names should have been allowed to remain. In the outback parts of the State the same facilities as are to be found in the more populated districts do not exist. People can secure enrolment outback only through the agency of the police and registrars. On the Murchison there are only two registrars.

The Minister for Mines: There are honorary electoral officers.

Mr. MARSHALL: The only honorary officers who are authorised to enrol people are the police, and these officers, when patrolling, do their utmost to enrol those who are prospecting or working in remote parts. The police, however, when on patrol, do not go beyond the station homesteads. The main object is to reach those homesteads and the enrolment cards are left there. It is only once in 12 months, however, that men come in from distant places, and then those people are so anxious to reach the towns that they do not bother about enrolling. Their sole desire is to get away from the keen hard living that they have been experiencing and to reach the towns. If by any chance they neglect to attend to the claim cards they are not enrolled. It happens too that their names, if they happen to be on the roll, are struck off by the registrar, who declares that he has no proof that these men are still in the district. The experi-

ence is that names are put on to-day and struck off to-morrow. The member for Roebourne may display his ignorance by laughing, but I assure him what I say is a fact. The registrar is in charge of the roll at Meekatharra, and though he is a conscientious officer, it is by virtue of the fact that he cannot get the information he requires, that he is obliged to strike names off the roll. He has to work on the fact that he does not see the people. They come from Peak Hill to-day and go out to Wiluna to-morrow, and so make it difficult for the registrar to attend to their enrolment. I enter my protest against the state in which the rolls are to be found to-day. I did claim that the rolls were going to make a great deal of difference to the boundaries.

Mr. Underwood: They are all bad.

Mr. MARSHALL: Then in that respect they are like the hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MARSHALL: If the outback parts of the State are going to prosper, that prosperity can be brought about only by giving the distant districts the representation in this House to which they are entitled. We cannot do that on the boundaries proposed in the Bill. It is utterly impossible for anyone to represent the Murchison if the boundaries are to remain as the Bill proposes. It will be quite impossible to go over the electorate.

Mr. Teesdale: Do your best.

Mr. MARSHALL: I will certainly do that even if I have to use camels. No one man, I care not who he be, can properly represent the people in the proposed new Murchison area.

Mr. Underwood: Cannot the people look after themselves?

Mr. MARSHALL: It would be better if the hon. member looked after himself. With regard to the metropolitan area being well catered for by the fact that the majority of members live within its boundaries, I would like to read to the House the expressed convictions of that wonderfully intelligent representative in the Senate for the State of Western Australia, Mr. Kingsmill, who says in an interview with the "West Australian"—

The removal of the Federal Parliament to Canberra will check the preponderant political influence of Victoria and New South Wales.

As members of this Parliament, we know that Western Australia, as a federated State, does not get the same deal as the other States, which are situated more closely to the seat of Government, States like Victoria and New South Wales. The very same thing applies to the Bill under discussion, that the electorates far removed from the seat of our own Government will be neglected by virtue of the fact that they have not the same political pull as those which are in closer proximity to the capital. I challenge any representative of the Murchison electorate, whether it be myself or another, to go over that vast area and give

it adequate representation. Personally I care not what the results of the Bill may be.

Mr. Teesdale: You are pretty right.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am seldom wrong. I care not what may happen to me politically. If the Premier himself contends that this Bill is justifiable on the quotas adopted by the Royal Commission, the inevitable inference is that the State is going back. If this redistribution of seats is fair, the population must be decreasing.

Mr. Money: Centralising.

Mr. MARSHALL: On the rolls of two years ago as compared with the rolls of to-day, assuming them to be correct, the Premier must admit that our immigration scheme is a dismal failure. I have here the census figures of two years ago which, if they err at all, mean that there are about 5 per cent. more people in the State than those figures indicate. The census of the 4th April, 1921, discloses certain things. If the electoral rolls used for the purpose of this redistribution of boundaries are correct, then it follows, for that census of 1921, that only one portion of this State has shown an increase, and that portion is the agricultural area, which in two years has gained the paltry increase of 1,069 people. The Premier acted very indiscreetly when he allowed the Royal Commissioners to work on the rolls before these had been given a thorough overhauling, and had been inscribed with the eligible names that were off them. In the Murchison goldfields district, according to the census of 1921, the population was 3,554. According to the rolls used for the redistribution, the same district on the 24th May, 1923, which is two years later, had 2,654, or 890 less. It follows that the population of the Murchison goldfields has been running away at the rate of 450 per year—which is not in accordance with fact. As for the metropolitan area, the 1921 census discloses a population of 90,000. On the rolls used by the Royal Commission, the metropolitan area on the 24th May, 1923, had a population of 83,000—or 7,000 less than two years previously. Is that correct?

Mr. Underwood: It is not correct. The figures are incorrect all round.

Mr. MARSHALL: On those figures, if they are correct, the Premier must admit that his migration scheme is an absolute failure. True, all the migrants were not entitled to be on the roll, but all those who entered the State 18 months previously were so entitled. If the Premier says that this redistribution is fair, he is in effect saying that his immigration scheme is a downright failure. Let us take the point of community of interest. If hon. members will look at the map hanging on the wall, they will observe that the Murchison electorate comes down to Maya, which is purely an agricultural area. Moreover, on the south-west corner the seat is within a stone's throw of Buntine, midway on the Wongan Hills railway. What community of interest have the farmers of Maya and Buntine with the miners of Wiluna?

I do not wish to speak in any way offensively of the Royal Commissioners. I have met only one of them, the Chief Electoral Officer; and him I met for the first time a few days ago.

Hon. P. Collier: You have not met the Chief Justice?

Mr. MARSHALL: My only fear is that I may meet the Chief Justice before I wish it. Mr. Canon I scarcely know. I desire to say, without attacking the Commissioners, that I do not think they took their job as seriously as they would have done if they had thought they would have been given the opportunity to amend their work. I think they were hurried over the job, and did not take into full consideration the basis laid down for them in the Electoral Districts Act. They were in a hurry to give this redistribution scheme to the Premier in order that it might be submitted to Parliament for discussion as early as possible. Still, I believe the Commissioners did what they conscientiously believed to be right and proper.

Mr. Pickering: In the time they had available.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. Another difficulty was that their hands were tied in many respects. However, I must say that the Commissioners did not fulfil their obligations under the Act in accordance with which they had to work. They did not do the work as desired by Parliament. Let me quote from last session's debate on the Electoral Districts Bill. I was complaining about the state of the rolls, and the Premier said, in effect, that I had no reason to fear, because myself and the member for Gascoyne would have to represent only 1,500 electors.

The Premier: Did I say that?

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes.

The Premier: I am very sorry indeed.

Mr. MARSHALL: The Premier's exact words were—

Your quota is 1,500, and so is that of the Gascoyne electorate.

The Premier: Aren't you satisfied? You have 1,500, and a few more.

Mr. MARSHALL: What is going to become of the extra 700? The Premier is making me a present of that number. I do not mind the additional electors, but I object to the vastness of the area. The Premier himself has absolutely been deceived regarding this Bill. It can be proved from "Hansard" that he never contemplated that the outer goldfields would be called upon to surrender five seats. In fact, the quota of 1,500 suggested by the Premier would give the Murchison two seats. As regards community of interest, I ask the Premier to consider what community of interest there can be between the lead miners of Northampton and the rural workers and farmers of Greenough? That is not a fair thing. There is no community of interest in that case. No member for Greenough can conscientiously represent the two sets of interests. Therefore, the Premier would be wise to send this Bill back to the

Commissioners, if that is possible. Evidently the measure is going to pass its second reading. I suggest to the Premier that he should indicate to the Commissioners where amendments are desirable on the score of community of interests and distance from the seat of government. Undoubtedly, the proposed Murchison district should have two members. No member will say that what the Bill proposes is fair representation.

Mr. Pickering: Nobody has said it.

Mr. MARSHALL: Nevertheless it is evident that members will accept it. If the Bill be sent back to the Commissioners, I hope it will be accompanied by a recommendation that the anomalies so apparent in the Murchison boundaries shall be adjusted.

Mr. Pickering: That is not the only one.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, but it is the one with which I am most conversant.

The Premier: If you had 50 to talk about, I don't know when we should finish.

Mr. MARSHALL: Without any political thought for the future, I enter a protest against the Bill, because the people of the Murchison are of too fine a type to be deprived of their franchise. Not only have they pioneered the mining industry, but they have pioneered also the pastoral industry. By their adventurous spirit in travelling inland, they paved the way for the pastoral industry that means so much to the State to-day. The Government and their supporters should be the last to persecute the people of the Murchison by inadequate political representation. I give the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) credit for his admission that there is community of interest in the Murchison electorate, but I do not think he can argue that the people of the Gascoyne should have a voting strength double that of the people of the Murchison. The Murchison has only 53 electors below its maximum. I have here a notification that an option has been granted by the Chemical Supply Company over the big manganese deposits at Peak Hill. Hon. members can imagine the activity that will be displayed on the Murchison as the result of the taking of that option.

Mr. Angelo: Is a railway to be built?

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know about that, but in consequence of the activities that will shortly be evidenced on the Horseshoe, the Murchison will have more than its quota of electors within three months, and so will be entitled, with four others, to demand an adjustment.

The Minister for Mines: There are even greater mining possibilities in Wiluna.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is so. If a second Golden Mile is to be discovered in this State, it will certainly be at Wiluna.

The Premier: Then I hope it will be discovered before very long.

Mr. MARSHALL: So do I, and I hope the Premier will give the district better political representation.

The Premier: I am afraid that will not serve to open up the mines.

Mr. MARSHALL: But it will give the people greater contentment with which to face their many difficulties. The Bill does not afford the justice and equity that were contemplated by the Premier. The Premier himself has been deceived by the Bill, as is shown by his statement of last session, when he declared that the Murchison would have not more than 1,500 electors. I appeal to the Premier to be fair.

The Premier: Come across here and talk it over quietly.

Mr. MARSHALL: Distance from the seat of government, one of the considerations for the Commission, has been entirely ignored in respect of the Murchison as against Northam.

The Premier: Where is Northam?

Mr. MARSHALL: Northam is 66 miles by railway from the seat of government. It covers a very small area, yet its quota is 2,925, or only 600 more than that of the Murchison. The people of the Murchison regard Northam as a suburb of Perth. It is not uncommon for Perth people to motor to Northam and back in a day, joy riding.

The Premier: Have you been joy riding up there?

Mr. MARSHALL: No, I am dubious about joy riding to Northam, for I see the effects of it on the Premier. Other comparisons just as glaring may be drawn—I am referring to the Bill—indicating positively that the Commissioners did not take into consideration distance from the seat of government. Thus Pingelly, 130 miles distant, has a quota of 2,509, or only 300 more than that of the Murchison, which is six times Pingelly's distance from Perth. Again, Wagin, 193 miles from the seat of government, has a quota of 2,699, with an area that is but a fraction of that of the Murchison.

The Premier: Well, what are you growling about?

Mr. MARSHALL: I am growling because, not being a glutton, I do not require anything like the area I have to represent. I am not taking a personal view of this. I have been representing the Murchison for the past two and a-half years, and possibly I shall not represent it after the next election.

The Minister for Mines: Do not say that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I mean it for, unlike the Minister for Mines, I realise that where there is one good man, there may be another still better. I do not know who will represent the Murchison after the next election.

The Minister for Mines: I will put in a petition that you represent it.

Mr. MARSHALL: I thank the Minister.

Mr. Corboy: That will be the end of you.

Mr. MARSHALL: There are many glaring anomalies in the Bill. The Commissioners drifted away from the instructions in the Electoral Districts Bill. If it be lawful to refer the Bill back to the Commissioners, I ask the Premier to do it, and to give the people of the Murchison a fairer deal than the Bill gives them. I make an appeal on

behalf of the people of the Murchison, who deserve far better treatment than is contemplated for them in the Bill.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [9.58]: We have heard a number of interesting speeches for and against the Bill. During the progress of the debate I thought we should have had from the Ministerial side of the House something to indicate what the Premier proposes to do in respect of the anomalies in the Bill. There is not the slightest doubt that, in the opinion of a majority of members, a grave injustice has been done to the electors of the Murchison; and not only that, but an injustice also to the outer miner areas generally. It is somewhat late to refer to the discussion that took place when the Bill for the appointment of the Commission was under consideration. Protests were entered from this side of the House. It was pointed out that the hands of the Commission were tied and that we could not expect to get a satisfactory redistribution from a Commission so placed. Therefore it is not surprising that the Bill is disappointing to a majority of members. Supporters of the Government are not all in sympathy with the measure. Member after member has made it clear that there must be some alteration before the Bill passes its third reading. The measure is unfair to the Murchison area and to the whole of the outer mining area. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) told the House of the impending increase in the number of employees on the Sons of Gwalia mine. Hundreds of additional men, together with their wives, will be qualified to be enrolled.

Mr. Mann: Where will they come from?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: From all parts of the State. To-day they are following other occupations, and are merely waiting to get back to their former positions on the mine. The employment of these additional men will attract other people to the district, and thus the number of electors will be greatly increased. It is most inopportune to proceed with the Bill at present. The mining industry for some time past has been suffering from depression due to the war, but we know that mines now operating in a small way will be capable of absorbing a larger number of men as soon as the cost of mining requisites is reduced. The Bill contains provision for the readjustment of boundaries and the reallocation of electors in order to give additional representation to those districts where an increase of population occurs. But we shall be faced with a general election next year and, if this Bill becomes law, the Parliament elected under its provisions will have a life of three years. We have a shifting population not only in the mining areas, but in the South-West and even in the city itself. The group settlement policy is resulting in a large number of people moving to the South-West and this movement will continue, so that the number will be greatly increased be-

fore the election takes place. Is there any possibility of a readjustment of boundaries before the election? In the interests of the whole of the people the best course would be to reject the Bill on the second reading. Three years ago we had an election under the existing Act. A number of anomalies have been discovered since then, but we may safely hold the next election under the existing Act. The deputy Leader of the Country Party said that in the event of provision being made to give the Murchison an additional seat, it could be taken from the metropolitan area, as this would mean giving the remaining 14 metropolitan members only 500 additional electors each. It was pointed out by way of interjection, however, that if one seat were taken from the 23 agricultural seats, it would mean an addition of only 132 electors for each of the remaining 22 country members. As the Commissioners were directed by facts, so should we be influenced by facts in determining whether to pass or reject the second reading of the Bill. I believe some effort will be made to grant the Murchison additional representation. Under the instructions laid down in the Act of last session, I consider the Commission had no alternative to recommending a redistribution on the lines suggested. Their hands were tied. This was stressed last year and the Premier was informed of the necessity for cleansing the rolls. The Premier promised that the rolls would be attended to.

The Premier: So they have been.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Nothing has been done beyond striking off the rolls a few hundred names.

The Premier: Do not make any mistake about that.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: Very few additional names have been added.

The Premier: A good many have been added.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: No machinery was made available for adding names save that a few posters were sent out to local authorities. The very material on which the Commission had to work was wrong. They could not suggest a satisfactory alteration of boundaries, because of the faulty premises on which their work was founded. This is a substantial reason why the Bill should not be passed. What is the use of saying we have a measure for the better representation of the people when we know the very foundation of the measure is faulty? In the interests of the people the Premier should withdraw the Bill, have the rolls cleansed and see that all eligible electors are enrolled. If this were done, we could hope to get a measure that would give fair representation. I cannot say whether the Bill will or will not benefit me as the representative of Kalgoorlie. It will be necessary for most members to await the declaration of the poll before they are able to answer the question. In January last after a hard fight, I won my seat, and I believe I can win it again under this

measure. Therefore my opposition to the Bill does not arise from personal considerations. I intend to vote against it because the premises on which it is founded are faulty. It is recognised by members generally, including the Premier, that the rolls are not in order and that the Commissioners had not the material on which to draft an equitable Bill.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [10.13]: I hope the Bill will be rejected on the second reading. We know the whip has been cracked, that the numbers are up and that members are present to support it. Members sitting behind the Government will lay their hands on their hearts and declare they are out for a fair redistribution and are doing the best possible in the interests of the country. But we have heard that tale before. We heard it during the great gerrymandering session.

The Premier: What did you say in 1913 when your blessed Bill was before us?

Mr. McCallum: It was not a blessed Bill.

Mr. LUTEY: In the central goldfields area it would have been an easy matter for the Commission to square up the boundaries. Some anomalies exist. An anomaly in Kalgoorlie occurred through the gerrymandering Bill.

Mr. Harrison: What is the definition of gerrymandering?

Mr. LUTEY: This Bill. I referred to what was known as Keenan's Gap. The politicians concerned did not hesitate to alter the boundaries in their own interests. There was a well-defined railway line available as a boundary, but they crossed it and took out one particular block, on which a few of the silvertails in Kalgoorlie lived, and placed it in the Kalgoorlie electorate. I should have thought the Commissioners, if they had taken any interest in the matter, would have straightened out the boundary, and put the block back into its rightful position. It would have been in my electorate; not that I want it.

The Premier: If they had done all that you wanted them to do the Bill would have been spoilt.

Mr. LUTEY: It has been said that a schoolboy could have arranged these boundaries. I notice also another anomaly in Boulder. The Boulder road makes a well-defined boundary, but five or six houses were put into the Boulder electorate, instead of the adjoining one. The Commissioners have left these houses in the same electorate as they were in before. Had the Commissioners looked at these boundaries they must have straightened them up. No member opposite has justified the deprivation of the goldfields of five seats. The proposed Murchison electorate is a monstrosity. It will be the end of the Mitchell Government if it is left as it is. It will be an act of suicide on the part of the Government if they neglect this matter. I do not wish to cover the ground al-

ready covered by members on this side, as well as by the member for York (Mr. Latham).

Mr. Mann: He did not favour your side.

Mr. LUTEY: His remarks concerning the outer goldfields were much appreciated by me. They show that he possesses a measure of fairness towards the pioneers who have blazed the track in this country, but who have had so little consideration at the hands of the Government. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) did not hesitate to speak his mind freely. The whip that has been scourging members supporting the Government has brought them to their places to-night. Some of them are almost strangers. Notwithstanding this the member for Sussex told the Government what he thought of the Bill. I am sure his electors will commend him for his courage in speaking his mind and in opposing the Government.

Mr. McCallum: How is he going to vote?

Mr. LUTEY: I believe he will vote with the Labour Party. He will be applauded by his electors if he does so. If this Bill is carried the public will do as they did after the gerrymandering Bill. They will stand for what is right and just, and see that the Government responsible for the perpetration of this redistribution are relegated to private life.

The Premier: You will use it for all you are worth, whether it is good or bad, just as you did in the other case.

Mr. LUTEY: We have no option but to do so. I am astonished to think that the Premier should attempt to justify the boundaries of the Murchison electorate.

The Premier: Think a little further.

Mr. LUTEY: There are likely to be developments in that electorate in the near future. I believe the population of the outer goldfields will increase very shortly by leaps and bounds, at a faster rate than is possible in any other part of the State. Even in the South-West, where so much settlement is going on, there is not likely to be the increase in population that should occur in the outer goldfields. I believe we shall shortly find the central goldfields entitled to an additional member. I hope, at all events, fair treatment will be meted out to the Murchison district, and that wider representation will be given to the outback pioneers who have done so much to build up Western Australia.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [10.22]: I have listened for several weeks to the discussion on this Bill, but to-night's discussion eclipses all. No two members opposite have agreed in their points of view. The last speaker referred to the 1911 Bill. He said they were going to use this Bill as they used that one to get this party out of office.

Mr. Lutey: We will do it.

The PREMIER: I do not see how members opposite can vote together against this measure. The member for South Fremantle

(Mr. McCallum) has nothing in common with the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) has contradicted his leader. The Leader of the Opposition said the provisions for the central goldfields were all right, and he is the member for Boulder. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe, however, says they are all wrong.

Mr. Lutey: I said the boundaries could be improved if the Commissioners would only look at the map.

Mr. McCallum: How has your crowd agreed?

Hon. P. Collier: The same objection lies over there. The Bill was most highly commended by some, but soundly trounced by others.

The PREMIER: The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) said the Bill was fair, and suited his purpose. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) said it was unfair, and was made for the parties sitting on this side of the House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Of the members opposite only four agreed, namely those representing the North-West.

The PREMIER: No two members opposite have agreed to anything.

Mr. Wilson: What did the member for Sussex say?

The PREMIER: The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) took a turn, and read a petition. I never saw such a conflict of opinion amongst members opposite. They generally agree to some extent. What are they going to do about it? How is the member for Collie going to vote? He cannot vote with the member for South Fremantle.

Mr. Wilson: I will vote with the member for Sussex.

The PREMIER: The discussion has been of a contradictory nature. Members opposite are going to vote against the Bill, all because of the Murchison seat.

Mr. McCallum: Not at all.

The PREMIER: I want to get rid of the Bill, so I will not say much about it now.

Mr. McCallum: You may not have the numbers next week.

Hon. P. Collier: Some of them may drift away. A few of them are pretty slippery on this question.

The PREMIER: They are more consistent than hon. members opposite, who, on their speeches, will not be able to vote together.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, for different reasons.

The PREMIER: I suppose they will. There are 12 members of the Opposition present to-night, and for 12 different reasons they are going to vote against the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: There are 20 different objections to it from our point of view.

The PREMIER: We passed the Electoral Districts Bill at the end of last session and the Commissioners were appointed. I need not say why. The House agreed there must be a redistribution of seats, and that the time was over-ripe for it. All sides also agreed

that the fixing of the boundaries should be done by a Commission. The Commission has now done its work. I think it has acted within the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act. Whether the Commission has fixed the boundaries as members would wish remains to be seen. It is very easy to be wise after the event. The Commission comprised the best men who could be selected. I am glad nothing has been said against the integrity or the intentions of the Commission. All that has been said is that the boundaries, particularly of the Murchison district, could have been differently placed.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Only in the case of the Murchison?

The PREMIER: Of course the hon. member himself objected to the boundaries of his electorate, and the member for South Fremantle also objected.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I objected more to the Plantagenet electorate.

The PREMIER: It would not be fair to recapitulate all that has been said by members. Before I sit down I intend to tell the House what will happen. What we on this side desire, and I hope members opposite desire, is to provide such representation as will best serve the interests of this country. We have no other desire than to have the boundaries fixed in such a way as to effect this. It would be ridiculous to follow the advice of the member for South Fremantle, who advocates one vote one value in a country like Western Australia. It is all very well to say that those interests should not be represented, and should be entirely disregarded, and that the great majority of people living in the back country should have but little representation. If the member for South Fremantle had his way it would take four outback seats to provide this House with one representative. We have done better than that. The representation provided under this Bill is fair to the country and in its best interests. It is the kind of representation which has always been provided under the laws of the State. It is the only way in a great scattered country such as this is, with its small population, to provide for the representation of the people. I am very glad that there has been so little suggestion of unfairness during the debate. I remember very well the discussion which took place on the 1911 Bill, and I remember very well the result, which was that my friends opposite came on those benches, not because they had very much to say for themselves, but because of what they had to say against the Bill of that period.

Mr. McCallum: History will repeat itself.

The PREMIER: No doubt my friends opposite will make full use of this Bill during the general election.

Mr. McCallum: You can bet your life we will. We will let the people know what it means. We won't let them be deceived.

The PREMIER: I hope the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) will tell his electors that the member for South Fremantle

(Mr. McCallum) wished to take away three out of four of the votes they have.

Mr. McCallum: I will go to the Murchison and tell the people what you have been trying to do.

The PREMIER: As for the results of this redistribution, the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) is rather counting his chickens before they are hatched. I am prepared to trust the people wherever they may be found.

Hon. P. Collier: But the farming districts latterly seem to be controlled by some outside organisation.

Mr. Latham: A jolly good organisation.

The PREMIER: I doubt whether anyone can foretell what the effects of a redistribution of seats will be. I think the people will exercise a wise discretion when it comes to voting. All we have to do is to see that the people are given a fair chance by the redistribution. It has been said that in several electorates the maximum number has been very nearly reached. That is true, but I think it has been overlooked that we are going to have a great revival on the gold-fields—at Leonora and Wiluna.

Mr. Marshall: I did not say that. I said that a big sum of money was going to be spent in the Murchison in the very near future.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I am inclined to agree with the member for Murchison. Thousands of electors are being added to the rolls each year. That means that the quota will be increased. We need not, therefore, fear the position in that regard. At first I did think that in a number of electorates the votes were far too near the maximum. Still, when in five electorates the maximum is reached, there must be another redistribution. I think we err in imagining there is very much danger in that connection. The rolls are not in the condition some hon. members have sought to make out. I know the rolls are not perfect, have never been perfect, and never will be perfect. But there were 172,900 voters on our roll on the 24th May, and on the Federal roll on the 26th May there were 172,500—only a difference of 400. So there cannot have been any great mistake. Besides, we have compulsory enrolment.

Mr. Latham: And you know it is not a success.

Mr. J. H. Smith: How do you account for people being 13 months and two years in a town and remaining unenrolled?

The PREMIER: I think compulsory enrolment is a success. However, people do move about the country a great deal. Approximately 20,000 persons change their place of residence each year. In connection with the State rolls, 6,000 notices were posted about the country, on railway stations, public buildings, post offices, municipal offices, and so on.

Mr. Hughes: It has been proved time and again that that is no use. The people do not read those notices, which are only a waste of money.

Mr. Chesson: In the back country the people never see them.

The PREMIER: If the people will not look, of course, they will not see them. Further, dodgers were sent to, a great many people, and members of Parliament were written to, and everything possible was done to get the rolls into a proper condition.

Mr. Pickering: But what about the new arrivals, who could not be enrolled then but would become eligible later?

The PREMIER: I have said that next year thousands of those men will go on the roll, such as the men who, with their wives, have gone on the land in the Sussex electorate. A house to house canvass is the most unsatisfactory method possible. If the husband happens to be away from home when the canvasser calls, his name is struck off the roll.

Mr. Hughes: The name cannot be struck off without objection.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If the husband was away from home, the wife would tell the canvasser where he was.

The PREMIER: The name is struck off the roll all the same. I do not know that I need say much more to-night.

Mr. McCallum: No. You have the numbers.

The PREMIER: I do not know that I need go over everything that has been said. Every objection raised, and every suggestion made, by every hon. member is, of course, on record. Before proceeding to the Committee stage I propose to refer the schedules to the Bill again to the Commissioners, with the discussion here.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Act does not say you can do that.

The PREMIER: The Act permits me to do that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But it does not say you shall do that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I only want the best possible measure that can be devised. There can be no possible objection to improving the Bill if the suggestions made during the debate can bring about any improvement. I doubt if there is very much wrong with the Bill. However, some objections have been raised, and before we pass the Bill finally we can go into the objections raised and the suggestions made. I do not think anyone can possibly take exception to that. Before concluding, I wish to express my appreciation of the moderation which has been shown during the discussion. Although many views have been expressed with which I do not agree at all, there has been a moderation that we all ought to commend. It is so easy, when a Redistribution of Seats Bill comes before the House, to have a discussion which is calculated to exercise some influence upon the general election which necessarily ensues on such a Bill. We can congratulate ourselves on the fact that this discussion has been on the lines of sug-

gesting means to improve the measure. I realise that no Redistribution of Seats Bill could suit everybody, that some hon. members would be bound to object to it. I hope the second reading will be carried.

Mr. SPEAKER: As this is a Bill to alter the constitution of the House, it is necessary, under the Constitution Act, that it be carried by an absolute majority of the House, that 26 members or more shall vote in favour of it.

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

Ayes	28
Noes	14

Majority for 14

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mann
Mr. Broun	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Carter	Mr. Money
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Davies	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Denton	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Durack	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. George	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Underwood
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Nullany

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lucey
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Munzie

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.