

a saving is made of £1,125 they say, "It is only a paltry sum of £1,125." I have only dealt with a few questions, but now wish in conclusion to say a few words in respect to the Government boarding-house. I desire to refer to this because members on both sides of the House have criticised the Government. I take an entirely different view from that voiced by other members of the Chamber. I claim that it is the duty of any Government to look after the citizens of the State at a time of crisis like the present. There may be men receiving assistance there who do not deserve it. It would be foolish to deny that. So long as the Government were unable to say to these men, "There is work for you to do," it was their bounden duty to see that they had a place of shelter, and at least sufficient food to keep body and soul together. It is all very well to say that these men should be put to work. If they had had to be put to work they would have had to receive the recognised rate of wages. It is not fair to take advantage of them because we are going through a very difficult time of depression and endeavour to cut down wages by employing them at less than the usual pay.

The Premier: That is the point underlying all their criticism.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That is so. If the Government could not supply them with work at the recognised rate of wages it is at least their bounden duty to see that they do not want the necessaries of life.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is about the strongest attack which has been made upon the Government.

Question put and passed, the Address adopted.

House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th August, 1915.

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Honorary Minister: Report of Medical, Health, Factories, and Early Closing Department for year ended 31st December, 1914.

QUESTION—LAND RESUMPTIONS, MULLEWA.

Mr. HEITMANN asked the Minister for Works: As some owners of land resumed by the Government for railway purposes at Mullewa have been waiting over a year for a settlement, will he facilitate the appointment of a Judge to sit in arbitration as to the prices to be paid for the land?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Of the 16 claims received six remain unsettled, and negotiations for private settlement are at present being conducted with the department. A claimant can at any time, by application to the court in the ordinary way, obtain hearing of his claim by the Compensation Court, and whilst the department is prepared to facilitate the hearing, it desires that every means should first be exhausted before a claimant or the department is put to the expense of court proceedings.

QUESTION — WORKERS' HOMES BOARD, PERSONNEL.

Mr. MALE, for Mr. Allen, asked the Premier: 1, Has any change been recently made in the personnel of the Workers' Homes Board? 2, If so, why?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Because the members of the board resigned, and the necessity devolved upon the Government under the Workers' Homes Act, 1912, of appointing another board.

QUESTION—STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS.

Acting Manager's Qualifications.

Mr. MALE, for Mr. Allen, asked the Minister for Works: Will he state the qualifications of the acting manager of the State Implement Works?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: In reply to the question, I desire to read a report from the Chief Mechanical Engineer—

Mr. Frank Ernest Shaw entered the railway service as an apprentice fitter on the 9th July, 1891. He duly completed five years' apprenticeship, and was employed as improver fitter from the 9th July, 1896, to the 15th February, 1897, when he was classed as a fitter. On the 1st September of the same year his classification was altered to that of draughtsman, but the particular work he was engaged upon in connection with the drawing office was that of testing material of all classes used in connection with the construction and maintenance of railway rolling stock. In addition, as the railway plant is the only one of its kind in the State, the testing of all materials for engineering work, including building material, mining wire ropes, exhaustion tests of expansion joints for the Coolgardie water scheme, and many other important tests for the Engineer-in-Chief, were carried out by him and under his supervision. The very complete and detailed test room work in connection with tests of Western Australian hardwoods, carried out for the Government in 1905-6, were also under

Mr. Shaw's charge, as well as initial tests in connection with powellising of various classes of timber. From the 7th March, 1912, Mr. Shaw relieved Mr. H. Bennett, works manager of the Fremantle harbour works, and remained in the position of acting works manager at Fremantle until the 1st July, 1913. He was then graded as engineering assistant, and placed as assistant to the workshops manager at Midland Junction. The workshops manager being called upon to relieve me for duty at Perth in the absence of Mr. Short on extended leave, Mr. Shaw acted as workshops manager at Midland Junction, controlling the output of some 1,300 workshops hands engaged in the construction, repair, and maintenance of railway rolling stock, as well as other general engineering work sent to Midland Junction on account of the facilities and equipment available there. On the return of Mr. Evans, the workshops manager, to his ordinary duties, Mr. Shaw again became his assistant. This was on the 21st January of this year, and he remained at that work until called away by the Government to take up the position of acting manager of the State Implement and Engineering Works on the 24th May last. In addition to his duties as testing officer, when the education of apprentices during their working hours was initiated in 1908, Mr. Shaw undertook the position of instructor, and owing to his previous technical training carried it out with marked success. Mr. Shaw has always proved himself to be an efficient, zealous, and painstaking officer, and is capable of supervising an engineering establishment. (Signed) E. S. Hume. Chief Mechanical Engineer. 11th August, 1915.

QUESTION — ELECTORAL MATTERS.

Mr. MALE, for Mr. Allen, asked the Attorney General: 1, Will he inform members of the agreement entered into between the Federal and State Electoral

Departments? 2, What electoral reforms will be introduced?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, No agreement has been entered into. 2, Electoral reforms will be considered at a later stage.

QUESTION—BLACKBOY HILL CAMP.

Mr. MALE, for Mr. George, asked the Premier: 1, Will he ascertain from the Federal authorities whether it is a fact that (a) at Blackboy Hill camp, where there are about 3,000 men encamped, only three water taps are available for the use of the men and for washing-up purposes; (b) at the camp there are seven shower baths, which are not available for the men between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m.? 2, Is it not in the interests of the volunteer movement that better sanitary arrangements be immediately installed? 3, If these questions are answered in the affirmative, will he use his influence to have more suitable arrangements made?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 2, 3, This is essentially a Federal matter, but having had cause to see the Military Commandant this morning on other matters, I brought the hon. member's question under his notice, and he advises that he would be pleased to give the hon. member an opportunity of visiting the camp at any time and seeing for himself what has been done in connection with these matters.

STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS.

Statement by the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.42]: With the permission of the House, I should like to make a statement in regard to the State Implement Works.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the will of the House that the Minister be heard?

Members: Aye.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister may proceed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: During the debate on the Address-in-reply, several hon. members have referred to the correspondence which has taken place in regard to the management of the State Implement Works; and almost every member who spoke expressed the view that an inquiry should be held into the management of the works, and into the manner in which the late manager had been treated by myself. As a matter of principle, I am entirely opposed to the granting of inquiries regarding persons who have resigned their positions, either in the Government or, for that matter, any other service, because, as a rule, such inquiries are held not for the purpose of benefitting any branch of the State's service, but for the express purpose of belittling the State service and doing it injury. In this particular case I am fully convinced that the action which I have taken would have been taken by any other member of this Chamber had he been in the same position. I doubt, indeed, whether another member would have proceeded in quite so lenient a fashion as I did in dispensing with the services of the late manager. I took over the control of the State Implement Works, which I should like to point out are engineering works as well, on the 7th December last; and within a few days I received from the manager a request that—if my memory serves me rightly—the selling price of certain windmills being manufactured there should be reduced. I immediately raised the question, what was the cost of manufacture, as I felt that if I was informed of the manufacturing cost, I should have no difficulty in deciding whether the Government could afford to reduce the selling price. Naturally, I wished to know whether the cost of manufacture warranted the suggested reduction. A few days later I had the draft Estimates for the year 1914-15 placed before me. I saw by the draft Estimates that the money required for carrying on the State Implement Works and the Engineering Works was considerably in excess of the revenue likely to be received from those establishments. Naturally

then, I wanted some information so that I might be able to give it to hon. members when the Estimates were being dealt with. Some weeks later I got the information, and I believed it then to be fairly satisfactory. From that time on I was continually pressing on the accountant, Mr. Brodribb, the necessity for having the exact costs of all the machinery manufactured at these works. I pointed out to him that we not only wanted a statement as far as the costs were concerned, but that it should be borne out in black and white, so that any member of Parliament might be able to ascertain the exact cost of manufacture. My officers reported to me that there appeared to be a disinclination on the part of those connected with the works to supply information, and the inquiries which were being made were resented. At that time I had every confidence in the management of the Implement Works, and I felt that Mr. Davies, being a stranger in Western Australia, there was a possibility of some of the other officers of the service having what is generally called a "set" on him, and consequently it led to some friction between myself and various other officers of the department. I might mention that, so far as the Tender Board is concerned, a letter was written by that board to the Premier asking him to protect them in regard to a minute I wrote; they were complaining about my action in regard to the management of the Implement Works. At last I formed the opinion that all the blame could not be on one side, and that if all the officers in the various departments were doing all they could that was detrimental to the works, possibly there might be some blame also on the part of the manager as well, and I wrote a minute to that effect to the Minister for Water Supply. This went on until the 27th February, when Mr. Brodribb, the accountant, addressed a minute to me, and I think it is advisable at this juncture that hon. members should hear that minute read. With the permission of the House I will read it—

1. Management: (a) As I understand the position, the general policy and general financial resources will be

in the hands of the Government. Relative to the latter, what I mean is this, that whereas on the one hand the manager will state what he considers his requirements will be in order to fill orders for agricultural implements for the harvest of 1916, it will be for the Government to say whether they are in a position to finance the same, and if not to state to what extent the management shall be permitted to go. The jobbing work is on a different footing, inasmuch as, whereas on the one side we get the expenditure, on the other side we obtain the revenue within a reasonable time. (b) With the implement manufacture, it will have to be remembered that for all machines sold from now until the harvest of 1916 very little cash will be obtainable, and if by June or July a good harvest is practically assured, the demand for implements will be great, and it follows that, if the Agricultural Implement Works are to properly fulfil the reasons for their establishment, they should be in a position to reasonably fill the orders placed with them by the agricultural community. This means a heavy expenditure, for which the State will not be reimbursed this year, the one-third cash being payable in February, 1916, the remaining two-thirds being payable in February, 1917 and 1918.

2, Costs: It is primarily essential that the cost of the manufacture of spare parts and completed machines should be definitely established. It is all very well to take a competitor's catalogue and write down their prices ten per cent., and say "These shall be our selling prices." It is generally recognised that the manufacturers of agricultural implements show a good gross profit on their selling prices, and if the Government were in the position to manufacture as economically as an outside firm, the ten per cent. reduction would probably show the Government a handsome profit, as their expenses of selling are not so great as a private firm, as a large amount

of orders come in to the Government, whereas in a private firm often a heavy expenditure has to be incurred to obtain the orders. On the other hand, a Government works is called upon to pay the highest rate of wage; holiday pay; and I think it is generally recognised that a private employer obtains a better *quid pro quo* for the money he spends than the Government.

Here I wrote a note in the margin, "This depends on the management."

This of course should not be, and with competent and faithful foremen in the various branches of the manufacture it should be largely overcome. Since taking over the accounts of the Implement Works I have endeavoured, through the management, to obtain definite costs of manufactured implements and parts. When Mr. Davies agreed to this course, I was under the impression that he would place work orders for the various classes of spare parts, and also for the assembling, up to the completed machine. This he did not do. He placed test orders for the completed machines and gave instructions to the foremen to keep careful costs of the various parts that they were then manufacturing. On asking him the reason for this course, he informed me that the works were at that time manufacturing fairly heavy quantities of spare parts, and when those spare parts were being manufactured in quantities, as it was his intention to do, the cost would be considerably less than if manufactured in small quantities only. I do not think that anybody will dispute this fact. In the ordinary course of costing, the actual time, cost of materials and loading charges, would be charged up, and we should have documentary evidence which could be verified that such cost was correct. I am not yet aware of the costs of the parts which Mr. Davies is manufacturing. Possibly he has not yet determined them, but I do not see how it is possible to have documentary evidence of the respective costs by the mode that

Mr. Davies has adopted. I understand that the reason why the costs were not obtained earlier was that, owing to insufficient plant, the production of the implements and parts could not be undertaken on an economical basis.

Mr. Davies in his statement to the Press, mentioned that he had already established his costs and that it had been forwarded to me.

It is now absolutely essential that, if the Government are to know whether the implements are being sold at a profit or a loss, to establish the actual cost. In my opinion it would pay the Government to spend £1,000 and establish the costs. At the present time we are in the dark. If I am not satisfied with the costs as disclosed by Mr. Davies, it is my intention to make out a recommendation to you that the Government expend a certain amount of money, and that Mr. Davies should work on the lines laid down in the system of account regarding the costing. If I can obtain no satisfaction in this direction, the only thing then will be to ask for a board of inquiry into this phase. Turning to the jobbing. From the cost cards at Fremantle, I am satisfied that either the wages costing is being kept very indifferently, or else that the quotations given are not too good. Take for instance one line only—the 30 hopper ballast waggons for the Commonwealth. I think that we shall find that the loss will run into several hundreds of pounds, which the State can ill afford at the present time. The cost clerk informs me that from 7½ to 10 per cent. of the wages charges are charged up wrongly against the respective work orders. This shows slackness in supervision by the foreman. Each workman has a card for every work order he is working on, and he is required to enter against the work order the time occupied by him each day. This is reviewed by the foreman and passed on to a timekeeper for necessary action and transmission to the cost-

ing clerk. I myself spoke to Mr. Briggs, the timekeeper, regarding this, and he admitted that there were far too many mistakes, but there seemed to be no hope of getting better results. I certainly do not agree with him in this respect, as, if proper results are not obtained under one foreman, make a change until you get what you pay for. The above will, I think, show at least the absolute necessity in the interests of the Government and the State, of effective costing.

3, Sales: I am very strongly of opinion that sales should not come under the manager controlling the manufacturing. In works of the magnitude of the State Implement Works, the manager should have his time fully occupied in obtaining economic production. This can only be done by close supervision, by being constantly about the shops, and seeing for himself what is happening. Mr. Davies has already complained that he is overburdened with work, and so he is with the sales under his control as well. The whole existence of the shop depends on economic production. The sales should be separated at once, and placed under the charge of a sales manager or a sales clerk, the selling branch being under the nominal control of the accountant. The sales clerk would probably be a better title at the present juncture, until it is known what the output will be, and the results of the harvest of 1916 will largely decide this.

4, Turning once more to economic production, to obtain this every recourse should be made for the utilisation of modern machinery and handling appliances. Much has already been done in this direction, but from what the management tells me there is still more to be done, and this should be done providing the finances of the State will stand it.

5, I am of opinion that to manufacture agricultural machinery the manager should operate on an authority given by the Minister; for instance, from the 1st March to the 30th June—

four months—the management advises that he requires £40,000 for the manufacture of implements for that period. The Minister takes into consideration the financing of the sum, and approves or reduces, as the position may require. That authority cannot be exceeded without a reference to you from this branch, and, if running out, before the 30th June, your attention will be called to the position.

6, There is one other matter which I do not like, and that is the appointment by the manager of his son as a clerk in the office. In this connection I desire that it is clearly understood that there is nothing personal, but from an administrative standpoint, it is fundamentally wrong, which can I think be very easily shown. For instance, the clerk-in-charge of the sales under whom the manager's son is working, may not be satisfied with him and considers that he is unsuitable, but he puts up with this position because he fears that if he takes steps for the son's services to be dispensed with he will go and not the son.

7, In these matters there is no good in beating about the bush. I have set out to some extent my feelings in the position, and in doing so my one desire is to make the implement works a success.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Was that written on his own initiative?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was written by Mr. Brodribb, my accountant, on the 27th February this year on his own initiative. I might add that Mr. Brodribb was not satisfied with the position of things, and he found it necessary to write this minute to show me the difficulties which were in the way.

Mr. S. Stubbs: How long had he been in charge of the accounts prior to that date?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He took over on the 7th December.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Where was the accountant before; at the works?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, at the Agricultural Department. The costs

clerk was down at the works, under the jurisdiction of the management there.

Mr. Gilchrist: Was the accountant responsible to the Secretary for Agriculture?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : The costing clerk was responsible to the management. I do not think that hon. members will for a moment believe that it was my desire to dismiss an employee because his views were Liberal, Labour, or those of the Country party, and that I asked Mr. Davies to do so on that account. I have sufficient confidence in hon. members to know that they will believe me. When I had an interview with Mr. Davies soon after I took control of the works, I pointed out to him that it was a surprise to me that there should be in the works persons occupying responsible positions who had previously been found wanting in the Government service, and I told him that I thought those persons should be relieved of their positions. I was informed that they did not occupy responsible positions, but, on referring to the pay sheet, I found that they were in receipt of responsible officers' wages, and one especially was assistant to the assistant manager. It is not necessary for me to mention names, because most hon. members know to whom I refer. This man had to resign from his position in the service while a Liberal Government was in power. After receiving the minute which I have just read and discussing the matter with the accountant and the Under Secretary—the House was sitting then and my time was fully occupied—I wrote a letter to Mr. Davies, the letter which he characterised as political interference. This letter, which was dated the 10th March, is as follows:—

I desire to place before you certain matters, as the works have been causing me some anxiety since the administration has been placed in my charge, particularly from a financial point of view. The interim balance sheet I forwarded to you a few days ago (which was prepared after much time) showed a loss for the first seven months' results of this year. I admit the state-

ment was only approximate, as the keeping of the accounts and stock sheets in the past had been far from satisfactory. After taking over the works, I found affairs were in such a state that I issued instructions that immediate action must be taken to bring up to date the position of the works. Since then the accountant of this department has given the greater portion of his time to this particular work. The works have been running now nearly two years and there is nothing to show the cost of the agricultural implements to the State. There is a price list issued at which implements can be purchased, but there is no documentary evidence of the cost of any machine from a manufacturer's point of view. It is, therefore, impossible to state whether the prices fixed are profitable or otherwise. This should be rectified at once and the cost of machines, such as harvesters, etc., should be clearly shown in costs' book and borne out on the time sheets as regards labour and material so as to stand any scrutiny. *Re* railway trucks manufactured for Commonwealth: The accountant reports that in all probability these will show a heavy loss to the State, running into several hundred pounds; it is necessary that due inquiry and report should be made regarding this. It is stated that from 7½ to 10 per cent. of the wages charges at the works are charged up wrongly against the respective works orders. This shows that the keeping of cost is being done in such a slipshod manner that it is impossible to state the actual cost of the work. Mr. Briggs, when spoken to by the accountant regarding this, admitted there were too many mistakes, and stated there seemed to be no hope of getting better results. This shows that he is not competent for his position, and it is my duty, acting on behalf of the State, to ask you to make a change. The State must have what it pays for. A new assistant manager is required in Mr. Briggs' position to enable me on behalf of the State to know the cost of the work done in every in-

stance. This is what a private proprietor would demand. *Re sales:* Arrangements have now been made with your concurrence for the sales to be placed in the hands of Mr. Murray, and whilst there are very little sales at present I see there is no alteration in your present staff. I placed before you certain suggestions the last time you were at this office, which I regret have not been put into effect. This should be done at the earliest opportunity. Instructions were also issued, and have been carried out, to cease construction work on capital expenditure, and I note the foreman in charge, Mr. Anderson, who early in January was foreman of these construction works, has been transferred at an increased rate of wages to position as foreman of the implement wood workers, thereby making two foremen in that shop where there was only one previously. I am of the opinion, there being no further work for Mr. Anderson, owing to the construction work ceasing, his services should have been dispensed with, as it is unnecessary to have two foremen in the one shop. I desire to again impress on you that it is urgently necessary that these works should be run in such a manner that the finances of the State will be protected, and the accountancy branch of this department is willing to assist you in every manner possible. Such assistance, I am of opinion, is necessary, and of your desire, and it is imperative that the Government should know exactly the actual cost of the works carried out and that the cost be kept in such a manner that it can be obtainable at a glance. I must, as Minister in charge, insist on such being done.

Immediately I sent this letter it was characterised by the manager as political interference, and was published in the Press. Unless I am in a position to know the exact cost of manufacture I am better out of the control. If it is my duty to know the exact cost of manufacture, and if I am going to hold the position, I intend to know the cost and to see that the works are carried on in a businesslike

manner. Otherwise someone else had better occupy my chair. Mr. Davies stated that we were already in possession of the cost, that the Government were aware of what the machines were costing, and he sent me the following letter, on which hon. members can form their own opinion as to whether I should be satisfied with the cost as put before me—

Referring to our exhibit at the Royal Show last week much surprise was expressed at the reduced prices, and as inquiries may be made concerning this I wish to make a statement showing that, notwithstanding our low prices, we still have a fair margin of profit to meet contingencies after paying actual cost of production. Take, first, the harvester, £65. The actual cost, including administration charges, etc., is approximately £50, and this will be reduced to £40 when we have our new factory going, and the machines being turned out in quantities. But on present figures we have 30 per cent. profit or margin to cover selling expenses, etc. Strippers and winnowers show an equal amount. Plows and cultivators, etc., will give even better results. Oil engines will give us 20 per cent., but with our better equipment these will be made much more cheaply than at present. The imported machines, binders, rakes, etc., which we have reduced about 25 per cent. below current rates, still give us 20 per cent. to pay cost of assembling and marketing. The Australian made machinery we are selling at about or slightly above wholesale rates, therefore we still have manufacturers' profits to handle. When in South Australia last March, Mr. A. May, of May Bros. and Co., asked me if we would sell their harvesters here instead of manufacturing ourselves, and offered to deliver on wharf at Port Adelaide at £60 each. We have, thus, in this case £5 over and above manufacturer's profit on each harvester we sell, since our price being £65 for the machine we are making, which is almost identical with May Bros. In making our first batch of implements all workmen's time employed on various machines was kept

separately and in this way a strict record kept.

That is the letter handed to me as showing how he obtained the cost.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Sent by Mr. Davies?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is a copy sent to me. The original was sent to the late Minister for Agriculture in October, 1913. There is a footnote as follows—

Unfortunately, if I added any further advice to what is contained in the above it has been lost here, but I have no doubt the Agricultural Department's records will enable it to be traced.

I have been unable to trace it. A test having been ordered by Mr. Brodribb, Mr. Davies, in January last, issued these instructions to foremen—

In order to test the correctness of the selling prices of our machines special work orders are being issued for the manufacture of a certain number of each of our lines, and I want you to be most particular to see that the strictest accuracy is observed in booking time and material to these jobs, and to be specially careful to see that any surplus material drawn for this job is credited to it. You will realise the necessity for the utmost care to be exercised, as on your showing we shall have to decide whether the prices of our machines are payable or not. Work orders for these implements will be as follows.

Then he supplies a long list. This letter was sent to the foremen in January, after my first inquiry in regard to costs. From a perusal of the book the accountant prepared I think about one week's work was done on these test orders, and from that time on nothing was done at all. Nothing whatever in regard to Mr. Davies' retirement was arranged at that time. I felt that with the officers I had. Mr. Brodribb, who has taken a keen interest in the work, and the Under-Secretary, there was a possibility of placing the works in a sound financial position. Most members have read the Auditor-General's report as to the costs. I may say I did not see that report until it was handed to me five minutes before I

placed it on the Table. Our views were borne out by the Auditor General, and it was thought necessary to send down an officer to record all the cost factors. The works, it will be remembered, were removed to Rocky Bay from Fremantle and there was no record of any appliances being used there. Any of a number of machines could have been taken out without anyone being the wiser for it. We sent down an officer from the Public Works Department to value and make a record of the machines.

Mr. Allen: God save us from State enterprises!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is making a personal explanation and members are going beyond the limit of the statement in making inquiries for further information or in making interjections. As a rule explanations are received in silence by the House, because they are made by the will of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: On this officer going around numbering and taking account of the machinery he came across a motor-car being repaired. He reported this at the time. The motor-car was the property of the manager. Personally I could not see anything wrong in the manager having a motor-car repaired there, if the work was charged up to a special order, and if the goods used on the work were also charged up to that special order. But I was informed by the costs clerk that some of the material used was charged up to the assembler's shop, some to the Narrogin agency, some to strippers, some to the Kellerberri agency, some to the power house, and some to harvesters. I felt it was my duty to discuss the matter with the Solicitor General, who is our advisor in such cases. The Solicitor General advised me to write Mr. Davies a letter. I did this, and Mr. Davies replied to the effect that these goods had been ordered by him from McCallum & Co., of Perth and that in due course he would pay for them in the usual manner. He further explained that the reason they had got into the Government stores was that on account of the delay in delivery, the foreman had requested the storeman to

ring up McCallum to know the cause of the delay. Thus these goods had got into the stores. Mr. Davies said it was a foolish mistake on the part of the foreman, and he claimed that the charging up of motor-car material to harvesters and strippers and the like showed clearly that it was never intended. When I wrote my letter I did not know that this was only a portion of the goods used. The Solicitor General then advised that an inquiry should be made. This was done, and it was found that the goods were ordered from McCallum & Co. by requisition from the Government stores. The goods were requisitioned in the usual manner, and the requisitions were on the file. The invoices for the goods were rendered to the comptroller of stores at the implement works in the usual way, and in reality the invoice of which Mr. Davies had sent me a copy was only for a quote which one man had asked McCallum for a month previously. We were also informed that while we were making inquiries in regard to this matter Mr. Davies went to Mr. McCallum and offered to pay for the goods, but Mr. McCallum refused to take the payment, because he had sent the invoices to the Government. It is a great pity that a statement such as this should be necessary, because it does no good to the persons concerned or to the department which I control. But Mr. Davies has taken this entirely on his own shoulders, because he challenged me to make a statement outside the House. I refused, but I regret very much that on three occasions I was challenged, and eventually I had to make a statement to the public in respect to this matter. The Solicitor General, after investigation, came to the conclusion that further inquiries should be made, and he reported, "You may now think fit to suspend the manager or the foreman or others concerned." This happened on the Friday. I felt that once a manager or foreman, or any person in control of men, allowed this sort of thing to take place, his power of control was gone, and he could not manage the works afterwards. Instead of holding an inquiry I recommended Cabinet

verbally that the best thing to do was to dismiss the manager according to his agreement. Some thought I was rather lenient, but I knew a good deal of the man's work there previously, and eventually we came to the conclusion that the best thing would be to dismiss the manager. However, a death took place in his family just at that time, and, therefore, I did not take the contemplated action. On the Monday afternoon I received the manager's resignation.

Mr. Bolton: He got to know something.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Whether he got to know or not, I cannot say. I only know that he was aware we were making inquiries. On Monday afternoon I received his resignation, which relieved me of a difficulty, and I immediately accepted it. I do not think it is necessary to say anything more at present. It had been my one endeavour to work in harmony with the manager until I found that things were going wrong; and I would not be fit to occupy my position if, knowing things were not going right, I allowed them to continue. I took immediate steps therefore to put the works on a sound basis. I believe that the manufacture of implements in Western Australia is necessary. We have been importing them for years and if we can manufacture them here it is better to retain the work and money here. It was better therefore, in the circumstances, to dismiss the manager than to have the works closed down to the detriment of a large number of employees. So far as my action is concerned, I have nothing whatever to fear from any inquiry. I have done what I thought was right, what I thought was just and what I thought was best on behalf of the people of the State. My colleagues have agreed with me and they intend to have a Royal Commission appointed to investigate the management of the implement works. I am quite satisfied to leave myself in the hands of any Commissioner who may be appointed to conduct the inquiry. I wish to have a Royal Commission appointed. If the inquiry were made by a Select

Committee it would be conducted in secret, but with a Royal Commission the public will be informed of what is taking place. A full inquiry will be allowed and I am confident that my action in connection with the matter will give complete satisfaction, not only to members of this Chamber, but also to the people of the State.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. MALE (Kimberly) leave of absence for two weeks granted to the Hon. Frank Wilson on the ground of ill-health.

MOTION—DISTRICT SURVEY OFFICES, TO RE-OPEN.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam)
[5.18]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House it is advisable that the district survey offices be re-opened.

Hon. members are fairly well aware of my reasons for moving this motion. Everyone knows that the Government have decided to centralise all land matters in Perth again. Every district survey office in the State has been closed and the district staffs have been brought to Perth. Plans, organisation, and, in fact, everything is now centred in the main land office building in Perth. I should be wanting in my duty if I did not ask the House to join with me in requesting that these district offices be re-opened. In 1910 we opened the first land office. The work of establishing the land offices was fairly extensive; the whole of the matters connected with the movement could not be arranged at once. We opened the first office, sent out our chief surveyor and a staff, and bit by bit the system was organised so that the whole of the work of the Lands Department from the time of the survey to the time when the Crown

grant was earned could be transacted in the district offices. The advantage of a system of this kind is obvious to all. Before I could bring the system to anything near completion, the Liberal Government with which I was associated left office. My successor, Mr. Bath, was, I believe, sympathetic with the system. He carried on the work but was a little slow in completing its establishment, and he left office before he had carried the work far enough to make it impossible for his successor, the present Minister for Lands, to again centralise the work in Perth. The present Minister had been in office only about five minutes, and had hardly warmed his chair, when he decided that the district offices should be closed and that people wishing to visit the land office must come to Perth to do their business. The work in connection with the sale of land alone is fairly extensive. First there is the survey, which is an important matter. Then application has to be made by the land seeker—very often he has to face the Land Board—and there is approval to be waited for. There is also the receiving of the Crown rent and there are inspections of improvements and inspections for other purposes. When I remind the House that the compulsory improvements to be done by the people who have selected land in this State amount in value to something like £500,000 a year, it will be realised that to supervise the carrying out of such an enormous amount of work entails considerable labour on a considerable number of officials. These inspectors can be controlled from the six district offices very much better than from the head office. Then, too, there is the question of consideration to be shown to farmers from time to time. Every one knows that the great bulk of the people who have selected land are men of very small capital, strugglers who are doing their best to develop our broad acres. They have done magnificently and, if there is a fault, it is that they have gone ahead too quickly. That fault has landed many of them in difficulties, but no Government would refuse consideration to a settler who had not paid his rent. No Minister, except-

ing the present Minister for Lands, would do so, nor would he forfeit a settler's holding. It is necessary to show consideration from time to time to the farmer who desires an extension of time for the payment of his rent. There is also the question of extension of time for effecting improvements. Everyone knows that in a dry season, such as last year, it is almost impossible to carry on clearing operations for want of water and other reasons. The granting of consideration in these directions can best be left in the hands of men in the country. When land is sold, it is necessary to make provision for roads, reserves and water supplies, to cut up townships and to do the hundred and one other things necessary to enable farmers to carry on their operations. All such works can be best done by the men in the country. Public bodies approach the district officers and arrange various matters directly with them. Roads boards confer with the district surveyors and, by so doing, find the results very much more satisfactory than if they relied upon correspondence to achieve their desires. Then there are often protests from roads boards and progress associations which are lodged immediately with the district surveyors. There are 50 roads boards and progress associations who have forwarded protests in connection with the closing of the land office at Northam. I think the Minister is under the impression that I was responsible for those protests, but I had nothing to do with them. The people connected with these bodies were determined that the office should not be closed without protests from them, and consequently they sent the letters along. All this work has to be applied to about 50,000 leases and each of the leases is for a term of 20 years; that is, it takes 20 years before the Crown grant issues. Can this work affecting 50,000 leases be done satisfactorily, with despatch, and conveniently to the applicants from the central office in Perth? Then there is the further consideration that these leases extend over the whole of that portion of

the State lying between the Murchison and Eucla. I am aware that few members are keenly interested in this matter because the land offices affect only the farming districts. In 1909 or even before that it was decided to decentralise the land work. I believe a great many members of Parliament favoured it. In the time of Mr. Throssell it was decided to sell the land along the Great Southern Railway through an agency at Katanning. Later on when Sir Newton Moore was Minister for Lands he determined upon decentralisation and the opening of district agencies, but nothing came of his determination. Early in 1910 I found that there was great confusion in the lands office. There was congestion of work; there were complaints from many selectors, particularly from those who were desirous of selecting land and who were unable to acquire it. It was impossible to obtain in Perth information from any one who knew the country. The Surveyor General was really the only official who knew the agricultural portion of the State. Members will recall the letters which appeared in the Press during those years. Complaints were rife, and not without good reason. I could tell of hundreds of cases of persons who came to Perth to get matters settled, but found that land surveys had not been made and that overlapping and disorganisation existed which could not be cleared up expeditiously. That was decidedly against the best interests of the State. Members should realise that the land is Western Australia, and unless it is satisfactorily used there is little hope for the State. I realised that we had a magnificent asset in the land and decided to open these district offices. The men who became district surveyors were inspecting surveyors so that there was no great added cost by reason of opening these offices. The officials were really transferred from the head office to the district offices, and the total added cost was very small indeed and by no means in proportion to the additional convenience thus provided. These officials in the district offices did their work well because they

were under supervision. They did it well because the district surveyors knew the men who were selecting, and the people who were selecting knew the district surveyors. The work was well done because the district and other surveyors were frequently in the office and selectors were able to obtain more or less accurate information in each district. The people were well served by the district officers, and they were so satisfied that complaints ceased almost entirely. The best that could be done for the selector was done under this system. The best that could be done for the public bodies was done under this system, and the work then carried out was of a permanent nature. When a road is laid down it is there for all time. Most members know of places where the roads have taken a wrong turn, with the result that a very bad grade prevails. This can only be altered at great expense. The Surveyor General reported on this matter from time to time, and I will read what he said because he was a capable officer and knew his work. I believe his report is the more valuable because in the early stages I do not think he was really in favour of the idea of decentralisation. In his report dated the 14th November, 1911, he says—

It is now evident that the system of decentralisation has relieved congestion of work in the head office, brought settlers, selectors, and all those having business with the department in closer touch with its officers, and enabled surveys and enquiries incident thereto to be dealt with more promptly than in the past. It is a material advantage to the head office administration having responsible and trusty officers permanently stationed in given districts, who are in a position to advise on all matters concerning lands, surveys, roads, areas suitable for settlement, timber resources, water supplies, etc.

Then a year later, in 1912, the Surveyor General reported as follows:—

The reports from the district surveyors are attached hereto. It will be seen from some of their remarks that the roads boards, progress associations, and the general public are increasingly

availing themselves of the opportunities provided by these district offices. The advantages of having senior officers resident in these districts are very many. It must be admitted that the cost is greater than under the old centralised system, but if the public are better served, the desired object has been secured.

In the year 1913 the Surveyor General again reported as follows:—

The advantages of having district surveyors permanently settled in their respective districts are being more and more appreciated by the public, and also by other departments.

We have this from the official who knew best what was being done in Western Australia by these district officers. The system works well in New South Wales. So far as I can see there are many more district officers there than we have in this State, and I think they have very much less work to do than our officers have. There is no attempt in New South Wales, however, to close down in regard to these district offices. The authorities realise that it is the only system by which settlement can be satisfactorily dealt with. It must have cost a considerable amount of money to prepare the plans and erect the buildings. The Land office at Northam, for instance, was erected by the late Minister for Lands, Hon. T. H. Bath. A great deal of money must have been spent in that way, and yet all this work is to be closed down by a stroke of the pen under instructions from the present Minister. This might be a wise course if we had nothing more to do than look after the 50,000 leases which have been taken up, or if we intended to close down on settlement upon Crown Lands, for then no more land would be sold. It seems to me that in closing these offices the Government are making a great mistake, and that they are not considering either the interests of the country or the people on the land. They have only had in mind the possibility of effecting some temporary saving. They have looked round in all directions to find avenues wherein the expenditure could be cur-

tailed. Accordingly they went to the Mines Department and took off something by way of expenditure in connection with our mines. They then went on to the Lands department, and determined to close down these district offices. What will our saving be as a result of this cutting down? It would not represent a saving of a hundredth part of what it would cost the settlers to come to Perth if they wished to have their business attended to. I ask the House with great confidence to support my motion. I do not know how any hon. member in this Chamber could oppose it. Everyone will admit that land settlement is of the utmost importance to Western Australia. These district officers covered not only our agricultural areas of the South-West, the potato fields of Western Australia, the apple lands and wheat fields of the State but also the pastoral land of the North. This work is now all to be centralised in Perth. Will the House agree to this? I ask the member for Geraldton (Mr. Heitmann) if he is willing that the people from his district should journey up to Perth, nearly 300 miles, to conduct their business with the Lands Department. Until the Government closed down these district survey offices the individual who required some land or wished to do any business in connection with his holding, if he lived in Geraldton, only had to visit the local land office, and finality was reached in five minutes. So it should be with the member for Narrogin-Williams (Mr. E. B. Johnston). In that electorate the people are put to great inconvenience by the closing of these offices. If a man wants to have something done urgently or requires to do any business with the Lands Department direct, and avoid much letter writing and correspondence, instead of being able to do his business locally he is obliged to come to Perth. When he comes to Perth he will simply be met by an official who might well have still been acting in the office at Narrogin. If all these officers are kept on there cannot be any great saving, and they must be kept on if the business is to be satisfactorily dealt with. The electorates of other hon. members are, I

should say, being affected in the same way. Hon. members will recollect the many attacks made upon the Lands department year in and year out. I would remind the Premier, too, of what he said about the confusion and delays in that department long before I became Minister for Lands. Centralisation has much that is objectionable in it. The Government, for instance, determined to centralise the work in connection with the Assistance Board. If we make a comparison, however, between the work done under the decentralisation of the Lands Department and that done under the centralisation scheme of the Assistance Board we will, I am sure, readily come to the conclusion that centralisation is no good. This board carries on the whole of its operations from the Perth office. They might with advantage have used the system employed in these district offices. Under the present system a man has a difficulty in getting his letters answered, and delays arise which are costing the settlers hundreds of pounds in connection with the supply of wheat and fertiliser. It is impossible from Perth to deal satisfactorily with all the matters that come from the different centres in the State. In my opinion, the Government have taken a retrograde step, and one which has nothing to commend it. It will take a considerable time to reinstate the officers unless the offices are re-opened, while the records are of some value. Land settlement will, I hope, go on apace during this year. It is quite true that during the last six months the sales of lands have been less than they were during recent years. Five or six years ago they amounted to two million acres, but I feel sure that this falling-off will not continue. People who are now criticising land settlement, the work done on the land, and the value of the land, will cease to croak, and the time will come when the demand for land will be as good as it was in 1910-11. When that time comes, however, the Government will not be prepared to undertake the work. There will be the same congestion and confusion, and the same want of satisfaction in connection with

applications for farm holdings. I have very much pleasure in moving the motion standing in my name.

Mr. S. STUBBS (Wagin) [5.39]: I second the motion.

On motion by the Minister for Mines debate adjourned.

MOTION — PERTH - FREMANTLE ROAD, TO INQUIRE AS TO COSTS, RECONSTRUCTION, ETC.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS (Subiaco) [5.40]: I move—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon an equitable method of apportioning (a) the cost of the reconstruction and maintenance of the Perth-Fremantle road; (b) the control and upkeep of the Subiaco-Claremont road through Karrakatta between all the bodies in any way concerned.

Some 18 months ago an enormous amount of dissatisfaction existed throughout the metropolitan area on account of the state of total disrepair into which the Perth-Fremantle road had been allowed to fall. At that time there were very great differences of opinion as to who was responsible for this state of things, and also as to which local bodies should undertake the responsibility of again placing the road in proper order. We had what, I think, was a most extraordinary and very unbecoming position forced upon the people by a number of citizens organising one Sunday what they called a "busy bee," for the purpose of putting into something like repair one of the main arteries of the State.

Mr. Allen: They had to do it because the Government would not.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That is exactly what I am pointing out, but there are differences of opinion as to who is responsible for the upkeep of the road. The local governing bodies on their side hold that the cost is too great for them to bear and that the Government should put the road in repair and keep it in repair, and, in fact, take it over as a national road. That, of course, was something which had not been advanced previously. As a mat-

ter of fact, only a few years ago this House of Parliament decided to wipe out a special subsidy which was being granted in respect of the Perth-Fremantle road and the Karrakatta road, thereby throwing upon the local governing bodies the whole of the responsibility of keeping those roads in repair. The Perth-Fremantle road thereupon fell into disrepair, and various conferences were held of representatives of the local governing bodies and members of Parliament; and the Minister for Works attended, I think, more than one of the conferences. The question was gone into, but, whilst the conferences arrived at decisions acceptable to the local governing bodies, they did not arrive at decisions acceptable to the Government. Eventually the Government, refusing to accept the decisions of the conferences, took the matter into their own hands and drew up conditions of their own for the maintenance of the roads. I desire to read the first letter sent out by the Government to the local governing bodies in this connection. It is dated the 18th May, 1914, and is addressed to practically the whole of the local governing bodies between Perth and Fremantle—

I have been advised by the mayor of Claremont that your Council agreed to the following resolutions, which were passed at a conference held in the Council Chambers at Claremont on the 16th March: 1, That it is desirable that the Perth-Fremantle road should be reconstructed, and an up-to-date thoroughfare provided. 2, That the conference suggest to the Minister that he recommend the Government to advance a sum not exceeding £35,000 immediately for this purpose. 3, That the sum be repaid to the Government in 15 equal annual instalments without interest. 4, That each local body be charged with their proportion of the actual cost of construction in their particular district, provided that the Government extend special consideration to those bodies which will be unduly penalised. 5, That the amount of each annual repayment be deducted proportionately from the Government subsidy from the bodies concerned, extend-

ing over 15 years. 6, That the construction of the road be left in the hands of a committee consisting of a representative from each body and a representative from the Government, and they be trustees for the said advance for the above purpose—five to form a quorum. 7, That the Government be asked to contribute one-half of the cost of maintenance of road when constructed, the local bodies interested to contribute the other half on basis as set out in Clause 4. I am now directed by the Hon. Minister to inform you that, as he was convinced that the local authorities charged with the upkeep of the Perth-Fremantle road would be unable to agree to a scheme which would be satisfactory to themselves and the Government, other proposals have been considered, with a result that a decision has been arrived at by Cabinet. The length of the road to be treated is 713 chains, commencing at Point Lewis and ending at the Fremantle-road bridge. The total estimated cost of reconstructing, top-dressing, widening, and tarring, is estimated at £30,000. In addition, cost of supervision, office expenses, and contingencies would be £1,500 (five per cent.); but it is not proposed to charge this to the local authorities. A great deal of consideration has been given to the question of allocating the cost to the local authorities interested, on an equitable basis. It must be generally admitted that it would not be fair to charge to each body the actual cost of the work required to be done within its boundaries. It is obvious to all who have studied the question that the Perth and Fremantle business people particularly are vitally interested in this main trunk road, and this fact has recently been fully realised by those mentioned, even though the alternative route on the south side of the river was largely used. In the absence of any reliable data as to the volume and tonnage of through traffic (that is, from Perth to Fremantle and *vice versa*), as compared with the suburban traffic (that is, from suburb to suburb, or from intermediate places to

Perth or Fremantle), consideration has been given to (a) the chainage of road in each district, (b) the rates received from properties abutting on the road, and (c) the revenue received from vehicular and motor licenses, and with the result that your council will be called on to contribute The money will be provided from Loan Funds, and the work carried out by the department, a commencement being made immediately materials and plant can be obtained, and the amounts specified must be refunded with 4½ per cent. interest added, and spread over a period of 10 years. If the Traffic Bill had passed during the 1912 session, the sum of approximately £850 would have been available by way of subsidising the license fees collected within the metropolitan area, so far as this particular road is concerned, and a similar sum would, of course, again have been available during the financial year. If this sum had been expended on the maintenance of the road, it is realised that the cost of reconstruction would have been reduced accordingly, and bearing in mind the fact that the majority of the local authorities, with one exception, were in favour of the Bill, it is proposed to set this sum of £1,700 off against the cost of reconstructing the road. In other words, the Government have decided to contribute this sum towards the cost of reconstruction. It is possible that a similar amount will be set aside each year, which will still further reduce the sum to be paid by the local authorities, because there will be practically no maintenance charges during the 12 months following upon reconstruction work; but this contribution depends on the fate of the Traffic Bill, which it is proposed to again introduce during the coming session. If the Traffic Bill is passed, it will provide sufficient to maintain this road and other main roads within the metropolitan area. I have, etc., (signed) C. A. Munt, Under Secretary for Public Works.

On the 14th November, 1914, the Under Secretary for Public Works wrote a let-

ter submitting conditions a little different—

Adverting to my letter of the 18th May, in regard to the reconstruction of the Perth-Fremantle road, I now have the honour to inform you that the question as to the method of repayment has received further consideration at the hands of the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, with the result that it has been decided that the repayments shall extend over a period of 15 years instead of 10, such dating from the date of the completion of the work, and interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum is to be added to the cost of the work and calculated over the period of reconstruction. Under this method of repayment, the instalment is fixed during the whole 15 years, but the proportion of interest included is reduced, as each instalment is paid, by the amount of the interest on the principal included in the instalment. On this basis, and assuming that the cost of the road is £30,000 (it might be more), the first repayment to be made by your council will be..... on account of principal and interest, plus interest accruing during the period of reconstruction.

Those are the conditions as they stand today, and I wish to state the payments which each local authority is asked to make.

Mr. Allen: What has actually been expended?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I have not inquired. The road has not been completed.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Can you say when it will be completed?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I think the work is progressing very favourably. It is now completed to considerably this side of Claremont. The amounts I refer to are: Perth municipality between £4,000 and £5,000, Subiaco municipality £849, Claremont roads board £2,782, Claremont municipality £4,303, Cottesloe municipality £1,824, Peppermint Grove roads board £1,824, Cottesloe roads board £1,824, North Fremantle municipality £4,000, Fremantle municipality, £2,500. Now, I wish to point out the position in which two local governing bodies

situate in my electorate would be placed under this scheme. I am dealing more particularly with these bodies because I have a better knowledge of them. I am not saying that their conditions are any better or any worse than those of some other local bodies affected. Twenty chains of the main Perth-Fremantle road passes through the Subiaco municipality. The road runs practically on the edge of the municipality, and there is really no traffic for the municipality itself passing over the road. Almost the whole of the traffic passing over the Subiaco portion is through traffic from Perth to Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: And other districts as well.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Yes, I will agree to that. As regards the 20 chains, the whole of the land on both sides of the road, with the exception of six blocks, has been resumed by the Government for university purposes. The Subiaco Council have now only six blocks of land abutting on that road. Five of these are vacant, only one carrying a residence. Now, the Subiaco Council are asked to pay for the upkeep of that section of 20 chains, from which they derive practically no rates whatever, the sum of £849.

Mr. Allen: The City Council are asked to pay £4,000.

The Minister for Works: That will be reduced.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I will deal with that point presently. Next, let me draw attention to another local body in my electorate, the Claremont roads board. The main portion of the board's territory is situated on the Perth-Fremantle road. In fact, the road runs right through the territory. The Claremont roads board have no less than 118 chains of the Perth-Fremantle road within their boundaries. They estimate that 95 per cent. of the traffic passing over the road is through traffic, and that only five per cent. is local traffic from which they derive benefit. The amount of rates they derive from property abutting on the road is £50, and they collect but a few pounds from vehicular traffic. Yet the Government ask that small community to pay

no less than £2,782 towards the construction of the road. In order to keep up that payment the residents of the Claremont roads board district would need to increase their rates by 50 per cent., and this for the sake of a road from which they derive a benefit of only five parts as against 95 parts derived by the general public. That, briefly, is the position of the two bodies with which I am conversant. Now, I desire to point out the position of the Perth City Council in regard to this road; and the same position applies in a lesser degree to the Fremantle municipality also. Whilst there is in the Perth municipal district a fairly large stretch of road in respect of which the council receive rates from abutting property, still there is the fact that the great bulk of the traffic passing over the road adds to the rateable value of the city of Perth, because it is carried on behalf of the large mercantile houses. The very fact of that traffic going over the Perth-Fremantle road builds up the business of the city of Perth; or the business which has been built up makes the traffic necessary; and therefore in that indirect way the Perth City Council, and in a less degree the Fremantle Municipal Council, have their rateable values increased by the very existence of that traffic. That is the difference between their position and the position of the bodies I have dealt with.

Mr. Allen: That is your opinion.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I am not asking for this select committee to inquire into the position on behalf of the local bodies in my electorate, but on behalf of all the local governing bodies, to see whether we can devise some equitable means for dealing with the difficulty, because none exist at the present time. The Government are in the position that they can force their scheme upon the local bodies, as they have suggested they intend to do by withholding the subsidies. But it is unfair to adopt that course.

Mr. Allen: You are not worrying too much about the Perth City Council's interests or those of Claremont.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: There is nothing to prevent the hon. member dealing with the matter, and drawing attention to the

point of view of those bodies. If I am successful in securing the appointment of a select committee that body will certainly inquire into the position from the point of view of all the parties concerned. All will be able to place their views before that independent tribunal, and that will be a procedure which they have not yet had the opportunity of following. The local bodies have met in conference and have sent the Minister a copy of the decisions arrived at, but the representatives of the bodies have not been able to give evidence. I want to deal briefly with the position of the Karrakatta-road. The condition of this road has been a burning question with the Claremont Roads Board for many years past. Just before the last elections I waited on the then Minister for Works, Mr. Johnson, and put before him the position of this thoroughfare from the point of view of the Claremont Roads Board, and he gave me to understand then that the Claremont Board, which had just previously paid a substantial sum of money, in conjunction with the cemetery board, for the purpose of putting the road in repair, would not be required to make any further payment, because he recognised the unfairness of asking them to contribute towards the upkeep of that road. Nothing was done, and some time ago I wrote to the present Minister for Works on the subject, and I received from him in reply this letter dated the 20th July—

In reference to your letter of the 8th May, and in which it is stated that the late Hon. Minister for Works gave a promise that the contribution made by your boards towards repairing Karrakatta-road would be the last payment you would be called upon to make, I have the honour to inform you that no such undertaking was given, although Mr. Johnson did express the view that it might be possible to make arrangements whereby a portion of the road would be maintained by the Cemetery Board. However, it was subsequently ascertained that the Government had no power to compel the board to assist in the maintenance of the road, and that

complications would ensue if amending legislation were introduced with a view to including the road within the boundaries controlled by the Cemetery Board. For the present at all events the department is therefore unable to take any action in the direction of relieving your board of the responsibility of maintaining the road. Within a few days I will let you know what further steps, if any, the department can take with a view to effecting further temporary repairs.

I also desire to point out the position of the Claremont Roads Board with regard to this particular road. It runs through their territory from one end of the cemetery to the other; it is bounded on one side by the Karrakatta Cemetery, and on the other side by the railway line, and along the whole length of the road there is not one bit of private property which is rateable. Yet the Claremont Roads Board is asked to contribute a substantial sum each year towards the maintenance of a road which is used by people who live miles away from it.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Who is maintaining that road now?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Towards the last expenditure on the road the Claremont Board paid £70, the Cemetery Board also paid £70, and the Government paid the balance.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: It must have been a long time ago.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It was not very long ago, but the repairs were not of a substantial nature.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: It is one of the worst roads in the State at the present time.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: There are 60 chains of road in the Claremont Board's area, and they get no rates whatever. Yet they spend an average annually of £150 towards the upkeep of the road. That portion of the road which runs through the Subiaco municipal district is 119 chains in extent, and the annual general rate derived from property abutting on it is £58. During the past six or seven years, the Subiaco council have spent the following amounts on the upkeep of the road:—In 1907 £226, in 1908 £114, in

1909 £53, in 1910 £99, in 1911 £60, in 1912 £55, and from that year to the present time the expenditure by the Subiaco council has been at the rate of about £55 per annum. At the present time they are carrying on extensive repairs, almost to the extent of reconstruction, and spending on it just on £400. Hon. members will therefore see that the drain on the two local bodies to which I have referred is out of all proportion to the benefit which they derive from the road. As I have already pointed out, I have received letters from all the local bodies interested in this road directing attention to their dissatisfaction at the proposals of the Government for recouping themselves to the extent of their outlay on this road. The municipality which the Minister for Works represents is almost in as bad a way as any of the other local governing bodies through whose territory this road runs. On both sides of the road there are large tracts of university endowment lands from which no rates are derived, and that portion of it is very costly to maintain. In fact, it is just there that the road got into such a bad condition a little time back that a busy bee got to work on it. Local bodies are appointed for the purpose of carrying on a part of the functions of the government of the country, and if we are going to place on these local bodies financial burdens which they are unable to bear, then it is unreasonable to expect them to continue to carry out those functions. There is also this further aspect, that because a certain number of citizens happen to settle in a particular district through which what might be called a national road passes, these citizens are called upon to pay heavy taxes so that that road might be kept in a proper state of repair. That is absolutely unfair, because the road exists for the benefit of a big proportion of the people of the State generally. Many of these people have made homes for themselves in these suburbs because land happened to be cheaper there than anywhere else, and now they find themselves unduly penalised, so that there might be maintained in their district a road which exists for the convenience of the great bulk of the people living outside the area. A select committee if ap-

pointed will investigate all these matters, and that will be the only means by which a scheme can be devised which will prove acceptable to all who are interested.

Mr. Thomson: Why not make it a national road?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If the select committee are convinced from the evidence that the road should be nationalised, then doubtless they will make a recommendation to that effect; I have no power to make such a recommendation. As I have already pointed out, a few years ago members felt so strongly on this question that they assisted to wipe out the special subsidy which was paid for the maintenance of these two roads. That was a distinctly unfair attitude to take.

Mr. Bolton: Parliament did it.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I understand that, and I am convinced that many of those who voted to wipe out that subsidy did so without having gone deeply into the question, otherwise they would not have taken such a drastic course.

The Minister for Works: The member for Katanning was against it, too.

Mr. Thomson: I was not.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: A number of the country members at that time were against it, but those who are representing the same constituencies at the present time, because of the prominence given to the question, realise that it is fair and just that the people of the State should bear some portion of the cost not only of the reconstruction of these main thoroughfares, but also of the annual maintenance, because, after all, the roads are used mostly by the big commercial houses on behalf of all the people of the State. I am convinced that it is important that the road connecting the port with the city should be the best in the State.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: And it is the very worst.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If it is not a good road, then it is a very bad advertisement for the State. Before the reconstruction of the Perth-Fremantle-road was undertaken, it was, without doubt, in a scandalous condition.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: A portion of it is still in a bad state.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The hon. member is wrong.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The Subiaco end is badly out of repair.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I think I have said sufficient to convince any reasonable member of the necessity for agreeing to this motion. I therefore move it.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [7.32]: Am I to understand that the hon. member desires the select committee to go into the question of whether the whole of the State is to be saddled with the cost of this particular road from Perth to Fremantle? This road is largely used by people who do not contribute to the State revenue to anything like the extent the people in the outback districts contribute; nor does the road serve as useful a purpose as a road in a farming district, over which the producers carry their stuff to market. The same may be said in favour of the roads in goldfields districts. But just because we have a large number of people congregated in a big centre, people who in many instances are living on the producers in outback centres, it appears to be the intention of the mover to saddle the producers—living under conditions which do not enable them to enjoy life to the same extent as those persons luxuriating in motor cars between Perth and Fremantle—with the cost of this metropolitan road. It is most unfair to propose that this road should be maintained on any other basis than that of the municipalities through which the road passes footing the bill and arriving at some arrangement with the Government. In the past Western Australia has been heavily saddled to put that road in good order, and the very people who are now asking that the State should bear this further burden are those who allowed the road to get back to its previous bad condition. Is it just to ask of those people who require feeder roads to bring their produce into market—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not discussing the motion at all. He is discussing some suppositions

intention of which the House is not aware. The motion is as follows:—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon an equitable method of apportioning—(a) The cost of the reconstruction and maintenance of the Perth-Fremantle-road. (b) The control and upkeep of the Subiaco-Claremont-road through Karrakatta—between all the bodies in any way concerned.

It asks for a select committee to make certain inquiries.

Mr. FOLEY: My reading may be wrong, although, with all due deference to you, I do not think so.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is discussing it wrongly; that is the point.

Mr. FOLEY: I think you are anticipating a question which I was going to ask you. Although at all times I wish to bow to your ruling—

Mr. George: What are you discussing?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must discuss the motion.

Mr. FOLEY: I wish to do so, and I am willing to take any advice. I want to know from you, is paragraph (a) to be considered as separate altogether from paragraph (b)?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I would like to know whether the hon. member is serious?

Mr. FOLEY: I am serious.

Mr. SPEAKER: So am I now. The motion is as follows:—

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon an equitable method of apportioning—(a) The cost of the reconstruction and maintenance of the Perth-Fremantle-road. (b.) The control and upkeep of the Subiaco-Claremont-road through Karrakatta—between all the bodies in any way concerned.

In other words, it is that a select committee be appointed for certain purposes. The whole motion is contained in the two paragraphs, together with the words moved by the member for Subiaco (Mr. B. J. Stubbs).

Mr. FOLEY: Is it permissible for me to move an amendment to that motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member submits the amendment I will tell him.

Mr. FOLEY: I move an amendment—
That paragraph (a) be struck out.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member moves an amendment to strike out all the words contained in paragraph (a). I want a seconder. There being no seconder the amendment lapses. The motion is now under discussion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [7.42]: There is no objection to the appointment of a select committee, but I would like to point out that this question has been discussed by Parliament previously, and that Parliament decided it was unfair, to the country districts particularly, that the whole of the upkeep of the road mentioned should be thrown on the State. As a matter of fact, no doubt you, Sir, will remember that the Liberal Government wiped off the subsidy for the maintenance of this road in a period of three years. That is why the vote was agreed to at the time, and the Government of the day, in accordance with the desire of Parliament, year by year decreased the subsidy until it disappeared altogether. In 1904-5 the State re-made this road at a cost of £30,000 or £40,000.

Mr. George: And the Government had remade it years before that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At all events it was reconstructed in 1904-5, and an undertaking was given by the local authorities that they would keep the road in repair. However, they failed in their duty in that respect, and Parliament refused to grant any more subsidy for the purpose.

Mr. George: Was not a subsidy granted for repairing the road?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: For assisting in repairing it. All that was spent was the amount of the subsidy. The road got into a bad state, and it was necessary that something should be done to make it passable for traffic. The local authorities from Perth to Fremantle were not in a position to do it. Then they were asked to meet together for the purpose of agreeing to some scheme of putting,

the road into repair. After receiving several deputations comprising users of the road, the Government decided to reconstruct the road, the cost to be apportioned between the various districts which benefited from it. We cannot get away from the fact that not an inch of the road being done is within the boundaries of Fremantle, but the Fremantle people are enjoying more benefit from it than those in any other district between that and Perth. The people of Perth are the gainers by the road because it means trade, and they receive a greater benefit than the people in any other district in the metropolitan area. After this was decided, the officers of the department went carefully into the matter and concluded it was only fair that Fremantle and Perth should pay a proportion of the cost in view of the benefit derived from the road. Since then the city of Perth has constructed the portion of the road within its boundaries.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Three and a quarter miles.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This means that a proportion of the amount would be allowed, and instead of being between £4,000 and £5,000, it would probably be reduced by one half.

Mr. Allen: You will not ask them to pay more than they have spent.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; but doubtless the Perth authorities did this portion hoping they might not be called on to maintain some part of the road between Perth and Fremantle.

Mr. Allen: That is not a fair remark because it was already provided for on their loan estimates.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perth and Fremantle gain more from the road than any other district.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: One half of the goods traffic of the whole State goes over the road.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Subiaco mentioned that the Subiaco municipality has to pay £849, but that is spread over a period of 15 years, and the proportion per annum would therefore be small. There is no objection to the appointment of the com-

mittee, but its members should consist of representatives of the country districts because they would be able to discuss the matter with unbiassed minds.

Mr. Allen: I like that very much!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not reflect upon members for the metropolitan area. I admit that I am biased because a considerable portion of the road runs through my district. The other day I was requested to take steps for the future maintenance of the road, but in view of the financial condition of the State and the payments to be made for the construction of the road, I cannot see how the local authorities can find the money. That is a matter for future consideration, and if the committee can devise means whereby the maintenance of the road will be apportioned between the various districts, including Perth and Fremantle, it will be beneficial to the Works Department and to the State generally. There is more traffic on this road than on any other in the State, but if the Government undertook to maintain it entirely they should undertake to maintain every other public road in the State. It would not be fair to ask the State to maintain the road between Fremantle and Perth in good order while allowing the road between Perth and Albany to go to pieces. Members who have discussed this question previously have regarded it from that standpoint, but in the past the Government have been asked to maintain this road while other roads have not received their fair share of consideration.

Mr. Willmott: Although travelled over by people of the metropolitan area.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A great number of the vehicles using the Perth-Fremantle road are licensed in either Perth or Fremantle, and the local authorities are receiving the license fees. A very large proportion of the heavy traffic is carried in vehicles licensed in Perth.

Mr. Allen: A lot of the vehicles are not licensed in Perth at all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the Traffic Bill had been passed, the cost of upkeep might have been alleviated somewhat.

Mr. Thomson: Why not re-introduce the Traffic Bill?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is useless in view of the opposition encountered in the metropolitan area. I hope if a committee is appointed, its members will realise that both Perth and Fremantle must pay their share of the upkeep and assist the adjoining roads boards and municipalities.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle) [7.52]: I am glad the Government support the appointment of this committee. I quite agree with the action of the Government in coming to the rescue when the local bodies failed to carry out the work of maintaining this road. It was a difficult problem and one to which apparently there was no solution, so the Government had no option but to step in and construct the road. It had got into such a state of disrepair that anyone who travelled over it and experienced the painful jolting must have agreed that as the local bodies could not decide the proportion that each should pay for maintenance, the only solution was for the Government to do the work. While the local governing bodies were quite agreeable to the Government doing the work, the question of paying a fair proportion was and is a matter which could not be so readily agreed to. Speaking for the Fremantle municipality, the members of that body were somewhat surprised to find that about £2,500 of the cost of constructing this road was allocated to them, as just previous to the construction of the road by the Government they had put their share of this road into proper and thorough repair. The portion of the road running from the North Fremantle bridge to the wharf had just been constructed by the Fremantle Council, and the Government did not have to spend one penny within the Fremantle municipal boundary.

Mr. George: Who cuts the road up? That is the question.

Mr. CARPENTER: Considering that the Fremantle Council had just spent £1,000 in putting their portion of the road in repair, they received a rude sur-

prise when they found they were still called upon to pay some £2,500 towards the other sections.

Mr. George: But who cuts the road up?

Mr. CARPENTER: That is what I want the committee to ascertain. We at Fremantle desire only a fair deal. I do not suppose that Fremantle, Perth, or any of the intervening bodies wish to shirk or escape their proper duty in this respect. There have been very good reasons why the local bodies should not spend a large proportion of their revenue in constructing a road running past property owned by the Government. This raises a big question which does not confine itself altogether to the construction of main roads. The motion refers to the section of a road which runs past the Karrakatta cemetery. This raises a larger question, that of the liability of local governing bodies for the construction of roads running past any considerable section of Government property. In Fremantle, I suppose we have a bigger proportion of Government buildings and lands than any other municipality in the State, past which we have to build and maintain roads and footpaths and provide light and everything else. If we consider the question of the road at Karrakatta, I do not see why the inquiry could not be profitably extended to considering the general question of the liability of the Government for the upkeep of roads past any Government property. However, the motion does not go that far, and I do not know whether the House would be agreeable to extending the scope of the inquiry in that direction. I merely point out that the second portion of the motion deals with only one particular aspect of a much bigger question. The chief work of the committee will be to try to devise some equitable scheme to apportion the cost of the construction of this road.

Mr. Harrison: Do I understand that the local governing bodies between Perth and Fremantle agreed to do so much, and that Fremantle is the only council which has carried out its part of the work?

Mr. CARPENTER: No, Fremantle had constructed its portion before the Government stepped in.

Mr. George: The liability extends beyond Fremantle.

Mr. CARPENTER: If there is an obligation, Fremantle is prepared to meet it, but we were not prepared to accept the *ipse dixit* of the Minister who said we should pay so much and that there should be no appeal. Those who have had experience of the local bodies will agree that it was not a fair position in which to place them. The select committee will be able to call evidence to show whether the proposal of the Minister was a just and equitable one.

Mr. Foley: They do all that by deputation in the outback districts every day.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am afraid that is quite a different question. A deputation simply ask the Minister for a grant for a certain road and if the Minister is in a good humour they get it. If he is not, they do not get it. This is a matter which should be capable of easy adjustment if we can get around a table and talk the question over, giving the Minister or someone representing him an equal chance to put before the committee his reasons for having allotted so much for one body and so much for another.

The Attorney General: Would not a consultation between these particular bodies be better?

Mr. CARPENTER: It would not have the same authority as this committee would have. I am glad to find that the Minister has agreed to the appointment of a committee, and I hope the House will agree to it also. The committee would be able to get to work in a short time, and I believe would be able to produce a report which would be fairly satisfactory to the bodies concerned.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth) [8.1]: There are certain roads in the State which should be considered main roads. I do not know that there are any roads in Western Australia that are classified as main roads, but there are certain main roads which it is the undoubted duty of the State to maintain.

The Attorney General: From Kalgoorlie to Kanowna for instance.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am sorry to say that it would not be a heavy tax on any Government to maintain that road at the present time. It would facilitate the public business if a classification was made of all roads. The grants for their maintenance could then be allocated without any discussion of this sort.

The Minister for Works: There are no grants at the present time.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If there is such a thing as a main road in the State undoubtedly that between Perth and Fremantle should be classed as such. There is no other road in the State that is more deserving of such a designation as this national road. Undoubtedly nine-tenths or nineteen-twentieths of the traffic that goes over that road is composed of traffic other than that belonging to the local bodies concerned. Since the advent of motor cars, for instance, I daresay a fair percentage of the traffic on that road is caused by the country people who come to town in their cars and use that thoroughfare to go to the port and meet the boats, and indeed, use it in a general way of business far more than they were wont to do.

The Minister for Works: The greatest damage of all is done by heavy motor lorries, which should have to pay a bigger license fee than other vehicles.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: There is, of course, as the Minister says, a great deal of heavy traffic over this road. Much of that is brought about by heavy lorries which convey goods from the ships in port, which goods are destined for various parts of the State.

Member: What about the railways and the river?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I admit that a certain amount of traffic goes by rail and by river.

The Minister for Works: Not much goes by river.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: A much greater proportion of the cargo arriving by sea is carried over that road than was previously the case, and that cargo is distributed all over the State. The road is,

in fact, used just as much as a country road as it is a metropolitan road. I must disagree with the member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter). In my opinion, Fremantle is in every sense as much entitled to share in the responsibility for the condition of the road (and indeed more so) as any other local body concerned. In the first place, it is a highway between the two Fremantles, North Fremantle and the port itself. The great proportion of the traffic is, what I may term, Fremantle's own traffic, the traffic from the ships and the traffic of the lorries.

The Attorney General: You might as well put a tax on the shipping companies which bring the goods here to be distributed all over the State.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: They are taxed already in the way of landing charges and wharfage charges.

The Attorney General: It is a *quid pro quo*. We give them something with which to enable them to land their goods.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not intend to oppose the motion, but I do not see the reason for it, as I do not think any allocation should be made in regard to the construction—not so much for the maintenance—of the road. The road should be constructed by the State. I desire to enter my protest against the method which is used in the construction of that road. At the rate it is being constructed now it will take some four years to complete.

Mr. Bolton: Do you not think that is work for the committee?

The Minister for Works: Is that the motion?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The motion deals with the construction of the road and the cost of construction, and I am protesting against this cost.

The Minister for Works: We will deal with that when we come to the Public Works Department Estimates.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: During the last eight months the Public Works Department have only constructed two miles of this road. If the Minister will multiply that by six he will find that they are travelling at the rate of 12 miles of road in four years.

The Minister for Works: They have done four or five miles.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Since December last they have constructed practically only that portion between the Cottesloe and Claremont railway stations, a distance of only two miles.

Mr. George: The work has been done cheaper than it was done before.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That does not say much for it.

Mr. George: It is a fact all the same.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It does not say much for it if the work has been done cheaper than it was done before. I maintain that the City of Perth is not entitled to pay, as the Minister for Works states, £4,000 or £5,000 towards the construction of the road, because already, at their own expense, they have constructed at least 25 per cent. of it.

The Minister for Works: I told you that would be reduced considerably.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister's estimate is that the City should pay between £9,000 and £10,000. Now, the amount has been reduced to between £4,000 and £5,000, because that authority spent £5,000 themselves and constructed three and a quarter miles of the road, and did it very well. The road has been badly constructed as a whole for heavy traffic. That is proved by the fact that at the Fremantle end many big holes have been worked in it.

The Minister for Works: That is the tar on the top wearing out.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If the Minister would go over the road he would see that the holes are due to bad foundations. I venture to say that many of the holes which are now six inches deep will be as many feet deep before the reconstruction of the road is completed, at the present rate of progress. I urge upon the Minister to hurry on the work as much as possible. There is no worse advertisement for the State than to have the main road from the port to the capital in the condition it is in to-day. In regard to the cost, which is to be charged up to the local bodies, and into which question the committee is to inquire, I would point out that they would be called upon to bear

this cost during the whole time that the road is under construction. I agree in a general way with the appointment of the committee because it will probably tend to shorten the time of construction, as well as throw light on the whole matter and have it placed upon a proper basis once and for all. Whether the local authorities have to pay for the construction and maintenance, or the Government have to pay, it is in the interests of the people that the question should be settled at once so that the main road of the State can be kept in proper repair.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [8.9]: It may seem a strange attitude for one to adopt to say that one is going to oppose the appointment of a Select Committee. This, however, is one of the occasions on which I cannot help opposing such a committee. I shall certainly vote against its appointment for reasons which I will give the House. First of all, I believe irrespective of who the committee may consist of, that there is practically only one recommendation that they can make which will be acceptable to the local governing bodies concerned. That recommendation is, as suggested by the hon. member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly), that the Perth-Fremantle road should be treated as a national road, and be built and maintained at the expense of the State.

The Minister for Works: And we have to get Parliament to agree to that.

Mr. MUNSIE: Believing as I do that this is practically the only decision the committee could arrive at that would be acceptable to the local governing bodies, I want to say that there are other roads in the State of just as much importance from a national standpoint as the Perth-Fremantle road.

Mr. Thomson: Why not do them all?

Mr. MUNSIE: If the motion was to appoint a select committee, for the purpose of going into the question of the classification of all roads so as to determine which should be main roads, and for the purpose of making some recommendation to this House as to whether the Government should or should not maintain the main roads of the State, I

should have no objection to its appointment. I should like to refer to some of the arguments used by the hon. member who introduced the motion. First of all he said that the reason for the introduction of the motion was that some little time ago some discontent existed in the metropolitan area because of the unsatisfactory state and disrepair of the Perth-Fremantle road. He went on to point out that the Government had eventually to come to the rescue and make up the road. They did so after notifying the local Government bodies that certain conditions were going to be imposed upon them after the road was built, and that they would have to repay the capital cost and at the same time keep the road in repair. He went on to point out that the reason why he asked for the select committee was that the conditions laid down by the Government, or the Minister controlling the department, were unjust to certain local governing bodies along the route. He pointed out that one of these bodies, the Claremont roads board, I believe, had a large proportion of its area adjoining or facing both sides of the Perth-Fremantle road; and almost in the next breath he told the House that the total revenue received from that local governing body was only £50 per year. He, therefore, contended that the conditions laid down by the Minister were absolutely unfair and unjust to that local governing body. If that argument is a reason why the select committee should be appointed, I maintain it is a capital reason why this local governing body should amalgamate with some other body or be wiped out altogether. The hon. member said he believed the select committee to be necessary because the local governing bodies could not possibly agree upon a fair allocation of the cost. I want to emphasise that, in my opinion, at all events, it was not a case of these authorities not being able to agree, but that they would not agree. I am perfectly satisfied that, irrespective of the recommendations of this committee, whether there be a recommendation that the Government should maintain the road or

that the local authorities should do so, the latter will continue to act exactly in the same way as heretofore, and that the State will still have to pay. Already the people of Western Australia are finding the money by which this road is being put into a state of repair. I maintain that it is a waste of time appointing a Select Committee, and that their recommendation can have no beneficial effect so far as the State is concerned. I am, therefore, going to vote against its appointment.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [S.15]: This question of the Perth-Fremantle road has been brought before the Assembly time after time during the last 20 years, I believe. The first occasion that it came before us, at all events in my experience, was during the time of the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor. He made that road, and the Government paid for it. Since then it has been made again, and now it has to be made again. With a good deal of what the hon. member opposite said I agree. There is not the slightest doubt that the municipalities concerned are desirous that the State should bear the whole of the cost. It is only natural they should desire that. If I were a city councillor at the present time that is what I should try to get carried through. The point I should like the House to consider, however, is, what are main roads in this State? That is a big controversy in the country districts. Wherever there are roads which the country roads boards consider trunk roads, application has been made to the Minister for Works through the local member to have those roads declared main trunk roads and maintained by the Government. The question requires to be gone into thoroughly, and I should look to the result of the proposed select committee's inquiry as representing a further stage in dealing with country roads. The Perth-Fremantle road undoubtedly has been cut to pieces by the heavy traffic from the Fremantle warehouses distributing their goods along the road to Perth and conveying goods to the Perth warehouses. The only equitable way of dealing with people using large motors would be to

revert almost to the dark ages, and put up toll bars and charge according to the weight of the loads. In England many years ago all the main turnpike roads were controlled by toll bars. When one got to a toll bar with an ordinary trap one paid 3d. for the use of the road, and with a wagon one paid according to width of tyre. I do not wish to go back to the dark ages, but I do think the Traffic Bill brought in some time ago, if it had been widened in its scope and less drastic in some of its provisions, would have met the position better than anything we have at the present time. Anyone living at Claremont, as I do, can see wagons carrying six, eight, and even ten tons of material. I ask, what road built by any ordinary municipality will stand such traffic? A road in Perth, of course, will stand it, because Perth has large rates to pay for such roads. But the suburban municipalities have not the means to build such roads, and they should not be asked to do so. Another aspect of the question refers to the Railway Department. The railways belong to the whole of the State, and the burden of maintaining them is thrown on the whole of the State; but a great deal of their revenue is taken from them by road traffic. It does not require much looking into the matter to see that that is the effect. If a merchant has to send stuff from Fremantle to Perth, then in order to rail it, he must first load it on the lorry or whatever means of transport may be adopted, take it to the station, unload it, pay railage, and then at Perth provide another lorry and load the stuff again, whereas by motor he can convey the goods from Fremantle to Perth in a couple of hours. If the merchants can save money by adopting that course, some scheme should be instituted by which they should pay for the use of the roads. The burden of their businesses should not be thrown on the ratepayers of the suburban roads boards. That is where the unfairness comes in. It is beside the question to argue whether the goods conveyed by road are for consumption in Perth or for consumption in the country. Whether they go up by rail or by motor, the destination does not affect

the point that the route over which they have to pass has to be provided by someone. Railways are provided by the State; the river is provided by nature, though the means of conveyance are provided by certain companies; and the roads have to be maintained, under the present system—that is, if we throw the responsibility upon the municipalities—by the people receiving least advantage. Whatever the select committee may recommend—I do not care—or whatever the Minister may think—and I do not care what he thinks—there can be no system fair and just unless the merchants pay according to the advantage they receive. If the merchant in Fremantle or the merchant in Perth saves money by this road traffic, he is the person who should bear the bigger burden; and I believe that is the view the Minister had in allocating the charges. The member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter) raised the point with regard to roads in Fremantle. This is a matter I myself have observed during the last two or three years. If it be right, and I think it is right, that the roads which the Perth City Council have made within their boundaries should be allowed for in fixing the amount that the council have to pay, it certainly cannot be otherwise than right that the Fremantle ratepayers should receive similar consideration for the portion they have made within their boundaries.

The Minister for Works: That was taken into consideration.

Mr. GEORGE: From conversations I had with the previous Minister for Works I am clear that it was his view to try and allocate the charges among the different municipalities according to the benefits that they derived.

The Minister for Works: That is what is being done.

Mr. Carpenter: The trouble is the municipalities were not consulted.

Mr. GEORGE: I have a recollection that the various municipal bodies of Perth and Fremantle had several interviews with the previous Minister for Works on the subject. Although I do not intend to oppose the motion, I wish to point out that for years and years it has been the policy of Australian Parliaments

to delegate a great deal of authority over local matters to local bodies, not with any idea of minimising the work of the chief governing body, but with the idea of stimulating the local bodies to rise to their responsibilities. If it has come to the point that the local bodies are unable to agree with a sympathetic Minister in such a matter as this, then there is something very rotten in the state of Denmark. If the aid of a select committee of Parliament has to be invoked to settle a difference of this sort, there is hardly anything in connection with the local government of Western Australia but we must have a select committee for it. I do hope that if the proposed committee get to work, they will be able to arrive at some settlement of this matter. I look forward to their recommendation, whatever it may be, as one step further in the bigger question of what is to be done with the main roads of this State, roads which cannot be looked upon as anything but main roads, and the maintenance of which throws too heavy a burden upon the people living along them. It is acknowledged that a great deal of the use of these roads is by people who come from the large centres. I do not think it necessary to say more. I believe I have made my point.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth) [8.25]: I find myself in a sort of dual position as regards this matter, inasmuch as temporarily I represent the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom), who is away from his constituents, and also represent the municipality of Perth. Both municipalities are affected very considerably by the motion. From the figures given by the mover, I observe that the proportion of cost proposed to be debited to the Perth City Council is between £4,000 and £5,000. However, I understand from the Minister for Works that that amount is to be reduced. For the life of me I cannot understand how the Minister is going to get over that part of the Municipalities Act which prohibits any municipality from spending money outside its own boundaries.

The Minister for Works: We do not ask the municipalities for money, and

there is nothing in the Municipalities Act about subsidies.

Mr. ALLEN: Then the Minister is going to take it out of the subsidies. The Perth City Council at the present time are not getting a very fat subsidy from the Government—about £3,000. Further, the Perth City Council have often told the Government that if only the council were permitted to rate public buildings in the city of Perth, the result would be considerably more revenue than the amount of the subsidy. Of course, the argument is always advanced that it is a great advantage to the City that these public buildings are placed in Perth. The Perth City Council have always kept in order and maintained that part of the Perth-Fremantle road which is within their boundaries. The part most affected is that running down William-street to the brewery and a little beyond; and that part is within the ward I represented for a number of years, the south ward. Year after year an item of £500 was debited to the south ward in respect of that portion, and it had to be taken out of the proportion allocated to the ward, about £2,000, before there was any money to spend on works. The whole of that amount of £500 had to be spent on the Mount's Bay-road, and I think that during every one of the eight years I represented the south ward the allocation of £2,000 was exceeded by £500 or more. I do not think that in any year that ward spent less than the amount of money allocated. Along the Perth portion of the Perth-Fremantle road the council collects something like £300 a year in rates. On the one boundary there is the river, and on the other the King's Park. Apart from a few houses owned by the Swan Brewery and one or two private properties, there is very little rateable land along the road.

The Minister for Works: Some of the districts get hardly any rates at all along their portions of the road.

Mr. ALLEN: That is as far as the Perth City Council are concerned. The Claremont municipality have more rateable land in this connection, but of course we know perfectly well that the amount

of rates they collect for tyres and motors is very small. No doubt the Perth City Council collect a large amount under these heads, but I wish to impress upon the House that, as I said when the Traffic Bill was introduced, practically the whole of that money is spent in providing for the traffic which comes within the Perth municipality. As an instance I mentioned, when the Traffic Bill was before the House, that in Murray-street alone a sum of £400 or £500 was spent in putting down granite cubes outside one of the markets to provide accommodation for the vegetable hawkers who come into the City and whose carts stand in Murray-street. These hawkers come in with their carts, and their license fees are not paid to the Perth City Council. The bulk of the hawkers come from the Perth Roads Board district, and a few of them from the Maylands district. The vegetables, moreover, are hawked in other municipalities. Assuming that the Perth City Council receive a revenue of £1,600 a year from licenses, still they have to spend that money in maintaining roads. The necessity for the expenditure of £500 or £600 a year on the upkeep of Mount's Bay-road alone was due largely to certain businesses, and this expenditure would have been in some way compensated for had the Traffic Bill gone through. Unfortunately, however, the Bill contained some objectionable provisions, as a good many Government Bills do, and in consequence it was rejected. Hon. members know what I am referring to. It has been asked by the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie), why should the Perth-Fremantle-road be made a national road more than any other? In reply to that I say that the Perth-Fremantle road has a standing all of its own, quite different from that of any other road in this State, inasmuch as Fremantle is our port, inasmuch as all our principal shipping comes to Fremantle, and inasmuch as practically all the passenger traffic is through Fremantle. The consequence is that the Perth-Fremantle road is used very largely for motor traffic by passengers to and from the boats, and also for heavy traffic from the shipping. The whole of the

cargo brought over that road to Perth is not for the residents of Perth and its immediate vicinity, but is distributed from the city throughout the surrounding municipalities and districts. If we are going to saddle the different municipalities between Fremantle and Perth with the cost of putting this road in order, it will mean that the ratepayers in those areas will have to carry the whole responsibility, while at the same time they will not be getting the whole of the benefit from it. This road is largely used by sightseers.

The Minister for Works: They mostly use the road on the south side of the river.

Mr. ALLEN: Many, however, use the main road, and a good deal of the cargo that is brought up to Perth comes up by that road. I think that some good will come from the appointment of a select committee.

Mr. Bolton: I think the matter has been so well discussed that there is no need for a select committee now.

Mr. ALLEN: I take it we want to appoint a committee which will make itself thoroughly familiar with the position. It is a very easy matter to get a majority of people representing different boards to attend a meeting and pass a resolution against a certain thing in regard to which they are going to be the losers. We require a select committee particularly interested in the districts affected and such a committee will be able to consider the question fairly. I do not think we should bring in the outside roads boards. I am going to support the motion, because I do not think any harm can come of it, and possibly some good will result from an investigation of the matter.

Mr. WILLMOTT (Nelson) [8.35]: I would not have risen to speak but for the fact that the member for West Perth (Mr. Allen) inferred that only members vitally and directly interested in this matter should be appointed to the select committee. I say that everyone in the State is concerned, and every roads board, far or near, is interested in this matter, and if anything should be recommended by this select committee in the nature of the State paying for the con-

struction of the road from Perth to Fremantle, it will open up a very big question indeed. For instance, the Warren roads board, in whose boundaries the State sawmill permits exist, cannot collect one farthing from the areas. The member for West Perth says that the Perth City Council cannot collect rates from Government buildings. All right, but Perth is not the only place affected in that way. If we were able to collect rents from the State sawmill permit areas we would not know what to do with the money, we would have so much of it.

Mr. George: You would not get it from the profits.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I only hope that when the committee is appointed it will go carefully into the whole matter, and that it will not be selected entirely from gentlemen who are vitally interested in the municipalities concerned.

Mr. ROBINSON (Canning) [8.38]: A good deal of time has been taken up in discussing many matters in connection with this motion, which will really be the functions of the committee when it is appointed. I suggest that there only two things to consider. One is whether it is proper for a select committee to be appointed. I answer that by saying Yes. The next is, who shall constitute the personnel of the committee, and in answer to that I say, disinterested men, and not those who are biassed. Then what is the object of that committee? What will the members of it have in their minds? I answer that by saying that they will inquire for whose good or for whose benefit this road is to be maintained, and the proportion who derive the benefit should pay accordingly. I commend the motion to the House.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a select committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Carpenter, McDowall and Wansborough, Hon. J. D. Connolly, and the mover (Mr. B. J. Stubbs), with power to call for persons, papers, and records, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned and to report this day three weeks.

MOTION — HORSE-RACING CONTROL, TO INQUIRE BY JOINT COMMITTEE.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [8.50]: I move—

That a joint select committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the question of horse-racing within the State and matters connected therewith, with a view to the subsequent introduction of legislation providing for the control of such matters.

I do not intend to take up the time of the House in dealing with matters which should be dealt with by the proposed committee. Therefore, I will not go into detail concerning the question of racing, or express my own opinion as to what methods we should adopt to secure an improvement on the present conditions. However, I assume it is advisable that I should make so much of a statement as will show the House that such a committee is necessary. As most members are aware, the Government have recently taken in hand and reduced the racing days in the metropolitan area to a very limited extent. For having done so the Premier has received a very kind letter of thanks from the Council of Churches, which goes to show merely that many people in Western Australia are considering pretty deeply this question of what is termed excessive horse-racing and that, therefore, it is a question which should be accounted urgent and worthy, of bringing before Parliament during the present session. I desire to say a few words in regard to the restriction of racing and the right of a Government to deal with it. I propose to use as text a sub-leader which appeared in that classical paper, the *Sunday Times*. It opened this way—

Only one race meeting a fortnight is being permitted in England. The Victorian Government are preparing to stop week-day racing in Melbourne. The Perth and Fremantle lacrosseurs have cancelled their fixtures. The junior footballers have abandoned their season and the senior footballers have curtailed their season; yet the Scad-

dan Government propose to allow 51 race meetings to be held in Perth and Fremantle between the 1st August and the 31st December.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Where is that from?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): From the *Sunday Times*. Football, cricket, lacrosse, bowls, and various other sports are being curtailed. Football is being curtailed or abandoned because there is either a lack of players or a lack of public support. As a matter of fact those games or sports are working out their own destiny, as many another sport has worked out its destiny. At one time we had a very considerable amount of foot racing; but foot racing worked out its destiny. We have had bicycle racing, and motor cycle racing. Those things have lasted as long as they received public patronage, and when that was not forthcoming they ceased to be in operation. There is something in the argument that horse-racing should be allowed to work out its own destiny. That is a proposition put up by many people, particularly those who are interested in horse-racing. I do not maintain that horse-racing is entirely side by side with those other sports I have mentioned, and I am of opinion that it is desirable in the interests of the people of the State that we should curtail the amount of horse-racing being indulged in at present. As a matter of fact a very great deal of the patronage of horse-racing is due to the circumstance that gambling is permitted where horse-races are run. When people gamble to excess—and they are apt to do this—it becomes bad for the State in which it occurs. I desire to give a few figures as to the cost to the patrons of horse-racing in the metropolitan area. In this I am really calculating, even guessing, a good deal. Let us take the W.A. Turf Club's balance sheet. During last year the total receipts of the W.A. Turf Club, less nominations, amounted to, roughly, £50,000. That amount had to be found by those who patronised the course. The W.A. Turf Club races on 17 days in the

year, and the clubs registered under the W.A. Turf Club, namely, the Helena Vale, the Canning Park, and Belmont, race on 27 days. I think I am safe in suggesting that those three clubs will have receipts equal to those of the W.A. Turf Club.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They are getting shabby treatment in the curtailment of the dates.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): I am not going into a question which the proposed committee should deal with. If those clubs are receiving shabby treatment from the W.A. Turf Club it is a matter for the committee. I have my own opinion, and possibly I may express it when the Bill comes before the House. If we take the receipts of the other three clubs as being equal to those of the W.A. Turf Club we have an aggregate of £100,000 which the patrons of racing found last year. There are other expenses. Generally there are betting with the W.A. Turf Club and the other registered clubs something like 25 bookmakers. Calculating roughly I take it there are 20 bookmakers betting regularly; the average would be well over 20. I do not know whether many members are well acquainted with racing, but I can assure them that the expenses of a bookmaker, namely, the payment of his license, his fees on the course, his clerk, entrance fees for his clerk, and his travelling expenses—taking all these things, the actual out-of-pocket expenses of each bookmaker before he makes a penny profit, amount to at least £1,000 a year. Then again, bookmakers live reasonably well. They are free spenders; they are most generous from a charity point of view. As a matter of fact many of them when they die leave reasonably comfortable sums for those dependent upon them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Some of them occasionally get a knock.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Yes.

Mr. George: What is that?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): I will explain that later. Calculating on these lines we can reckon

that a bookmaker makes a profit of £1,000 a year. Therefore, 20 bookmakers with £1,000 for expenses and £1,000 profit gives an aggregate of £40,000 a year. We have in training and registered under the W.A. Turf Club in the metropolitan area 525 horses. To train a horse costs well over £2 a week, but many trainers will not take on a horse for less than £3 a week and some of them charge more. All horses are not training during the whole of the year. Some are trained from years end to years end, and some are turned out. I am calculating that there are 300 horses continually in training.

The Minister for Mines: Some of them go out in butchers' carts.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): No, they would be trotters. These horses would not look at a butcher's cart. Taking a very conservative estimate, there are 300 horses permanently in training at a cost of £2 per week each which, reckoned at £100 a year, means £30,000.

Mr. Willmott: You could double that sum.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Yes, but I am taking the lower figure. Thus we have the receipts of the various clubs, the money made by the bookmakers, and the cost of training the horses. There are many other costs in connection with racing such as train fares and other unconsidered trifles.

Mr. Willmott: Jockey fees.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): They come out of the owners' or trainers' pockets. On registered racing in the metropolitan area last year, the people spent £200,000. The Turf Club held 17 meetings and other clubs 27, or 44 all told. Over and above those, we have two trotting clubs, one on the cricket ground and one at Midland Junction who were racing—until the Government put a check on them—something like 80 meetings a year. In addition, we have the unregistered galloping, in connection with which 50 meetings are held a year. Therefore, considering that these trotting clubs and

unregistered racing associations held twice as many meetings as the registered, the cost of upkeep would be equal to the registered, which gives us an expenditure of £400,000 per year on racing for the people of the metropolitan area. Those figures I am sure are under the mark. We have to allow of course that many of the patrons come from the country and do in their money in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Munsie: Do not some of them make a wad to take back with them?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Some of them come to me to advance them a railway fare with which to return home.

Mr. Allen: And you do it?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): I wish to point out that such a large sum spent on racing is more than the people of the metropolitan area can afford, and if the Government find that the people are wasting their money unnecessarily it is their duty to protect the people. It is easy enough for the *Sunday Times* to say that the Government ought to do it. As a matter of fact, the Government have not the power to do it, but if anybody is going to do it, Parliament should. The Government should be working under statutory authority when they start to deal with matters of this description. I am convinced that there is an enormous excess of racing, particularly in the metropolitan area, and I think it is the duty of Parliament to regulate it and prevent those people, who are likely to go to excess, from injuring themselves. I do not think it is necessary at this stage to make a long speech and, as I said at the beginning, it is not necessary to go into any details or express an opinion as to the Turf Club or the associations, or to say which should be stopped or which should be permitted, or the method of control which should be submitted to this House. These are matters for the committee to consider, and I trust that the House will agree to appoint a committee to present a report after considering the matter fully and having all the evidence possible before them. In con-

clusion it is not necessary to say this is absolutely a non-party motion. There are as many opponents on this side of the House as there are on the Opposition benches. I take it this is a question which we as members of Parliament can fairly deal with, and I think it is a question which we should deal with.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [9.10] : It is very evident that the House is of such unanimous opinion that this motion will be passed with very little discussion. I realise, of course, that this is as it should be. It has been the opinion of Parliament for some considerable time that a committee should be appointed to glean all the necessary facts in order that Parliament as a whole might take the responsibility of getting a better control and grip of the racing problem. I quite agree with the Honorary Minister in his remarks that we have a surplus of racing in the metropolitan area. The committee will have a very difficult problem before them in arranging something equitable to all parties concerned. Huge vested interests have been allowed to grow up between the different clubs, and the question will have to be taken into consideration as to what recognition will be given to the pioneer clubs and also to those which have been recently formed, but which are enjoying a fair measure of prosperity. I rose only to draw attention to the somewhat reckless set of figures given by the Honorary Minister. I am surprised that the gentleman who is to be chairman of the committee should so far let his imagination run away with him as to give to this House what he claimed to be fairly accurate estimates of the profits realised by the bookmaking fraternity.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): A conservative estimate.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The committee will be able to find out whether those huge profits are realised in that particular line. I hold no brief for the bookmaker, but I have reason to believe that many of them at present are not making a living.

Mr. George: Explain what "getting a knock" is, will you?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon. member is not so simple as he looks. I know the

case of a bookmaker whom I happen to meet occasionally. Only last Saturday he won £19: That was a book bet with one individual patron of the racecourse and he booked £17 of the amount. The individual beat him for that sum, and the bookmaker had no recourse at law.

Mr. George: Is that getting a knock?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, he took the knock. His profit of £19 won that day was eventually diminished to £2. The Honorary Minister said there were 20 registered bookmakers, and he has allowed £20 a week as expenses for them. I would cut that amount down by one half. I have not one half of the extensive knowledge of the Honorary Minister, but I have had just as bitter experience as he on the racecourses. I believe a reduction of £10 a week, particularly during the last 12 months, would be somewhere near the mark, but when the Honorary Minister stated that in addition, to paying £1,000 a year expenses to carry on their occupations, bookmakers are making £1,000 a year profit—

Mr. George: Despite the knock.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes; I venture to say that never was a more absurd proposition put forward. The evidence before the committee will prove this, and I believe every bookmaker in the metropolitan area will submit his books so that the Honorary Minister will have a good opportunity to critically analyse the position as it affects the different people interested in the racing business. The Honorary Minister, I venture to say, will get the surprise of his life, and will wonder why he was so reckless with figures when moving this motion.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [9.14]: I would not like the motion to pass without saying a few words. I think hon. members on this side of the House are quite prepared to leave the consideration of this question to a joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament. The matter which they will have to consider is that of the control of racing. I am quite certain that everyone in the country is satisfied that the control of racing may be necessary. If the committee were to have been called upon to deal

with the abolition of racing I am quite sure that it would not meet with the approval of Australians.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): And I would not have moved it.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: Consequently this is not a matter for the committee to consider at all. If racing is to be abolished away goes the thoroughbred horse, the finest and grandest in the world. Racing is no new sport. It has been engaged in by the British people for centuries. It is also the great sport of Australia. I hope, at any rate, that Parliament will not do anything that will in any way prevent the people in the country districts from enjoying once in 12 months this great sport, this legitimate sport, this sport in which the whole countryside is able to take part and enjoy to its heart's content. There is no need to argue the point at the present time. I think the House is quite satisfied to leave this matter in the hands of the Select Committee, feeling that no member of this House is likely to recommend anything which will have an injurious effect on that truly legitimate sport. For my own part, I confidently leave the matter in the hands of the Select Committee, knowing that they will consider the matter fairly and squarely in the best interests of all concerned.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister — Pilbara — in reply) [9.17]: I desire to say, in reply to the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loghlen), that I am not altogether sure about the bookmakers' profits. I have, however, made a conservative estimate. I have got information from the bookmakers themselves, and also from some of the racing clubs. I find that, as a matter of fact, their payments in fees to the clubs conducting meetings in the metropolitan area and in Kalgoorlie amount to over £600 a year. I am also assured—and I think the bookmakers themselves will agree with me that I have under-estimated their expenses—that before they start to make any profit for themselves their first outlay is equal to a thousand pounds a year.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a Select Committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Bolton, Gilchrist, Hudson, Willmott and the mover (Hon. R. H. Underwood), with power to call for persons, papers, and records, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report this day three weeks.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [9.27]: I move—

That the resolution be transmitted by Message to the Legislative Council with the request that they appoint a similar Committee to confer with the Committee appointed by this House.

Question passed.

MESSAGE — WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY, ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received a letter from the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor, as follows:—

Sir,—I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to inform you that His Excellency telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on the anniversary of the declaration of war, and has this day received the following reply:—"In answer to your telegram 7th August, it has been laid before His Majesty, who greatly appreciates the resolution of Parliament and people of Western Australia to continue war to victorious end. (Sgd.) Bonar Law."

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 12th August, 1915.

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

QUESTION—FREEZING WORKS, WYNDHAM.

Alteration of Notice.

The Speaker called on the Hon. J. D. Connolly to ask the question of which he had given notice.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Before asking the question standing in my name, I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that certain paragraphs which were contained in my notice do not appear on the Notice Paper. Further, I desire to draw attention to the fact that other paragraphs do not appear in the form in which I gave notice of them. Two paragraphs of which I gave notice were: "Will he (the Premier) also lay the whole of the papers and correspondence connected with this matter on the Table of the House forthwith?" "If not, why not?" I desire to point out that these two paragraphs are in accordance with the Standing Orders, and certainly in accordance with the practice of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not argue at this stage.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I simply want to point out—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can ask his question, but he must not argue it.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not wish to ask that your ruling, Sir, be disagreed with. I am simply asking why these two paragraphs do not appear on