

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 25th October, 1944.

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

QUESTIONS (2).

RAILWAY DEPOT, ARMADALE.

As to Quarters for Employees.

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware that out of a total of 35 railwaymen employed at the Armadale depot, only one is provided with living quarters?

(2) Is it a fact that one railway employee has had his furniture stored in a van in the railway yard for the past two months?

(3) Is he aware that several employees have to travel great distances to and from work in one particular case as far away as North Perth?

(4) Does he know that in some cases the only accommodation available is in improvised sleep-outs?

(5) Is it a fact that a large number of detachable jarrah cabins are stored in the Ways and Works yards at West Perth?

(6) Would it not be possible to erect these cabins in the Armadale railway yards in such a manner as to form suitable temporary dwellings for railwaymen and their dependants?

(7) Will he undertake to investigate this unsatisfactory state of affairs with the object of rectifying the position as early as possible?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. The department can not at present undertake to provide living accommodation for all its employees any more than a private employer at Armadale would do. There are 37 railway employees at Armadale.

(2) No. The assistant station-master's furniture was stored in a van for approximately 3½ weeks until he secured accommodation.

(3) No. Three members of the staff live at Inglewood, Carlisle and Perth, respectively, where it is understood they have their own homes and travel from there to suit themselves.

(4) No.

(5) There are a number of frames for hessian camps stored at West Perth.

(6) No.

(7) Answered by No. 1.

NOXIOUS WEED.

As to Hoary Cress.

Mr. TELFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is it true that Hoary Cress is a noxious weed in the Eastern States?

(2) If so, to what degree of seriousness is such weed viewed in this State?

(3) What steps are being taken to have such weed eradicated?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, with the exception of Queensland.

(2) Regarded very seriously, although only two patches, both at Merredin and totalling under half an acre, have been discovered in this State. They are not spreading.

(3) There is no proved method of eradication. Experiments conducted by the Department of Agriculture over the past two years indicate that heavy dressings of salt are likely to prove most effective. Arrangements have been made to apply salt at the rate of 30 tons per acre about March or April next year.

METROPOLITAN MEAT SUPPLY SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report Presented.

Mr. Seward brought up the report of the Select Committee.

Ordered: That the report and recommendations be printed.

On motion by Mr. Seward, resolved: That the consideration of the report and recommendations be an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

BILL—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FUND ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Watts, and read a first time.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—VERMIN ACT SELECT COMMITTEE.

*Request for Attendance of Member of
Council.*

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.35]: I move—

That the Legislative Council be requested by message, to grant leave to the Hon. Hobart Tuckey, M.L.C., to give evidence before the Select Committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly to inquire into the operations of the Vermin Act.

In explanation of the motion, I desire to inform the House that Hon. H. Tuckey, M.L.C., is the president of the Road Board Association of Western Australia. At the annual conference of the association held in 1943, certain resolutions were carried, having reference to the desirability of amending the Vermin Act. Since that time discussions have taken place at meetings of the executive of the Road Board Association in regard to matters arising out of those resolutions. It was intended by the Select Committee to call the secretary of the association. When the matter was discussed with him, he stated that the executive of the association desired the president to give evidence on its behalf. Secondly, the secretary said that, so far as he was concerned personally, his occupation did not render him knowledgeable in matters pertaining to vermin, particularly in rural areas, and that consequently he would not be a very serviceable witness before the Select Committee, for which reason he himself desired the president to be the witness. In consequence, it became necessary to ask Mr. Tuckey if he would be good enough

to attend before the Select Committee. He expressed his willingness to attend and to give the Select Committee such information as it desired from him. But Standing Order 402 of this House states—

When the attendance of a member of the Legislative Council, or any officer of that House, is desired, to be examined by the House or any Committee thereof (not being a Committee on a private Bill), a message shall be sent to the Legislative Council to request that the Council give leave to such member or officer to attend, in order to his being examined accordingly upon the matters stated in such message.

I understand there will be no difficulty whatever regarding this matter, and I move the motion formally in order to comply with the Standing Orders of the House.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—RURAL MORTGAGES.

As to Limiting Personal Covenant Liability.

Debate resumed from the 11th October on the following motion by Mr. Watts:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take action to legislate—

(a) in respect of existing mortgages of rural land and where the security has been handed over to the mortgagee—

(i) to prevent mortgagees from proceeding on the personal covenant without a court order; and

(ii) to enable mortgagors to obtain relief by a court order from liability on the personal covenant,

so that the factors determining the court in making such orders shall be whether the default has or has not been caused by fraud or mismanagement of the mortgagor; and

(b) in respect of all future mortgages to prohibit actions on the personal covenant taking into consideration the methods adopted in the Civil Rights Limitation Act, Chapter 88 of 1939, of the Province of Saskatchewan in the Dominion of Canada.

to which an amendment had been moved by Mr. North as follows:—

That in lines 1 and 2 of subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) the words "proceeding on" be struck out with a view to inserting the words "not losing by not enforcing" in lieu.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (on amendment) [4.42]: In speaking to this amendment, I understand that the mover of it has in mind the insertion of words which will mean that no loss shall be suffered by the mortgagee in spite of personal covenants being removed, and the inability to obtain

repayment of some part of the money owing. I consider it highly necessary for the hon. member to explain to the House just in what way, and from what fund, the amount necessary to avoid loss by the mortgagee is to be made good. I can find in the hon. member's speech no reference to just how such a plan would operate, and I can only interpret his meaning to be that any compensation necessary to the mortgagee if he is not to suffer any loss shall come from moneys provided by the Crown. I do not know that that is the hon. member's intention. I do not know whether he has a right of reply, but I consider it necessary for this House to understand the position.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not entitled to speak twice.

Personal Explanation.

Mr. North: Under Standing Order 120, Mr. Speaker, may I make an explanation?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, a personal explanation.

Mr. North: The Minister for Lands is quite right in his interpretation. I did intend that in cases where the mortgagee was not protected, rather than let the mortgagee lose his money, the charge should be on the people to meet any loss incurred.

Debate Resumed.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and negatived.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: This matter was dealt with very succinctly by the member for Nedlands recently, when speaking on an entirely different subject.

Mr. SPEAKER: Of course the Minister is not entitled to refer to that.

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS**: Surely the principle in all borrowings and lendings is the acceptance by the borrower of the obligation to repay, and according to the ability or standing or integrity or any other qualification associated with the person, so is the money lent and the risk taken by the lender. Accordingly, so does the cost of money vary. It is obvious that many men with no security at all in the way of collateral find it necessary to borrow money. Many people in difficulties can, because of their personal standing, borrow money on their good name and on the realisation of the lender that the borrower will repay the money if it is at all humanly possible. That, then, is the lend-

er's security. On the other hand, because of the value of the personal covenant, because of the value of the integrity of the borrower, many other persons with a lot of assets find great difficulty in borrowing money with those assets as collateral security. So that this is a subject which can affect, I submit, very prejudicially the people whom the Leader of the Opposition desires to help.

I submit that the carrying of the motion would make for them very great difficulty in the obtaining of credit at current rates, or at rates that would be commensurate with their ability to repay the amount of the loan with interest. The second mortgages, because of the lesser value of his asset or collateral security, in the absence of the personal aspect charges more for the money he lends. I consider it very important to realise, as one hon. member in conversation about this subject this afternoon expressed it, the difference between the borrowing of money on personal security, and the method adopted by pawnbrokers. If we take the case of a pawnbroker, the pawnbroker will lend money quite irrespective of and without regard at all to the personal covenant or the value of the person. He will lend money on an article submitted, lend perhaps up to 30 per cent. of its value, and perhaps charge 30 per cent. interest, and more, for the accommodation. There remains with him the privilege of selling the pledge at the expiration of a period. He takes no responsibility, because there is no personal factor for him to give consideration to; and I think it would be a very sorry position indeed if in normal business transactions the importance of credit to any section of the community were brought down or depreciated by any efforts to remove from such mortgages the personal factor.

I regard the matter seriously because although the Leader of the Opposition has moved his motion in all good faith so far as I am concerned, at other times the subject has been dealt with by members of this House from a purely political standpoint, with a desire to embarrass, with a desire to make political capital out of any opposition to such a motion, or to a Bill which prescribes this procedure. That has been done. I would suggest that since it is highly necessary to have this matter impartially reviewed and examined, examina-

tion by competent people, able to inquire into it, is the proper manner in which to proceed. I would like to think of the possibility of a Select Committee being moved for by, say, the member for West Perth, who would have the able assistance of his associate King's Counsel in this very important matter, involving as it does legal aspects. Further, I think that if a Joint Select Committee of both Houses were obtained, we would get the proper angle on all the various aspects of this vexed problem.

I object strongly to this subject being hackneyed as it has been, even on the air this week, in a political manner; and it is quite wrong that part of this Parliament should have an opportunity—if it was not the desire of the Leader of the Opposition in moving this motion to infuse politics into it—to have such a subject as this misunderstood. I would go so far as to say on the political side—as against what has been said over the air during the last week—that, if the Opposition parties in this Chamber were on this side of the House, there would be no chance of such a motion as this being launched. With that in view, and with it being far from my desire to make any allegation in respect of the Leader of the Opposition concerning political sidelights on the subject, I think he will agree that this is a subject so involved that it should be thoroughly scrutinised. I therefore move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to the motion:—"Provided that the whole subject as affecting all mortgages be referred to a Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament before such legislation is framed."

MR. WATTS (Katanning—on amendment): I have no objection to the amendment. As a matter of fact, as the Minister said, there is perhaps something to be gained from an inquiry by a Select Committee; though why the Minister should desire it to be a Select Committee of both Houses somewhat passes my comprehension. I should have thought that a Minister of this House, with the Government holding the views it does in regard to another place and the desirability of maintaining the pre-eminence of the Legislative Assembly, would in circumstances such as these have contented himself with an amendment to refer the matter to a Select Committee of this House; in which case there would

have been no great divergence of opinion between the Minister and myself. As the atmosphere has been made by the Minister, as it were, somewhat full of suspicion as to my intentions—although directly he has absolved me from his insinuations, yet indirectly they have been made to apply to me—might I suggest that the same feeling of suspicion is in my mind as to the desire to incorporate in this amendment the word "joint" in regard to the proposed Select Committee.

If the views expressed by the Minister are anything more than lip service to the cause which Ministers have advocated in regard to another place, obviously—as the accusation made against the other place is that it is obstructionist—then the Government must desire obstruction in regard to this matter. I submit that I have interpreted very clearly the hon. gentleman's views in regard to the word "joint." However, as I observed at the beginning, I do not propose to offer any opposition to the proposals. If the matter receives examination at an early date, even by a joint Select Committee, something will have been achieved which would not be achieved by the defeat of the motion, which in all probability would be the fate attaching to it if I took opportunity strenuously to oppose the amendment. I take it that I am at liberty, seeing that the whole life and substance of the motion is involved in the amendment itself, to make some reference to the other observations of the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is entitled to go through the whole of the motion. He is entitled to deal only with the suggestion for a Select Committee.

MR. WATTS: Am I not at liberty to make reference to the political accusations?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member can show cause why the matter should or should not go to a Select Committee.

MR. WATTS: I can see no particular reason why it should not go to a Select Committee; though I would have preferred, and still prefer, that it should be a Select Committee of this House. Were the amendment before me in writing, I might be able to understand it better than I do at present, for I have heard no more than other members have heard of this amendment and I grasped only what I heard.

The Minister for Lands: I am prepared to let you romance. So far as I am con-

cerned, I am not wedded to a Select Committee of both Houses. You can have that part struck out if you like.

Mr. WATTS: I do not propose to move in that direction. I have no feelings in regard to the Legislative Council, such as I presume the Minister and his party have. If they have not such feelings, why the declaration we have heard in the last few weeks, to which, I presume, the hon. gentleman subscribes? What I want to say now that I have been given and seen the amendment is that it does not contain any guarantee that the matter will ever be referred to a Select Committee. This is an extremely cumbersome way of dealing with the matter. Is there no means whereby it could be referred to a Select Committee now as part of the motion? I ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point the hon. member is making?

Mr. WATTS: I wish to know whether the matter can be referred to a Select Committee now as part and parcel of the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: It has to be moved for.

Mr. WATTS: And it must be moved as a separate motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. WATTS: I am not going to move to strike out the words "of both Houses of Parliament" for the reasons I gave. A great deal of good might be done by such an inquiry and I will leave the matter where it is.

Amendment put and passed; the motion, as amended, agreed to.

MOTION—LICENSED PREMISES.

As to Closing on Cessation of Hostilities.

Debate resumed from the 27th September on the following motion by Mrs. Cardell-Oliver:—

That this House considers the Government should take steps to ensure the closing of all premises licensed for the sale of alcoholic liquor for a period of twenty-four hours immediately there is news that an armistice or any other arrangement is made putting an end to hostilities with Germany or Japan, or when either of them surrenders.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [4.59]: I had been hoping that the Premier would acquaint us with the decisions, if any, that were made at the conference in Canberra

in regard to matters allied to the subject-matter of this motion. From the information I can gather from the Press, which is necessarily flimsy in character, I understand that some arrangements, similar to what is suggested by the motion, are likely to be made by all the Governments in the circumstances outlined. I think that would be all to the good. If the Premier is in a position to make a statement to that effect then, of course, the reasons for moving the motion would not be so apparent, or so necessary, as when the motion was moved. It is all very well to argue that the existing laws in this State give authority for action of this kind. They do provide authority, but I think that authority is limited to a piece-meal regulation in circumstances where a riot is likely to develop. That is to say that the riot has to be in process of development before action can be taken. Then a J.P. has to be found. Taking all things into consideration the present state of affairs does not enable the authorities to take action on a partly State-wide basis if this emergency should arise.

I do not know whether the emergency will arise or not, but there is an old and well-tried saying that fore-warned is fore-armed. We should bear in mind the possibility of a situation arising which would require the enforcement of legislation contemplated by the motion. If this is to be on an Australia-wide basis, so much the better. I think we should be informed on that point. If nothing is to be done on an Australia-wide basis, then more careful consideration will have to be given to this motion, because the member for Subiaco has been quite reasonable in her suggestion. She has limited the period of closing to 24 hours, which seems to me to be a reasonable time after the news of an armistice is received. It is very hard to judge just what effect that news might have on the populace. The motion presumes—and we, too, must presume—that there may be a separate armistice or arrangement with Germany while we are still engaged in hostilities with Japan. In these circumstances, there would not be anything like the need for a regulation of this character as there would be if an armistice were declared with both Germany and Japan at the same time or, alternatively, an armistice with Japan bringing all hostilities to a complete end. So the question of what type of legislation should be introduced is

one that requires very careful consideration by the Government.

The Premier: A regulation.

Mr. WATTS: A regulation is legislation, after all. At the complete cessation of hostilities the enthusiasm of the public might get beyond control and a state of affairs arise that we cannot foresee. In such circumstances strong action would be necessary. On the contrary, with the closure of hostilities in Germany, and the public believing that we might still have a year or two of war ahead of us, no such action might be required at all. So we should not bring down a regulation which does not take these points into consideration. Nevertheless, I want to commend the member for Subiaco for bringing the matter under our notice. I wish to ensure that no unhappy circumstances will arise which we shall afterwards regret. I know that the National Security Regulations provide for liquor rationing and that in itself might be taken to be sufficient by some people. But I question whether that is so because there are still substantial quantities of liquor available, and it might be within the bounds of possibility that all the supplies available for a longer period than 24 hours might be consumed within that time with disastrous results. I am also led to understand that the members of the United Licensed Victuallers Association are impressed with the belief that there may be necessity for this type of legislation by regulation. Therefore such a regulation should be available in case the need for its enforcement arises. I think that every member here can support the motion, and leave the question of the type of legislation or regulation to be introduced to the further consideration of the House.

The Premier: There would not be time to do that.

Mr. WATTS: There would if it were done by regulation, because we could discuss the regulation if we thought it necessary. My idea is that we should not leave the preparation of a regulation until it looks as though an armistice is about to be declared. The regulation should be prepared beforehand so that there is no chance of being taken by surprise, which is an imminent possibility, especially in regard to the war in Europe. When we know what the proposals are we can criticise them as we wish. Action should be taken, if the motion is carried, to have the neces-

sary authority prepared at an early date so that it can be enforceable if and when the necessity arises. I feel inclined sometimes to hope, and indeed to think, that the need may not arise, but that is not the way to ensure a satisfactory outcome in matters of this nature. As I said, forewarned is forearmed. I therefore support the motion, but I hope that the Premier will advise us, more formally than we have yet been advised, of the exact intentions of the Commonwealth and State authorities throughout Australia, and if they have any such intention as mentioned in the Press, so that we may be in a position to judge if everything is being taken care of.

THE PREMIER: This matter was the subject of discussion, as the Minister for Works mentioned, while I was at Canberra. There was no great desire to give much publicity to it at this stage. It was thought that while the war was in progress and severe casualties were being sustained, the feelings of the relatives of many people who were suffering, would be harrowed if we were to discuss what might happen and what might be declared between the nations. We thought at one time that it would be a great thing and that the people would be overjoyed when we got Italy out of the war. We got Italy out of the war, officially, as a nation, but nothing happened. It was regarded just as one of the small steps on the road to victory. It may be that part of Germany may go out of the war as a result of the work of collaborationists, patriots and the many partisans in the war, such as took place in Yugoslavia and in Greece, and we would not know exactly where we were. It is difficult to forecast what will happen.

Then of course there is the matter of the time at which an armistice might be declared. It might be declared on a Saturday evening when all the hotels are shut. Most of the hotels in the metropolitan area close at 2 p.m. on Saturdays. We might get an armistice at 3 o'clock with the result that there would not be a hotel open until 10 o'clock on Monday morning. Would it be necessary to have a regulation to take the steps suggested in the motion, some 30 or 40 hours after? There is another aspect. In these days of bright journalism and the race between war correspondents, we might have news by a flash from some paper or other telling us that an armistice had been

declared. It might be two days later before we received official confirmation of that news. Therefore, would we be prepared to take action because the New York "Times," which sometimes seems to get advanced information, sent by a wireless flash around the world the news that an armistice had been declared? Or would we wait until the Governor-General, through the King, or the Prime Minister through the Prime Minister of Great Britain, gave us official notice before taking this action?

It might be that all sorts of rumours may be spread without any authentic foundation. It seemed some three or four weeks ago to many people that the war would be over within a week. Once the Germans made a dash across France to get away from the British, American and Canadian troops, it looked as though the war might be over in a few days. But the position has since altered. Very responsible people say that the mid-summer of 1945 will be reached before Germany can be overwhelmed. It is a matter of speculation, and of the morale of the people and the fighting spirit of the soldiers as to just when an armistice will be declared. There is much speculation and doubt as to what will occur, when it will occur, and what steps will be necessary. The general feeling at the Premier's Conference was that steps should be taken to get a regulation ready. We have done that for this State, so that if the necessity arises the regulation can be put into operation straight away. But there is still the other matter I mentioned, namely, whether we get official news or a rumour which will be sufficiently responsible for us to take notice of.

Mr. McLarty: You would not act on rumour; you would want official confirmation.

The PREMIER: That is so, but it might seem to most people to be authentic if a responsible paper like the New York "Times," the "Manchester Guardian," or the London "Times" said that an armistice was imminent. Then someone might go a step further and say it has occurred. Do we take notice of that?

Mr. Doney: We would only take notice of unmistakable official advice.

The PREMIER: Some of the population might act on that information and have their jollification by beer drinking, or con-

suming other intoxicating liquors, so that the necessity for what this motion envisages might be all over by the time we got official information, with the result that this legislation may not be required. It is rather an awkward question to deal with.

Mr. Doney: They would break out afresh then.

The PREMIER: The Leader of the Opposition said that perhaps all the stocks of beer, which are very limited, might be consumed by that time. It is not an easy question to deal with. The Prime Minister said that so far as he and the Commonwealth Government were concerned there would be no occasion for a holiday being proclaimed if only Germany went out of the war, because the task ahead of us would still be tremendously serious, and we would not want to waste time on jubilation and jollification when we had got only one enemy out of the war. If we get an official notification of a cessation of hostilities, and it appears that the issue of a proclamation or regulation which we are in a position to give effect to is warranted, the Government will unhesitatingly issue it immediately. If, on the other hand, there appears to be no necessity for such action, that aspect will be given consideration by the Government. The member for Nedlands spoke about the Licensing Act, and all that sort of thing; but there is a National Security Regulation empowering the Premier of the State to take any action considered necessary in the way of closing hotels. The Premier has the power, at an instant's notice, to issue a regulation, proclaim it and take immediate action such as may be in the public interest, or necessary for national security.

The Crown Law Department has been instructed to prepare a regulation so that immediately it becomes necessary for the Premier or, in his absence, the Acting Premier, to take action, a proclamation will be issued forthwith. We have to bear in mind that certain peculiarities or difficulties might arise. If an official notification reached us, say, in the morning, it would probably be found advisable to close hotels for at least that day. If the notification arrived late in the day, the next day might be considered more suitable for the closing of hotels. The proclamation could be broadcast over the air immediately, and I believe our people are sufficiently law-abiding, if a

proclamation were broadcast in this way, to observe it and raise no objection to it. The matter is well in hand and it will depend upon circumstances as to what action will be necessary. Consequently I consider the position is well safeguarded. It may happen that an armistice will be granted to some of the enemy nations only, and that a proclamation will not be necessary at all. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would like to consult with me regarding the effect of the regulation being prepared by the Solicitor General. The hon. member implied that perhaps the House should consider it and say whether it would be likely to fit all the circumstances that might exist at such a time.

Mr. Watts: I think you might show us a draft of the regulation. That is what I had in mind.

The PREMIER: I gave instructions a week or two ago for the regulation to be prepared. I presume that it has been drafted, and I will consult with the Leader of the Opposition to determine whether it meets all the circumstances. I do not want to table a regulation indicating that certain action will be taken when events might prove that such action is not at all necessary. If the official notification came through on Saturday evening, the hotels, as a matter of course, would be closed on Sunday, and it probably would be quite unnecessary to close them on Monday. The Commonwealth Government has indicated that it does not desire a public holiday to be observed until the war with Japan is brought to a conclusion, assuming that that will be the last of the enemy countries to be overcome. The general tenor of the motion has been agreed to, and that is about all that can be done at the moment. We have taken the necessary steps to have the regulation ready at a moment's notice, and will give effect to it as circumstances require.

MR. THORN (Toodyay): That the tabling of the motion was justified is shown by the fact that the Premiers' Conference considered it of sufficient importance to make it a subject for discussion.

The Premier: I put that item on the agenda.

Mr. THORN: The Premier indicated that, if the notification of the cessation of hostilities was received on Saturday night, there

would be a 24 hours' respite over the week-end. I think the main idea behind the motion is to permit of some time elapsing after receipt of the news so that the excitement may die down. The Premier mentioned that hostilities with Germany might cease, but that that would not be so important as a cessation of hostilities with all enemy countries. I point out, however, that Germany is the main aggressor.

The Minister for Mines: Not as regards this country at the moment.

Mr. THORN: Germany undoubtedly is the main aggressor and the strongest nation that is opposing the British Empire. When Germany seeks an armistice, there will be great excitement in the Old Country, and that excitement will be reflected in Australia as well. People will feel that their troubles with Germany are over, for the time being at any rate, and will be eager to celebrate the occasion.

The Premier: Even though a serious battle, like that which is in progress today, is still going on.

Mr. THORN: I will concede the Premier that much. When the Armistice came in 1918, the people of London absolutely ran riot. They took charge of buses and everything else; in fact, took charge of the whole city.

Mr. J. Hegney: Then this motion does not go far enough.

Mr. THORN: The hon. member may deal with that aspect of it. We ought to take some action. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that, if the hotels were not closed during the 24 hours following the signing of any armistice, there would be nothing to drink in Western Australia during the rest of the week. I have some idea of the quantities of liquor being rationed to the trade at the present time. The Premier has told us that hotels are often closed at 2 p.m., owing to stocks being exhausted.

Mr. Cross: People might then drink some of your wine.

Mr. THORN: I suppose some of them do. The supply of beer is strictly rationed, and a change from cool to hot weather is all that is needed to increase the demand and thus exhaust hotel stocks before closing time. I am glad to hear that a regulation has been, or is in process of being, prepared by the Crown Law Department. I venture the opinion that if the news were received

on Saturday night, there would be no need for the Premier to issue a regulation.

Mr. Cross: What happened in Perth when news came through of the 1918 Armistice?

Mr. THORN: I was abroad at the time, but I know what happened in London. The member for Canning need not think I am an alarmist in this matter. Very often, I consider, such celebrations are regarded too seriously. On this occasion, I believe that a respite of 24 hours would give the people time to calm down and become normal again. If the news were received on Saturday, I do not think the Premier would need to close the hotels on Monday. I commend the member for Subiaco for having introduced the motion.

MR. GRAHAM (East Perth): Even though the terms of the motion may be given effect to by the Governments of the several States—it is their particular responsibility—I wish to make it clear that all members on this side of the House, at any rate, do not support the motion. To my mind, the motion is an unmitigated insult to the people of this State.

Mr. Cross: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAHAM: It is all very well for some people to set themselves up as moralists, believing that everyone else is likely to offend against the law or against propriety and decency. I have far more confidence in the people's sense of decency than apparently is entertained by quite a number of members. It has been suggested that the relief that will be felt by the people when the war ends will lead them to indulge in all sorts of extraordinary excesses. We have been told that people took charge of the buses in 1918, turned them upside down, and did all sorts of things. As the member for Middle Swan interjected, if we have so little faith in the citizens of this State, we ought, to carry the matter to a logical conclusion, to close up everything and put everyone in a padded cell so that nobody will be capable of causing any bother at all.

Mr. Thorn: You are ridiculous. You are too young to know what happened in 1918.

Mr. GRAHAM: The latter observation is perfectly true; I cannot speak from personal experience of the magnitude of the demonstrations in 1918.

Hon. P. Collier: You are guilty of the crime of being a young man.

Mr. GRAHAM: From what I have read, however, I believe there is not the emotional stress or hysteria that there was on the previous occasion, either with regard to those leaving our shores or those returning. Similarly, I believe that when the war ends, people are not going to run riot.

Mr. Thorn: You cannot get within a mile of our men when they are leaving or returning.

Mr. GRAHAM: We must have regard to the situation with which we shall be confronted when the war ends. Our workers are scattered all over the State. The motion presupposes that as soon as the news is received, assuming that the first intimation is official, there will be a whole series of orgies, that the workers are going to down tools and hie to the nearest hostelry to make pigs of themselves.

Mr. Thorn: We did not mention the workers.

Mr. GRAHAM: The workers comprise the great majority of the people. Those who are not workers seem to have ways and means of stocking their refrigerators or in other ways making provision for themselves without having to patronise the hotels. Therefore they would not be affected by the closing of licensed premises for 24 hours.

Mr. Thorn: Speak for yourself.

Mr. GRAHAM: I believe that when news is received of the cessation of hostilities, the workers generally will pursue their normal trades and avocations pausing to discuss the news with their fellow-workers perhaps for a moment, but no more. Surely no member can, in his wildest flight of imagination, conceive that there would be this tremendous flow of thousands of people to the nearest hotels. Speaking for myself, I refuse to believe that that would be the general trend or tendency on the part of the public at large. I am in accord with what some other members have stated, that even if there were this disposition on the part of a reasonable number of people, it would only be a matter of minutes before the hotels would have disposed of their quota of liquor for the day. The problem would in that way solve itself. Those, briefly, are my comments on the motion. I conclude by stating that I refuse to believe every other person in the community is a potential sinner and that it is our bounden duty so to hedge and hem in

the other citizens as to rob them of their normal civilian rights. I felt I could not cast a silent vote on the motion.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: This matter, in my opinion, should be left in the hands of the Premier, or of his Deputy should he happen to be out of the State when the armistice is declared. Unlike some members who have spoken, I have vivid recollections of the last Armistice Day.

Mr. Thorn: In Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. I arrived back a few weeks before the armistice was declared. I recall very well being in the Terrace at 11 o'clock in the morning; in fact, I was there practically all day. There were platforms here and there in the Terrace that had been used for recruiting, and the late Sir William Lathlain was talking nearly all day. Everyone was on the tiptoe of expectation, waiting for the word to come through.

The Premier: Did you have any drinks?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not have drinks at any time. That did not affect me. In fact, I do not remember seeing a drunkard in the city.

Member: Not even a dog fight?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I went home, had tea and came back. I remember that Sir William Lathlain could not speak above a whisper; he could not even say, "Three cheers for Montenegro." Many people were on the Terrace during the day; and when I got within 50 yards of the gate of my own house at Leederville it was 11 o'clock and the gun was fired to signify that the armistice had been declared. We had been waiting from 11 in the morning until 11 at night.

Hon. N. Keenan: Did you not know before then?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We were told that a gun would be fired when the armistice was officially declared; and the gun was fired in Perth at 11 o'clock that night. As I say, I was within 50 yards of my own house when the gun was fired. My wife got out of bed, so wildly excited was she. I do not think there will be any wild excitement on this occasion. People are war-weary, and there is more likely to be a sigh of relief when the armistice is declared. I have no fears of what will happen. Probably there will be all sorts of

rumours for at least 12 hours before the armistice is officially declared. As I said, I think the matter can well be left in the hands of the Premier or his Deputy; either will see that the right thing is done. I would not be surprised if the armistice were again declared on the 11th November.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan): I incline to the view of the member for East Perth, who stated the position clearly. There is no doubt that the motion is aimed chiefly at the workers, because they are by far the greater part of the population. Personally, I have every confidence in the ability of the Premier to do the right and proper thing when news of the armistice comes through. The Premiers' Conference, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, gave every consideration to the subject-matter of this motion. I consider the motion is unnecessary. I move an amendment—

That the words "considers the Government should take steps to ensure the closing of all premises licensed for the sale of alcoholic liquor for a period of twenty-four hours immediately" be struck out, with a view to inserting the words "has every confidence in the ability and commonsense of the Government to do all things necessary to maintain law and order" in lieu.

The motion will then read—

That this House has every confidence in the ability and commonsense of the Government to do all things necessary to maintain law and order when there is news, etc.

The Premier has already indicated what he proposes should be done, and I, for one, as a supporter of the Government, have, as I think every other member of the House has, every confidence in the Premier. He is a man of commonsense and reason and has had much experience. He will, as Leader of the Government, do the right and proper thing when the time arrives. The motion asks that hotels shall be closed for a period of 24 hours immediately there is news that an armistice is declared; but the motion would not prevent persons who are able to store liquor in their homes from having a drink. It would, however, prevent the worker from having a glass of ale if he felt like it. The worker has no refrigerator in which to store liquor, but numerous other people have that facility and the motion does not deal with them.

Mr. Berry: How are persons going to lay in a stock of liquor? You are talking nonsense.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: As a matter of fact, they have liquor stored up.

Mr. Berry: Nonsense!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: And those persons replenish their stocks from time to time. It is all very well for the member for Irwin-Moore to say, "Nonsense." He may not have a refrigerator; there might not be one at Safety Bay. All members are aware that numbers of people own refrigerators and can secure a stock of liquor by dealing with holders of gallon licenses. They have the liquor sent direct to their homes.

MR. CROSS (Canning—on amendment):

I do not know how many members have considered this motion in the light of the conditions that prevailed when the last armistice was declared. I doubt whether the conditions will be similar when this war ends. I was in Perth on the occasion of the last armistice. I was on night duty on the trams; I started at about half past eight in the morning and worked through till midnight. The people were terrifically excited. More and more people came into Perth and stayed in the streets, but there was not the least sign of drunkenness. It must be remembered, too, that at that time the hotels remained open until 9 o'clock at night and had unlimited supplies of liquor. Now the hotels close at six o'clock and have exceedingly limited supplies of liquor; they would run dry in no time. Suppose news of the armistice arrived at 10 o'clock in the morning and was made known to the public at a quarter past 10, the workers would be at work and the hotels would be closed until 10.15 o'clock the following morning. That would be too silly for words; it would be an insult to the workers of the State. When this war is over, people will be only too glad to be rid of the whole business once and for all. The time when it is advisable to close the hotels is when a big convoy arrives. The hotels were not closed on the occasion of the armistice in 1918; but when big convoys arrived the hotels were invariably closed. I support the amendment.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco—on amendment): I oppose the amendment. When the member for Middle Swan moved it, he said he was prepared to accept what

the Premier had told the House. I, too, was prepared to fall in with the Premier's views without any further discussion, because I, like other members, have confidence in him. He said he would frame regulations and was willing to consult with the Leader of the Opposition as to what it would be advisable to do. I think the members who have just spoken are fairly young, with one exception.

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I was old enough to take notice of the previous armistice. My son would probably be a little younger than the member for East Perth, and I dare say the hon. member must have seen something of that armistice. In many places in the British Empire there were on that occasion disgraceful scenes, and we do not want a recurrence of them. People's emotions are stirred to a much greater degree on such occasions than they are in ordinary times. Even a person who is not a drinker—even a teetotaler—may do very stupid things on the occasion of an armistice. I feel that the amendment, if passed, would make the motion undignified and stupid. I trust, therefore, the motion will be passed in its present form, as I am prepared to accept the assurances given to the House by the Premier.

MR. LESLIE (Mt. Marshall—on amendment): The amendment places me in rather an awkward position. My belief is that the Government will be able to manage the position quite satisfactorily when it does arise. The amendment certainly indicates complete confidence in the Government to do what is necessary.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question before the House is the striking out of certain words.

Mr. LESLIE: I, too, believe that the Government can handle the position when it arises. But when the Armistice does come it may be that people's minds will have changed from what they are today. If the Armistice were signed within the next few days possibly the occasion would go off like a damp squib in Australia, because at present there is no military activity that is firing the imagination of the people of this country. The picture would be entirely different if our troops at the time of the Armistice were engaged in a life and death struggle, at grips with the

enemy and their victories were firing the imagination of the people, while lists of casualties had appeared only a little while before, in which circumstances the minds of the people would almost certainly be attuned in a different way.

It may indeed be necessary for the Government, according to the situation as it finds it, to take some action which might seem impertinent so far as the workers are concerned—as the member for East Perth submits—and savour of depriving them of their liberty. If we agree to the motion we shall be placing the Government in the position that if the action it takes is of a drastic nature, as has been suggested, at least it will be able to say that such action was taken with the concurrence of the representatives of the people in this Chamber. It would then not be within our right to say afterwards, whether the Government jumped over the fence or sat on one side of it, it did the wrong thing. In any event, I am confident that the Government will be able to handle the position that will arise. It will be obliged to do so otherwise there may be trouble. The action taken may be drastic or it may not be. I do not suggest to the Government that it must necessarily take a certain course of action—

MR. DONEY: The Premier has indicated what the Government would do.

MR. LESLIE: Even if it had the position in hand. By carrying the motion as it is now worded we shall be giving moral support to the Government to take what action it thinks advisable in the circumstances that arise.

MR. WATTS (Katanning—on amendment): From the wording of the proposed amendment one could assume that the motion itself expressed a lack of confidence in the Government to do what was desirable in the circumstances. There is nothing in the motion to indicate such a thing in any way. If it had been intended to move a motion of want of confidence in the Government on a question of this kind I can assure it that the motion would have been worded in quite a different manner. The mover of the amendment simply asks the House to record a motion of confidence in the Government. That point, however, does not enter into the question at all. I was quite satisfied with the observations of the Premier to the effect that he was pre-

pared to take action along the lines suggested by the member for Subiaco. The Premier has a right to assume that he has the full support of the House in his point of view, now that he has put it up. After the assurance he has given the sole purpose in carrying the motion will be to make it clear that he has the backing of the representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly.

Amendment (to strike out words) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	21
Noes	14
Majority for				7

AYES.

Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Needham
Mr. Cross	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Fox	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Graham	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Telfer
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Triat
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Leahy	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Berry	Mr. North
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Doney	Mr. Seward
Mr. Hill	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Watts
Mr. Mann	Mr. Willmott
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Thorn

(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan): I move—

That the words proposed to be inserted be inserted.

Amendment (to insert words) put and passed.

Question put and passed; the motion, as amended, agreed to.

MOTION—STATE-WIDE POST-WAR WORKS.

As to Government Planes for Official Inspections.

Debate resumed from the 18th October on the following motion by Mr. North—

This House realises that it cannot adequately handle the various problems which arise in the 1,000,000 square miles of our Western Australian territory unless the most modern transport facilities are utilised. It therefore advocates that the Government should acquire some well-found transport planes to enable Ministers, members of Parliament, and particularly engineers of the P.W.D., etc., to cover all parts

of the State including the Kimberleys, wherever much Federal money will have to be spent after the war in large engineering projects.

to which an amendment had been moved by the Minister for Works as follows—

That all the words after "Kimberleys" in line 10 be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [5.55]: The motion moved by the member for Claremont apparently contemplates a substantial effort being made to develop the North-West areas of the State in a manner far more active than has been evidenced in the past. Although I understand the motion to have that meaning, and although it contains some references which do not appear to me to be entirely applicable to the subject-matter of it, I am quite willing to support it. I feel that references in the motion to the acquisition of transport planes to enable Ministers, members of Parliament, and engineers to cover all parts of the State may not serve the purpose the hon. member desires to achieve. It is possible to cover a lot of ground by aeroplane, and to take many photographs, under the modern methods being used, that are all perfectly clear. That, however, is not the kind of research work that is required to ensure the development of an area so vast as is the North-West of this State. It will be necessary to examine the area a little more closely than it will be possible to do from an aeroplane. Doubtless if members of Parliament were to make such a journey, they would be enabled to land from time to time and make an exploration of the surrounding country after landing. The motion could well be made to cover more ground than it now covers in its present form. The member for Claremont, for instance, did not specify with regard to the North-West areas of the State those problems which might receive substantial consideration with a view to the development not only of that area, but also indirectly the remainder of Western Australia.

The Minister for Justice: I think he intended to refer to the whole State.

Mr. WATTS: I think the time has arrived for the House to give very careful consideration to some substantive proposals for the development of the North-West areas of the State. We hear from time to time of the efforts which have been made in that part

to strike oil. So far the results of that endeavour have been disappointing. I believe a great deal of money has been spent by the company concerned in the search, but that has not resulted in any achievement so far as the discovery of oil is concerned. It may or may not be that oil is in that particular district. We know how costly it is to conduct a search for oil, to obtain the necessary modern machinery and the services of men qualified to use it, and fully to investigate the question in an area so vast as are our northern areas. Such expenditure is very great indeed, and it takes a considerable time before one can assure one's self whether oil is there or not. There are many instances in other countries of areas which have been explored over a long period and found to give negligible results, but subsequently when some new device or scientific process has been employed oil in payable quantities has been discovered and it has been recovered and made use of to the common benefit. There is, I have no doubt, ample room for that kind of investigation to go on in the North-West.

I hope that enterprise, whether co-operative or State or private, will be found willing in the post-war period to go in for considerably more of that type of investigation. There would be nothing, I suppose, that would be more likely to improve the prospects of the development of the vast areas of our northern territories than the discovery of flow oil in payable quantities. Then we had the privilege once upon a time of hearing the member for Canning with regard to proposals that were in his mind as to the development of another portion of our north-western areas, which were the subject of considerable comment in this House many years ago. I refer to the Yampi Sound iron-ore deposits. Here again there is ample room for investigation and, indeed, for action. In that instance, too, the development that would follow the successful exploitation of the reserves of iron-ore, granted to us by Mother Nature but hitherto not made use of by us, would be very great and we would all profit, directly or indirectly, by what was achieved in that direction. So it is quite fair to say, as the motion sets out, that there are a great number of problems in the North-West and throughout the State generally, which up to date have not been adequately handled.

I submit, however, there are problems other than those that have been referred to so far, that if given attention would contribute substantially to the development of the country, to an increase in our population and to the general betterment of conditions in Western Australia. I am convinced that the possibilities of the areas in the north-west of this State are very great, quite apart from those to which I and other members of this House have in past times made reference. I think there is a distinct possibility that agriculture of tropical and semi-tropical varieties could be developed in those areas if the right precautions were taken, as they should be, and the necessary money expended on certain works of a national character. I feel that in this State where we have much territory in the South-West available for safe settlement, successive Governments have found it not only advisable but necessary to concentrate their finance and energy in the South-West. I think, too, that while development must go on in that part of this State, the time has come when we must concentrate more on other portions of Western Australia. Our North-West seems to me, from such inquiries as I have made and from such reading as I have been able to do, to be open to a great deal of effort that would pay dividends.

I remark at this juncture that I have not so far had the opportunity—I hope to have it before very long, when the war period is over—to travel in the north-western areas of the State beyond Carnarvon, and it is many years since I made a journey to that centre. What I am about to say, it will be quite clear to members, has not been derived from personal knowledge of or experience gained in that part of the State, but has been supplied to me by persons well qualified by knowledge and experience to express an opinion as to the possibilities of the matters to which I propose to refer. I think that if we fail in the time to come to develop that area, we shall find we shall not have an inheritance even in the South-West. Surely the war has given us a very striking example of the position in which we might have found ourselves because of the vast undeveloped areas of this continent. I have some appreciation of the difficulties that exist. I know it is not an easy matter to settle any large population in the northern

areas of Western Australia. I appreciate that there is much hard work ahead of anyone who seeks to populate that part of Western Australia by means of pioneering development. At the same time we have been in possession of that portion of the State for something like 115 years.

We have enjoyed Responsible Government for 54 years. Notwithstanding this, we have not a great deal to show as the result of the effort we, as a people, have made during that period. As a matter of fact, we have little more to show there than is to be seen in the Northern Territory, which is an area somewhat similarly situated to our northern parts, and we have nothing to congratulate ourselves upon with regard to the development of the North-West of this State. From time to time we have had very substantial sheep populations scattered over great areas. In the Kimberleys we have developed, to some extent, a number of cattle stations, and there was established at Wyndham the State Meatworks as a consequence. All these achievements are only, as it were, drops in the bucket in comparison with what could be done, and would be done, in many other countries of the world possessing areas no more attractive than are to be found in the North-West of this State.

Mr. North: And it has a good rainfall, too.

Mr. WATTS: Yes, as I shall mention in a few minutes. I submit that what has been done in certain areas of South America and the much greater development that has taken place in the Kenya Colony in South Africa, which areas are no better situated than is our North-West, lend support to my assertion that the people of Western Australia as a whole for at least 54 years during which they have enjoyed responsible self-government, have neglected to take advantage of the very substantial birthright that they possess and which we should have made much of during the intervening years. There is always very substantial talk of the work to be done in the post-war period. We hear from time to time of the development that will take place as the result of Commonwealth and State co-operation. We do not, however, hear of any very definite proposals that have been made with regard to the contemplated works. I am afraid they are more or less proposals of a nebulous character. I remember reading in the Press a few

weeks ago some observations made by a worthy citizen of this State to the effect that we should contemplate handing over to the Commonwealth the North-West of this State, or, at any rate, that portion north of the 26th parallel of latitude. In my opinion, we would forfeit our rights, or a great part of them, to the privileges of self-government if we adopted that line of action. There would, in my opinion, be no justification for such an action.

On the other hand, there is very substantial justification for asking the Commonwealth Government to assist us, particularly with financial aid, in regard to the development of the North-West. I say that because the North-West constitutes one of the problems of importance in connection with Australian national defence and therefore must assume a very high priority. The establishment of a reasonably large population in that part of the State north of a line drawn through Carnarvon is essential. If we do not very shortly take action of our own volition, we shall tend to justify such observations as were made by the person I mentioned. I do not want that stage to be reached. If we were to part with our heritage in the North-West we would simply become an even more insignificant element and would lose the opportunity to defend our future right to prosperity.

We have a great task before us, one that, if undertaken successfully, will bring increased prosperity to Western Australia, and make us more comparable to those other States that we are prepared today to designate the richer States of the Commonwealth, whereas they are not richer States than Western Australia, taking into consideration the latent wealth that exists here and which, if developed by means of certain national undertakings, must spell a tremendous advance for the State. A great proportion of that wealth is to be found in the tropical and sub-tropical areas of the North-West. If we extend private development to those areas there is no doubt in my mind that there will be a greater field for secondary industries than there could possibly be at the present juncture. Proximity to population makes the resources of a country more easily available and easier to develop and handle because transport and other facilities are provided in their vicinity. In consequence, the develop-

ment of secondary industrial resources is influenced by reason of the fact that food supplies and all other requirements for human beings are readily available to those in need of them. That is one of the greatest difficulties with regard to the North-West at present. It is, if I understand the position aright, the supply of proper food and necessaries to the people of that area, that constitutes a major problem. I know those difficulties have been greatly accentuated by the war, but why is that?

It is because the supplies that are required are situated a long way from where they are needed. In consequence, while we in the southern end of the State are able, as it were, to put out our hands and grasp all we want, the necessaries of life required by the people up north have to be transported over great distances. Because of that, the transport difficulties and the losses experienced en route make it impossible for them to secure what they require. Had the people there been closer to the settled areas and greater effort had been made to develop the primary industries in those northern parts, then, of course, they would not now have the slightest difficulty in obtaining their supplies in just the same way as, for instance, we in the metropolitan area can obtain butter supplies from the South-West. So it is that the motion refers to the necessity for the development and progress of the North-West of the State which at present has imposed upon it restrictions regarding food supplies and ordinary amenities which human beings in these days look forward to, and to which the people in that part of the State are deserving of, in the fullest measure, at the earliest opportunity.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. WATTS: Before the tea adjournment I was referring to the difficulties that had taken place in the northern areas of the State by reason of lack of supplies for human consumption. These supplies are not available in any quantity at all in the northern areas. Further, I was expressing the opinion that every effort should be made to clear up that state of affairs which will exist, whether in peace or in war, under present circumstances, because of the vital necessity for populating, as far as we are able, the areas of the northern part of Western Australia. We should proceed to

do so as early as possible, because the task has already been far too long delayed. I admit it is not a question of improving the North for the benefit of those already there. They would, of course, naturally receive their portion of the improvements made. Their surroundings would be entirely changed, and changed for the better. It is, I think, a question of adding to the assets of the State or perhaps rather of making use of an asset which to a great extent has been ignored.

I believe most members will agree that the greater part of the soil of the huge area of the North-West Division is fertile, and could be made to grow a great many things that are required and desirable for human consumption, were there water to be obtained for that purpose. Much of the country is comparatively flat; little of it is mountainous, and a great deal of it is undulating so that there are, from these aspects, few undesirable features in that great stretch of country. The principal rivers of those areas, I have been informed, are the De Grey, the Fitzroy, the Ashburton, the Gascoyne and the Murchison. There is also, of course, the Kimberley area. I think that while different points of view apply to the Kimberleys—in fact, I am convinced that water conservation by the method most desirable for that area by embankment of gorges and other similar areas is now under consideration—we should be in favour of any action that can be taken in that regard at the earliest possible moment. Be that as it may, the rivers to which I desire to refer are those I have just mentioned. Some of those rivers are upwards of 400 miles long, and they flow into an area of Western Australia which is approximately 700 miles by 300 miles, and therefore covers something like 200,000 square miles of this State.

In my opinion there is little question that if parts of this area could be given adequate water supplies, there would be no doubt whatever as to their fertility. I do not want anyone to get the idea that I am suggesting the erection of huge, costly dams, or that my view is that water should be carried from such dams by tremendous pipe-lines such as we have, to the great benefit of the State, in the Eastern Goldfields water supply scheme. I am informed that there are not on the rivers I

have named any suitable formations which would allow these great dams to be built. Such formations do not exist so far as the physical conformation or natural advantages of the country go. Sometimes it has been said that the rainfall over portion of the areas is too low, and then up comes the question as to how to solve the problem and so bring this immense area into somewhat greater productiveness than it is now capable of. When a big and costly dam is built up a river near its headwaters, the only rainfall conserved is that which falls over the catchment area; but that which falls along the river and its tributaries is in the main lost. Therefore, taking into consideration all the facts I have mentioned, the waters of those rivers cannot be conserved by big dams built upstream or near the headwaters.

The question arises, can the water be conserved by building barrages along the length of each of those rivers and of any of the tributary streams they may possess? If that can be accomplished, the whole of the rainfall can be conserved in the beds of the streams from the headwaters to the sea. Now, what is the amount of rainfall over the whole of the country to which I have been referring? It is recorded, I understand, as varying from 10 to 20 inches annually. Taking it on that basis, it is as substantial in many parts as it is in large areas of the southern division of the State. A further question is whether all the records that have been kept as to average rainfall are entirely satisfactory. I am inclined to the view, from all I can understand, that there are very heavy rainfalls in that semi-tropical climate in places where no records can be kept; but those rainfalls eventually find their way into the watercourses. Supposing for a moment, however, that we can expect the rainfalls which are given, would this system conserve almost the whole of the 10 to 20 inches of rainfall, as the case may be, over this area? So far as I can gather, it would do so; and that is the main reason why I have taken the trouble to bring this matter up this evening, in the expectation that complete investigations will be made into the subject, and that information will be furnished to the House at the earliest possible opportunity.

The motion moved by the member for Claremont appears to me to offer a suitable

opportunity for a contribution on the question which I put forward in all good faith. I have explained that I do not know the country personally. I have not yet had an opportunity to visit it. As regards the rainfall, I still doubt whether the records are by any means complete, in view of the scattered and exceptionally heavy rainfalls in various parts of the area from time to time. However, even if the records kept are complete, there is still much very heavy rainfall that is not caught, and the net result of it is to flood the rivers periodically, the water simply going down to the ocean. I contend it is high time that we gave consideration to any proposal that is of any practical nature for making use of that water rather than letting it go to freshen the waters of the Indian Ocean, in which almost all of it is lost. I have been encouraged in the belief that the flow of rain is greater over all the areas of the watershed than has been estimated; but even if it is not, then we still have to consider the question of making use of the very vast quantities of water which go down these rivers merely to the sea, where they are entirely lost. I would like to say that I have had some information given to me in regard to similar investigations as to water catchments in other areas of Australia. I will read one or two that I have here. My first is as follows:—

After a most extensive investigation over many years, it was estimated that the average daily rainfall over the Burrenjack catchment area was .6in., giving a spillway over-flow at 80,000 cusecs.

Later this had to be revised, putting the average rainfall at 1.7in. and the spillway at 230,000 cusecs.

After the 1925 flood, estimates had again to be jumped first to 2.5in. average rainfall, with spillway over-flow at 340,000 cusecs; and again revised to 3.44in. rainfall and spillway at 465,000 cusecs.

Similarly with the Hume dam. Based on the 1917 flood in the Murray, estimates had to be jumped to .55in. average daily rainfall, with 90,000 cusecs at spillway. But after the 1925 flood in the Murrumbidgee, these estimates had again to be jumped, this time by 100 per cent.—to 1.2in. average rainfall—and spillway at 182,000.

It seems to me that those facts from other parts of the continent must be taken into consideration. I have already said that rainfall can be conserved by great big dams high up the stream near the headwaters of the river, or, of course, by excavating earth dams such as we make in the southern

areas of the State for farming purposes—a most unsatisfactory method of conserving water, for reasons that will be quite apparent to members without my mentioning any of them. It might also be done by barraging a flow of water so as to bring about the flooding of areas in a way which approaches natural flooding, although controlled by man. Flooding the fertile soil would of itself, to a great extent, conserve the moisture. In such circumstances water is much better conserved than where it is exposed to the sun, when conservation is necessarily minimised. There is no question that an investigation should be conducted into a proposal of this character. The barrage method is much simpler and cheaper than the building of great conservatories at the headwaters of a river. It has been put into practice in other countries with success and can be put into practice here.

We should deserve to lose the North-Western area of our State unless we are prepared to tackle some such proposition as this, difficult though it may be, in order to make use of those fertile areas to the best of our ability. It can be argued, of course, that the production of such areas would not warrant the expense. I have already said that it would be of immense service to such projects as have been discussed on occasions in this House regarding the development of mineral resources. It would also assist to put an end to the need for transport over huge distances and would conserve supplies to the citizens in those areas, who should increase until they reach substantial numbers. Are those areas not suitable to the production of cotton? That is a tropical plant and, given water, there is no reason why it cannot be grown. If it did no more than supply the demands of Western Australia for an increased population, it would at least have served some useful purpose. Already bananas are growing in the Gascoyne, but we know how seriously the efforts of the settlers have been hampered by water difficulties.

I am convinced those difficulties could be overcome and the production of that delicious fruit very substantially increased and improved in quality and that the worries of the settlers could be greatly removed if they were assured of a better water supply when required. On the Darling River in New South Wales, where the

climatic conditions somewhat resemble those of the area I am now discussing, sorghum and maize have been grown with tremendous success. In fact, maize has reached a height of nine feet. Is it to be said that the north-western portion of this State is incapable of doing the same thing? I believe and hope that is not so. I have no doubt there are certain varieties of tropical tobacco that could be grown successfully in those areas, and I do not doubt that some effort could be made at afforestation and growth of timber suitable for use in those areas and also in the production of coffee. I have touched on what I believe to be only the fringe of things that could be done. Let us think—if the development of the North-West continues, as I believe it is capable of continuing—of the impetus to trade. Think of the consequent development that would take place in the southern areas of the State. Cement, timber, machinery, transport and many other things would be required and could be readily supplied—producing full and satisfactory employment for our people, conserving the State's assets and providing us with an everlasting tribute to the foresight and energies of those who brought such proposals to fruition!

Mr. North: Mutual benefit!

Mr. WATTS: Yes. A mutual benefit society so far as Western Australia is concerned, without question; and, in fact, a mutual benefit society so far as the whole of the Commonwealth is concerned; because we would never have faced the difficulties we did in 1942 had we had some reasonable development and population in this great country to the north of us. I think, therefore it is desirable that I should ask the House to agree to an amendment to this motion, in order that this matter should not be lost sight of. I do not intend to trespass on the terms of other motions moved in the House but propose to confine myself to the matters to which I have made specific reference in the last few minutes, bearing in mind at the same time that the development I suggest could not but be advantageous to any form of development or exploitation of resources that might take place in that area of the country. I move an amendment—

That the following words be added: "paying particular attention to the need for and the possibilities of water conserva-

tion and the utilisation of the rivers of the north-west of this State and the development of tropical and semi-tropical agriculture."

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

MOTION—HEAVY INDUSTRY.

To Inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 18th October on the following motion by Mr. Cross:—

That in the opinion of this House, a Royal Commission, consisting of five persons, should be appointed to make a full investigation into and report upon the following matters:—

- (1) The establishment of heavy industry in Western Australia, by the smelting of Koolan Island iron ore on a commercial basis.
- (2) The construction of rolling mills for the manufacture of steel.
- (3) The probable and possible market, both in Australia and oversea for the disposal of the manufactured iron or steel.
- (4) The possible profitable disposal of a limited quantity of iron ore to European or other markets.
- (5) The possibilities of financing the launching and the successful establishment of all activities involved in the inauguration of the smelting of iron and manufacture of steel for the profit and benefit of the people of Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS [7.52]:

I am sure that every member who had the opportunity to listen to the speech made by the member for Canning in connection with this motion was interested in the amount of information of a more or less general character which he placed before the House. The speech indicated a good deal of research and investigation, and contained a considerable amount of information appropriate to the motion and in support of it. The motion asks for the appointment of a Royal Commission of five members to carry out investigations on five different points. The first point is the possibility of establishing in Western Australia a heavy industry based upon iron-ore to be obtained from Koolan Island in the North-West of the State. The second point has to do with the construction of rolling mills for the manufacture of steel products. The third point has relationship to the carrying out of inquiries in Australia and oversea concerning the disposal of manufactured

iron and steel products. The fourth point is concerned with the disposal of raw or unprocessed iron-ore in countries overseas. The fifth and final point has to do with the possibility of establishing an industry of this State for the smelting of iron-ore and the manufacture of steel products.

To anyone who might have heard the speech of the hon. member or who might have read it since its delivery, there would come the idea that the proposals contained in the motion are new and that nothing has been done in this State in the past along any of the lines set out in the motion for an inquiry. It, therefore, becomes advisable and necessary for the effort of a particular nature put forward by the Government in these matters during the last three or four years to be explained to the House in some detail. In 1939, to some extent, and in 1940, to a much greater extent, the Government gave serious consideration to the possibility of building up, on the appropriate raw materials available in this State, an industry for the manufacture of pig-iron and steel and other products. In January, 1941, the Government appointed an iron and steel panel for the purpose of thoroughly investigating the possibility of establishing such industrial activities upon a solid foundation. The personnel of the panel was Professor Bayliss and Messrs. Fernie, Bowley, Tomlinson, Foreman, Mills, Wilson and Gregson. All of those names will be familiar to most members and I think it will be agreed now, as it was agreed at the time the panel was appointed, that the personnel was about the best that could be recruited for the purpose of carrying out the necessary inquiries and also of presenting to the Government, in due time, a report and recommendations as to the best lines that could be followed in Western Australia to develop the iron and steel industry.

This panel set to work and continued its inquiries and investigations for a period of approximately 18 months. During that time, individual members of the panel visited the Eastern States and conferred with acknowledged experts in the iron and steel industry of the Commonwealth. They obtained from those experts a great deal of information and advice of a technical nature. Finally, as a result of the inquiries and investigations carried out, and as a result of consultations held with ex-

perts in the industry in the other States of Australia, the panel submitted its report and recommendations to the Government. The main proposal of the panel was for the establishment in the South-West of our State of a charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry of considerable proportions. The panel strongly recommended that any effort made in this State to establish the iron and steel industry should be linked with a wood distillation industry and that the constituents obtained from the timber, in the process of converting timber into charcoal, should be made available in a commercial way so that revenue could be obtained from those products. The two main by-products of wood distillation are acetic acid and wood naphtha, both of which products are in demand in Australia and, of course, have been very much in demand, especially acetic acid, because of war conditions.

The panel pointed out that by establishing with the iron and steel industry a wood distillation industry, the State would have two direct and substantial sources of income as against only one if the industry were to be established upon the basis of coal and not that of wood distillation and charcoal. The proposals of the panel in connection with this joint industry were that sufficient iron-ore should be treated each year to enable 100,000 tons of high-grade charcoal pig-iron to be produced annually. In addition there would be produced from the wood distillation side of the industry, approximately 5,000 tons of acetic acid, and 1,100,000 gallons of wood naphtha or wood alcohol. The estimated capital cost of establishing this joint industry, upon the basis proposed for the South-West, is £1,000,000 with an estimated amount of working capital of £250,000, making the total amount required £1,250,000. The estimated value of the annual production is approximately £1,000,000 and the estimated cost of making that production available is £700,000. I want to mention at this stage that charcoal pig-iron is of higher quality than pig-iron produced from coking coal. That is because pig-iron produced from charcoal, as a fuel, is greater in strength and has a finer grained structure than pig-iron produced from coking coal.

Mr. North: It has not been produced elsewhere in Australia, has it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Because of this, higher quality charcoal pig-iron always commands a premium of about £1 per ton over ordinary pig-iron. It is true, as suggested by the member for Claremont, that charcoal pig-iron has never yet been produced in Australia, but it has in several other countries of the world, including America, Sweden, India and, I think, Russia.

Mr. Cross: They have stopped producing it in America.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is true that the production of charcoal pig-iron in America has been reduced in recent years, but the only reason is that the supplies of necessary timber are not available as they were in the years gone by.

Mr. Cross: They find it cheaper to smelt with coal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They find it cheaper to smelt with coal because great supplies of coal are available and great supplies of timber are not available. The position in Western Australia, of course, is exactly opposite to that. It is not, therefore, appropriate to try to compare conditions in this country, with regard to the establishment of charcoal-iron, with those in America. As a matter of fact, as all members know, we in Western Australia have great quantities of timber but no coking coal whatsoever so far as our information goes at present. If we were to proceed on the basis of trying to establish an iron industry using coal as a fuel we would have to import coal from Newcastle, and a move of that description would utterly wreck any attempt to establish the iron and steel industry within the boundaries of Western Australia.

Mr. Cross: Could not we do the smelting with gas from Collie coal?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Canning, somewhat nervously, asks me from behind my back if we could not smelt our iron-ore using as a fuel industrial gas produced from Collie coal. I am not able to answer Yes or No, to that question.

Mr. Cross: Mr. Fox said he could.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Fox did not say that.

Mr. Cross: He said so to me anyway.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What I think Mr. Fox would be prepared to say is

that he is confident that he can, in time, use Collie coal as a fuel for the purpose of smelting iron-ore into pig-iron. But I am sure that Mr. Fox would not say that he could reach that stage this month, this year or next year, because a great deal of investigation and experimentation would have to be carried out before he could say with any degree of certainty that that could be done, and certainly before he could say with assurance that it could be done economically. After all, the great test about these things is not so much whether we can, in a physical sense do them, but whether we can in a physical sense, do them on an economic basis. That is the final and deciding factor. It might well be that as a result of investigations and experiments to be carried out in connection with Collie coal, a stage will be reached in the years to come where it will be possible to demonstrate that Collie coal can economically be used as a fuel for smelting iron-ore into pig-iron. However, that lies in the future; it is something that has yet to be established.

I am in a position to inform the House that the Government has agreed to finance the carrying out of investigations and experiments in connection with Collie coal in addition to the one that has already been successfully carried out at Midland Junction for the production of industrial gas from Collie coal. But the investigations that are shortly to be put in hand, which will be financed by the Government and will be controlled by a panel operating in conjunction with the Mines Department will not be concluded quickly. They will take a long time to complete, and it may be of some interest and consolation to the member for Canning to know that Mr. Fox will be one of the gentlemen associated with those investigations and experiments. So, we as a Government have dealt with the realities of the situation and not with future possibilities.

When the panel to which I referred earlier presented its report and recommendations to the Government, it did not advise the Government to proceed in the first place with the establishment of the proposed large-scale wood distillation and charcoal-iron industry in the South-West. Its members recommended and the Government agreed that there should be established first of all at some suitable place a commercial pilot plant in which would be

tested out completely the technical aspects of wood distillation and charcoal-iron production and also the economics of the industry. The recommendation of the panel in that respect was that there should be established a blast furnace which will be capable of producing approximately 10,000 tons of charcoal pig-iron per year, and side by side with it there should be established a wood distillation industry capable of producing 500 tons of acetic acid per year and also a quantity of wood naphtha or wood alcohol.

In accordance with the recommendation of the panel and a decision of the Government approving the recommendations, the Government introduced in the session of 1942 a Bill for the establishment of the charcoal-iron wood distillation industry. Parliament accepted the Bill and passed it into law. Under that measure a committee of management was set up for the purpose of organising, putting into operation and managing a charcoal wood distillation industry. The measure became law about the end of October, 1942, and immediately following that, the board of management was set up and in quick time the necessary organising work was carried out to make a start on the establishment of the industry at Wundowie, some 40 miles north of Perth. Since then a great deal of work has been done, as any member who has been to Wundowie in recent weeks will have seen.

Mr. Seward: It does not seem to be going on too fast.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not suggest that it is going on too fast or even fast enough. It is going on all too slowly for my liking, but is not that the experience with everything that can be mentioned in these days of war with manpower restrictions and shortages of plant and material? The industry at Wundowie has no priority in the matter of manpower or material, so members will readily understand the difficult struggle we have had in our endeavour to make progress in establishing it at that place. When consideration is given to all the difficulties that have to be faced, the progress made is reasonably satisfactory. A great deal of the more important work in connection with the establishment of the industry at Wundowie is not to be seen there at all at present, but is to be seen in the foun-

dries and factories and workshops of the State where most of the fabrication of the necessary plant and machinery is being carried on. Naturally the Government has placed as much as possible of that fabrication work within the State, and the greatest part of it has been so placed. It is necessary, however, to obtain some of the more complicated plant and machinery from other countries, and the requisite orders have been placed in the countries concerned.

In addition, the Government some little time ago decided to send oversea an industrial chemist employed by the Government for the purpose of having the wood distillation side of the industry thoroughly investigated at as many plants as possible operating in the country to which this officer is being sent. Apart from carrying out personal investigations into that question, he will, of course, inquire also into the production of charcoal-iron at one of the industries at least being operated oversea. This industrial chemist will also make inquiries regarding the possibility of disposing of charcoal pig-iron in the country to which he is to go. Thus it will be seen that in this direction the Government has already acted along the lines suggested by the member for Canning concerning the need for making inquiries as to the ability and willingness of oversea countries to buy from us when we have available pig-iron and possibly steel products.

In that connection I may add also that the Government is making other inquiries in other countries with respect to the possibility of disposing in those countries of any portion of surplus iron and steel production which we may have available for sale in the years to come. I do not suggest for one moment that when the Wundowie industry is in operation there will be much surplus production for sale outside this State, and certainly not very much for sale outside Australia. The Wundowie industry will be, as I mentioned earlier, a commercial pilot plant. It is an industry being established by the Government for the purpose of enabling us to obtain practical experience in the operation of wood distillation and charcoal-iron production before we finally make a decision favourable to the large scale charcoal wood distillation industry for the South-West. As I indicated earlier, production of charcoal-iron at Wundowie will be

only one-tenth annually of the estimated or proposed production for the large scale industry in the South-West. But the Government felt that it would be unwise in every sense of the term to rush ahead into the large scale industry in the South-West before taking steps to test out in a practical way the economics of the industry. That is why the industry is being established on a comparatively small scale in the first instance at Wundowie.

Some members may wonder why Wundowie was chosen by the Government as the site for the commercial part of the plant. The main reason is the existence at Wundowie of a number of suitable raw materials, which do not exist to the same extent, if they exist at all, in any other part of the State. At Wundowie there are deposits of ironstone sufficient to maintain this commercial pilot plant in production for at least 15 years. There are at Wundowie substantial supplies of suitable timber for use in the wood distillation side of the industry; and so we have in this centre two of the main essentials in the establishment and operation of the charcoal-iron wood distillation undertaking. In addition, and as most members are aware, Wundowie is on the main goldfields line and close to the main road, besides being close to the metropolitan area, which will provide the main market for the charcoal-iron to be produced at Wundowie. The member for Canning quite rightly raised the question of the comparatively low quality of the ironstone deposits in the Wundowie district, and pointed out that the metallic content of the iron-ore at Wundowie was about 50 per cent., whereas the metallic content of Koolan Island ore was about 66 per cent.

But when consideration is given to the fact that it will be possible to land Wundowie iron-ore at the furnaces at Wundowie for about 7s. 6d. per ton, as against 30s. per ton to land Koolan Island ore, it will be seen that there is an immediate saving per ton on the cost of landing ore at the furnaces of anything from 15s. to 22s. 6d. per ton. That consideration, of course, counts all in favour of using the iron-ore in the Wundowie district, even though its metallic content is not as great as that of iron-ore from Koolan Island or from Koolyanobbin. The member for Canning did not suggest that high quality pig-iron could not be produced from 50 per cent. metallic con-

tent iron-ore. As a matter of necessity, he told us, in some parts of America iron-ore with a metallic content of not more than 50 per cent. was being used, and that other countries were using even a lower grade.

Mr. Cross: They cannot use higher grade if they cannot get it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have the advantage of other countries in more respects than one. But I am sure that if the member for Canning himself, out of his own hard-earned money, was going to put money into an industry of this kind, he would not transport Koolan Island ore or Koolyanobbin ore to Wundowie, or to Fremantle or any other place if it was going to cost him more finally to transport and use that higher quality ore than it would cost to transport the lower quality ore which would return him a better financial result. However, as I suggested earlier, the main question associated with all these proposals is the question of carrying out the operations on the most economic basis possible.

Mr. Doney: The member for Canning seems to have left the cost question out of his calculation.

Mr. Cross: Do not worry about that!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think most members of the House are aware that the Koolan Island ore leases are held by a company and have been so held for the last ten years. The leases have a currency of 21 years, with a right of renewal for the like period. So, even if the Government, in considering the question from every possible angle, had finally decided that it would be best and most economical to use Koolan iron-ore, the Government would still have to face the problem of getting that ore. It is hardly to be expected that the company holding the leases would give the ore to the Government for nothing. It might do so; I do not know. The position never arose and therefore that question did not have to be faced, because the Government, when establishing a commercial pilot plant, did not require Koolan Island ore. The Government thought it better and more economical to establish the industry at Wundowie and to use the iron-ore immediately at hand. I have tried to give the House some indication of the work which has already been put into the scheme for establishing an iron and steel industry in Western Australia. I have shown that for at least 18 months a panel of

qualified officers inquired into and investigated the matter in every possible way.

I have also explained that some of the members of that panel visited the Eastern States on several occasions for the purpose of close and long consultation with the technical experts of a big iron and steel producing company in New South Wales. Those technical experts freely and gladly made their advice and services available, and it was upon the expert advice and information given by them that the proposals of the Government have, to a large extent, been developed in regard to the production of iron, but not of course in regard to the establishment of the wood distillation industry, because the latter is an industry entirely new to the Commonwealth. It has not yet been established in any part of Australia. When the panel inquired into the possibility of establishing an industry in this State for the production of iron and steel, it did not cease its labours when it reached the position of being able to make recommendations to the Government to establish a large-scale wood distillation and charcoal-iron industry. It carried out additional investigations for the purpose of ascertaining whether it would be possible to build upon the foundation of that joint industry other industries.

The member for Canning told the House that the iron and steel industry, wherever it is established, becomes the foundation upon which can be built many other industries of a subsidiary but nevertheless very important character. Of course, that is true beyond question. Because it is true and because it was understood by the members of the panel, they went very fully into the question of establishing industries subsidiary to the charcoal-iron wood distillation industry. Associated with their recommendations for a large-scale charcoal wood distillation industry in the South West, were proposals for the ultimate production of transparent paper, rayon yarns, rayon textiles, plastic resins, plastic mouldings and possibly the production of tinplate. The estimated annual value of the production of each of these items, except tinplate, is as follows:—

	£
Rayon yarns	2,000,000
Rayon textiles	1,000,000
Transparent paper	100,000
Plastic resin	600,000
Plastic moulding products ..	400,000

making a total annual production value of £4,100,000. I have not dealt with the possibility of the production of tinplate in quoting these figures. Members may be aware that tinplate has never been produced in Australia. It has not been produced even during the war, despite the great shortage of it and the great demand for it. No-one can say with certainty whether such an industry will be established in Australia in the early years after the war. However, it would appear to be reasonable to anticipate that this large and important industry will be established in Australia before many years have passed. The production of tinplate is one of the greatest providers of employment imaginable for each £100,000 of capital invested.

The charcoal pig-iron to be produced in our proposed industry will be of sufficiently high quality to be used as a raw material from which tinplate could be manufactured. The ordinary pig-iron produced in Australia from coking coal is not of sufficiently high quality to enable tinplate to be manufactured from it. The question whether tinplate will be manufactured in the charcoal wood distillation industry in this State is one which the Government cannot possibly decide at present. The estimated cost of establishing the tinplate industry in Australia varies from £7,000,000 to £15,000,000, so it will be realised that a decision upon the establishment of the industry is not one that can be reached in a month or even in a year. From our point of view, the proposal is one which will require much investigation before we shall be in a position to make a final decision. I understand that for some years before the war one of the big companies in Australia was interested in the possibility of establishing the tinplate industry in the Commonwealth, but that huge company, with all its financial resources, hesitated and postponed taking action, with the result that nothing was done before the war started, and nothing has been possible since.

The production of acetic acid is a very important item associated with the wood distillation industry. Acetic acid is a vital constituent in the production of many other manufactured products. At present, the Government is carrying on negotiations with a company for the establishment in Western Australia of an industry for the production

of rayon yarns and textiles. It is estimated the company will require approximately 5,000 tons of acetic acid each year for its requirements in the production of rayon yarns and textiles. There would be no possibility of producing the amount of acetic acid required for the company's operations unless a wood distillation industry of the size proposed ultimately for the South-West were first established. The Government hopes, as a result of the negotiations already carried on with this company and of further negotiations to be carried on in future, to obtain a favourable decision from the company to establish its proposed manufacturing operations in this State. The company, which is an oversea concern, has already decided to establish works in Australia, but a final decision as to the State in which it will establish itself has yet to be made.

Members can easily understand why the Government is so anxious to press ahead with all possible speed in establishing the proposed industry at Wundowie. Until we have established and successfully operated the industry there, both in respect of the wood distillation side and the charcoal pig-iron side, it will not be possible for us to consider seriously the question of preparing to establish the large-scale industry in the South-West. It will be necessary to have the large-scale industry established in the South-West in order that the quantity of acetic acid required by the company may be available.

Mr. North: And tinplate, too, I suppose, eventually.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As I explained a few minutes ago, the question of tinplate is one that will require a great deal of consideration and one in connection with which a decision will not be possible, perhaps, for many months and even for two or three years to come. But the large-scale wood distillation and charcoal-iron industry can be established in the South-West without tinplate. It can be established without rayon yarns and textiles, and without plastic resins, and mouldings, and without transparent paper. Those subsidiary industries to which I have referred may be benefits that would flow from the major industry in the event of its being established on a large scale in that part or in any other part of the State.

Another problem requiring to be overcome before the Government can make a final decision to establish a large-scale industry is the disposal of the 100,000 tons of charcoal-iron that would be produced each year by the large-scale industry. Western Australia's total requirements of charcoal-iron or pig-iron amount, roughly, to 6,500 tons a year. I have no doubt that we could sell in the Eastern States 20,000 tons of charcoal pig-iron a year, because there will be in the Eastern States a demand for high-quality charcoal pig-iron, and companies in the Eastern States will purchase high-quality charcoal pig-iron in preference to ordinary coke iron for special purposes. Where they require pig-iron of great strength and of fine texture, they will purchase the charcoal pig-iron from Western Australia, so it is estimated there will be a market within Australia for approximately 30,000 tons of charcoal pig-iron. That would leave us in the position of having to find markets outside Australia for approximately 70,000 tons a year. It has been said that there will be a demand for this product from countries close to Australia, that there will be a demand for it from Great Britain, America and probably other countries.

I have informed members that the Government is already having inquiries made in Great Britain and America to ascertain the extent to which markets will be available in those countries for the disposal of our charcoal pig-iron production in years to come. The member for Canning suggested that South Fremantle might be the best place in the State to establish the iron and steel industry. The great argument against that contention is that South Fremantle does not possess, within reasonable distance of the centre, anything that would be useful in the production of iron and steel, except limestone. The iron-ore would have to be transported there and the coal or timber—whichever was to be used—would also have to be taken there. I am sure that the possibility of economically establishing at South Fremantle an iron and steel industry is extremely small, whilst that centre in an unfavourable position compared with other parts of the State. In every country where the industry exists, it is established either close to the iron-ore or close to the coal.

Mr. Cross: In plenty of places it is well away from both.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It may be, too, in certain circumstances. But where there is a reasonable opportunity to establish the industry close to one or the other of those products, that is usually done, especially where it can be done near the sea-coast. I think I have indicated to members that when the large-scale industry is established in this State it will not be possible to establish it in a place where both iron-ore and fuel supplies are available. The intention of the Government in that regard is that the large-scale industry will be established close to fuel supplies, which will mean the transporting of iron-ore to the place where the industry is established. I think I have already said that Koolan Island iron-ore is held under lease by a private company. That also applies to Cockatoo Island iron-ore, but it does not apply to Koolyanobbin iron-ore. The leases in connection with these deposits are reserved for the Government. Whether Koolyanobbin iron-ore will ultimately be railed to the centre of the large-scale industry, or whether iron-ore will be transported from Koolan Island is something for the future to decide. If Koolan Island or Cockatoo Island iron-ore is to be used it will be necessary for some arrangement to be made between the Government and the companies concerned for the purpose of obtaining the necessary quantities of ore and transporting it to the site of the industry.

Mr. Marshall: Surely it is optional for the Government to refuse to renew the leases.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That question has already received some consideration, and there is considerable doubt about it.

Mr. Marshall: There ought not to be any doubt about it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I suggest to the member for Murchison that he study the Mining Act, and we will then be very glad to have his impressions of what that Act lays down in that regard. In any event, the question of obtaining the quantities of iron-ore which might be required subsequently for the proposed large-scale industry is receiving the consideration of the Government, and it might possibly

be necessary for the Government to come to Parliament for the purpose of ensuring that all the supplies of iron-ore required by the Government will be available. If Parliament is to be approached on that question I am sure that it will make a decision that will be favourable to the development in Western Australia of iron and steel manufacturing industries based upon the state of our raw materials, as against allowing those raw materials to be mined for the purpose of being transported to other parts of Australia and possibly to other parts of the world.

I want to state again, briefly, the actual points contained in the motion for the appointment of the proposed Royal Commission. No. 1 point is the establishment of a heavy industry in this State by smelting Koolan Island iron-ore. I have already shown to the House that the Government is well ahead of the suggestion contained in that point. We have carried out exhaustive investigations and inquiries and have commenced the establishment, on a small scale, of a wood distillation and charcoal-iron industry which, of course, will use Western Australian iron-ore even though it will not be Koolan Island iron-ore. At least it will not be in the case of the small-scale industry being established at Wundowie, but when the proposed large-scale industry is established it may be, and probably will be, Koolan Island iron-ore that will be used. Point No. 2 is that a Royal Commission should inquire into the question of constructing rolling mills for the manufacture of steel. I have pointed out that the industry the Government is already in the process of establishing will be a foundation upon which steel could be manufactured. So I submit to the House that point No. 2 has already been met by the decisions made by the Government and the work already being carried out by it. Points Nos. 3 and 4 relate to the question of making inquiries to ascertain what markets exist in Australia and overseas for the disposal of iron-ore, not processed, and also for the disposal of manufactured pig-iron and steel products.

I have shown to members that the Government has decided to send overseas an industrial chemist, who, in addition to testing the technical aspects of the wood distillation and charcoal-iron production will investigate also the markets available for

charcoal pig-iron in the country to which he is going. In addition, I have explained that the Government is having official inquiries carried out in other countries for the purpose of ascertaining the actual market possibilities there both during the war and particularly in the years after the war. So, points Nos. 3 and 4 are also being being fully met by action that the Government has already taken. The last point is the one dealing with the general establishment of an industry for the smelting of iron-ore and the manufacture of steel in this State. I think that in the course of what I have said to members I have shown that that point is also met by the present operations of the Government to establish at Wundowie a wood distillation and charcoal-iron industry, and by the further proposals of the Government in the direction of the probability of establishing a large-scale industry in the South-West in later years with a productive capacity of 100,000 tons annually of charcoal pig-iron, of 5,000 tons annually of acetic acid, and over 1,000,000 gallons annually of wood alcohol. I have shown to members that upon the basis of that production many other subsidiary and valuable industries may be capable of being established.

I have also pointed out that the Government is already in negotiation with at least one other overseas company regarding the establishment in our State of an industry for the large-scale production of rayon yarns and rayon weaves. Before the war, as members may recall, the Government brought to Western Australia from Switzerland an expert in the production of transparent paper. He was in this State for approximately three months. He carried out all the inquiries and made all the investigations necessary, and finally presented a favourable report on the establishment, on a payable basis, of the transparent paper industry in Western Australia. That is another subsidiary industry which, in the post-war years, could very well be established upon the large scale of the wood distillation charcoal industry proposed for the South-West.

The most unkind and probably the only unkind remark made by the member for Canning in his speech was that no attempt whatsoever had been made in this State to establish the iron and steel industry on a large scale. I suppose he included the words

"on a large scale" to counter the explanation which I might give of the steps already taken by the Government to establish on a small scale the wood distillation charcoal-iron industry. I am convinced that it is far better and safer in every respect to go ahead with the Wundowie proposal, and test out technically and economically the question of establishing the wood distillation charcoal-iron industry in this State as against rushing into a large scale industry. To establish the industry at Wundowie is estimated to cost about £150,000, whereas to establish the proposed large scale industry for the South-West was estimated to cost over £1,000,000. Every member will agree that the wise course to adopt in a matter of this kind is to proceed cautiously and test out the proposals on a small scale on the definite understanding that, if they can be conducted successfully on a small scale in the physical as well as in the financial sense, we might then proceed at the first opportunity to expand the industry by establishing it upon a much larger basis in the most suitable part of the State.

As a matter of fact that is exactly what we are doing in connection with the production of potash at Chandler. We did not rush in there on the basis of putting in enough plant and machinery to produce a quantity sufficient to supply the whole of Australia's requirements. We went in carefully and safely to establish sufficient plant and machinery to produce one-third of Australia's requirements on the understanding that, if we could do this successfully, we would be justified in taking action on behalf of the taxpayers to triplicate the plant, so that in the years to come it might be capable of supplying the whole of Australia's potash needs. So, even though the member for Canning condemns any small scale attempt to establish the wood distillation charcoal industry in this State, I think the great majority of members will agree that it is the safest, wisest and best thing to do.

In view of the information I have made available to the House, I consider there is no justification whatever for the appointment of the proposed Royal Commission. In my judgment, this motion is three years behind the action taken by the Government, because the Government set out along these lines three years ago. As a result of having set out along these lines three years ago, we were able to bring to Parliament two years ago a Bill for the establishment of the

iron and steel industry in this State, a Bill of which Parliament approved, which became law and under which the charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry at Wundowie is now being established. Therefore I ask members to vote against the motion.

MR. TRIAT (Mt. Magnet): I have listened with great attention to the Minister's explanation regarding the production of iron by the charcoal process in this State. I recall that some 12 or 18 months ago the Minister explained to the House the whole position. Even at that stage I did not realise the magnitude of the proposal introduced by the Minister. In addition to the iron produced by the charcoal process, the by-products are of great importance. Consequently I still have a certain amount of faith in the motion that has been moved by the member for Canning. I see a certain amount of merit in the proposal and I propose to tell the House the position as I view it. Of course it was impossible for anyone without the qualifications of a shorthand-writer to note exactly what the Minister said, but I did take a note of some items with which I intend to deal.

The first was the Minister's statement of the great importance that investigations of a practical character should be carried out in the production of pig-iron. That is all-important. In 1941 the practical way of producing pig-iron in this State was restricted to one way and that was by coking coal imported from New South Wales or by the charcoal process. No other method was known at that time except possibly the use of electricity, but that would be too costly to use for the production of pig-iron. Therefore, the investigating panel that sat in 1941 had no opportunity of arriving at any decision except in relation to the resources that were here in the shape of wood or the material that could be imported from New South Wales in the way of coke.

In 1944, however, we are faced with an entirely different proposition. We can now say to the panel investigating these matters that it should inquire whether it is possible to produce from the resources of this State pig-iron at a cheaper rate than that at which it can be produced by any other process known here. Therefore I say that in 1941 the practical character of the proposition could be judged only according

to what was known then and not to what is known today. That panel consists of several members including Mr. Fernie, Professor Bayliss, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Gregson and Mr. Bowley. I cannot speak of Mr. Gregson, but amongst the others I do not think there is one who is an iron worker, a moulder or a producer of iron.

The Minister for Works: What about Mr. Tomlinson?

Mr. TRIAT: That is so; I should have excluded him.

The Premier: Mr. Gregson is the forest products utilisation expert.

Mr. TRIAT: Those gentlemen are undoubtedly quite competent in their own spheres, but even they at the time I speak of had no knowledge of producing iron other than by the charcoal process. I believe that charcoal-iron commends itself to the people. It has very good qualities. But how we in Australia can produce 100,000 tons of iron annually by a process requiring a million tons of wood every year is not easy to understand. That consideration presents a factor which has to be faced. Our forests will not last long if they have to furnish 1,000,000 tons of wood per year. I feel quite sure that the Minister is well able to take the opportunity to make investigations for the purpose of utilising Western Australia's resources.

I understand that the Government has sent a chemist to America to make investigations and inquiries. He should have gone long ago to get better ideas on technology and more up-to-date views. The Government's action in sending a chemist is, however, one to be acclaimed. Visits to the Eastern States iron works also are necessary. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company produces iron and steel that are better than England produces. Again, that company has a big reserve of iron-ore. Its labour costs are not cheaper than English labour costs, but the company has coal at Newcastle, and that is the factor which makes its product so cheap. The market which the company has is one that it is going to build up, and certainly is not going to give it away. It is only a matter of commonsense that Eastern States competitors are not going to put a competitor from Western Australia on the same footing as themselves, so that he may compete with them in other parts of the world.

The Premier: The Broken Hill people are very generous as regards allowing inspection.

Mr. TRIAT: At Newcastle I was given every possible opportunity. Unfortunately I could spend only a day there, whereas three or four days are required for making a thorough examination. The works are extensive and up-to-date. Still, there is great doubt whether a competitor will put another man on a level enabling him to compete. I am sure the Government is convinced in its own mind as to the cost of the plant to be erected. The Government will put in a cheaper plant, costing £150,000. After the spending of that amount, we shall have a production of some consequence to the State. If not, we shall have to fall back on some other place. Western Australia must produce iron sooner or later. This State cannot allow its huge deposits of iron to lie idle indefinitely. I have heard an American say that Koolan Island has been held by the Brasserts since 1935. No company has ever taken up Koolan Island for the purpose of working the deposits.

I well remember the row that occurred when the Government Resident at Koolan Island decided to forfeit some leases. The man holding the leases had nothing. He anticipated that Japan would spend half a million of money in opening up the Koolan Island propositions. The Brasserts of England are people of straw, not people of any consequence. Certainly they were not in favour of developing an iron industry at Koolan Island. The Broken Hill Pty. owned Cockatoo Island for the sake of the deposits, and has held it since 1938 or earlier. Whatever do they do with it? They have simply held it. I was there in 1937, and what were the Brasserts doing in 1937? They had about ten or twelve men on the place, doing nothing except walking about among the compounds and huts. A lot of holes were sunk to test the ore, but it has not been worked. The only ore taken from Koolan Island has been taken for sampling purposes.

Mr. Cross: The object is to tie up our industry.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes; that is obvious. There is nothing wrong with it if one can get away with it. But when the war is over it is felt that these people ought to be compelled to work their deposits or get out and let

somebody else get in. When that time comes, I hope the Government of Australia again will declare itself for us. Let us get to the facts regarding the new idea. Charcoal is not suitable for an open hearth furnace. The Government ought to be urgent and insist on getting some final decision from its chemists as to whether the producer-gas is good, or no good, and whether it can be used for industrial purposes. Every day we await a final decision. But if it is a question of gas, let us prove and demonstrate to Western Australia that we can do something with it.

The Minister for Works: Mr. Fox can test it.

Mr. TRIAT: But Mr. Fox is not going to test his own gas. I do not think the Government would be right in asking him to do so.

The Minister for Works: It would be a fair thing.

Mr. TRIAT: I do not look at it in that light. Dr. Kemp and his assistant have been testing the gas in tubes. Dr. Kemp is an analytical chemist and a doctor of science, so surely he should be capable enough to inform us whether the gas is efficient or not. Are we to wait for months for a report? I hope he will be requested by the Minister in charge to give this House some information about the quality of the gas.

The Minister for Works: We all agree that it would be fair for Mr. Fox to be here.

Mr. TRIAT: I think he has gone to the Eastern States. Let us hope that he will not be away long, because I would like to know the result. I do not want anybody to think I am criticising the Government, because no one is more appreciative of its efforts than I am. However, I point out that when Mr. Fox came to Western Australia he received very little attention. I was able to introduce him to the Premier, and also to the Minister for Works and Mr. Fernie. No one could have been of greater assistance to a stranger than was the Minister for Works himself. He interviewed Mr. Fox and arranged the necessary finance to make the tests. I may appear to be a little annoyed over this matter, but I do not want members to think that I am adversely criticising the Minister. What I am complaining of is that we have to wait so long for information about the result of these tests. Mr. Fox claims that he has produced gas which

will reduce iron-ore. I am given to understand that he is a man of great intelligence and ability. He very ably demonstrated to members of this House that he could do what he claims to have done.

Mr. Wilson: Hear, hear!

Mr. TRIAT: He claims to be an expert on iron. He probably is. He was responsible for the erection of some million pounds worth of iron-rolling mills in the Eastern States. I am given to understand by a member that he also was responsible for the establishment of works at Whyalla, and that he taught the experts of Hadfields Ltd. the process of electric smelting in the Eastern States in 1912. If these facts are true, this man is invaluable, and when he returns I hope we shall be able to get some information from him. He claims that the gas he has discovered can reduce iron-ore at a very cheap rate. He guaranteed that with a plant costing only £25,000 he could erect rolling mills capable of turning out angle-iron, round-iron, iron bars and other iron requirements of the State. If there is but a semblance of truth in his claims they are worthy of consideration. The Government is about to spend £150,000 to ascertain whether pig-iron can be produced from charcoal in this State. This man says that for £25,000 he can erect mills which will produce 10,000 tons of pig-iron or mild steel.

The Minister for Works: We can arrange to discuss all that with him when he returns.

Mr. TRIAT: I am pleased to hear the Minister say that. I shall not delay the House much longer. The member for Canning spoke about the iron-ore at Koolan Island, but the ore at Kununoppin has a metallic content of 63 per cent., only 3 per cent. less than that of the Koolan Island ore. The former ore should be good enough for our purpose; it is close to hand and will not cost much to transport. I hope that no company will get its claws on that particular deposit.

The Premier: Do not worry about that.

Mr. TRIAT: I am glad to know that. The rolling-mills to which I have referred cannot be worked by any fuel other than gas, and that is why I am so anxious to have our gas thoroughly tested. The motion also deals with the question of probable and possible markets, both in Australia and overseas. That matter has been dealt with. The

motion also discussed the possibilities of financing the launching and the successful establishment of all activities involved in the inauguration of the smelting and manufacture of steel for profit and benefit to the people of Western Australia. That has been partly done. The State is financing a charcoal-iron plant; but the financing of rolling-mills is a totally different matter. The Minister says he is going to make inquiries into that project, and that will suit me.

I sincerely hope the motion will be carried. I commend the member for Canning for bringing it before the House. It has caused much discussion and we have obtained some invaluable facts from the Minister. We have the best iron-ore in the world; I do not care where one goes, there is nothing superior to it. We have as good alloys in Western Australia for the manufacture of steel as can be found in any part of the Commonwealth; we also have chrome, manganese and scheelite, perhaps not in big quantities, but sufficient for our requirements. We have in Western Australia all the fluxes we require. I sincerely hope that we also have the fuel, either in pulverised coal, in gas or in charcoal. Even if the motion is not carried I hope the Minister will make a thorough investigation and let the House know at the earliest possible moment what his views are, after discussing the matter with Mr. Fox or some other engineer.

Mr. CROSS: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Canning may reply, but he cannot move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion ruled out.

Question put and negatived.

Mr. CROSS: Divide!

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already put the question and declared it to have been negatived. Does the member for Canning want a division?

Mr. CROSS: I was moving for the adjournment in order that I might reply to the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot do that. I have declared the question negatived. However, he has called for a division. The House will divide.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	23
Noes	9
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Majority for	14
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AYES.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Cross	Mr. Millington
Mr. Doney	Mr. Owen
Mr. Fox	Mr. Redoreda
Mr. Graham	Mr. Seward
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Smith
Mr. Hill	Mr. Triat
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Watts
Mr. Leaby	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Mann	Mr. Willson
Mr. Marshall	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Hawke	Mr. Telfer
Mr. Needham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. North	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Nulsen	Mr. Coverley
Mr. Pantou	(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the motion agreed to.

MESSAGE—VERMIN ACT SELECT COMMITTEE.

Attendance of Member of Council.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that the Council had given leave to the Hon. Hobart Tuckey to attend and give evidence before the Select Committee appointed by the Assembly to inquire into the operations of the Vermin Act.

BILL—PAWNBROKERS ORDINANCE AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—CHURCH OF ENGLAND DIOCESAN TRUSTEES (SPECIAL FUND).

Second Reading.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [9.34] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is of a somewhat unusual character. A very peculiar set of circumstances have necessitated its introduction. A few weeks ago I received a letter from the secretary of the Perth Diocese, Mr. Fisher, and it might be as well if I read it so that members will understand the reason for the introduction of the measure. It is addressed to me and dated the 19th July, 1944. It is as follows:—

Under the will of the late S. E. Burges which was proved on the 10th June, 1885, this estate

was charged with an annuity of £20 a year to be paid to the clergyman from time to time stationed at York. This created much difficulty for the executors, because they could not dispose of any part of the estate without getting a release from this charge.

On the 19th April, 1910, with the consent of the court, the charge was commuted by a payment of £500, the judge directing that the money be invested, and out of the income £20 a year paid to the rector for the time being at York, and the surplus, if any, added to capital with power to draw upon it to make up any deficiency.

The annuity has been regularly paid to the rector of York and the capital sum is now over £1,000. The trustees desire to obtain authority, at their discretion, either to pay the whole of the annual income derived from the sum to the rector for the time being at York, or to pay £20 and add the balance to capital. Messrs. Stone, James & Co., the trustees' solicitors, advise that the court has no power to make such an order, and so unless some arrangement can be made the additional income will have to be added to capital in perpetuity.

The trustees have requested me to ask if you would approach the Government and ascertain if they would introduce a Bill to give effect to what the trustees desire. If this could be done it would be appreciated very much.

I submitted that letter to the Premier and it was then submitted to the Crown Law authorities, after which it was suggested that I might introduce a private Bill myself. That Bill is now before the House. The background leading to the measure will disclose one outstanding fact, which is that the testator builded better than he knew. By his will Mr. Burges created and charged upon the corpus of his real and personal estate an annuity of £20 a year to be paid to the clergyman from time to time occupying a certain religious office in York. Because such charge prevented the sale or disposal of the corpus of that estate or any part thereof unless in each and every occasion all the beneficiaries released from the charge the part of the corpus of the estate which it was proposed to sell or dispose of, the trustees applied to the Supreme Court for and obtained an order of the court directing that £500 out of the corpus of the estate should be appropriated out of such corpus for the purpose of the said annuity and invested, and that the income from the investment thereof should be applied to pay the £20 annuity each year to the Church of England rector in York. I have here a copy of the order which the court made on that occasion. It is dated the 17th March, 1910, and the matter was heard in Chambers

before His Honour, Mr. Justice McMillan. The order reads as follows:—

Upon hearing Mr. Darbyshire of Counsel for the Plaintiff and Mr. Frank Mends Stone of Counsel for the Defendants and upon reading the Will of the late Samuel Evans Burges of Perth deceased and the Affidavit of Mona Mary Sophia Burges of the 17th day of March, 1910, filed herein it is ordered as follows:—

1. That the cash surrender value of the perpetual charge of the annual sum of Twenty Pounds to the Standing Committee of the Synod of the Western Australian Branch of the Church of England for or towards the support of the Church of England clergyman from time to time stationed at York as created by the will dated the third day of October 1883 of the late Samuel Evans Burges deceased over Avon Locations Y3, Y4, and A, B, C and No. 967 also Avon Locations 215, 509, 510, 511, 537, 557, 682, 697, 734, 761 and 795 comprising his Tipperary Estate and also all other his lands both freehold and leasehold in the said district not in the said will specifically mentioned, be fixed at Five hundred pounds.

The income derived from the investment has been more than sufficient to pay the £20 annuity each year, with the result that with the surplus income accruing each year the annuity capital has already increased to £1,000. If the investment continues it seems that the annuity capital will continue to increase indefinitely and in perpetuity, unless some steps are taken to apply the surplus income to some purpose which has not been authorised by the will of the deceased testator. The Perth Diocesan Trustees have no power to dispose of the surplus income amongst the other beneficiaries or in any other way. So they made two suggestions. One was to pay the whole of the income derived each year from the annuity capital to the annuitant instead of paying him only the £20 provided for in the will of the testator. The other was to pay the annuitant his £20 and then to pay the surplus income each year into the corpus of the estate for distribution among the beneficiaries in accordance with the terms of the will.

Then it was discovered that the Supreme Court had no jurisdiction to enable it to make an order authorising either of the proposals of the trustees. Therefore the trustees have asked that consideration be given to the introduction of special legislation which will make provision either to give the court jurisdiction to make an order conferring the necessary authority upon the said trustees, or alternatively giv-

ing to the trustees direct the authority to apply the income from the annuity capital to purposes to be expressed in such legislation. As the court has not any jurisdiction in the directions suggested by the trustees it may be considered undesirable that the trustees should be faced with the problem of administering an ever-increasing trust fund, without being able to use the annual income for any purpose other than the payment of the annuity to the Rector of York. That is the reason why this Bill is brought forward to enact special legislation to meet the position of directing the trustees what to do.

There is already, to a certain extent, a precedent established as far as legislation of this nature is concerned. A precedent was established by the Salvation Army (Western Australia) Property Trust Act, 1931, which inter alia, made legislative provision for giving effect in Western Australia to certain trusts created by deed poll of William Booth, the first general of the Salvation Army. The Bill before the Chamber will give power for certain orders to be made so that the income from the said annuity capital should be dispersed. This legislation has been framed to confer special jurisdiction on the Supreme Court to make the appropriate orders rather than to confer authority on the trustees direct. While there is every confidence in the Perth Diocesan Trustees, still it was thought to be rather difficult for them, from time to time, to dispose of the surplus income. It was, therefore, considered better to give the court the authority to make the order. That is the position, and I have related all the facts leading up to the necessity for the introduction of this legislation. I submit the Bill for the approval of the House. If it passes the second reading it will be necessary to make one or two slight alterations in Committee. Those alterations are due to a misunderstanding in regard to the proper name of the Church of England Trustees. The amendments will be placed on the notice paper in due course. They cannot be placed there until such time as the House passes the second reading of the Bill.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, the debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 19th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £2,265:

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [9.50]: As the present seems to be an appropriate opportunity, I propose to pass a few comments on a leading article that appeared in "The West Australian" on the 18th October. The article was apparently written as the result of a change recently effected in the name of a certain political party in the Commonwealth. I intend to read extracts from the article and make what I consider to be desirable comments. Under the heading "The Liberal Party" the article started by saying—

To millions of Australians, the so far highly successful move to unify the political forces which, in a Parliamentary sense, are opposed to Labour will be welcome tidings. The new unity move may be ponderously ridiculed and vilified with all the wealth of invective which the Australian Labour Party and its Communist friends have at their ready command.

As a lifelong member of the Labour movement, and as one acting in a representative capacity in the movement, I unreservedly repudiate the unjust insinuations contained in that paragraph. I would like to indicate clearly that there are vital points of difference between the methods and objectives of the Australian Labour Party and those of the Communist Party. As far back as 1924 the Commonwealth Labour Conference carried a motion, which still stands, as follows:—

Neither the Communist Party nor a branch thereof may be or become affiliated with the Australian Labour Party. No member of the Communist Party may be or become a member of the Australian Labour Party.

The Federal Executive on the 22nd April, 1937, unanimously adopted the following declaration:—

The A.L.P. refuses affiliation to and dissociates itself from the policy, methods and propaganda of the Communist Party and all its auxiliary organisations. It declares the Communist Party to be an anti-Labour political organisation. It declares furthermore that the Communist Party is in direct conflict with the policy, platform and constitution of the A.L.P.

Only last year the Commonwealth Labour Conference, in dealing with the question of what are known as Communist subsidiaries, indicated the following:—

At the Federal Executive meeting the following motion was carried:—

(a) This meeting of the Federal Executive of the Australian Labour Party calls public attention to the attempt of the members of the Communist Party (to which our attitude is one of hostility) to capitalise for their own purposes the magnificent effort of the Russian people.

(b) Our attitude to the Communist Party's "Aid to the Soviet" meetings is one of warning and suspicion. We warn members of the A.L.P., those assisting Communist organisations and the public generally against Communist subsidiaries, which have purposes of their own to serve.

(c) We declare the Australia-Soviet Friendship League to be dominated largely by persons having political objectives contrary to the Australian Labour Party, and therefore no member of the A.L.P. can become, or continue to be a member of the said League or other kindred organisation similarly dominated and retain membership of the A.L.P.

There is a clear indication that no member of the Communist Party can belong to the A.L.P., and I would say further that every member of the Australian Labour Party who holds office in any district council or on the State Executive of the party must sign a pledge. It reads—

The following pledge shall be signed and be binding on all officers and delegates of the A.L.P.:—"I hereby pledge myself to adhere to and uphold and support the principles of the A.L.P., and to support candidates selected by the A.L.P. for public offices, and I also declare I am not a member of any other political party including the Communist Party.

I think those indications are clear enough to satisfy the most rabid anti-Labourite that there is no affinity between the Labour movement and the Communist Party. Further to support my argument, I would like to point out that in the pamphlet known as the A.B.C. of Communism published in Great Britain and stated by the Communists to be an authoritative outline of the objective of the Communist Party, the following appears.—

Communism relies on world-wide bloodshed for the establishment of its regime.

Thus Lenin.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a relentless struggle waged with bloodshed, a war a hundred times more difficult and more long drawn out, more complicated than the most

bloodthirsty war which could be possible between nations.

This was quoted by Stalin in his "Theory and Practice of Leninism," pages 50 and 196. In Lenin's work "The State and Revolution," page 116, the following appears:—

It is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible without violent revolution and without the destruction of the machinery of State power.

Again at page 135 the following appears:—

All former revolutions helped to perfect the machinery of government, whereas now we must shatter it, break it to pieces.

The Communist Internationale—the first Internationale was set up in 1864—based its programme largely on the manifesto drawn up by Marx in 1848 and by Lenin. The following is an outline of what the Communist international programme sets out:—

The party is the vanguard of the working class—a revolutionary organisation bound by an iron discipline. It must set itself to extend its influence over the majority of the members of its own class, including working women and working youth. To do this it must secure predominant influence in trade unions, co-operative societies, sports organisations, etc. To work in reactionary trade unions and skillfully to capture them, to win the confidence of the broad masses of the industrially-organised workers, and to remove from their posts and replace the reformist leaders are all-important tasks in the preparatory period.

That is a definite indication that the Communist Party's objectives are entirely foreign to those of the Labour Party. The Communist theory and outlook and objectives are based, and necessarily so, on atheism and materialism. This is what it sets forth in regard to religions of all kinds—

"Religion is the opium of the people," said Karl Marx. "It is the task of the Communist Party to make this truth comprehensible to the widest possible circles of the labouring masses. Religion and Communism are incompatible, both theoretically and practically." A Communist who rejects the commandments of religion and acts in accordance with the directions of the party ceases himself to be one of the faithful. On the other hand, one who while calling himself a Communist continues to cling to his religious faith, one who in the name of religious commandments infringes the prescriptions of the party, ceases thereby to be a Communist.

The methods of the Communist Party, I repeat, are absolutely foreign to the ideals of Australian Labour. There are plenty of

vital points of difference between the objectives of the two parties. The Labour movement in its constitution has definitely set out that it proposes to use constitutional methods to reach its legitimate ends. The Communist Party is generally recognised as a revolutionary party. The Labour Party believes in political and industrial action. The Communist Party believes in such action as suits it best at the moment. When Communists think the tide of revolution is rising, they favour violence in forms which will tend to discredit the existing order. When that position was no longer popular, they tried to get into the trade union movement and form subsidiary groups for the purpose of carrying on in devious ways their own propaganda. Here are a few of the subsidiaries which they are known to have established, and which the Australian Labour movement has repudiated:—

The Friends of the Soviet Union, International Class War Prisoners' Aid, Christian-Socialist Movement, Movement Against War and Fascism, Society for Cultural Relations with Soviet Russia, Militant Minority Movement, Budget Protest Committee, Medical Aid to Russia, Anti-Fascist League, Christian Community Movement.

Mr. George Gibson, the president of the British Trade Union Congress, when speaking at the conference held in Edinburgh on the 1st September, 1911, expressed a warm welcome to Russia as an ally, and added—

But this does not imply the least sympathy with the British Communist Party leaders, for the astonishing gyrations of these people have placed them in the lowest category in the esteem of the British working class. For them, the war ceased to be an "imperialist war" at 4 a.m. on the 23rd June, 1911, and became a righteous one.

The Communist Party has sought in recent years to gain control—this is undoubtedly so—of the industrial union movement. It has failed in this State, and my view is that what will allow the Communist Party to advance its cause here or in any other State is the apathy and indifference of the great mass of organised workers who belong—or should belong—to the industrial movement. I believe that the great body of Australian workers will take that interest in their organisation which undoubtedly they should take. The Communist objective will never be attained in any other part of Australia. The resolutions I have read out, together with the ac-

tion of the Federal A.L.P. conference, indicate clearly that we have no relationship whatever with the Communist Party at election time. However, members of the Labour Party and Communists, equally sincere, believe in different processes. We believe that we shall gain our ends in due course by constitutional means.

The leading article referred to starts off by insinuating that the Labour Party and the Communist Party are great friends. Some little time ago I asked an indirect question as to the new party established in this Chamber. In the last Parliament we at first had the Country Party and the Nationalist Party, but from 1st August this year the former have termed themselves the Country and Democratic League. At a recent conference in Canberra, the leading light was Mr. Menzies, of the U.A.P. After outlining the objective of the new party, however, Mr. Menzies indicated that it was to be a force which would be able to sweep Labour out of office at the next election. In the reports of the daily Press it was stated that 18 organisations were represented at the conference. Some of those organisations now exist only in name, but I have taken the trouble to look up what occurred at the last Federal election and see what their designations were. Here are some of the names of the parties which were represented against Labour at the last election—

The United Australia Party, Nationalist Party, Country Party, United Country Party, Liberal and Country League, One Parliament for Australia, Communist Party, Constructive Democrats, Liberal Democrats, Approved U.A.P., People's Party, Country Liberal Party, Australian Women's Party.

We have also—

The Unendorsed Country Party and the Unendorsed U.A.P.; the Independent Middle Class Party; the Soldiers, Citizens and War Workers' Labour Party; the Soldiers and Citizens' Party; the Services Party; the Middle Class Organisation; the Independent; the Christian New Order Party; the Country National Organisation; the Queensland Country Party; the Northern Country Party and the Women for Canberra Movement.

Those are some of the organisations that stood against the Labour Party at the last Federal elections; and ostensibly it is Mr. Menzies' job to unite all those parties into one organisation.

Mr. North: He has your sympathy, I am sure.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am sure he has the sympathy of the member for Claremont. Reference to the Unity Conference has been made in a leading article of "The West Australian," with which I propose to deal in a few moments. This is an extract from that article—

But the new party makes no attempt to out-Labour Labour. Rather does it emphasise some of the cardinal points of difference between Labour policy and practice and its own ideals. It takes a positive stand on the supremacy of Parliament over the extra-parliamentary bodies to which Labour habitually bows the knee.

I wish to clear away the charge that Labour bows the knee to anybody. The position of the National Party just now is that it has looped the loop; it has made a complete circle. When I was a lad, I can recollect that some of the older people called that Party the anti-Labourites, the Conservatives. Afterwards the Party came to be known as the Liberal Party, but that was a long time ago. Later, there came the Win-the-War Party and, when that name had outlived its usefulness, if my memory serves me aright, the Country Party broke away from the St. George's-terrace farmers, as they were known, and formed a separate Party. The Win-the-War Party changed its name to the National Party; in some States of Australia it is called the United Australia Party, as well as many other designations which are mentioned in the list I have just read.

Mr. McLarty: What is the use of all of this?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: We now find the National Party has looped the loop. We have the Liberal Party with us again.

Mr. McLarty: Evidently it is causing you some concern.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The statement was made in the leading article to which I have referred that Labour bowed the knee. I repeat that Labour bows the knee to nobody. What does happen, and has happened for many years, is that the working people of Australia, through their organisation, draw up a platform and a policy which is subscribed to by all the representatives of the workers. On matters affecting the platform of the party members of the Labour Party act in a united way throughout the length and breadth of Australia; but

on matters outside that platform, each individual member of the party acts on his own initiative and speaks and votes as he thinks fit. During my short term in this Parliament I am quite satisfied that that has been the case, because I have seen Ministers voting on non-party issues both on one side of the House and on the other, and members of the various parties also on one side and on the other. Seeing that "The West Australian" accuses Labour of bowing the knee, I propose to quote some extracts to show who it is that does bow the knee, and to whom the knee is bowed.

Mr. McLarty: The paper would require plenty of space if it were to report your speech.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I shall now quote from the "Sydney Morning Herald" of the 31st July, 1943. The headings to the article are "In the Grip of Vested Interests" and "Sydney Morning Herald" attacks U.A.P. control." The article reads—

The failure of the present Opposition party to raise the standard of Australian public life is due, among other causes, to lack of a coherent National organisation, and to the fact that they largely represent vested interests. They represent them not directly but through a clique of professional politicians who close their ranks to talent.

Further on, the article proceeds—

It is astonishing, but, nevertheless true, that broadly speaking, the financing of both the United Country Party and the U.A.P. has been outside their own control. The large companies that have been providing the bulk of the U.A.P. war chest have been giving it not to the U.A.P., but to trustees outside the party organisation.

Those are the "Sydney Morning Herald's" views on the U.A.P. financial machine. Under the heading of "Who is Finding the Money for the National-Country Party Team?" and "The Sunday Times' Challenges Mr. McGibbon and his Friends." "The Sunday Times" of the 25th July, 1943, has this to say—

Behind a smokescreen of personalities, the cold and dour Senator Collett and the virginal Mr. Ross McDonald endeavoured during the week to successfully hide the full facts of the association of the National and Country Parties with the big money interests of the National Union. But they failed dismally. We say the National Union is not merely a collecting agency for the Party as stated, because Mr. Sinclair McGibbon's National Union used influence even as recently as the last Senate selection to defer the closing of nominations, thus enabling the entry of Brigadier Louch and

Colonel Paton. We challenge Messrs. Collett and McDonald to reveal how much money has been subscribed by the National Union to the Party during the last seven years.

Further on the article continues—

We know that they are not game to tell the public who the subscribers are, because the subscribers are the kind of people who want the rich man's interests preserved, who don't want any New Order that will interfere with the rights of the "haves," who don't want anything that will seriously take from those who are in high financial power any of the control they now possess. We all know that there are certain interests today which, if they get a chance, will cheat our fighting men out of the New Order that has been promised, as they were cheated after the last war. And they will be cheated out of it if the power that the money interests have today is allowed to go unchecked.

These are statements not made about the Labour Party but about the United Australia Party, which has now changed its name to the Liberal Party.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: It is now called "The Mirror."

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The same paper on the 8th August, 1943, elicited some information with regard to the amount of money expended by the National Union. The following is an extract:—

The National Union in a period covering the last two Federal elections, and not including anything budgeted for the current campaign, has spent the sum of £19,637 4s. 2d. to keep the National Party organisation in existence and to get National Party and Country Party candidates into the Federal Parliament. It is big money, and, obviously the National Union hasn't spent it merely out of personal devotion for the members it sought to get into Parliament.

It has spent it to get value in political service . . . From this there could be no illusion held by any of the delegates as to what the National Union expected to get for this money and it was natural then, when the present election came along, that the National Union insisted on getting its own men endorsed as candidates. And events showed that the National Union succeeded in carrying out its objective.

Further on Mr. McGibbon said—

In the past it has been the policy of many organisations to make their subscriptions to our funds "anonymous" and some have been to great pains to see that the subscriptions which reached our Union have been donated through channels which could not be traced.

Now we come to the matter of the separate entity and to "The West Australian" in its leading article trying to make out that Labour bends the knee to outside super-

parliamentary bodies. Here is a newspaper extract of what one of the Country Party leaders in Melbourne had to say—

A voice has been heard crying in Sydney that the Country Party will not merge with any other party. Said the voice, which belongs to a Mr. Wilson, president of the metropolitan branch of the C.P.:

"I say to those who say there should be only two parties, 'Let us have a Country Party and a Labour Party.' The present Leader of the Federal Opposition (Mr. Menzies) was responsible for the non-Labour parties losing thousands of votes in the last elections. If we were to merge with the United Australia Party hundreds of thousands of votes would be given to the Labour Party because so many of our supporters do not like the U.A.P.

It is just as well that the people of Australia are wide awake to the machinations of these Parties in their efforts to secure unanimity of opinion! Let us see what Mr. Menzies thinks of Mr. Fadden, and vice versa. Here is an extract from "The Sunday Times" of the 25th July, 1943. It is headed "Menzies and Fadden Fight" and is as follows:—

Melbourne, Saturday: Political circles are buzzing with another rift in the Opposition forces occasioned by a new outburst of hostility between Mr. R. G. Menzies and Mr. A. W. Fadden.

Speaking at Camberwell last night, Mr. Menzies said he could not support Mr. Fadden's proposal that one-third of taxation taken as post-war credit would be refunded, and added that whatever people said about him (Mr. Menzies) they couldn't accuse him of having deceived his electors.

Today in Brisbane, Mr. Fadden came back with a bitter retort that "this was just another stab in the back from Mr. Menzies and makes another betrayal in the series for which Mr. Menzies is notorious."

That is the man who is going to be the super leader of the anti-Labour forces in Australia! The extract continues—

Hitting back at Mr. Fadden, Mr. Menzies later today replied with this remark: "Have we come to such a pass that one is to be accused, in intemperate terms, of treasonable conduct because one discharges one's plain duty to one's electorate?"

The latest Fadden-Menzies breach is regarded as increasing evidence of the growing disunity of the Opposition forces, in which there have been cleavages in every State.

A rose by any other name will smell as sweet, and the fact that anybody changes his name does not mean that he thereby changes his nature. I do not believe that because the U.A.P. has decided to change its name it has changed its policy or outlook.

I believe that its objective and policy are the same as ever, and I find that those who are very prominent in the new Liberal Party include Mr. Ross McDonald, Mr. J. Bartington, Mr. J. L. Paton, and Mr. S. W. Perry of the Australian Constitutional League. Mr. Ross McDonald is the present Leader of the National Party; Mr. J. L. Paton is President of the National Party; Mr. J. Bartington is an executive member of the National Party; and Mr. S. W. Perry is a member of the National Union. The same old people are in charge and the same old people will be in control. The newspaper extract I have in my hand states—

If the National Union doesn't support the new Liberal Party with its money and its influence, what will it support?

Nobody objects to there being a new party in Australia, because new parties are always interesting, but the average elector will object to having his commonsense insulted by this cheap political confidence trick.

People who are Nationalists and associated with all the Tories that the National Party was associated with at the last election cannot suddenly become "Liberal" overnight.

And perhaps the biggest joke of all is that while the new Liberal Party was enjoying its first days of existence, colleagues of Mr. Ross McDonald in W.A. were busy showing their "Liberalism" by refusing returned soldiers a vote for the Upper House.

I have made those remarks and read those extracts, because I believe that the people of Western Australia are entitled to be placed on their guard in connection with the blandishments of the new party. I come again to the leading article in "The West Australian." It says—

The party should consider means of establishing a multiplicity of active district sub-branches or clubs which will aim to stimulate liberal thought and discussion on public questions, select and train suitable candidates for the State and Federal Parliaments, give factual and inspirational political leadership and include in their agendas sufficient entertainment to make them and keep them popular.

The party that is trying to get the young men and women in this country to swear adherence to it is not prepared to grant a vote to everybody who attains the full rights of citizenship. I do not think the youth of this country, however unsophisticated they may be, will be so foolish as to fall into the trap laid for them. I believe that the United Australia Party—and I do not speak in a personal but in a political sense—has outlived its usefulness and has been discredited because of the disunity that has taken

place within its ranks. I believe that the move made in Canberra recently to endeavour to unify the forces against Labour in the Commonwealth was promoted by big financial interests who will not come to the surface. But Mr. Menzies is their spokesman, and every conceivable effort will be made to achieve some semblance of unity so that they will be able to face the electors at the next Federal election with a united front. They will stop at nothing in an endeavour to capture the Commonwealth Government so that there will be an anti-Labour Party in office when peace is declared. Why do they want that?

After the last war, efforts were made by our opponents, with considerable success, to obtain Commonwealth assets created during the period of hostility. On this occasion I have no doubt that the huge assets created by the Commonwealth in its war activities will be seized upon by business and financial interests, and if we have an anti-Labour Government in power they will be obtained for a song. We have munitions factories, aeroplane factories, shipyards and other Commonwealth activities that have been established with the taxpayers' money, and I have no doubt that that is the real reason behind the effort to unify the forces opposed to us, apart from the fact that the Associated Banks and other financial institutions do not want a virile and progressive Labour Government in office Federally because of the fear of restrictions on their activities. Efforts will undoubtedly be made to unite the forces opposed to Labour. The people of Australia will be wide awake to their efforts, and I do not think they will fall for the propaganda that has been put out for their benefit.

I was prompted to make these remarks by the entirely unfounded and unwarranted innuendoes and insinuations in the leading article of "The West Australian." I reiterate that there is no bowing of the knee by the Labour Party, which came into existence, industrially, in the latter part of last century because of the unjust and sweating conditions that obtained in various parts of this country. If the employers in those days had treated the workers in the mass as human beings and granted them reasonable social justice—and there were no Labour members in Parliament in those days—there probably would never have been the antagonisms that have been en-

gendered over the years. The Labour Party was organised strongly, industrially, and the time ultimately came when it was felt that it also had to capture the political machine because, while organised industrially, it was found that the laws could be trained against it at any stage of the game, and that was done. So after the maritime strike of 1890 and the shearers' strike of 1891 the organised workers of the Commonwealth turned to political action. In those days they called themselves the Australian Labour Party and not once, over the long period of years since, have they had cause to change that name. Because of the unjust conditions to which the workers were subjected they were forced to use the political machine, and on various occasions in Australia's political history they have been able to get control of the Governments.

While we have such opposition and recognise our own frailties and drawbacks the Labour Party has always stood for constitutional action. It has always had a very definite objective and, by degrees, it will carry out its mission of improving the lot of the working-class people of this country. It ill becomes the daily Press, no matter what hostility it shows to Labour, to make efforts to link up our movement with any other that is entirely foreign to us. So I say in conclusion that while we recognise our own weaknesses, this Labour Party of ours cannot afford to rest on its laurels and carry on from day to day as if everything in the garden were lovely. The Labour movement must go forward. It must have the masses of the people supporting it. If the people of this country take an enthusiastic and abiding interest in its welfare, and see that its objectives are carried out as far as possible, it will be in the interests of the country as a whole, and the interests that were recently banded together by Mr. Menzies will have to wait many a long day before being able to capture the political machine of the Commonwealth or that of the State of Western Australia.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.