

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 16th May, 1934.

	PAGE
Questions: Kelmscott-Dale road	276
Tractor fuel	276
Wire netting advances	276
Education, post primary: Free tramway passes	276
Bill: Secession, 2R. etc.	276

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

QUESTION—KELMSCOTT-DALE ROAD.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the Kelmscott-Roleystone-Dale-road been surveyed to provide a good through road? 2, Will he say what is proposed to be done, and, if possible, when?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Not throughout. 2, Improving the road, from Canning River to Slab Gully, a distance of 2½ miles. Work is to be undertaken after the winter.

QUESTION—TRACTOR FUEL.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Lands: In view of the fact that petrol for farm tractors makes development very expensive, and that it is reported that many petrol-driven tractors have been successfully converted into gas-producing tractors, will he have special inquiries made as to the reliability, economy, and cost of such alterations?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The matter is the subject of investigation by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the results achieved by plants in use here and the Eastern States are being carefully followed.

QUESTION—WIRE NETTING, ADVANCES.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is it a fact, as stated in the Press, that the Assistant Commonwealth Treasurer, Mr. Casey, said:—"The first advances made by the Commonwealth for the purchase of wire netting were granted to the State free of interest"? 2, What amount was ad-

vanced, and during which years were advances made for this purpose free of interest? 3, What amount was advanced, and during which years, were advances made upon which interest was charged, and at what rate of interest and sinking fund? 4, What amount of interest and free advances, plus sinking fund, if any, has been repaid to the Commonwealth?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, £88,019 14s. 7d. during the years 1924-1927. 3, £429,630 during the years 1927-1933. Interest at £4 per cent. and sinking fund £2 per cent. per annum. 4, Interest-free advances repaid, £43,493 10s. 2d.; interest paid, £70,163 0s. 5d.; sinking fund paid, £35,081 10s. 4d.; total £148,738 1s. 2d.

QUESTION—EDUCATION, POST PRIMARY.

As to Free Tramway Passes.

Hon. N. KEENAN asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is he aware that children, after attending the Nedlands State school, have to travel to Claremont to finish their post primary education? 2, Is he aware that the children from the Leederville and Thomas-street schools, who also have to travel to Claremont to finish their post primary education, are given free passes on the railways? 3, Have representations been made to him that the children in the Hollywood and Nedlands districts, who cannot use the railway, should be given free passes on the tramways to enable them to attend the Claremont school. 4, If so, will such representations be acceded to? 5, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, Yes. 4, The matter is under consideration. 5, Answered by No. 4.

BILL—SECESSION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [4.35]: In supporting the second reading of the Bill, this Assembly is only carrying out its duty to the electors. As has been pointed out by the Premier and by other speakers, the Bill is the result of the verdict of the electors of the State, and constitutes a direction by

the people to the Government. It is not now necessary to deal with the question of Federation as it affects Western Australia. Suffice it to say that Federation has been weighed in the scales and found wanting. The question of seceding having been decided, the least this Parliament can do is to represent the wishes of the people to the Imperial authorities in the most effective manner possible. I commend the Government for the straight-forward manner in which they have set about giving effect to the referendum. No Government could ignore the decision of such a large majority of electors on such an important question. I congratulate the special committee on the Case presented in support of secession. Members generally will admit that their work is a credit to them and a testimony to their sincerity. I was somewhat surprised at the criticism of those speakers who wished to quibble about the procedure that ought to be adopted in approaching the Imperial authorities. I am afraid I must come to the conclusion that their hearts are not truly in the movement. If there is any matter upon which this Parliament should be unanimous, it is that of the disabilities we suffer under Federation. The Case for separation from the Commonwealth was fought on non-party lines. The electors know from experience that there is no hope of obtaining redress through the State Parliament, or of the State Parliament being able to do anything effective to ease the burden of Federation. I do not think I shall be out of order in saying that the State legislature during the past 30 years has failed miserably in defending the State rights that existed when we entered the Federation. I fail to see that any concerted effort or united purpose has been displayed by the State Parliament to stem the tide of Federal aggression. Our difficulties have become so acute that I am justified in saying that the people are losing faith in the parliamentary system, because of the failure to obtain redress for the disabilities suffered under Federation. There is no doubt about the determination on the part of the people of Western Australia to separate from the Commonwealth; there is also no doubt of their desire that effect should be given to the decision at the referendum. Let me remind members that unless something is done to remedy the existing state of affairs—a good deal of time has elapsed since the referendum was taken—there will be a general disinclination on the part of the people

to trust any parliamentary party, and such mistrust may lead to chaos. One member went so far as to say that the proposed method of presenting the Case to the Imperial authorities had not been approved by his particular party. Unless something is done to ease the Federal burden weighing upon our people, we may find ourselves with only one political party, and that will be bolshevist. Certainly we are not likely to continue to have the well-defined parties that exist to-day. To some extent party bias has stood in the way of our securing redress for our disabilities. I do not wish to insinuate that this is to be laid at the door of the Labour Party alone. Every political party that has been in charge of the Commonwealth Treasury benches has shown a disinclination to lighten the burden, and I consider that every party that has been in power in the State has not sheathed home our difficulties as it should have done. More than 30 years have elapsed since the consummation of Federation, and during those 30 years we have suffered considerably from Federal aggression and encroachment upon State rights. It is not surprising that in the last resort the people have practically taken the matter out of the hands of Parliament by asking for a referendum. The people realised that they could get no redress through the State Parliament, and they requested a referendum so that they might decide the question for themselves. The result of the referendum is known to all of us. After giving full consideration to the question, a large majority of the people have decided that secession is the only cure for our ills and the only way in which to get our disabilities remedied. This Parliament has no alternative to accepting the direction by the people and should, with all seriousness, place the Case for Secession before the Imperial authorities in the most effective manner. I can see no better or more suitable way than that suggested in the Bill. The member for Northam said he saw all the remedies for our ills in an approach to the Federal Parliament. He was going to cure all our troubles by the most ineffectual way imaginable so far as would apply to the Parliament of Western Australia, by going cap in hand to the Federal Parliament. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) indicated that he would just be content to send a formal

delegation, and favoured the "wait-and-see" policy. He invited objection to the mode of procedure set out in the Bill, and thought that a pious resolution carried by this House would be the best plan to adopt. That, of course, would be the last we would hear of the matter, for no further action would be taken. I do not see why there should be any difference of opinion on this subject. The people of the State, as loyal subjects of His Majesty the King, expect their verdict to be accepted, and placed before the British Parliament in the best possible manner. Reasonable expense should not enter into the question. It should be only a secondary consideration. When we consider that so much is at stake, that the future of Western Australia is so greatly concerned, why should we cavil at the cost of a few hundred pounds when millions are involved, and the destinies of our people are in the balance? This is not a party matter, and should not be a contentious question. We cannot, however, get away from the fact that we are at the mercy of the larger and wealthier States. We are leg-ironed, as it were, and will always be at their mercy whilst our present inequality of representation in the Federal Parliament exists. The real questions before the House are those of presenting a petition in the proper manner and the personnel of the delegation it is proposed to send. The Bill provides for a delegation of four persons. I should like to see the number increased so that it may be representative of Parliament as well as of the Government. There should be at least three members of Parliament on the delegation, together with the Agent General for Western Australia, the Crown Solicitor and the Assistant Under Treasurer. We should not cavil at a delegation of five or six. We cannot do without those State officers who so ably filled the positions on the Secession Committee which prepared the Case. Parliament should have the courage to say that this is its wish, so that it may back up this highly important Case. This movement means life or death to Western Australia. Something like 12 months have passed since the referendum was taken. An unduly long time has been spent by this House in dealing with the matter already. It has been said that five or six good business men could manage this country better than Parliament can. Is it not

giving those people further powder and shot to fire at Parliament and members generally by taking so long to deal with this matter? The whole question should have been decided in a week, or at most in a fortnight. I support the second reading of the Bill, and in Committee will support any amendments the Government may bring down to increase the number making up the delegation to six, but not less than five, compared with the four referred to in the Bill.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [4.50]: I wish to say at the outset that I support the second reading of the Bill, not because I am a secessionist, but because the majority of the people have voted for a Case to be submitted to the authorities in Great Britain. A considerable number of people voted for secession who did not want it. That, of course, is their funeral.

Mr. Latham: Surely not their funeral.

MR. SLEEMAN: They voted for it, and the Case must go forward. Dozens of people have said to me since the vote was taken that the reason they voted for secession was to stir up the Commonwealth Government. They thought that by passing a vote for secession, they were going to have a few more pounds put their way by the Commonwealth Government than would otherwise be forthcoming. Others have said this State would never progress under the present tariff. They honestly believe that if this State got out of Federation they would get rid of the tariff. They argue that Western Australia's industries have to be built up, and that we must get rid of the tariff in order to do so. They cannot have it both ways. If the industries are to be built up, they cannot abolish the tariff. I will say to those who voted for secession with the idea of getting rid of the tariff, that they are destined to be badly let down. Irrespective of the Government that may be in power in this State, whether Labour, Liberal, Country Party or Independent Party, the tariff will still remain more or less as it is to-day.

Mr. Stubbs: We want a moderate tariff.

MR. SLEEMAN: There are one or two directions from which it is possible to obtain tariff relief. Not even the Labour Party stands for the tariff as it is arranged to-day, and do not believe in some of it. I wish to refer particularly to the attitude adopted by one or two sections of the Press concerning this Bill and concerning members of Parliament. We have reached the stage when,

unless members hold the same opinion as that held by certain journals, they are going to be blackguarded and blackmailed in the hope of forcing them to vote the way those journals desire. I might not have risen to my feet this afternoon but for one or two things that have happened recently. During the present debate articles have been written in newspapers to which one would like to refer as a section of the Press, but which I would call pink sausage wrappers. The paper I have in mind should not be allowed to circulate in the home of any decent man. It has published articles which have practically amounted to blackmail, and published statements about me in connection with this Bill that support my view with regard to blackmailing. Let me quote one or two extracts. I would first point out that these statements were broadcast to the people throughout the length and breadth of the country. Citizens living in other parts of the State may well believe the statements because they heard them over the wireless.

Mr. Hawke: Are you referring to the "Sunday Slimes?"

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would call it a pink sausage wrapper. The headings appeared in large letters, as follows:-

LUMPERS' ACTION.

Causes Stir at the Port.

Refusal to Listen to Labour Members.

Mr. J. B. Sleeman, M.L.A., and several other Labour politicians attempted to address a largely attended meeting of lumpers one morning during the past week in support of Mr. Fraser, but the lumpers refused to listen to them.

In associating himself with Mr. W. D. Johnson in attacking the Premier, Mr. Collier, on the Secession Bill, Mr. Sleeman has evidently jeopardised his position in Fremantle.

There are people connected with the "Sunday Times" who draw parliamentary pay. If ever a man drew his pay under false pretences, it is the one to whom I am referring. I maintain that I earn my parliamentary pay. Evidently this particular individual thinks he can come here when he likes, stay for a few minutes when Parliament is in session, and then take his departure.

Mr. Hawke: He certainly takes it under false pretences.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The article in question continues—

They resent the heroics of Mr. J. B. Sleeman, and expect him to support the Secession Bill as it stands. Are you listening Mr. Sleeman? And are you listening, also, Messrs. Tonkin, Fraser and Gray?

This is the most lying statement that was ever published in a journal in this country. It was pointed out to me in my own home, for I would not allow the paper itself to pass through the doors. After I had seen it, I went back to the lumpers the paper talked about. On this occasion very few men had been picked up, and the meeting was largely attended. I read out to the men the statement which appeared in the "Sunday Times" and said, "I want to know from you whether you agree with the statement, or whether you are behind the attitude of the member for Fremantle." I told them my attitude on this Bill. I called for a show of hands, and asked those who were in favour of the statement in the "Sunday Times," that the men had refused to listen to me, and so forth, to put up their hands, but not one hand went up. I then asked if they were in favour of my attitude on this Bill, and they immediately showed that they were unanimously in favour of it. Let the "Sunday Times" publish that answer if they have the principle of a louse. I do not expect they will do so. So long as I am in this Chamber, the "Sunday Times" will never dictate to me as to my policy. If I have to stay in the public life of this country so that I may oblige the "Sunday Times" or any other journal, I will not stay in it for a day. I am sent here to express the wishes of the people and to do the right thing, and while I am here that is the policy I am going to endeavour to follow. This sort of thing is nothing new to the "Sunday Times." It is already responsible for the death of one of the best men we ever had in the country, the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor. It is not going to be responsible for my death. It may be able to cause the death of eminent Government officers, but it will never be the cause of my death. Whilst I have life in my body, I will fight this kind of thing, especially when members are being blackmailed and threatened because they will not do what the paper wants them to do. Part of the Case for Secession is that our industries are

being ruined, that we are being bled white, and that if we get secession, all will be well. These sentiments were freely expressed during the secession campaign. I will endeavour to be consistent. I would remind members of the occasion when I put up a fight for local industries and for State industries in particular. The continuance of the State Implement Works would have meant giving employment to hundreds of men, but members disagreed with my claims. Of what use is it to talk about building up Western Australia's industries when members will not do anything to help in that direction? I want to show the attitude of some people who have been loudest in their condemnation of Eastern States industries in relation to those in Western Australia, who have spoken about the country being ruined, and have claimed that if we get secession, everything will be all right. They have talked about the competition from the Eastern States. I wish to read an advertisement from the "Bulletin." This may refresh the memory of some people and show how they have attempted to double-cross this State and how traitorous has been their attitude. In some countries people would have been shot for such a thing. In the "Bulletin" of 7th March last there appeared an advertisement inserted by the "Sunday Times." It reads:—

"Things are moving in the West!" Visitors to the Golden West express pleasant surprise at the state of trade, the outward signs of prosperity and the progress in Western Australia. Western gold mines produced 80 per cent. of Australia's gold last year. Western pastoralists have received splendid prices for wool. The building trade is getting back to pre-depression days.

—There is trade—good trade—for Eastern States merchants. Reach out for it by using the largest newspaper in the West, the Perth "Sunday Times."

Can the House imagine this particular newspaper, the "Sunday Times" run by a member of this House, one of the greatest advocates of secession, one of the men who say our country is being bled white, desiring to deal with the Eastern States octopus that is getting all our trade. Was there ever a bigger political Judas in the country than the owner of that newspaper? The hon. member to whom I have referred invites Eastern States people to come over here and get a trade—big trade, good trade. "Come over here and get

it," he says. And this is the attitude of a newspaper which tries to blackmail members of Parliament into voting as that newspaper wishes.

Mr. Latham: The "Sunday Times" is inviting people in the Eastern States to start industries here.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Not so. Did the "Sunday Times" ever do anything to advance this State's industries? Never. Did not that paper violently oppose, for instance, the State Implement Works? I hope I shall receive a couple of columns by way of reply in the next issue. Look at the way the paper double-crosses the people of Western Australia! Recently the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) set out to reprimand the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) severely. The member for Nedlands waxed quite eloquent in his condemnation of the manner in which the member for Guildford-Midland had raised objections to the Bill. He declared that the member for Guildford-Midland was utterly wrong and, in fact, did not know what he was talking about. Thereupon the member for Nedlands proceeded to congratulate the Premier, saying that the hon. gentleman was the finest man in Western Australia and the very man to lead the delegation; but listening to the member for Nedlands over the wireless the other night one would have thought that the Premier was a person with whom no self-respecting man could associate. According to the member for Nedlands over the wireless, the Labour Party and the Labour Government and the Labour Premier have done everything they should not have done and left undone everything they should have done, and there is no health in them.

Mr. Hawke: That was a separate brief, though!

The Premier: For different clients!

Mr. SLEEMAN: Now the member for Nedlands sets out to scold members on this side of the Chamber who ventured to say anything against the Bill, although it is emphatically a non-party measure. The Premier knows, and has frankly acknowledged, that members on this side are free to vote as they choose unless the measure under consideration is a policy measure, when we are all behind the Premier and support him unanimously in accordance with our platform. We agree that a petition should be sent Home, but because we have a few slight differences as to procedure the member for

Nedlands chastises us as bad boys and declares that we ought not to have anything to say against the Bill. On this measure the Premier is entitled to say what he thinks and we are entitled to say what we think. The Premier does what he thinks is right, but what we think is slightly erroneous. As regards members on the other side of the Chamber, the whip is cracked whether a Bill introduced by a Government of theirs is a policy Bill or not.

Opposition Members: No!

Mr. SLEEMAN: I shall now try to show why, in the opinion of the member for Nedlands, the member for Guildford-Midland is pretty nearly right. In 1906 the member for Nedlands, then Attorney General, a young man in the vigour of life—or, to use a motoring phrase, sparking on seven plugs—made a speech on the subject of secession. I quote the following from the speech:—

It has been said here by many members that there is a certain provision in the Constitution of the Commonwealth which may be invoked for the purpose of dissolving the union of any one of the States with the Commonwealth. However, I venture to differ from that. The Constitution Act does not make any provision whatever for the withdrawal of any of the States from the union they entered into. In fact, I may call the attention of members to the wording in the recital of the Act. It is recited that the sovereign States therein named and the people of those States have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth; in one that cannot be dissolved; and therefore, it is impossible to invoke any provision in the Constitution Act on which it would be open for any State to withdraw from the union it then entered into.

Mr. Foulkes: The British Parliament can amend that Act.

The Attorney General (Hon. N. Keenan): The hon. member suggests another course as soon as he finds that the one already suggested is not a practicable one. Supposing that were the case, supposing the Imperial authority had the power, and I will not question it, to remove from the provisions of the Constitution Act one of the original constituent States; is it at all likely they would exercise that right? Surely the hon. member must know that if we were to ask the Imperial Parliament by petition to act in that direction, we should be absolutely certain of a refusal on their part. Their reply would certainly be this: "Of your own free will you entered into a union only a few years ago, and we are not going to dissolve that union merely because, acting under some temporary stress of difficulties, you come and ask us to do so." Let me make this confession, that in common I think with everyone—in common certainly with a great majority—I am disappointed with the results of Federation.

I was one of those who actively advocated the union of this State with the other States of the Commonwealth in a common Federation, and I did not do so with a desire of producing unification but only Federation. Unfortunately, matters have so trended that instead of remaining a pure Federation there has been a considerable attempt to centralise everything in one particular State to the detriment of the outlying States; and in so far as that tendency has produced ill effects, I am prepared to admit at once it is our duty to strongly oppose it, and if in the long result every legitimate effort were made, and such legitimate effort produced nothing but failure, then it would become necessary to consider not namby-pamby resolutions expressing disgust or dissent or anything else, but whether the price we were paying for Federation as it then existed, the unification of the whole of the Commonwealth in one centre, as it might be if the Constitution were abused, was not too great, and whether it would not be better to face the risk of a direct attempt to break away by physical force rather than continue to belong to it.

"By physical force." Put up your guns like men!

Hon. N. Keenan: I did not use those words.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Let me quote again what the hon. member said—

Break away by physical force rather than continue to belong to it (Federation).

If there were any other way of breaking loose from the Federation, I am convinced that an Attorney General, a responsible person, would not have talked of using physical force. The 1906 speech of the hon. member proceeds—

That can only arrive when as men we have come to the conclusion that it is worth the acceptance of the risk to adopt physical force, because it is perfectly safe to say that if we wish to break the bond of Federation we can only do so by absolutely setting our own physical force against any force that the Commonwealth can bring to bear.

Mr. Walker: We could present our case to the British Parliament.

The Attorney General: The hon. member talks of presenting a case to the Imperial Parliament. Who, does he think, would have the big end of the stick if we presented our case, this State or the Commonwealth? Does he imagine that his voice would reach all the way to the Parliament at Westminster?

Mr. Bath: Suppose they did interfere, what would be the result then?

The Attorney General: Suppose it were possible to reach there, does the hon. member really in his senses think that the power and influence of the Commonwealth and the expression of their determination and that of other

States would be put on one side, and that the objection of a fraction of the whole of the population of one State would prevail? . . . I admit, as I have said before, my own grave disappointment with the results of Federation; I admit that this State particularly has cause to complain of its results; but I am prepared, just as we all would be prepared in our private lives, to allow a sufficient time to elapse that the machine may get into proper working order; and then, if after we have given it every fair trial, it proves a failure, let us make up our minds not as movers and seconders of resolutions which look very mighty on paper but really amount to nothing, rather let us act to the fullest extent of our manhood in asserting the rights which we believe require their assertion by physical force. It would be disgraceful on my part, holding an official position, to advocate physical force; but I only point out what I think is the alternative to which we must be driven if we adopt the attitude that apparently some members wish to adopt, of now and forever expressing our dissatisfaction with Federation.

I suggest that the legal position has not altered since the member for Nedlands delivered that speech in 1906 as Attorney General; or, if the position has altered, it has changed for the worse so far as we are concerned, because the Statute of Westminster makes the position no easier. The member for Nedlands in 1906 could express a definite opinion that the only way we had of getting out of Federation was to put up guns and fight. I hope the day will never come when we do that. I shall not be behind the hon. member then.

The Minister for Mines: I hope you will be a long way behind.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, probably I shall be a long way behind. If the member for Nedlands really wishes to get secession, why does he fool the people by telling them that this is the correct way to go about it? Why does he not marshal his forces, order his brown or blue or green shirt army to come along and say to them, "March! Let us obtain separation by physical force!" In view of what the hon. member stated in 1906, I contend that he is only fooling the people of Western Australia by letting them think we shall get anywhere with the present proposal.

Mr. Lambert: Other countries have got free.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think any country in the world ever had more liberty than Western Australia has now. If the hon. member interjecting wants to be the lieutenant of the member for Nedlands, he is quite free to take that position; but, as I said before, I shall be a long way behind if ever the

march takes place. My view is that if ever we are to take up arms, it should be in order to keep Australia one and not to split it into fragments.

Mr. Hawke: The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) has had a lot of military experience with emus.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I object to that portion of the Bill which provides for the sending of a delegation to London. A delegation would not get anywhere. However, as the people have by a majority voted in favour of secession, it is right to give way. On the other hand, we have no right to spend a great deal of money on a delegation, which will not cost, as the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) first suggested, a few hundred, but several thousands, as that hon. member himself finally admitted. There are many better ways of spending a few thousands. At the present time the Government are doing all they can and making every possible penny a prisoner to provide extra work for people who are unemployed and food for those who are unable to maintain themselves.

Mr. Latham: If the expenditure of this money were the means of providing more employment in future, would not the money be well spent?

Mr. SLEEMAN: But we have the statement of the member for Nedlands that secession is an impossibility.

Mr. Latham: But we also have the statement of the member for Nedlands that effect can be given to the referendum vote in favour of secession.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Which statement are we to believe?

Mr. Latham: This one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SLEEMAN: I venture to say that even the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that this procedure will not get us anywhere. I venture to say that if the Leader of the Opposition speaks as he thinks, he will acknowledge that the sending of a delegation Home cannot help us to arrive anywhere. Unfortunately, the Government have not at present too much money to provide extra work for the unemployed and to feed those who are unable to feed themselves.

Mr. Thorn: But the majority of the people of the State have asked us to do this.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Not so. Indeed, I am in the happy position of knowing that a portion of my electorate has definitely expressed

itself as in agreement with the attitude of the member for Fremantle.

Mr. Latham: If you take the complete figures, you cannot say that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A lot of people voted for secession who did not want secession, and the Leader of the Opposition knows that that was so.

Mr. Latham: I do not know that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Many people on that occasion said that it was a gesture, but it has become more than that.

Mr. Latham: I know some people who, after reading the Case, said they would have voted for secession had they been aware of the facts.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I think the Government have an idea that unless they send a delegation to the Old Country in support of the claim for secession, they will be accused of not endeavouring to put the Case through.

Mr. Thorn: I think that is right, too.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think so. That charge could not be levelled against the Government with truth. On the other hand, we have in London our Agent-General, Sir Hal Colebatch, who is a most able man and an ardent secessionist.

Mr. Lambert: Did we refer to him in those terms when he was here?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes. We respected him for his views, although we tried to beat him when we had the opportunity. Everyone will agree that in our present Agent-General we have a most able man.

Mr. Hawke: You did not say that when he went to Fremantle.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The only time I knew him to be cleaned up was at Northam, when Mr. Curtin went along.

Mr. Lambert: But what about the Fremantle episode?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That was one of those instances of the use of physical force, to which the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) referred in 1906.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member had better get back to the Bill.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There is no man I know of who could more ably present the Case than Sir Hal Colebatch. As an ardent secessionist, he can be relied upon to do his best to present the Case adequately and to further the claims for secession. In my opinion, we will not get far with the Case, if it is submitted in its present form. If it were altered considerably, Sir Hal Colebatch might be able to put up a decent fight.

The Premier should be careful about some of his new admirers because they will drop him at the first opportunity.

Mr. Thorn: That is not correct.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I know it is correct, and I want to utter a note of warning to the Premier.

The Premier: Yes, I am quite new-fledged in this position! Perhaps, after all, the warning may be regarded as quite unnecessary, although I admire the spirit in which it has been given.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope the second reading of the Bill will be agreed to and that the measure will be given effect to in accordance with the wishes of the people. I hope the Case will be altered more in accordance with our desires and I hope that not much money will be spent on the delegation if one is to be sent Home. If that should be the resultant position, the people will be able to rest assured the Government have done all that, 12 months ago, they promised to do.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.18]: As a young Australian, it is but natural that I feel some regret that circumstances compel me to adopt a course of action that may possibly result, even though the possibility is remote, in the dismemberment of the Australian nation. I cannot understand why any true-blue Australian should not frankly regret the possibility, which certainly does exist at the present juncture, and which may have the effect I indicate, even though it be remote. I pledged my word that whatever the decision of the people might be on this question, no action of mine would obstruct anything done by the Government to give effect to that decision. Therefore, I intend to support the Bill. On the other hand, the Bill requires that our approval shall be given to the Case which accompanies it.

The Premier: Not "approval."

Mr. TONKIN: That is what the Bill says.

The Premier: No, that is not there.

Mr. TONKIN: I have not sufficient experience of procedure in this House to know whether I may quote from a Bill, but if I am permitted to do so, I would like to read these words—

And whereas the said joint Committees of both Houses of Parliament was duly appointed, and thereafter made a recommendation that a committee be appointed consisting of Messrs.

C. Dudley, J. Lindsay, A. J. Reid, J. Sead-
dan, J. L. Walker, and H. K. Watson to pre-
pare a dutiful Address to His Majesty, the
Statement of the Case for Secession, and hum-
ble Applications to both Houses of the Im-
perial Parliament as may be necessary to effect
the withdrawal of the People of the State from
the Federal Commonwealth and to submit the
Case for the subsequent approval of both
Houses of Parliament. . . .

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Thereby hangs a
tale.

The Premier: We will be able to argue
about that in Committee.

Mr. TONKIN: Those words surely mean
that the Case has to be submitted for the
approval of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Latham: But the Bill does not carry
that out, does it?

Mr. TONKIN: Where the Case represents
a recital of facts, I am prepared to approve
of it, but when it amounts to an expression
of personal opinions, I am not prepared to
approve of its contents, because my opin-
ions are different from those indicated in
the document. For instance, elaborate argu-
ments are embodied dealing with free trade
and protection, in which direction opinions
are expressed with which I would not agree
for one moment.

The Premier: Neither would I.

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot give my approval
to the Case when it contains such matters,
unless I have the right to amend the docu-
ment.

The Premier: Neither would I give my
approval.

Mr. TONKIN: But if I read the Bill
aright, as it stands now, we will not have
that power. We cannot amend either the
Bill or the Case.

The Premier: Yes, you can.

Mr. TONKIN: Then we shall see. The
member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) asked
that question, and I looked through the Bill
to ascertain if I could supply the answer to
my own satisfaction.

The Premier: You can move to amend
the Bill in any way you like.

Mr. TONKIN: I am speaking more par-
ticularly of the Case.

The Premier: Yes, and the Case too.

Mr. TONKIN: But the Bill refers to the
submission of the Case for the approval of
both Houses of Parliament! It does not
refer to the Case "as amended by either the
Legislative Assembly or the Legislative
Council."

The Premier: Of course it is subject to
amendment.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If we amend any
portion of it, then the Case, as it stands,
will not be endorsed by Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: I should say that the Bill,
as it stands, does not permit us to do any-
thing of the sort.

The Premier: The reference you have
quoted means the Bill as it has gone through
Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: I think it necessary that
something should be inserted to indicate that
the measure has gone forward as amended
by Parliament.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, we should strike
out that particular clause.

Mr. TONKIN: Or we could amend it.

The Minister for Mines: It may keep us
till next year if we are to amend the Case.

Mr. TONKIN: That raises a further diffi-
culty. Having regard to the bulkiness of
the Case, the job confronting us of amend-
ing it involves going through the whole of
it. What will be our position if we alter
it at all? Parliament will be responsible
for the whole of it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We are only re-
sponsible for it as we pass it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think discus-
sions of this description should take place
in Committee and not at this stage.

Mr. TONKIN: I should not be held re-
sponsible for a measure I cannot amend,
nor should I be held responsible for a docu-
ment that contains expressions of opinion
of other people. If Parliament endorses
the document, then we become responsible
for the whole Case.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You will be respon-
sible all right.

Mr. TONKIN: As I indicated at the out-
set, it is only natural that I should have a
feeling of regret that circumstances will
force me into being party to an action that
may possibly result in the dismemberment of
the Australian nation. On the other hand,
there has been one bright light during the
debate. The member for Nedlands (Hon.
N. Keenan) has prepared the people that
they may fall lightly. It is common know-
ledge that during the referendum cam-
paign, the view was placed before the peo-
ple that Secession was their only hope of
salvation. They were told that our ills
were almost wholly and solely the result of
Federation, and that Secession would re-

move those disabilities; on the consummation of Secession, everything in the garden was to be lovely. Now we find that, during the course of the present debate, the member for Nedlands has indicated that that is not the view he adopts. On the other hand, he has contented himself with saying that while we remain within the Federation, Western Australia will have no chance, but if we can get out of Federation, we will have a chance. He did not quote the odds. Are they 100 to one or 1,000 to one?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, 1,000,000 to one.

Mr. TONKIN: At least the member for Nedlands, by his utterance, indicated that he does not expect a great deal from Secession, and I commend him for telling the people that much. A number of prominent men led the people to believe that immediately Secession became an accomplished fact, we would be in for a wonderful time. The member for Nedlands made it clear, however, that the road will be long and hard to travel. Those were not his exact words, but that was what he implied.

The Premier: He was a bit more honest than most political and other leaders who have suggested that the road will be easy.

Mr. TONKIN: At any rate the member for Nedlands has not adopted that attitude, and I commend him for his remarks.

Mr. Hawke: It would have been better had he given expression to that opinion when the referendum campaign was in progress.

Mr. TONKIN: We have had a lot of verbiage during the debate, and last night we listened to a marvellously declamatory utterance, which suggested that sincerity was the monopoly of one particular member.

The Premier: Did you say "sincerity"?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes. For my part, I think there is a great deal of insincerity about the whole business.

Mr. Hawke: My word there is.

Mr. TONKIN: A number of men who are taking a prominent part in the movement are not adopting that attitude because they think this action will result ultimately in benefit to Western Australia. Their action is governed by what they consider will be the interests of No. 1.

Mr. Hawke: And many of them will tell you so privately.

Mr. TONKIN: It is because of that, that people should be very chary in giving whole-hearted support to the movement that has been so prominently before us during the last year or two. I have no desire to detain the House any longer. I hope the position regarding the Case will be thoroughly examined, and that we will not be forced into accepting responsibility for a document in connection with which we are to have no say in altering or amending where we consider necessary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—in reply) [5.28]: I have no objection to offer to the manner in which the Bill has been received. Even those who have criticised it and have offered objections to it, have done so in accordance with their feelings and beliefs. I do not propose to delay the House at any length in replying to the debate, mainly because I feel that there has been little that calls for a reply. The issue is very simple indeed. At the outset Parliament passed a Bill, which became an Act, authorising the taking of a referendum. Subsequently a referendum was taken in order to ascertain the views of the electors of the State on this all-important question. The result of that referendum was, in round figures, a two to one majority in favour of Secession. At the time the referendum was taken a general election was held and I, on behalf of the party of which I was leader, said to the people of this country that whilst we took no definite part in the referendum, each of our candidates being free to express his own individual opinion, either for or against Secession, whatever the result of the vote might be, our party, if we should come into office, would do our utmost to give effect to the will of the people as expressed at that referendum. That was perfectly fair and definite.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We all subscribed to it.

The PREMIER: In a moment I will deal with the way in which I think some members are subscribing to it now. That is another question. However, we did that; we went to the country and gave that promise. We were fortified in adopting that attitude at the elections by a long-standing plank of the platform of the Labour Party, namely the initiative and referendum. That has been one of our standbys.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It does not apply to the Bill.

The PREMIER: Apparently there is a difference between my interpretation and the hon. member's interpretation of that plank in our platform. However, the verdict was given by the people, and the Government were obliged to carry out that promise. The result is that this Bill is now here. What is the objection to it? Some members say it is not the right way to give effect to the will of the people; that instead of its being presented in this form by way of a Bill it should have been by an Address to His Majesty the King.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You said that.

The PREMIER: I did? When?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: When introducing it to the House.

The PREMIER: The hon. member, if he quotes that authority which constituted a committee to prepare the Case, knows quite differently. Anyway, I put it to any member who wishes to give effect to the promise made to the people, whether it be by way of an Address to the King or by way of this Bill, what is the hon. member quibbling about? It is the difference between tweedle-dum and tweedledee. Of course he is only trying to side-step the issue and get around the promise made to the people by attacking the manner of the presentation of the Case. It is nothing more nor less.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There is the constitutional aspect.

The PREMIER: Constitutional rubbish! What does it matter? The whole quarrel of the hon. member is that this is not the proper way in which to present it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Not the right way; that it ought to be presented through an Address to the King, not by way of a Bill. That is the hon. member's objection, that it ought to be presented by way of an Address to the King.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: By resolution of both Houses.

The PREMIER: Let me put this to the hon. member: he says it should go forward to the King by way of resolution of both Houses.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is the proper way.

The PREMIER: It may be so; I do not agree.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It has always been done.

The PREMIER: Not always, because nothing of this kind has ever been done before. But suppose that should be the right way, and that this way, by Bill, is the wrong way; does that call for much disagreement?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Yes.

The PREMIER: All those who at the last elections subscribed to give effect to the vote of the people subscribed to a principle, not to a form. They agreed on the platforms of this country to give effect to the vote of the people. Nothing was said about whether it was to be done by dropping something in a pillar box and sending it by post. The hon. member is a great stickler for constitutional methods, and I hope I am not doing him an injustice when I say that by raising this point of having it done in what he regards as a constitutional way, he is trying to give effect to his own individual opinion rather than to the vote of the people.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is you who are doing that.

The PREMIER: That is the attitude of the hon. member. What does it matter whether it goes forward by way of Address or by way of a petition?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I will tell you.

The PREMIER: The main obligation on this Parliament is to give effect to the will of the people and, let me say, not to do it in a slipshod, lukewarm way, but to do it in the most effective and proper way. Labour members would be letting down one of the principles they stand for, and letting down the platform of the party which stands for the referendum, if the party's representatives in this House were to arrogate to themselves the right to decide in what manner they should give effect to that great principle cherished by that great party. Suppose members of the Labour Party in this House were to adopt this attitude towards the people: "Well, you are taking a referendum on something, but if we do not agree with your decision we will not put it forward in any effective manner." What would the people think? There is honesty required in these matters, that honesty which prescribes that not only are we pledged to the principle of the referendum and to give effect to the voice of the people, but we are in honour bound to attempt to carry it out in the most effective manner; not in a slipshod way, merely dropping an envelope in a pillar-box.

We are bound to do it in the most effective way, and that is all the Bill seeks to do. Without imputing motives to any member on this side of the House, I say members should be very careful in dealing with the Bill, careful in determining whether they are giving effect to their own individual opinions on Seccession or whether they are carrying out the great principle of the Labour platform, that the vote of the majority must prevail.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I am very careful about that.

The PREMIER: Yes, the hon. member has always been very careful about that; I am quite aware of that. Perhaps we shall have something to say about that later on. On behalf of the Government, I dissent entirely from the view that some members of the Labour Party—not necessarily in the House, but perhaps outside—apparently entertain, I dissent from the attitude adopted of putting the Government in the wrong in regard to Labour principles.

Hon W. D. Johnson: That will have to be fought out.

The PREMIER: Yes, and I know the way in which I will fight it out, and I know also how the hon. member started it and what a wretched attitude it is.

Hon W. D. Johnson: In this House.

The PREMIER: And outside, too.

Hon W. D. Johnson: I did not.

The PREMIER: The Government, in regard to the Bill, have not departed one iota from accepted and generally known Labour principles, notwithstanding which some members would have the rank and file outside believe otherwise.

Hon W. D. Johnson: I can prove that.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can prove anything to the satisfaction of his own mind.

Hon W. D. Johnson: I have to prove it to satisfy the Labour people outside.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can prove anything to his own satisfaction, but unfortunately for him he has never been able to prove anything in regard to Labour principles to any large number, inside or outside the House.

Hon W. D. Johnson: Yet I have been there a good while.

The PREMIER: Yes, but notwithstanding his proofs, the hon. member has never got anywhere much. I want to deal with the hon member's comments on the Bill: I

wish to do that in defence of the Government, and in defence of Labour principles, for I should be sorry if those amongst the electors who support Labour should accept the hon. member's ideas as to what are real Labour principles. For instance, in his speech on the second reading he said—

It is no good telling me that this is an open question, that every member is free to vote as he likes.

Why should it be no good?

Hon W. D. Johnson: Because you have a majority here, irrespective of the way in which I may vote.

The PREMIER: The voting that will take place in Committee will show whether or not it is an open question. The hon. member said it was of no use telling him that every member was free to vote as he liked. What justification is there for that statement?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The passing of your Bill is assured.

The PREMIER: But whatever happens to the Bill, whatever the voting may be, surely it does not involve the point whether this is a free and open question or not!

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I was speaking, not from that point of view, but from the Labour point of view.

The PREMIER: "The Labour point of view," says the hon. member. I can gather what is in his mind. He said, "Members are not free to vote as they like."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I did not say so.

The PREMIER: "Hansard" says that the hon. member did say so. I am quoting from "Hansard."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I did not say that.

The PREMIER: I am quoting from "Hansard."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That would be contradicting myself. I admit, as you say, that it is an open question. Caucus decided that way. Why should I say it is not?

The PREMIER: I cannot understand why. It is one of the extraordinary things that the hon. member so frequently does say. He contradicts him-self. I have never known him to speak for 15 minutes without contradicting him-self, without affirming something at the beginning of his remarks and negativing it before sitting down. I have quoted the hon. member's words. I know what is in the hon. member's mind. He has

in mind that this Bill, if carried, will be carried by the votes of the Opposition.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is what I said.

The PREMIER: I quoted the hon. member's words. However, I will accept that statement if the hon. member likes to correct "Hansard" in that way.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is in "Hansard."

The PREMIER: The hon. member says that the Bill will be carried by the votes of the Opposition.

Mr. Patrick: It will be carried by a majority of this House.

The PREMIER: Is there anything wrong with a Bill being carried by a majority of the House, even though the majority include members of the Opposition? There are no Labour principles involved.

Mr. Latham: It is really supporting Labour principles.

The PREMIER: This issue was made a non-party question at the last election. Every member on this side of the House or on the other side of the House was free to declare himself one way or the other. Every member on the Government side is free to vote as he likes. So, in a free and open vote on an issue which is not a party question and was not a party question at the election, what is wrong with the Bill being carried by a majority of this House? Even though the majority should come from the other side of the House, what is wrong with it?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I will explain.

The PREMIER: Of course the hon. member will explain in his own peculiar way. I know what is behind that kind of talk and insinuation. The inference is that in some way or other, according to the explanation that may be made by the hon. member, this Bill infringes the Labour platform and Labour principles, and the present Government are only able to get it passed by the House with the support of Labour's opponents. That is what is behind it all. The hon. member is trying to get that into the minds of the electors who sent us here.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Committee stage will prove or disprove that.

The PREMIER: It will prove a lot. That is the motive behind the hon. member's remarks. That sort of thing will not go down. The hon. member cannot put the present

Government, or any member of it, in the wrong as regards Labour principles on this or on any other question.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Government cannot put me in the wrong, either.

The PREMIER: Of course not.

The Minister for Mines: The Government are not trying to put the member for Guildford-Midland in the wrong. He is trying to put us in the wrong.

The PREMIER: That is the point. The hon. member, in his own peculiar way and by his own peculiar methods, is trying to put the Government in the wrong with the men and women who returned them to this House, and he cannot do it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We shall see.

The PREMIER: There are members of the Government whose record will bear comparison even with that great record that the hon. member gave himself in his second reading speech. Well, there are no babies in Labour principles amongst the members of the Government, and I venture to say that they will not be put in the wrong by the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Time will show.

The PREMIER: If I may say so, the hon. member is designedly trying to put us in the wrong.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not right.

The PREMIER: The hon. member said—

It does not matter how I vote, or how the rank and file of the Labour Party vote.

That is a good old gag—the rank and file—and I know how it has been used by designing leaders.

The Government are assured of a majority because we know the Bill will appeal unanimously to members of the Opposition.

That is the point I have been making. The inference he would have Labour supporters draw is that a Bill that appeals unanimously to the Opposition must of necessity be opposed to Labour principles.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Oh no.

The PREMIER: The hon. member also said—

If members of the Cabinet stick to their Bill, as they will, they, plus the Opposition, can have effect given to the measure.

See the vein running through it! The hon. member conveys to the rank and file of the Labour movement that the Bill will be passed with the support of the Opposition, and the inference is that, if it gets through with the

support of the Opposition, it must of necessity be opposed to Labour principles.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I believe it is.

The PREMIER: The hon. member does not believe it at all; he is merely talking that way. The hon. member also said—

In those circumstances, what is the good of telling me that members have freedom of action?

In what way is their freedom of action hampered? Has the hon. member's freedom of action been hampered? Has he not enough amendments on the notice paper? If the hon. member has been hampered, we might arrange for a double-sized notice paper. Looking at his list of amendments, I cannot believe that his freedom of action has been restricted in any way.

Mr. Latham: Anyhow, he did say in a lukewarm manner that he would give effect to the will of the people.

The PREMIER: In his speech the hon. member said—

In those circumstances what is the good of telling me that members have freedom of action, seeing that the Bill has already been launched, and we must realise that we have no power to secure any drastic amendments that we may regard as necessary?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That part is worth re-reading.

The PREMIER: I do not propose to re-read it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It clinches my argument.

The PREMIER: It is all rubbish and nonsense. To use a phrase that was frequently employed by another hon. member in this Chamber last evening, there is not a scrap of sincerity behind it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the Premier is not accusing the member for Guildford-Midland of being insincere.

The PREMIER: No, I was referring to the member who spoke last evening, but I hope there will be some connection. The hon. member also said—

The Labour movement has been a big movement, dealing with big questions in a big way.

I quite agree with that. It has been my privilege to be associated with the Labour movement for a longer term of years, I venture to say, than the hon. member can claim.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: A long while.

The PREMIER: I can show a union ticket dating further back, I venture to

say, than any that can be shown by the hon. member.

Mr. Hawke: Not in the awful A.W.U., I hope.

The PREMIER: Yes, it was in the A.W.U. The hon. member added—

Tonight, however, we find that great party degenerated to the extent of piloting through Parliament a Bill of this kind.

Degenerated! That was an unworthy remark for the hon. member to make. He said the Government had been guilty of introducing into this House a Bill that evidenced degeneration in the great Labour movement, the members of which, I maintain, compare favourably with the hon. member.

I regret what is being done. It is not worthy of the Labour Party. It is not up to the standard set by the Labour movement of old.

What balderdash! What is there in the Bill that detracts from the standard of the Labour movement of old? What is there in the Bill that in any way reveals degeneration either of Labour principles or of the Labour movement? The hon. member made those wretched and extravagant statements for the purpose of influencing people outside the House who do not know the facts. The charge of the hon. member is that members of the Government, in introducing the Bill, have done something revealing degeneration in the Labour movement and lowering the movement from the standard occupied of old. I stand here to-night to answer that charge. What shadow of justification is there for such statements? Is there any one line or word in the Bill to justify any honest man, any impartial man, or any decently impartial critic in making such an observation?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is extravagant language.

The PREMIER: For extravagance my language is not to be compared with that employed in the quotations I have read. The language I am using is mild in comparison with the contemptible language employed by the hon. member. It is unworthy of any honourable, honest and decent Labour man to make such a charge.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

The PREMIER: The hon. member ought to be ashamed. I rather feel that he is ashamed, now that I am quoting his re-

marks. Does it lie with him to make a charge of this kind against this Government, to say that we have done something to degenerate the Labour movement; does it lie with him to make the charge to which I have just alluded? It does not lie with him; above all men that I know, least should it come from the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I invite you to say what you mean. You are only insinuating.

The PREMIER: I am speaking against the hon. member's arguments.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are making insinuations.

The PREMIER: The hon. member cannot bluff me. I am arguing against his statements. I am not insinuating any more than he insinuated things in his remarks.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Mine was a straightforward declaration.

The PREMIER: He has made a direct charge against this Government. He has not insinuated it, but has made a direct charge.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is what I prefer you to do.

The PREMIER: My charge against the hon. member is that he has no authority to do this, and is absolutely wrong. Am I going beyond that? The hon. member made a charge against the Government of jeopardising the Labour principles. That was a direct charge.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Undoubtedly.

The PREMIER: I am repudiating that. I hope I am not going beyond the requisite bounds.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are insinuating you could say something against me.

The PREMIER: I am not insinuating.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the Premier address the Chair?

The PREMIER: I am not insinuating anything beyond the arguments I am employing. If the hon. member likes to challenge me, I will not be averse to saying something I am not saying to-night.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I do challenge the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Premier address himself to the Bill?

The PREMIER: The hon. member need not challenge me. I may take the opportunity to say something without being challenged.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I do challenge the Premier definitely.

The PREMIER: That is good bluff now. The hon. member would not make any challenge 15 years ago, but he throws out a challenge now when there are new and young members in the House who do not know him.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I challenge the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in this question.

The PREMIER: The hon. member cannot bluff me.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I challenge the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Premier resume his seat? I must ask members to refrain from cross-questioning one another. The Premier has the right of reply. He is replying fairly, I think, and should get a fair hearing.

The PREMIER: I do not desire to labour the question, or to indulge in personalities with the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson). Somehow we do not seem very often to agree upon matters of public importance. But I do desire to say that the Bill appears to me to be quite clear, as I said on the second reading, and the issue itself seems to be quite clear. I am not able to understand the attitude of certain members of the Labour Party who oppose the Case being presented in its best form. I do, however, understand and appreciate the views expressed by some of my friends, namely, that there should not be any necessity to send a delegation, and that the Case might well be presented by the Agent General. That is a legitimate view for any member of the party to entertain. Any one is entitled to say that the delegation should be reduced in number, or that there should be no delegation at all. That is quite understandable, and I find no objection there. Every member is free to vote on this question, and no member of the Labour Party will incur my displeasure if he should vote to the effect that there should be no delegation, or that it should consist of one, two, or three persons. The matter is entirely for members to decide. Having done as we did, and having taken up the attitude we took up at the general elections on the whole question, I suggest to my friend that the adoption of the principle of the referendum, and the principle of giving effect to the vote of the people as expressed in the ballot box, does entail upon this party the obligation to give effect to these things in the most

adequate way possible. That is what I submit to my friends.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You and I will not differ up to that point.

The PREMIER: No member of the party will challenge that. We are bound to give effect to the vote of the people. But there seems to be a difference of opinion on this side of the House as to the manner in which this should be given effect to. To raise trouble as to whether it should be done by way of Address to the King, or petition to both Houses of the British Parliament, is merely an evasion of the whole question.

Mr. Hawke: One of the individuals who prepared the Case has stated definitely that unless members support the whole Bill and nothing but the Bill, the whole Case and nothing but the Case, they will be betraying the decisions of the people.

The Minister for Works: Nonsense.

The PREMIER: I listened most carefully to the speech of the hon. member on this Bill, and I take no exception to any word he uttered. He has said that one member of the Secession Committee, who prepared the Case, said that it has to be the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill.

Mr. Hawke: The same with the Case.

The PREMIER: Some member of that committee may have made that statement, but the members of the committee are not infallible.

Mr. Thorn: We have a say in the matter.

The PREMIER: They are not the be-all and end-all of the Case they have put up. I should like this to be put on record so that I may not be misunderstood I am personally opposed to Secession, and have been opposed to it as strongly as any member on this side of the House. I would not have introduced the Bill if the contents of it, including the Case itself, had committed me to an expression of approval of Secession or an expression of approval of the Case. I want members on this side of the House to regard themselves as free to vote as they think fit upon any clause or any line of the Bill, without feeling that they are committing themselves to Secession, or anything contained in the Case. If I started to go into the Case I would probably dissent from 50 per cent. of it. I disagree with it, but I contend there is nothing in this Bill, so far as I have examined it, that commits any member to a personal approval of Secession, or a personal approval of the Case as it has been presented. If the position were otherwise I

would not be fathering the Bill. I am opposed to Secession, as much as any man is.

Mr. Hawke: Then the statement of Mr. Watson is absurd.

The PREMIER: I do not know exactly what that statement is.

Mr. Hawke: There are several statements by Mr. Watson.

The PREMIER: I am speaking for myself, and I stand by what I say. We are not committed to Secession or to the Case for Secession. Parliament is asked to pass this Bill and this Case, as being an authentic Case that has been put up by a committee created by Parliament itself. I hope there will be no misunderstanding within the ranks of our own Party on this matter. There is no feeling whatsoever with regard to it. I desire to make it clear, not only to members of the House, but to the people of the country, that this Government, in bringing down the Bill, and giving effect to the vote of the people in consonance with our platform, are still standing by our platform and our policy. I do not want it to go forward in any insidious way, in underground circles and by underground engineering, that this Government are doing something which is contrary to the Labour platform and Labour principles.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [6.12]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the third reading of this Bill to be taken at this sitting.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [6.13]: I do not think this is fair. The intention is that we shall be kept going all night in the Committee stage. No doubt there will be discussion during that stage.

Mr. Latham: It is only a small Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It will be easy to exhaust the small minority who may desire to express their views, and to attempt to convince the Committee that certain things are wrong. Last night we were prepared to go on with the debate, but I take it that the Premier for his own convenience, or the convenience of the Government, decided upon an early adjournment.

The Premier: A supporter of yours was not prepared to go on.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I was told in the afternoon that certain members were going on.

The Premier: They were not ready to do so. I adjourned the debate to meet the convenience of those members.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I appeal to the Premier to remember that the Legislative Council has adjourned until Tuesday next, and that we have all day tomorrow in which to deal with the Bill in Committee. Why exhaust us to-night in order to reach the third reading stage, when we still have to-morrow left to us? It is of no value to pass the Bill through to-night. If it be finalised to-morrow, it will still reach the Legislative Council on Tuesday. We should deal with the Bill under decent conditions. If the Premier intends to go on with it to-night, it means, in my case, that my powers of endurance are going to be tested in maintaining the justification for the amendments I have submitted.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is known that I have given notice of a number of amendments. To take the third reading at this sitting means calling upon me to sustain the debate during the Committee stage until all my amendments have been disposed of. I regard that as unfair, seeing that there have been other adjournments.

The PREMIER: I have no desire whatever to place the hon. member in a position of inconvenience. The only reason I have for moving the suspension of the Standing Orders is that I feel that perhaps the Bill may go through the Committee stage at this sitting. Following that, we would take the third reading, so as to send the measure to another place. If the Standing Orders were not suspended, it would, in the circumstances I have indicated, be necessary for us to meet to-morrow merely to pass the third reading, so that the Bill might reach another place. I assure the hon. member that I shall not try to force the Bill through at this sitting. I am quite willing to adjourn at a reasonable hour to-night.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: With that assurance I am satisfied. My amendments are not for the purposes of stonewalling, nor do I propose to stonewall the question itself;

but I do want to debate the question under reasonable conditions. I am quite prepared to go on sitting until 11 o'clock, but I do not want to miss my last train.

The Premier: I assure the hon. member that we shall not sit beyond a reasonable hour.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have counted the House. There is an absolute majority of members present.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Case for Secession authorised to be printed and published:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: My object in placing on the Notice Paper an amendment for the rejection of this clause was to indicate that I proposed to appeal to the Chamber not to allow the clause to be included in the Bill. I wish to make it abundantly clear that I desire to support the Premier and all other Labour members who, like myself, declared on the hustings that we would respect and honour the decision of the people. I intend to do that to the full. All my amendments have that for their object. The Premier rightly pointed out this afternoon that the people at the referendum declared themselves in favour of secession. Whatever the declaration of the will of the people may be, it will be honoured and given effect to by the Labour Party. Various Labour people expressed their views on the subject, and those views were not all exactly the same; but it was generally agreed that the expressed view of the country would be represented in a manner that would be faithful to the resolution carried by the people at the referendum. Up to that stage there is no difference of opinion between the Premier and me. However, the hon. gentleman, having made that declaration at the general election, having been successful at the poll, and having been chosen for the Premiership, proceeded to fulfil the promise made by him that the will of the people would be faithfully obeyed. Accordingly he moved a resolution to that effect in this Chamber. What had he said that he would do to fulfil the promise in this Parliament? He moved a motion, which was carried by this Chamber, that a dutiful address be presented to His

Majesty and an application made to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament. That is in accordance with what the hon. gentleman had said during the general election.

The Premier: The Bill says that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It says more than that. Having given his pledge to the people, the Premier implemented that pledge and took the first move towards fulfilling the obligation which he had undertaken on behalf of the Labour Party. In the terms of the motion his pledge would be implemented by the submission of an address to His Majesty and an application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament. All that my amendment seeks is to observe that pledge faithfully, to provide for an address to His Majesty and an application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, as suggested by the Premier's original motion. After stating definitely how he would do these things, the Premier suggested the appointment of a joint committee of both Houses of this Parliament for the purpose of doing them; that is to say, preparing the address to His Majesty and the application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament. The Premier's appeal to this Parliament was honoured unanimously, both Houses carrying the resolution I have outlined. Next a joint committee was appointed, the Premier being its chairman. That committee, after deliberation, decided to recommend that a committee of citizens be appointed for the purpose of implementing the resolution. But by some means or other, some influence or other, possibly by some representation made to that committee, something was added to the original motion. The committee added the words "to prepare the Case for Secession to be submitted for the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament."

Mr. Latham: If you look at the original motion, you will find that provided in it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Exactly. That shows how difficult it is to follow this question. The Premier's original motion was for an address to His Majesty and an application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament. There is no difference of opinion as to that. That is what the Labour Party stood for, and that is what the Premier submitted in the motion he introduced. But after the appointment of the committee to give effect to the resolution, that committee added to the resolution a recommendation that a Case for Secession should be prepared. The Case for Secession, however,

was not to be prepared for submission to anyone outside Western Australia. The members who sat on the committee under the Premier's chairmanship tried to ensure that no Case for Secession should go forward until it had been endorsed or approved by both Houses of this Parliament. That recommendation reached this Chamber and another place. It was a very definite and distinct recommendation—

Your Committee recommend that the following gentlemen be appointed a committee to prepare a dutiful Address to His Majesty, a statement of the Case for Secession, and an humble application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament to procure such legislation by the Imperial Parliament as may be necessary to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of the State from the Federal Commonwealth—

Then the names of the gentlemen referred to are given, and the report continues—

—and to submit the Case for the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament.

Something had happened meantime. Something had influenced the committee to declare that a Case for Secession should be prepared. Words to that effect were added to the original resolution. Something must have influenced the committee to go beyond the original motion moved by the Premier and carried by this Chamber: The report of the committee came to both Houses, and was adopted by both Houses. We expected the Premier—and my opinion is that he intended at the time—to submit to this Chamber a motion that the gentlemen in question be appointed a committee and that they be charged with the responsibility of preparing the address, preparing the application, and getting the Case for Secession ready to be considered by this Chamber. That was the intention.

The Premier: It was not my intention.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I want to know how it came about that in the motion moved here by the Premier, and moved by the Chief Secretary in another place, for the appointment of the gentlemen named to do the things indicated, the words "with the approval of both Houses of Parliament" did not appear. In all my experience of Parliament, I have never known such a thing to happen before. A joint committee of members of both Houses of Parliament was appointed to report to their respective branches of

the legislature, to make a definite recommendation. We adopted the recommendation and we agreed to a committee being appointed to give effect to their report. When the resolution for the appointment of that committee was moved, the all-important words referring to the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament were omitted. I want the Premier to explain to members why he did not point out that fact, and tell them why the words were left out.

The Premier: I do not know.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Premier introduced the motion. I have been charged with having supported the motion and with having gone back on it later. That allegation is untrue. I supported the resolution as moved by the Premier in order to fulfil the pledge he gave to the electors. I prepared my amendments on the basis of the resolution we carried faithfully reflecting the recommendations of the committee. When I awoke to the fact within, comparatively speaking, the last few hours, that the important words I have referred to were not embodied in the motion we agreed to, I felt that the member for Northam and the member for Bunbury, who were appointed to the joint committee, should explain why the words were omitted. I cannot accept any responsibility for the omission of the words regarding the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament. Members of this place and of the Legislative Council should require the Premier and the Minister in charge in the Council to explain the omission of those all-important words. We should have been told of their omission and if that had been done, we would not have been faced with the trouble now confronting us. Our trouble is that the precaution we took in order to see that the Case was to be brought before both Houses of Parliament, cannot now be enforced because we were misled by the subsequent resolution moved by the Premier.

The Premier: It is strange that that should be the cause of all this trouble, as you say, seeing that, although you stated you had only discovered this matter a couple of hours ago, it has been on the Notice Paper for weeks.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is the position exactly; that is the cause of all the trouble.

The Premier: Yet you discovered it only two hours ago.

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: If the Premier had adhered to his undertaking to present an Address to His Majesty, and to follow up the Address with applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, there would have been no trouble about the Case for Secession. If the Case for Secession had been added to the recommendation, then this House would have dealt with the Case as a supporting proposition to the Address and to the applications. I have no hesitation in saying that the only reason for the Bill is that Clause 2 may be implemented so that the Case for Secession may be endorsed and that the delegation to London may be financed. I made abundantly clear at the outset the proper constitutional course followed by those who have had to present Addresses to His Majesty, and petitions to the Imperial Parliament. It is significant that the member for Nedlands did not give us one authority for the Bill that he says is quite all right. He talked a lot about ancient history, but he did not deal with the all-important question of whether the Bill was necessary in fulfilment of the undertaking given by the present Premier to the electors. If we were to follow the ordinary constitutional practice, there would be no need for the Bill. On the other hand, the Premier has put forward the proposals he has submitted, and also the Case.

The Premier: Do you say I put the proposals forward?

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: The Government put them in the Bill.

The Premier: You say that?

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: In the Preamble there is reference to dealing with the Case, and the delegation is referred to in another clause. That is a rather important statement, and it is such a serious matter that the Premier should give us an explanation. I shall not proceed any further with that point, and I do not want my objection to the clause, as framed, to be mixed up with my desire to secure an explanation as to why the all-important words I have referred to were left out of the motion to which I have drawn attention. It is due to the country, and certainly to the Labour Party and to Parliament, that the deletion of those words be explained before we proceed further with the clause.

The PREMIER: I am not able to give any explanation of this "extraordinary" matter to which the member for Guildford-Midland has referred. It is the first I have heard of it. I know nothing at all about it. The hon. member spoke of this discovery of his that certain words had been left out of a motion, and he asks the Committee to take seriously his statement that that represents the cause of the whole trouble. He said that he had only discovered the trouble a couple of hours or so ago. As a matter of fact, his trouble started three weeks ago and evidence of his trouble has been on the Notice Paper during the last fortnight.

Hon. N. Keenan: What is his discovery?

The PREMIER: I do not know; apparently some words have been added or omitted. It is the first I have heard of it. With his usual courtesy, the member for Guildford-Midland did not acquaint me with the procedure he proposed to adopt.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not fair.

The PREMIER: It is fair to this extent, that even when he opposed my motion regarding the Standing Orders suspension, he did not acquaint me of his intention. I was acquainted of it by members of the Opposition. Was that fair?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It was talked about in the corridor all day.

The PREMIER: It was not from the hon. member in the corridor that the information was gleaned, but from a man who had been kicked out of the Labour Party. The hon. member did not acquaint me of his intention. That is the kind of loyalty we get from the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is wrong.

The PREMIER: It is not wrong. Whenever any other member on either side of the House decides to take a particular stand on a Bill, he informs me of it, but in this instance the hon. member said nothing to me about it. I propose to adopt this attitude towards the hon. member's amendments: I do not intend to waste the time of the Committee answering his extraordinary arguments. The Committee is fully informed of the Bill and its purport, and I am not going to assist the hon. member to delay the Committee by replying to his arguments. The hon. member is not so much concerned with proper procedure as he would have the Committee believe: he would have the electors believe that he is concerned that the Case for Secession should be presented to the

Home authorities in the proper constitutional way, according to his view of the Constitution. But, as I said this afternoon, it is only the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee, and I suggest that the electors are not going to be bluffed. They know what is right and what is wrong, and they are not a bit concerned as to whether the Case should be forwarded in the manner suggested by the hon. member or by the method suggested in the Bill; all they are concerned about is that the Case should go forward. I believe the manner adopted is the best one, and that my advisers are just as capable as are those of the hon. member. We owe it to all those people who voted for Secession to send the Case forward in the best way. The hon. member himself wants the Case to go forward, but he is quarrelling with the way in which we are sending it. I suggest he is not quite sincere with the people of the country in the arrangement of his quibble. I could understand the hon. member raising a point as to whether a delegation is necessary, or even as to the number of the delegation, but all that the hon. member is arguing about is the mere question of method. I do not propose to waste the time of the Committee in discussions with the hon. member, for I believe he is trying to sidetrack the vote of the people at the referendum.

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: I am sorry the Premier has not explained the omission of those words.

Hon. N. Keenan: They appear in the Bill.

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: They do not. I am even more disappointed that the two private members who were on the committee have made no explanation of this matter.

Mr. Hawke: You have not given them a chance.

Hon. N. Keenan: The words appear in the Bill.

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: However, I have raised the point and am satisfied to leave it to the judgment of the people. I urge the exclusion of Clause 2 from another point of view: The clause authorises the submission to His Majesty of a Case prepared by a committee of citizens, a Case which has never been checked by the Parliament that authorised it.

The Minister for Mines: The Case was not authorised by Parliament.

Hon W. D. JOHNSON: It was authorised by Parliament. Surely the Minister will not contend that Parliament is not responsible for Clause 2 because it was prepared by an outside committee. The Minister knows quite well that Parliament must be responsible for its own legislation. The whole Case for Secession is included in the Bill, and if we pass Clause 2 we shall be endorsing the huge Case of 480 pages. Even if we should delete Clause 2, we should not be taking out the schedule that provides the subject matter of the Address and the application, but if we pass Clause 2 we shall be endorsing the whole Case. This Bill must go forward to His Majesty with the Address, and so we shall be endorsing something which we have not checked up, something which Parliament cannot say is correct. If the Case goes forward to the Imperial Parliament in this way, members of both Houses of that Parliament who will take the side of the Commonwealth in the debate, will be able to expose the fact that the Case for Secession provided for in the Bill was never checked up by this Parliament, never approved by this Parliament; but because a committee of citizens prepared it, and submitted it to this Parliament, we say to His Majesty that we are authorising its presentation to him. When we present a Case to His Majesty, we require to be scrupulous in regard both to our language and to the Case we present. Therefore we are doing a wrong in including Clause 2 in the Bill, for by it we shall be authorising the submission of an unchecked document which some members say contains inaccuracies and which certainly contains controversial political matter. In Clause 2 we are called upon to endorse that and submit it to His Majesty as the considered opinion of this Parliament. Surely this Parliament has not so degenerated as to be prepared to pass legislation of Imperial importance, yet repudiate responsibility for what is in it. We cannot expect the Imperial Parliament to take us seriously when we make a representation of that kind. I have been charged with insincerity and other harsh things. I did not object to that because, in the course of debate, we have to give and take, but I do not like anyone to insinuate that my record will not bear investigation.

The Premier: I do not think anyone said that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If anyone did, it would be unfair. I do not think I have ever been guilty of violating the principles for which I stand.

The Premier: Strength is not measured by length.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Long service should command respect, and there should be no insinuation that one's record will not bear the light of day. If we proceeded by way of an Address to His Majesty, the Address would be forwarded to the British Government forthwith, and the Government would analyse it. The Address could take the form of a schedule which could be amended and for which this Parliament could take responsibility. I am prepared to accept the responsibility for the second schedule subject to its being amended, but I say that no Labour member can support portions of that schedule. We have made application previously to the Imperial Parliament, and it has been submitted by the Agent General to the Secretary of State for Dominions.

Mr. Latham: You have no precedent for that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It has been done over and over again.

The Premier: Give us an instance.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The most recent one was Newfoundland.

Mr. Latham: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Address was presented to His Majesty who, through the Government, took certain action. If we passed the Bill, while the Address to His Majesty was being investigated by the Government, the petitions would be presented to Parliament, and serious conflict might result. If we relied upon an Address to His Majesty and upon the British Government's doing what was necessary, without presenting petitions to Parliament by the back door, we should be proceeding along safe lines. The Bill is a development beyond the resolution originally passed by Parliament. The special committee influenced the Government to introduce a Bill.

The Premier: That is an improper thing to say.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The committee must have done so.

The Premier: Only a man like you would say it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is nothing wrong in the committee influencing the Government in that way. The committee went beyond the original resolution.

The Premier: That statement is worthy of you.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not wish to be offensive, but I am in the habit of saying to a man's face what I believe.

The Premier: And a good deal behind his face, too.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is untrue.

The Premier: I know you.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will address the Chair.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I desired to discuss the matter with the Premier, and got in touch with his secretary over and over again, because I was chairman of the party.

The Premier: That gives you no greater claim than anyone else would have.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But the Premier should not accuse me of being unfair. Evidently the Premier did not think it worth while to discuss the matter with me.

The Premier: You had been discussing it with a member of another place.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is distinctly untrue. I did not discuss it in any shape or form with any other man.

The Premier: You discussed it with Cornell.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: After I had failed to get into touch with the Premier, I told the deputy leader (Hon. A. McCallum) of my fears and the action I would be compelled to take if the Government persisted in proceeding by way of a Bill.

The Premier: How could you have had fears when you had not seen the Bill and did not know its contents?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I had not the slightest idea of what the Bill contained, but I knew that a Bill was unnecessary. I noticed the change of attitude reflected in the Press, and began to realise that something was happening.

The Premier: How could you have had those fears when you did not know what the Bill contained?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the clause and not to things that happened between him and the Premier.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I feared that something of the kind would be attempted, and I tried to get into touch with the Pre-

mier to discuss how we could proceed without introducing a Bill.

The Premier: But why had you any fear?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There is no need for Clause 2, and I appeal to members to delete it.

Mr. LATHAM: I think the member for Guildford-Midland has been discussing Clause 3. Clause 2 merely authorises the printing and publication of the Case.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: For submission to His Majesty.

Mr. LATHAM: Quite so. The discussion has nothing to do with Clause 2.

The CHAIRMAN: It is the Chairman's duty to decide that.

Mr. LATHAM: I submit that that is so.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. LATHAM: I am submitting my opinion. All we are authorising is the submission of the Case presented by the special committee. The Premier has made it clear that he does not agree with the whole of the statements in the Case. He is not a secessionist, but he is resolved to give effect to the wishes of the people expressed at the referendum. The Case is the brief; it contains the facts.

The Minister for Mines: I doubt that.

Mr. Hawke: There are hundreds of statements of opinion.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but they are quoted as opinions. They may not be actual facts. The Case does contain statements that have been made by certain individuals. I would not agree with every word that is set out in it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But you would send it to His Majesty with the approval of Parliament.

Mr. LATHAM: I believe most of the Case can be justified. It is the Case of the people who voted for Secession. All this clause does is to authorise the submission of that Case to His Majesty and the British Parliament.

The Premier: The submission of a Case prepared by a committee on behalf of the majority of the voters of this country.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so. We ought to bear that in mind.

The Premier: Every honest man does bear it in mind.

Mr. LATHAM: All that took place is set out in the preamble. I cannot follow the

argument of the member for Guildford-Midland, and I think he would be well advised to leave things as they stand.

Mr. HAWKE: It is true that Parliament appointed a committee to do certain things. The instructions that were given to that committee did not include one regarding the preparation of any Case for Secession, but the members of the committee decided to prepare such a Case in order to support an address to His Majesty and petitions to the British Parliament. I thought the understanding was that the Case would be submitted first of all to the State Parliament for approval. Although the motion that was moved by the Premier did not actually include the words that the Case would have to be submitted to Parliament for approval, the omission of those words did not deprive members of the power to ask that the Case should first be considered by Parliament and approved or disapproved.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Did you know that the words regarding approval had been omitted from the motion?

Mr. HAWKE: I did not read the motion the Premier moved, and did not know that the words providing for the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament had been omitted. Surely, however, we are not deprived of the right to approve or disapprove. The passing of this clause will undoubtedly suggest that the Case itself has the approval of this Parliament. Most members do not want to be placed in the position of approving of the Case when actually they are not in favour of it. Another part of the Bill states that by the passing of the measure we approve of the Case. There can be no doubt that once we have passed the Bill we can be said to have approved of the Case that is to be submitted to His Majesty.

Mr. WITHERS: I wonder why it is that two members of this side of the House are singled out for an explanation of their attitude on this Bill. This suggests to my mind there has been collusion for the purpose of deleting these words. The phraseology of the Premier's motion may differ from that employed in this Bill, but in substance both are the same. Had the word "approve" been included in the clause, I should have spoken in opposition to it and the member for Guildford-Mid-

land would have had greater cause to argue against its inclusion in the Bill. Members on this side of the House are not in accord with the Case as a case, but most of us are in accord with authorising the submission of the Case to its proper destination, through the proper channels. I am prepared to support the clause.

Mr. TONKIN: I endorse the views which have been expressed by the member for Northam. The clause should have provided for approval of the submission of the Case to His Majesty the King. It does not say that it is the submission of the Case that is authorised. I would raise no objection to authority being given for the submission of the Case. The word "authorise" means, amongst other things, "to endow with authority." I would have no objection to endowing the committee with the necessary authority to prepare this Case. I realise that we cannot simply send along a Case which belongs to no one. We endow the Case with the authority of the committee for submission to His Majesty. It is absurd to say that by passing the clause we can authorise the submission without authorising the Case. By passing the clause we authorise the Case. If I understand English, the predicate of a sentence describes the subject, which subject in this instance is the Case for Secession. That Case is to be authorised for submission once it has been endowed with legislative authority. The passing of the Bill, even without this clause, would authorise the presentation of an Address to His Majesty.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I find myself at variance with some of my colleagues. The argument of the member for North-East Fremantle would have been much stronger if after the word "authorised" there appeared the words "and presented for submission." By passing the clause we shall authorise the submission of the Case, and not the Case itself. The clause means the preparing of a way to convey the Case to His Majesty the King and the Imperial Parliament. The member for Guildford-Midland argues that members who vote in favour of the clause and the Bill vote in favour of the Case, but in voting for this clause I do not express myself in favour of the Case; I merely join in authorising the presentation of the Case. In the Federal Parliament many members who voted in favour of a Bill for the survey of a route for the trans-Australian railway

were opposed to the construction of the railway; they voted for the survey Bill in order to obtain evidence whether such a railway was or was not necessary. When, eventually, the Bill to authorise the construction of the railway was introduced, as the result of investigations which had been made, some of those members voted against that measure. In authorising a Case for submission, we do not implement the Case.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not profess to be an authority on English, but I do profess to have some knowledge of what is common sense. There are not two pages of the Case, from beginning to end, with which I agree; nor do I agree with one solitary map in the Case, as not one of them is correct. Much has been said in this Chamber about Labour's policy and principles. I claim to be just as true to the principles of the Labour movement as is any other man either on this or on the other side of the Chamber. That being so, I believe in the initiative and referendum. A referendum on secession has been taken. The result of the referendum is opposed to my own vote and my convictions; but there being a majority in favour of secession, I am loyal enough to the principles of the Labour movement to support the decision of the majority, irrespective of whether the margin is large or small. The clause, if punctuation counts for anything, does mean exactly what the Government intend and believe it to mean. Not one member has yet read the clause as it is punctuated. Why has every member stopped short at the word "authority," which is not followed by even a comma? If I thought for one moment that this clause, or any other clause up to and including Clause 8—that being the point up to which I am willing to accept responsibility—expressed approval of even the schedules to the Bill, I would vote against the whole measure. However, the Bill does nothing of the kind. We were exceptionally careful in the drafting of the measure to ensure that the members of the Ministry and the members of the Labour Party were not committed either to the Case itself or to Secession. In that I believe we have succeeded, and therefore I shall support the Bill as it stands. My personal belief is that the Case, when it goes to the Imperial Parliament, will damn Secession. No matter who goes Home to support the proposal, Secession cannot be justified on the Case. The Bill as it stands will have my support unless someone can move

an amendment making the intention of the measure still more clear.

Mr. Latham: You do not endorse the Case.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I could not endorse two pages of it. If the Leader of the Opposition could have been present at the Cabinet meeting when we discussed this, and heard my remarks regarding some of the clauses in the schedule, he would not have regarded them as of advantage to the Case for Secession. I am indeed sorry that some statements that appear in the schedule are included, but that is not my responsibility. They are embodied for submission to His Majesty as part of the Case drafted principally by secessionists in order to secure Secession. If some of the statements included in the Case are regarded seriously by the British public, incalculable harm is likely to be done to Western Australia in the future.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—An Address to His Majesty and applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament in prescribed forms authorised:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That, in lines 4, 5, 6, and 7 the words "the Right Hon. the Lords spiritual and temporal in the Parliament of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland assembled" be struck out, and the following words inserted in lieu:—"both Houses of the Imperial Parliament to procure such legislation by the said Imperial Parliament as may be necessary to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of the State of Western Australia from the Federal Commonwealth."

I desire the clause to apply to the Address to His Majesty and to the applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, as indicated in the original motion. I desire the Address to be presented and the applications to be made, but if we agreed to the course outlined in the clause, it would mean dividing the House of Commons by putting up a private member to differ from the Imperial Government. We would ask private members to approach the House of Commons and the House of Lords at the same time as we would ask the Imperial Government to make a recommendation. I do not want this Parliament to be held up to ridicule by the Imperial Parliament. I want them to realise that we know what we are doing and have some knowledge of constitutional procedure. I want them to recognise that we desire to follow precedent and established practices.

If we attempt to make constitutional history by adopting new practices, we are liable to open up a discussion on methods, and the members of the House of Commons are likely to protest against an Address going to His Majesty and filtering through to the Government in the House of Commons and the House of Lords by the front door, and the State of Western Australia at the same time attempting to influence both Houses by means of a back-door entrance on the part of private members. In moving the amendment, I am simply following the phraseology used by the Premier in his original motion. If we proceed as suggested in the clause, no good will result and we will do harm to our claim. I ask the Premier to realise that a mistake is contemplated in the clause as it stands.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That, in lines 12 and 13, the words "the heading contained in Part II. of the said First Schedule and" be struck out.

I regret the decision of the Committee on the earlier amendment, which I regard as vital. Clause 5 deals with the Address and applications only, and in Clauses 2 and 3 additional provisions are dragged in that are calculated to bring the whole matter into ridicule and contempt. In view of the attitude of the Committee, I cannot proceed with other amendments.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4, 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Presentation of Address and applications:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That, in lines 1, 2, and 3, the words "together with a copy of the Case for Secession as printed and published under the authority of this Act" be struck out.

The clause seeks definitely to compel approval not only to the Address to His Majesty and to the applications, but to the despatch of a copy of the Case for Secession.

The Premier: How could His Majesty consider it without having the Case?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We outline the Case in the Second Schedule and that should be all that is necessary, and that is all we can honourably do when we endorse it by

agreeing to the schedule. It is a frightful reflection upon this Committee to think that we can submit something that a Minister of the Crown has said is not authentic.

The Premier: He did not say that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: He said the maps were quite wrong.

The Premier: No, he said the Case was authentic, but he did not approve of it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I heard what he said.

Hon. N. Keenan: It is the Case for the majority, and it is authentic to that extent.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: What silly nonsense it is to suggest that the committee could speak for the majority of the people of Western Australia.

Hon. N. Keenan: You can express only your own views.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That applies equally to the committee, who had no power to analyse the voting and decide why the people voted for Secession.

The Premier: It would have been a big job.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: One that would be humanly impossible. Yet the member for Nedlands, a K.C. and Leader of the Bar, says that the committee could voice the opinions of the majority and give a detailed expression of their views in the course of the Case.

Hon. N. Keenan: To the best of their ability.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am surprised at the hon. member's attitude. Of course he has various views on this important subject and he may even change them before the Bill is passed. I do not want Parliament associated with something that we cannot prove to be authentic, something that should never be submitted to His Majesty unless it can be regarded as authentic.

The Premier: That is pretty shallow reasoning. If this Parliament agrees to the Address, it can be argued that Parliament would not send the Address forward unless we approved of it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Exactly.

The Premier: Then you approve of the sending of an Address?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, and I approve of the terms of the Address, with the right to amend them. I approve of the Bill, but I want the right to amend the subject matter of the Bill. It is that big tome of 489 pages that I want to get away from.

The Premier: But that is not in the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is. I do not want that document; all I want is the provision contained in the Second Schedule, with the right to amend it. If we have that, then we can present what we are responsible for and it can be presented to His Majesty in such a way that we can say, "That is the considered opinion of the State Parliament." One of the Ministers has said the Case is not reliable, and that he is not prepared to approve of it. What is the use of putting in something we cannot approve of? Why not delete these words and let us put the second schedule into a shape in which it will say all we want to say in regard to the petition, after which we shall say something more about the application?

Mr. Hawke: How do you propose to present the Case?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not want to present the Case; I do not want to be bothered with the rubbish; I do not want to authenticate a document which I have not read. Ministers have said it is not correct. Should we present to His Majesty something we are not prepared to stamp as perfect? If we do not delete the words I want deleted, we shall be endorsing that big document and submitting it to His Majesty as the considered opinion of this Parliament. We should not do that.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That subclause 3 be struck out.

This subclause is a definite authority to the Treasurer to select four persons to compose a delegation to London. I say the proposed delegation cannot make the application, which can be made only by the Agent General submitting it to the Secretary for State. The proposed delegation could reach the Imperial Parliament only with the consent of that Parliament. It would be extraordinary if such a delegation could influence the House of Commons to allow them to make application in defiance of the Imperial Government. Therefore, the proposed delegation could only try to influence the Imperial Government to recommend them to the House of Commons. If the Imperial Government were to agree to a delegation from Western Australia being heard, it would have to be with the approval of the House of Commons, and that body is not

likely to listen to the application of such a delegation. Moreover, if the House of Commons were to agree to hear our delegation, in common justice they would have to hear a delegation from the Commonwealth. We should do this in a dignified way by sending an address and an application without a delegation at all. In my view the Bill is altogether unnecessary, as I have said from the beginning.

The Premier: Did you say so before you saw it, or was it another Bill you saw?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I did not see any Bill: All I did was to try to find out whether there was any precedent for the introduction of such a Bill.

The Premier: It is most extraordinary that you should have been in active opposition to a Bill which you now say you never saw.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I did not see the Bill, but the Premier had moved in the House for the petition and the application.

The Premier: No, when the hon. member was seeking to discuss the Bill with me, the House had not met.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Premier is wrong. In the original motion moved by the Premier, the address and the application were dealt with and when on the 28th March, I saw in the "West Australian" that a Bill was going to be introduced, and when the "West Australian" began to get behind the Case for Secession, I thought it was time for me to get active against the Bill.

The Premier: By courtesy I had sent a copy of the Bill to the Deputy President of the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I went to the Clerk of Parliament, and to everybody else who was an authority on constitutional law, outside the Crown Law Department. I even went to the University, but I could not get anyone to say that the Bill was necessary. That is why I opposed the Bill, not because I had seen it. I had not seen it. I knew the Bill was not wanted, and now the Premier tries to make out that I saw a Bill which was not for my eyes.

The Premier: You did see a Bill, but it was not this one.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I had no knowledge of the contents or the proposed contents of the Bill. I opposed the Bill be-

cause I knew it was not wanted for an address and an application.

The Premier: We can only leave it to the people to believe you or me.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Very well. I ask the Committee to agree to my amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	..	31

Majority against	24
------------------	----	----	----

AYES.

Mr. Hegney	|	Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Miss Holman		Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Johnson		Mr. Clothier
Mr. Needham		(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Brockman	|	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Collier		Mr. Patrick
Mr. Cross		Mr. Piesse
Mr. Ferguson		Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hawke		Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Keenan		Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Kenneally		Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Lambert		Mr. Thorn
Mr. Latham		Mr. Troy
Mr. McCallum		Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. McDonald		Mr. Warner
Mr. McLarty		Mr. Welsh
Mr. J. I. Mann		Mr. Willcock
Mr. Moloney		Mr. Withers
Mr. Munsie		Mr. Doney
Mr. North		(Teller.)

PAIR.

AVE.		NO.
Mr. Wilson		Mr. Seward

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. HAWKE: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of Subclause 3 "four" be struck out and "two" inserted in lieu, and that after "persons" the words "one of whom shall be the Agent General" be inserted.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot move that amendment, because the Committee have already decided to retain the subclause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—Persons authorised to present applications empowered to transact all matters and things necessary or incidental:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The clause proposes to give extraordinary powers to persons who may not even be members of Parliament. So extraordinary are those powers that I intend to read the clause in order to place it on record in "Hansard"—

The person or persons authorised to present the said applications in the manner provided

for in Section six of this Act shall be and are hereby empowered to transact all business, conduct all negotiations, and do all such acts, matters and things as may be lawfully transacted, conducted or done in relation to the presentation of the said applications, as may be or be deemed to be necessary, relevant, or incidental thereto, and to transact a such business, conduct all such negotiations, and do all such acts, matters, and things with the Ministers and Advisers of His Majesty in England, with the officers and members of the House of Lords, with the officers and members of the House of Commons, and with all other officials, officers, and persons in England with whom they may lawfully and properly transact such business, conduct such negotiations, or do such acts, matters, and things with intent that the said application to the House of Lords may be duly presented, brought before, considered, and properly dealt with by the said House of Lords, and the said application to the House of Commons may be duly presented, brought before, considered, and properly dealt with by the said House of Commons: Provided that no business shall be transacted, no negotiations shall be conducted, and no act, matter, or thing shall be done under the authority of this section which involves the expenditure of public money in excess of one hundred pounds in the aggregate without the prior consent of the Treasurer of the State being obtained thereto.

The delegates may not be in touch with the people; they may be associated with some faction or section.

The Premier: In other words, I might make some stupid selection.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not say stupid, but the only men who could represent the people are those elected by the people, and the Premier has already told us that he would not be limited in his choice to members of Parliament. If the Premier goes outside members of Parliament, he must select men not representative of the people.

The Premier: You can only depend upon what judgment I may possess.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No delegation could represent the Labour point of view.

The Premier: I disagree with the hon. member. The Labour point of view, if I understand it at all, favours a referendum and involves giving effect to the decision of a majority of the people. There is no principle in our platform to the effect that we will not represent the majority.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I agree, and that has been done by way of address and application. But the clause goes further. It provides for four spokesmen, not to carry

out the requirements of the Bill, but to transact all business and conduct all negotiations, etc.

Mr. Lambert: To give effect to the referendum.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Labour movement is not prepared to give such authority to anyone outside the elect of the people.

The Premier: Yours is an imperfect understanding of the Labour movement.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We shall be violating the straight-forward course for which Labour stands.

The Premier: The straight-forward course you have in mind is the crooked course to defeat the will of the people.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course the Premier may repeat that sort of remark—

The Premier: It is true, too.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: But repeating it will not make it true. I wish to honour what the Premier asked when he moved the original motion. On that occasion he said nothing about a delegation or about the Case for Secession. If he had done so, the motion would not have been carried.

The Premier: Do not you think so?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

The Premier: You are a pretty bad prophet.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The motion agreed to gave effect to our promise made to the people.

The Premier: And there is not a word in this clause contrary to that resolution.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There was never any suggestion of sending a delegation. That was not thought of until the Bill was introduced. Even I, with all my anticipations, did not dream that provision would be made for sending a delegation to London.

The Premier: The Committee have decided in favour of the delegation, so you are a bit late.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, but I wish to curtail the powers proposed to be given to the delegation.

Mr. Lambert: What powers would you give them?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Subclause 3 of Clause 6, with the addition of a few words, would provide ample powers.

The Premier: No power at all has been provided for beyond what is necessary.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We have no right to use the people's money in this way.

The Premier: What, £100!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The delegation could spend many hundreds.

The Premier: You would want them to cable for authority to pay their laundry bills.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If we have money to spend, there are unemployed and destitute people in this State on whom it should be spent.

Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Moloney: That is only playing to the gallery.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I wish to bring it right home to the hon. member who sneers at me that he is authorising expenditure of this kind while we need authorisation to expend quite a lot of money within the State. It is unnecessary to spend money in this instance. If it was essential to the Address, and to the application, I would agree to certain expenditure, but it is not essential. I prophesy that the delegation will not go beyond the lobbies of the House of Commons. It will be time wasted, and the money will be frittered away.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am surprised at the remarks of the member for Guildford-Midland. The small amount of money involved in sending an effective delegation to London matters very little compared with the possibility of success in obtaining Secession. It is only courtesy to the majority of the people who voted for Secession that we should spend a little money in providing an effective means of representing their views to the Home authorities. During the period of Federation, the Eastern States have exported to Western Australia £167,000,000 worth of goods, and purchased from us a matter of only about £50,000,000 worth. If a delegation is going to London, it should have the full authority of Parliament.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: And a full pocket.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, if that full pocket means relief to Western Australia from some of the burdens of Federation. It would be wrong to deprive the delegation of any authority necessary to enable them properly to discharge their duties.

Mr. MOLONEY: If the member for Guildford-Midland had desired to take up the cudgels on behalf of the unemployed, he should have done so on the previous clause. It is apparent to anyone that his desire is to ensure that the delegation shall be deprived of all power to do their work efficiently. I

assure the hon. member that I am just as solicitous for the welfare of the unemployed as he is.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Appropriation:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That all the words after "aforesaid," in line 42 down to and inclusive of the word "Secession," in line 43, be struck out.

I am opposed to the expenditure of any money upon the presentation of the Case, but I am prepared to agree that the Address should be financed out of State funds. We should be careful to see that all moneys spent by the Government are first authorised by Parliament. We told the Government not to touch the Case for Secession until it had been approved by Parliament, but they cut that out and caused something to be printed that should never have been printed. I am quite prepared to call upon Consolidated Revenue to pay for the Address and the applications as set out in the Premier's original motion, but I object to any further money being spent on this business.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

First Schedule—agreed to.

Second Schedule:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph 9 the words "and on the 19th day of September, 1933, presented a report as follows:—"The Joint Committee recommends the appointment of a committee consisting of Messieurs C. Dudley, J. Lindsay, A. J. Reid, J. Scaddan, J. L. Walker, and H. K. Watson to prepare a dutiful address to His Majesty, the statement of the Case for Secession, and humble applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament as may be necessary to effect the withdrawal of the people of the State from the Federal Commonwealth, and to submit the Case for the subsequent approval of both Houses of Parliament'" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"and duly recommend that a committee of specified citizens be appointed to prepare a dutiful address to His Majesty, the statement of the Case for Secession, and humble applications to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, as may be necessary to effect the withdrawal of the people of the State from the Federal Commonwealth."

There is no need for the insertion of a kind of honour roll. It would be just as sensible to insert the photographs of members of the committee. There is no precedent for the honour roll.

The Premier: The hon. member is aware that in his long experience there has been no such matter as this before Parliament.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Why repeat the names of the members of the committee three times? The Bill will do quite enough harm without that.

The Premier: Your real worry is that the Bill will defeat secession.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes. It will bring the whole question into ridicule. I am getting tired, and would like the Premier to report progress with a view to remodelling the paragraph.

The Premier: It is early yet.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The work is heavy.

Mr. LATHAM: The Second Schedule is a recital of the whole of the facts which have caused Western Australia to ask for secession. It should not recite merely portion of the facts. The paragraph is perfectly in order, and I hope no alteration will be made.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That paragraph 10 be struck out.

The paragraph is merely a repetition of the previous paragraph and, as a protest, I move for its deletion.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. HAWKE: I do not desire to move an amendment, but to draw the attention of the Premier to part of the wording of paragraph 12. It refers to the desire for Western Australia to be "restored to its former status as a separate self-governing colony in the British Empire." The reference to a "colony" has rather an ancient and servile ring. The wording of the paragraph would be improved if it referred to the desire for the State to be restored to its former status as a separate self-governing dominion.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's suggestion appeals to me and I will look into it. If he is prepared to allow the paragraph to stand, I may have an amendment inserted in another place, if no objection is raised to that course.

Mr. Hawke: That is satisfactory to me.

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That in line 12 of paragraph 13 the words "approved of and" be struck out.

The inclusion of the words was a printer's error. As the paragraph stands, it means that Parliament approved of and authorised to be printed and published, the Case for Secession.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Paragraph 14 should be struck out, because it is the one that definitely commits Parliament to the Case, which covers 489 pages. Undoubtedly that is the position.

Mr. TONKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of paragraph 14 after "forth" the words "inter alia" be inserted.

The paragraph sets out that the Case "in the form of a separate memorandum of more than 480 pages contains and sets forth in a detailed and compendious form, all the circumstances and grounds and all the reasons by which the people of Western Australia are constrained to procure their withdrawal from the Commonwealth". The Case contains many other matters and therefore I think my amendment is necessary. There is a lot of rubbish included, in which there is no truth at all.

The PREMIER: I do not see any serious objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2. of subparagraph (i) of paragraph (e) of paragraph 15, all the words after "Eastern Australia" be struck out.

This is the sub-paragraph that contains the reference to Western Australia being definitely separated from Eastern Australia by a vast sea of sand. The amendment will omit that reference. The "sea of sand" is not there in the sense that this paragraph conveys, and therefore it should not be included.

The PREMIER: I hope the hon. member will not press the amendment, for if we amend the schedule it will then be understood that anything we have not amended is approved of. It would be wiser not to press the amendment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: If I were of the same opinion as the Premier I would withdraw the amendment, but I am not of that

opinion. I am prepared to let this go forward, because it may be taken for what it is worth. Members will never agree to the inclusion of the words on pages 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23. The matter is so vital from my point of view that I might just as well press this amendment, for I certainly am going to press the others. We have no authority to outline to the Imperial Parliament the kind of constitution we shall have. All that we can do is to implement the voice of the people up to the time it was heard, so I appeal to the Committee to pass my amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That paragraph 16 be struck out.

Mr. LATHAM: Before that is put, it will be noticed that we have here again the words "approved and authorised." Does the Premier wish to strike out "approved"?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Very well, I will withdraw my amendment.

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That in lines 7 and 8 of paragraph 16 the words "approved and" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Well, that settles my proposed amendment. However, I wish to draw attention to paragraph 17, which is a gem. It reads as follows:—

17. The people of Western Australia, as your petitioners,—quitting all narrow grounds as becomes a British community, looking only to the large and lasting interests of the people and Western Australia as a self-governing colony destined to become one of the greatest colonies adding wealth, strength and lustre to the British Empire, and having no other aim in view than their own self-preservation and the preservation and protection to the fullest extent of those rights of self-government which should be enjoyed by and be available to every British community to which responsible government has been granted under the British Constitution, and desiring to maintain the integrity both of Australia and of the British Empire as a whole, and believing that no higher political ideal can be fostered and cherished by the people of Western Australia than the attainment of the best means of using for the benefit of mankind generally the land which they hold in trust, and believing that their inalienable rights as a self-governing community and such great ideals as aforesaid must prevail over any ideal which may involve or lead to the centralised government of all the people of Australia to which the growth of

the Commonwealth of Australia since the establishment thereof has tended and is still tending under the Constitution and the laws of the Commonwealth—hereby submit that of all the disabilities from which the people and the State of Western Australia are suffering as aforesaid, the main disabilities are incurable and consist of those disabilities which arise out of the fiscal policy of the Commonwealth, including the Federal Tariff, and the fundamental principles of the Constitution of the Commonwealth providing for free trade and intercourse between the States of the Commonwealth, and in support thereof, and in support of this, their petition, submit the following facts and propositions:—

And so it goes on. It is indeed a gem.

The Premier: I suggest that you ask "Hansard" to insert it without your reading any more of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member intend to move to strike it out?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Then why read it?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Merely because it is such a gem. I desire to strike out all the words after "Empire," in line 11, paragraph 19, down to and including the word "Act" in line 7 of page 23. If we authorise all that was done up to the time the referendum was taken, nothing more is necessary. The special committee had no authority whatever to outline the basis of a proposed new Constitution. It is a most serious thing to attempt, and to send it forth as the desire of the Parliament or the people of the State is quite wrong. I suggest that the Premier report progress in order to consider the matter.

Mr. HAWKE: I have an amendment previous to that indicated by the member for Guildford-Midland. I move an amendment—

That after "Empire, in line 11, the words "under its present Constitution" be struck out.

It would be wrong for us to ask the Imperial authorities, in the event of their granting secession, to establish the Dominion under the Constitution that exists at present. The Constitution for the new Dominion could be determined at a later date. I do not think members are prepared to ask the Home authorities to constitute us as a separate Dominion, based upon the Parliamentary Constitution now existing.

The PREMIER: Whilst I agree with the hon. member's views regarding our Constitution as it affects another place, I do not think it desirable that we should carry his amend-

ment. The people will have to determine any alteration in our Constitution. I do not think the authorities overseas should lay down any form of Constitution for our adoption. Our present Constitution must stand for the time being. If success should follow upon the presentation of the petition and the Case for Secession, we must then start upon the framing of a Constitution, and that is something which the people of the State will be called upon to decide. The committee would be well advised to leave the Bill as printed.

Mr. LATHAM: This is the outline of the people's Case; let us keep clear of it. Any alteration that is made to the Commonwealth Constitution Act would have to be made under the Commonwealth Constitution Act (Imperial). The request contained here is that Western Australia should be restored to its former status. When that is done the Constitution can be the subject of a further discussion.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I move an amendment—

That all the words after "Empire," in line 11, down to and including the word "Act," in line 7 of page 23, be struck out.

No part of the British Empire will agree to a Constitution such as we have to-day. The rights of property to dictate to the Government of the country will never be repeated in any Constitution that comes from the British Parliament. This Bill is asking for the right to do something that is obsolete. What right have we to deal with the representatives of Western Australia in the Federal Parliament under this measure? We also say how the representative of the Crown, which is to say the State Governor, shall be appointed. Further we say how departmental property, assets and liabilities, shall be transferred and administered. Then there is a reference to the Commonwealth Bank, as if we were authorised to suggest anything in regard to that institution. Here is a gem of a suggestion—

Until an arrangement has been made between the British and Western Australian Governments whereby the Dominion of Western Australia undertakes her own coastal defence, the defence by sea of the Dominion of Western Australia shall be undertaken by His Majesty's Imperial Forces—

We do not ask that it shall be done, but direct that it shall be done.

Mr. Latham: These are only suggestions.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The paragraph continues—

—and towards the expenditure in respect of such service, the Dominion of Western Australia shall make a just and equitable contribution—

Mr. Latham: You know that that is being done now.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The proposition is extraordinary. The paragraph concludes—

Provided that nothing in this provision contained shall preclude an agreement between the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments concerning the defence by sea of the Dominion of Western Australia.

I could go on reading similar extraordinary suggestions. My knowledge of Parliamentary affairs tells me that the responsibilities and actions of Parliament in regard to such matters, if covered by a statute, are governmental responsibilities. There has never been the slightest indication of the views of the people on these matters. Who told the committee that they could make such suggestions? I trust the amendment will be carried.

Amendment put and negatived.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

Preamble:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I shall not attempt again to induce the Government to delete the names of the members of the committee, though the repetitions are unnecessary and ridiculous. I have done all in my power to get a decent Bill.

Preamble put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [10.56]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 22nd inst.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.57 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 22nd May, 1934.

	PAGE
New members	307
Question: Railways, freights and fares	307
Bill: Secession, 1a., Standing Orders suspension, 2a.	307

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

NEW MEMBERS.

The following new members, elected at the biennial elections, held since the previous sitting, took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll:—Hon. V. Hamersley (East): Hon. H. Seddon (North-East): Hon. C. H. Wittenoom (South-East): Hon. H. S. W. Parker (Metropolitan-Suburban): Hon. E. H. Angelo (North): Hon. H. Tuckey (South-West) and Hon. J. George (Metropolitan).

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, FREIGHTS AND FARES.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Have the Government noted the statement that appeared in the "West Australian" of the 10th May, dealing with the substantial increase of railway revenue in New Zealand and indicating that passenger revenue increased by £129,033 and freight revenue by £165,468? 2, The increase in the passenger revenue is interpreted as a vindication of the Railway Board's policy of reducing fares and its decision to make holiday excursion fares operative all the year round. 3, In view of the financial position of the State railways, will the Government urge the Commissioner to give reduction of freights and fares a similar trial here?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The whole matter is under consideration.

BILL—SECESSION.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.45]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the second reading of the Bill to be moved at this sitting.