

speaking. The whole business appears to hang upon the 90 per cent. extraction. If a company gets a 95 per cent. extraction, what becomes of the extra 5 per cent.?

Hon. A. H. Panton: The company keeps that, as has always been the case.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: That is not fair. What would be the result if the company only got an 85 per cent extraction?

Hon. E. H. Harris: That would balance the 95 per cent.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: If the company were honest it would charge more for treating 85 per cent. ore than for treating the 95 per cent. ore.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Some of them adopt the sliding scale.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: It makes very little difference whether the clause is struck out or left in, for the parties could then fall back upon the freedom of contract. The only difference may be that mining companies may be compelled to charge different prices for treating different kinds of ores, and this would probably cause dissension amongst tributers.

Hon. J. Cunningham: They do it now.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I would rather see the men get what they are entitled to. If the clause is cut out, they will get a fair deal.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I do not think we shall get any further ahead by reporting progress. In order to prevent the clause from being defeated, I would suggest that the word "ninety" be struck out and the words "eighty-five" inserted in lieu thereof. I think the tributer is fully entitled to 50 per cent. of the gold premium, and I will gladly give him more than that. Some years ago I sent some stone to be treated at a battery, and we were given an extraction of 8 dwts., although the ore was worth 3 ozs. to the ton. I am going to vote for the retention of the clause. I consider the tributer is entitled to a fair deal.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	..	10
Majority for					2

AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. F. A. Baglin	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. A. H. Panton
Hon. J. Duffell	(Teller.)
Hon. E. H. Harris	

NOES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. C. McKenzie	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. Mills	Hon. J. A. Greig
Hon. J. Nicholson	(Teller.)
Hon. E. Rose	

PAIR.

Ayes: Hon. J. E. Dodd; Noes: Hon. R. J. Lynn.

Clause thus passed.

Clause 11—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 23rd November, 1921.

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

QUESTION—NORTH-WEST DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. ANGELO asked the Premier: Will he, when introducing the Estimates for the North-West Department, enunciate to this House his Government's policy for the development of the northern portion of this State?

The PREMIER replied: I will make the usual statement when introducing the Estimates.

QUESTION—TUBERCULOSIS, TREATMENT.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Have any inquiries or tests been made as to the efficacy of Professor Le Monaco's treatment for tuberculosis? 2, If the evidence shows any possibility of success of the treatment, would he be prepared to allow patients in the Wooroloo Sanatorium to undergo the prescribed treatment, as, it is understood, several are anxious to do?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. Inquiries were made through the proper channel from the Ministry of Health of Great Britain, which reported as follows:—"It is understood that Professor Le Monaco holds the Chair of Pharmacology at the Royal University, Rome. The Minister has been informed that several communications appeared in the Italian journals of two or three years ago with reference to the method of treatment in question, but his information is to the effect that the results of the treatment were disappointing, and that as a result it is now little used." 2, There is no evidence, apart from the usual evidence which accompanies advertised remedies, of the possibility of success with this particular form of treatment, which has been tried and found wanting in European countries. If any satisfactory evidence can be produced, we will be prepared to use the remedy in the Sanatorium.

QUESTION—PENSIONERS, EXEMPTION FROM RATES AND TAXES.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Premier: What, if any, steps have been taken to exempt old age and invalid pensioners from the payment of rates and taxes?

The PREMIER replied: No person in receipt of an old age or invalid pension is assessed for income tax. When it has been found that any such person had, prior to becoming a pensioner, been liable to taxation, and therefore not in a position to discharge the liability, the matter has been considered as a bad debt. This, however, does not apply to land tax. Provision to deal with this feature is being made in the amending Act now before the House.

QUESTION—MINING PROSPECTUSES.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Minister for Mines: Will the Government introduce a measure rendering compulsory the embodiment of a Government report in every prospectus applying for public moneys to develop our mining areas?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Mines) replied: No.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE—FEDERATION AND THE STATE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Mr. Angelo, the time for bringing up the report of the select committee was extended to the 15th December.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Mullany, leave of absence for three weeks granted to the Hon. J. Scaddan (Albany) on the ground of urgent public business.

MOTION—SITTING DAY, ADDITIONAL.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.41]: I move—

That in addition to the days already provided, the House shall meet for the despatch of business on Fridays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary; and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

We are now within four weeks of Christmas, and it is desirable that we should despatch our business. Moreover, it is usual to sit on Friday during the closing weeks of the session. There is a good deal of business still to be done. We have on our Notice Paper several Bills, in addition to the Estimates; and I have still to bring down two or three amending measures.

Mr. Munsie: Do you want to close before Christmas?

The PREMIER: Yes. I intend to bring down an amendment of the Licensing Act, and also an amendment of the law relating to closer settlement. Then there will be one or two other small Bills—a measure giving the Agricultural Bank power to make advances to group settlements, and a Bill rendering it possible to erect workers' homes in the country prior to application. Further, the House will be asked to consider the Loan Estimates. I hope the House will agree to sit on Fridays, although I know it will be inconvenient for many members, and especially for country members. However, it is very much better to meet on Fridays and get through our business before Christmas, than to come back after the New Year. To sit in the middle of summer is most uncomfortable. Apart from that consideration, I think that if the House sits on Friday of this week and of next week, we shall be able to get through the Upper House practically the whole of our proposals. Therefore I trust the House will agree to meet on the fourth day.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.43]: I agree with the Premier that it is desirable the work of the session should be completed before Christmas; but I am not certain, at this stage at any rate, that there is need to sit on Fridays. An examination of the Notice Paper shows that there is practically no business left, or that in a day or two there will be practically no business left, except the Estimates. Certainly, the Notice Paper contains some Bills on which I think the House should not waste its time, and I trust we shall not be called upon to consider them further. If the House concentrates on the work which it is desirable should be done, and on the Bills that the Government wish to get through, I see no reason why we should not complete the work before us within the next four weeks without sitting on Fridays. Let me point out, too, that the Government have had practically no opposition; or I may say they have had an Opposition that has assisted them, and has not been responsible for one

hour's delay since the session opened. The Opposition has rendered the Government every possible aid; and, that being so, the Government ought to have pushed on more rapidly during the earlier stages of the session with the Bills which Ministers desired to get through.

The Premier: I cannot agree with that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There are two very important Bills awaiting consideration, one dealing with closer settlement and the other dealing with the licensing laws. Does the Premier hope to get the latter through? Bills affecting the licensing laws of the State have always in the past been most contentious, and if it is really desired that the proposed Bill shall go through this session, it should have been introduced at a much earlier stage. What chance have we of getting it through if we hope to rise before Christmas?

Mr. Munsie: None in life.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Members know that Bills dealing with the licensing laws of the State have always taken many weeks to consider. To sit four days a week as is proposed, will impose a very severe task on members, especially bearing in mind that we have for the past two or three weeks been sitting until midnight. It may not be so severe on those who can devote a portion of the sitting hours to attending to other business, but to those members who have to sit here constantly, it becomes a heavy strain. I ask the Premier to reconsider his proposal. I am sure members on both sides will endeavour to meet the Government, and, if necessary, will agree to an all-night sitting or two in order to get through the work.

The Premier: That is a cheerful prospect.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It may not be cheerful, but I would prefer it to coming back on Fridays. Personally, I do not think there is any need at the present stage to begin Friday sittings. I hope the Premier will decide at once which Bills it is not proposed to go on with, so that the time of the House may not be absorbed by measures which we know have no chance of getting through.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.50]: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should not enter upon Friday sittings, because such sittings will take up the time that some hon. members require to enable them to proceed to their homes. I suggest as an alternative that the Premier should arrange for the House to meet at 2.30 on the present sitting days.

The Premier: We have tried that without much advantage.

Mr. TROY: If the House began its sittings at 2.30 instead of at 4.30, we would thus have the advantage of two additional hours daily or six additional hours in the week, which would make up for the Friday sitting.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That would be equivalent to another sitting day.

Mr. TROY: The proposal to sit earlier would not inconvenience members who have

their homes in the country to go to. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "that" be struck out, and the following be inserted in lieu:—"On the days already provided the House shall meet for the despatch of business at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary, and, if required, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [4.53]: It would suit members of the Country Party to meet at 2.30 p.m. The member for Mt. Magnet has already stated that the additional sitting hours would be equivalent to a Friday sitting. At the same time I am aware that it is very unwise to send legislation to another place on the last day or two of the session. We do not want a repetition of what has occurred in the past. Complaints have come from another place, and from the country as well, regarding the manner in which legislation has been rushed to the Legislative Council in the closing hours of the session.

The Minister for Agriculture: They have had more legislation up to date this session than they have ever had before.

Mr. HARRISON: Personally I wish this session to close before Christmas so that we may avoid having to conduct our business here during the hot summer months. I think that we can do that by agreeing to meet at 2.30, and later if necessary on Friday as well.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [4.55]: I can neither agree to the motion nor to the amendment. The amendment is just as objectionable as the motion, for the specific reason that we have here an exceedingly small programme to finish in three or four weeks, in comparison with the work that has been before members in preceding sessions. It is a shame to us if we cannot get through this business without extra pressure at this stage of the session. I do not care how often we may meet or how many hours we may sit, we will find exactly the same position of things at the end of the session, a number of Bills to hold over or to be consigned to the waste paper basket. That is unavoidable. It happens session after session. The usual thing is for the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition to confer and definitely decide which Bills are to stand over and which to be dropped altogether. There is no need for the Government to come along with a speed-up command in order to get through the legislation we have on the Notice Paper. What Bills are there of any importance that must of necessity engage the time of another extra day a week, or two sitting hours of each day?

The Minister for Agriculture: The Loan Estimates.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have known the Loan Estimates to go through in a couple of hours. As a rule they do not take very long because there is no necessity to debate what

the Loan Estimates contain, as the subject has already been discussed at length on the Estimates in chief.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is now proposed is what we have always done.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, perhaps when there have been important measures on the programme and a factious opposition, an opposition that has kept the House going night after night, and all night long in some instances. In such a case I could understand the Government saying, "As a penalty you shall come back." Was there ever in the history of this or any other State an Opposition which more facilitated the work of the Government than the Opposition in this Chamber?

The Premier: It is a matter of hours.

Hon. T. WALKER: Why cannot we get through?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: All the opposition so far has come from the Ministerial benches.

Hon. T. WALKER: I can scarcely credit that. There has been a good deal of talk on the cross-benches but no more than was necessary for the due and adequate criticism of the measures submitted. There must be some analysis and criticism of Government measures. Never were the Government treated with such fairness from either side of the House as the present Government have been. Yet they now ask us to sit on another night, or, if we accept the amendment, two hours a day extra. I would prefer the Friday sitting rather than two hours extra daily. If we are to have administration properly conducted, we cannot take Ministers from their duty for half a day.

Mr. Pickering: They cannot have too much to do if they can be spared for two hours a day.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is true. It must lead to neglect of administration. We must not be leaving things to the departmental heads. We have had too much of this leaving everything to the heads of departments, apart from Ministerial responsibility. We must avoid it if possible. We require Ministers at their posts, supervising what is necessary for the wise and just administration of the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: Particularly if they have to sit here until 1 o'clock in the morning.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Opposition cannot be blamed for that. Some Bills which have received discussion have been important departures. I might instance the Grain Bill and the Wheat Marketing Bill. They were not entirely stereotyped measures which could be passed without discussion. They required all the knowledge, wisdom and experience that this House could contribute to get the best solution of the problems these measures offered. Not only are Ministers expected to be at their offices in the afternoon; we have half-a-dozen select committees as well as a Royal Commission sitting. When are they to get through their work? How are they to do it adequately? The select committees must report to Parlia-

ment or they die at the end of the session. Yet, if we accept the amendment, we will be depriving them of the opportunity to do their work. It is humiliating to find the Government, after the peaceful, placid, considerate treatment they have received from this side of the House, asking for extra time to get through what I might almost describe as the paltry work submitted for our consideration. There are one or two measures, I admit, especially the Licensing Bill, which may evoke considerable discussion. When we reach those measures, if the Premier finds it necessary to devote one or two days extra in the week to the work, good and well; but it is not necessary to have extra sittings now. In answer to the remark of the Leader of the Country Party, I say that, however much we facilitate the Government in the way of time, there will be measures sent up to another place during the last moments of the session.

Mr. Pickering: That is inevitable.

Mr. Harrison: Important measures should not be sent up at that time.

Hon. T. WALKER: If, by sitting the extra time, we conclude our work in a fortnight, these measures will still be shovelled into the other Chamber at the last moment just the same. We will gain nothing. The hon. member asked us to put on a spurt.

Mr. Harrison: I said nothing about spurts.

Hon. P. Collier: You asked us to sit early and late; surely that is spurring?

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member would have us speed up. He wants us to get through. What is the meaning of what he said if it is not that we must get through these measures so that another place can have them?

Mr. Harrison: So that we can have more time.

Hon. T. WALKER: More delay!

Mr. Harrison: You can call it delay if you like.

Hon. T. WALKER: What is the use of the hon. member talking when he does not understand the meaning of what he is trying to convey to the House. However we speed up, we are bound to get some measures to another place in the last minutes of the session, and they will have the same excuse for refusing to go on with them at that late hour. We have been going calmly along without any special friction and with a helpful rather than an opposing Opposition. Let us continue that, and if at the very end it is necessary to hold other sittings, we can do so. Do not let us make it appear that we are anxious to get into recess by putting extra duties on ourselves night after night. Members cannot pay proper attention to their duties if they are here every night until 10, 11 or 12 o'clock. Three days' hard work in this Chamber is very trying. Outsiders have no conception of the wear and tear of this upon hon. members.

Mr. Pickering: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. WALKER: If this extra pressure is put upon us, the work will be slumped.

Mr. Harrison: Those who sit here night after night seem the keenest in debate.

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite so; there is an excitement arising from exhaustion, but when people are exhausted mentally, they not only lose their temper but they become wandering, hysterical and talkative. I have seen the hon. member in that state of mind repeatedly. I want to avoid that sort of thing. It is not the hysterics of politics we require for the work we have to do but calm, sober, thoughtful, informed deliberation. If we have that, we must have a spell between the excess of exertion.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not spell, but time to look up the work.

Hon. T. WALKER: Time to recuperate the nervous forces from the continuous sittings here in hot weather. We are doing our best with the work before us, but we cannot do our best in the middle of summer if we have to sit here till midnight every day in the week.

Mr. Harrison: You never do that.

The Premier: What do you want us to do?

Hon. T. WALKER: Continue as we are doing at present.

The Premier: Suppose we have a holiday?

Hon. T. WALKER: We had a holiday while the Premier went to the Cup.

The Premier: I did not go to the Cup.

Hon. T. WALKER: There was a week's holiday for a picnic. I will not deny that members benefited physically, mentally and intellectually from the tour.

The Premier: Some members go to theatres occasionally.

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite right. The Premier should not regard as offensive my remark that he went to the Cup. If Ministers had been really attentive to their duties, some other time when the House was in recess would have been found for the picnic.

Mr. Pickering: What picnic?

Hon. T. WALKER: To the South-West.

Mr. Money: Why didn't you go?

Hon. T. WALKER: I know the South-West. I did not feel inclined to share in the picnic.

Mr. Pickering: It did not suit your convenience.

Hon. T. WALKER: I could have easily made it convenient had I felt it my duty to go. It is not fair to ask us to sit earlier.

The Premier: It is fair; the country has a right to it.

Hon. T. WALKER: The country has no right to ask members to sit here when they are unfit to do their work. Sitting here night after night in the summer months unfits us for our work. I trust the House will reject both the amendment and the motion.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.12]: I have every desire to facilitate the Government in the business of the House, but I trust that the Premier will accept the amendment. I quite recognise that it is our duty to sit during the whole of the session and do our

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PICKERING:

(Sussex)

[5.16]:

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study of Bills which they will have to discuss when the House meets. Many measures remain on the Notice Paper, and a number of others are still to come before us. I trust sufficient opportunity will be afforded to get through the business on the Notice Paper. There is altogether too much jettisoning of business at the end of the session. Measures considered worthy of inclusion on the Notice Paper should receive full discussion.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—on amendment) [5.20]: I am no more anxious than are other members to sit here four days a week, but I want to see the session closed before Christmas without the necessity for abandoning measures on the Notice Paper. At various times have we tried sitting early in the day, but it has never been a success.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Once we tried sitting at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The PREMIER: That was even worse than sitting at 2.30 p.m. It is true the Opposition this session have not obstructed in the slightest degree any of the measures brought down. Still, very properly, they have criticised measures, and even strenuously opposed some. Of course, the passing of any measure must occupy a certain time. Even the consideration of this motion takes time. It would be wrong if it were not so. We have worked consistently well throughout the session and passed a fair volume of business. Never before was there a session in which so little undue time was taken up in discussion. I hope the House will reject the amendment to meet at 2.30 p.m. That has been tried, and proved to be futile. It was an utter failure.

Hon. P. Collier: Because members would not come along at that hour.

The PREMIER: I hope the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy) will withdraw his amendment. If the House will pass the motion, I will undertake that if there be any chance at all of getting through by sitting only three days in the week, the House shall not be asked to sit on Fridays. It rests entirely with hon. members. If I had my way, I would put through all the business on the Notice Paper this afternoon, and be done with it. I do not wish to inconvenience members at all. I agree that country members ought to be permitted to get home for week ends. It is not expected of them that they should neglect their own business altogether. I know that sitting on Fridays will inconvenience all members, but the business to be done is important and we ought not to hesitate about sitting an extra day if necessary to carry through the legislation before the House.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.25]: I hope hon. members will not agree to the amendment. It has been tried in the past and found to be quite unsatisfactory. Members will not attend at the earlier hour. In consequence of the House

meeting at an early hour, clauses of Bills which have been passed during the afternoon have had to be recommitted at night to allow of further discussion by those who would not come early. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, that having regard to the relatively small volume of business before us, there is no necessity whatever for sitting on Fridays. Never before has there been a session with so little business on the Notice Paper at this time of the year. Of course, all Governments want to get into recess as soon as possible.

The Premier: Don't you want to go fishing at Christmas?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Never mind that. The Government would like to get rid of Parliament altogether. Were it not for the Constitution Act, they would not call Parliament together at all.

The Premier: You are speaking from experience of office.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt the Premier is anxious to close down the session. It must not be thought that the time given by members to the business before us does not exceed three nights a week. Of the Bills introduced this session, there is only one which I have not yet read; that is the Public Works Committee Bill, which was introduced while I was away. I go through all Bills carefully. It takes me, not only the days on which we sit, but all other days, including Sundays. It has to be done if one is to get through his work and analyse the legislation brought down. We on this side have not the Solicitor General's office to call upon, but have to search measures for ourselves, whereas members on the Government side can get all necessary information. We have improved many Bills this session as the result of having carefully perused them, not while the House is sitting—it cannot be done then—but while the House stands adjourned. The business still on the Notice Paper is capable of being finished up next week.

The Premier: Let us try to get through it to-night.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is nothing here of great importance. Of course, if the Licensing Bill is to be brought down, it will take until Christmas to distribute it throughout the State, let the people know what is in it, and hear their verdict. We must have the verdict of the people on that Bill. We all want to know the opinion of our electors in regard to it. I can get the opinion of my electors in the course of a few days, but the members for Kimberley (Mr. Durack) and for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker)—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better not discuss the Licensing Bill at this stage.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, but the Premier intimated early in the session that he intended to introduce it.

Mr. Davies: It will be a non-party measure.

Hon. P. Collier: But there will be a jolly lot of talk on it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I hope both the amendment and the motion will be rejected.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	29

Majority against	..	18
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AYES.

Mr. Denton	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Durack	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Chesson
Mr. McCallum	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Money
Mr. Boyland	Mr. Munslie
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Carter	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Collier	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Simons
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Davies	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. George	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion, after the word "onwards," "Friday, November 25th, excepted."

The PREMIER: This really means giving up only one Friday. Members are entitled to receive some notice of this intention to sit on Fridays and I have no objection to the amendment being carried.

Amendment put and passed.

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

Ayes	25
Noes	15

Majority for	..	10
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AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Money
Mr. Boyland	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Broun	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Richardson
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Davies	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Denton	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Durack	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Harrison	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Mann	Mr. Mullany
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munslie
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Simons
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Troy
Mr. Collier	Mr. Walker
Mr. Heron	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. McCallum	(Teller.)

Question, as amended, thus agreed to.

MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [5.40]: I move—

That Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day on every day on which the House meets.

There is some private business on the Notice Paper, and I will see that members have every opportunity of discussing those matters in which they are interested.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.41]: I recognise that at this stage of the session it is usual to ask members to yield up their rights in regard to private business, but I hope the Premier will give an assurance to the House that two or three private Bills on the Notice Paper will be fully discussed so that members interested may obtain the decision of the House.

The Premier: Certainly!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was hopeful that the Statute passed by the governing authorities of the University would have been laid on the Table before now, so that we might have an opportunity of discussing it at an early date. The only opportunity that will be afforded to private members of discussing this matter will be through the medium of a motion. I hope the Premier will give an assurance that every opportunity for the full discussion by the House will be given on the question of these University fees. Upon that undertaking I do not propose to offer any objection to the motion.

The Premier: I gave that undertaking the other day.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.42]: I am opposed to the motion. I can see nothing on the Notice Paper in the way of Government business that is of any importance, except those items to give a few more monopolies to different institutions or professions.

The Premier: You mean mining leases?

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am particularly anxious that the Leader of the Opposition should have an opportunity of having a full discussion upon the Constitution Further Amendment Bill in order that it may reach the Upper House as soon as possible. If we oppose this motion for a specific purpose the Premier will understand that we are in earnest about this Bill. We desire to have an expression of opinion from this House, which

is differently constituted to the House that met when the measure was last discussed here. I ask the Premier to give us an opportunity to have this Bill thoroughly discussed, and sent to another place in sufficient time for it to be dealt with there.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [5.44]: I did not catch the assurance given by the Premier, or understand what his undertaking was. Was it that private members' business already on the Notice Paper would be fully discussed by the House?

The Premier: Yes, and it was distinctly given.

Mr. McCALLUM: I do not want to appear to doubt the Premier's word and I whispered to the member for Geraldton to ascertain what the Premier had said. I want the decision of this House upon the Bill that I introduced, and if the Premier will give an assurance that the House will have an opportunity of arriving at a decision upon it I have no further objection to offer to the motion.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanoona) [5.45]: I would like to emphasise the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition and trust that we will have ample opportunity to discuss the question of fees in connection with our university.

The Premier: I have been dealing with that matter for the last day or two. I hope the Statute will be before members to-morrow.

Hon. T. WALKER: So long as that is the position, I have no objection to raise to the motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [5.46]: Naturally the House will be given an opportunity of dealing with matters brought forward by private members, and which appear on the Notice Paper. That is a course which is always followed. I hope members will realise that the question of university fees will come before them as soon as possible and that the House will have a full opportunity of discussing it. The Statute is before His Excellency the Governor, and I hope I shall be able to place it on the Table of the House to-morrow. I informed the House in reply to a question a day or two ago, that I would endeavour to get the Statute before Parliament as soon as possible. As to other matters on the Notice Paper, I do not mean to indicate that I regard the Bill mentioned by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) as of the same importance as he does.

Mr. McCallum: But we do.

The PREMIER: All the same, I promise that there will be ample opportunity to consider that measure too.

Mr. Willcock: And in ample time? That is the trouble.

The PREMIER: I will give every member an opportunity of discussing the matter.

Question put and passed.

BILL—GRAIN.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Members will notice that on the addendum to the Notice Paper, there is a notice of motion by the Premier to move for the addition to the Bill of the schedule which is set out and which represents the lease to the company. This lease is open to modification by the Committee. Any modification must be shown in a separate clause in the Bill, after the style of the new clause that was inserted at the instance of the Premier and of the new clause moved by the member for South Fremantle and temporarily withdrawn by him. Amendments cannot be moved to the schedule, as the schedule was completed and signed on the 31st day of March of this year. Members have an opportunity now of moving new clauses to the Bill, the effect of which will be to modify the schedule. It must be distinctly understood that they cannot alter the schedule itself but can only move new clauses which will have the effect of modifying the schedule.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The schedule is not referred to in the Bill. I take it that there will have to be a new clause to deal with that aspect. In most Bills, there is a clause dealing with the schedule and on that clause amendments can be moved.

The Premier: In this Bill, we must do it in the way indicated by the Chairman.

New clause:

Mr. McCALLUM: I move an amendment—

That a new clause be added to provide that in paragraph (k) of Clause 2 of the schedule "paid up capital of the company for the time being" be struck out and the words "on the amount actually paid up on each share" inserted in lieu.

The Premier: I agree to that.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Mr. McCALLUM: I have two additional sub-clauses set out on the Notice Paper.

The Premier: These have nothing to do with the lease.

Mr. McCALLUM: Clause 2 of the schedule sets out what the company has to do, and I want to provide that they shall do other things as well.

Mr. Money: Do the subclauses modify the clause or introduce something new?

Mr. McCALLUM: They modify the terms under which the lease is granted to the company and impose new conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: If the member for South Fremantle moves his amendment as a new clause, it can be inserted in the Bill, if agreed to, and the effect of that will be to modify the schedule.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier has stated two or three times that the Bill provides that at any time a wheatgrower can insist upon becoming a shareholder in the company. I have read through the Bill and I cannot find any such provision. My intention is to provide for such contingency.

The Premier: Move the first portion of your proposed amendment as a separate new clause and I think that will be agreed to.

Mr. McCALLUM: Very well. I move an amendment—

That the following new clause be added:— That the company undertakes that the number of shares in the company which may be held by any one person or corporation shall be limited in such manner that a controlling interest in the company cannot be acquired by any person or corporation.

The PREMIER: As a matter of fact, this point is already provided for in the company's articles of association.

Mr. McCallum: Not too clearly.

The PREMIER: I am assured that it is, although I have not seen it myself. I do not intend to object to the amendment. At the same time, I really think we must get away from the tendency, that is apparent among some members, to treat these people with so much suspicion.

New clause put and passed.

Mr. McCALLUM: I move a further amendment—

That the following new clause be added:—“(1b) That it shall be a condition for the holding of shares in the company that the holder will surrender any shares held by him exceeding one hundred shares at a price equal to the amount actually paid up on such shares, to enable other wheat-growers who may not be shareholders in the company to acquire shares.”

The company are being granted a monopoly for 25 years, which period actually represents a wheatgrower's life-time. Where is the provision of the Bill authorising any wheatgrower to demand at any time to be admitted a shareholder in the company? I am unable to find it. Hence this amendment. If all the shares in the company are taken up, and subsequently wheatgrowers who are not shareholders desire to take up shares, how can they possibly do it under the Bill as it stands? Besides, the articles of association, inasmuch as they require that any shares issued must first be offered to existing shareholders, will tend to limit the membership.

The Premier: But subclause 3 of clause 3 of the agreement provides for that matter.

Mr. McCALLUM: But that paragraph does not lay down how the thing is to be done. A farmer might not be content to pay the same price as other farmers for the handling of his wheat; he might want a voice in the management of the company.

The Premier: I do not think we need bother about that.

Mr. McCALLUM: I hold the contrary opinion. What is going to be the position of new wheatgrowers?

The Premier: The company can increase their capital.

Mr. McCALLUM: Only if the existing shareholders desire to do so. That matter will rest entirely with those actually holding the company's shares at the time.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: There are still 1,350,000 unissued shares.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes; there are now. But what about the future?

The Premier: Your proposal would mean that the shares would be rendered valueless from time to time.

Mr. McCALLUM: Nothing of the kind. There is no use talking that way. The shareholders in this company are to be granted a monopoly. There is nothing to compel the company even to issue the shares now unissued. The company may sit back and say, “We do not want any more capital.”

Mr. MacCallum Smith: There must be some finality. It is not an unlimited company.

Mr. McCALLUM: If a monopoly is to be granted, every wheatgrower should have the opportunity of coming into the company. If a man has over 100 shares in a company holding a monopoly, surely it is not unreasonable to ask him to surrender some of his 100 odd shares in the manner I propose. I am seeking to encourage the new wheatgrower, for whom no man in the country has more responsibility than the Premier has.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Suppose a man had held shares for 10 years without getting a dividend; why should he afterwards be compelled to hand some of them over to somebody else?

Mr. McCALLUM: Because every other wheatgrower is equal, in the eyes of the State, to any wheatgrower holding shares in the company. The whole of the argument of the Premier has been that this Bill does not propose a concession to individuals but a concession for the purpose of developing the entire wheat growing industry. If this is to be, in fact, a concession to individuals, the whole case for the Bill falls to the ground.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You want to wreck the Bill.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am prepared to give any one holder 100 shares which cannot be interfered with.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: He might hold his shares for 10 years without getting any dividend. Indeed, it is very likely that he will do so.

Mr. McCALLUM: Can it be logically argued that newcomers ought not to have the opportunity of taking up shares and exercising some influence in the management of the company? If the spirit of co-operation is to be observed, there should be no limit as regards the number of shareholders. Really, however, this is a limited liability company and not a co-operative company. It is a serious thing to ask a Parliament to grant a monopoly; but this Parliament is getting

quite into the habit of granting monopolies; so much so that all safeguards are opposed. If my amendment cannot be accepted, surely some other provision can be devised to attain the end in view.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have no desire to labour the point. There are two contributing factors to the opposition to my proposal. The first comes from the spokesman of the company, the member for North Perth, who declares that my proposal is unreasonable, that it cannot be carried out by the company. It is also suggested that what I propose is already provided for in paragraph (b), which reads: "Any grain grower shall have the right at any time to acquire shares in the company on the same terms and conditions as the original shareholders." How can that possibly be carried out except by a proposition such as I am putting forward? If the company attempts to block new growers coming in and acquiring shares, they will lay themselves open to an action, and I should think that in their own interests they would seek to protect themselves by having embodied in the Act some such proposal as I am making. Those who are arguing that it is already in the Bill are answered by the attitude adopted by the Premier and the member for North Perth. If the suggestions I have outlined are not accepted by the company, how will the company carry out that provision. If a grower requires shares, according to that paragraph, he must get them.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You are holding up the Bill, that is all.

Mr. McCALLUM: There are two conflicting ideas, and if the truth were known the reason of the opposition to my suggestion is that it is something new and is not easily adopted by such companies. I want to know what the position will be when a million and a half shares are taken up. I am considering the interests of the grower who wants to come in at a later stage. He may see that the company are making a muddle of bulk handling and he may want to have a voice in the management of the concern. How will he do it?

The Premier: Everybody is protected.

Mr. McCALLUM: How are new shares going to be acquired when a million and a half have been taken up? The Premier has not been able to answer that.

The Premier: You will not give me a chance.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What are you going to do after all the shares in the Labour Daily have been taken up?

Mr. McCALLUM: The labour movement never has approached Parliament and asked for a monopoly. When that day comes I will desert the labour movement. We have been able to stand up despite misrepresentation, abuse and maligning from our opponents, and we have lived through it without a special Act of Parliament. This Bill con-

fers special privileges upon a few wheat growers, and I have pointed out that the very articles of the company will mean that, as years go on, shares will be in fewer hands, and the younger men will have no opportunity of acquiring shares. I have no personal interest in the matter.

Mr. Mann: Have you read Clause 8 of the agreement?

Mr. McCALLUM: That clause deals with disputes and provides that they shall be referred to the Arbitration Court. It is a clause which is usually found in most contracts, but that will not prevent serious litigation arising in connection with other matters.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The hon. member wants to know what the company will do in order to carry out its obligations under paragraph (1) of the agreement, which states that any grain grower shall have the right at any time to acquire shares on the same terms and conditions as the original shareholders. We are not going to do it in the way the hon. member proposes, because to my mind that would be a most objectionable and unfair way. Assume that the present shareholders have been out of their money for say ten years. It is quite likely that it will take that period before the Company will be a paying concern. The hon. member suggests that after this period, anybody who has stood out during the ten years whilst the original shareholders have been doing all the pioneering work and running all the risk—that any Tom, Dick, or Harry who imagines he is a graingrower, and others who come along and demand shares, should have the right to do so. Under the hon. member's proposal the existing shareholders will be compelled to sell their shares—

Mr. McCallum: Over 100.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: —shares that might be worth 25s. or 30s., and after the holders of these shares have been out of their money for ten years or more.

Mr. McCallum: This clause says they must be available at the original price.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The authorised capital of the company amounts to a million and a half. We must have some limit, and the promoters of the company are of the opinion that a million and a half was a reasonable amount to provide for all future requirements. Up to date we have issued something like 200,000 shares and that has been done after a most exhaustive canvass in the wheat belt, controlled by the port of Fremantle. That represents something like 75 per cent. of the wheat growers of Western Australia.

Mr. McCallum: You have got only £15,000 from 75 per cent. of the wheat growers!

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The hon. member has stressed that point until we are tired of it. He forgets to say that the £15,000 is cash that the shareholders have paid. They applied for shares and gave orders to deduct the application and allotment money from

their wheat dividends, and until the wheat dividends are paid that money will not be received by the company. The £15,000 is really money which shareholders have paid in advance. There was no need for them to do so, but they have faith in the prospects of the company.

Mr. McCallum: I like the way you put it.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That is the exact position of the company. They have undertaken to pay these shareholders interest on the money so advanced. The promoters were of opinion that $1\frac{1}{2}$ million shares would be sufficient for all requirements and, notwithstanding the most exhaustive canvass extending over two years or more, we have been able to get only 200,000 odd shares taken up in the Fremantle zone. As the company develops, more capital will be required, and shares will be placed in the Geraldton, Bunbury, and Albany districts; but I am quite certain that for the next 10 years, we will not have anything like the remaining 1,300,000 shares taken up. The hon. member need not worry about that. If the million and a half shares are taken up and the company are compelled to issue shares to an intending shareholder, the capital will have to be increased whether we require additional capital or not. If we do not want the capital, we will simply issue one share. Each shareholder irrespective of whether he holds the maximum number of 5,000 shares or only one share, has only one vote. There is no possibility of any individual controlling more than one vote. It is unreasonable to expect any holder of stock, after taking all the risks for 10 years or perhaps more, to hand over his shares at the actual cost.

Mr. McCallum: There is no difference between my proposal and the schedule.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Under the hon. member's proposal, any person holding more than 100 shares will be compelled to sell the surplus at the actual cost. That is a most unreasonable proposition. There is no need for it. There is ample provision for the company to issue shares when called upon.

Mr. HARRISON: I would like your ruling, Mr. Chairman, on the point that the amendment is not a modification, but will increase the obligations of the shareholders of the company.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You can increase anything in a Bill.

Mr. HARRISON: I question whether the amendment can be regarded as a modification. It is a distinctly new element which the hon. member is seeking to introduce into the schedule.

The Premier: I do not think that.

Mr. HARRISON: I do. We are asked to compel shareholders having more than 100 shares to part with the surplus at actual cost at any time a wheat grower who has stood out for years wishes to come in. This will impose a monetary obligation on the shareholders, because they will have lost interest on their capital outlay. I question whether the amendment is permissible under the Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that the amendment of the member for South Fremantle is perfectly in order.

Mr. ANGELO: Ostensibly, the object of the member for South Fremantle is to look after the interests of grain growers who may wish to deal with the company in future. Paragraph (1) of the schedule gives the newcomer a right to become a shareholder until the capital is fully subscribed, and afterwards the company may increase their capital. There is one point with regard to the grain grower who does not wish to become a shareholder but wishes to enjoy the benefits of the company. Paragraph (1) provides that after the payment of eight per cent., the profits shall be distributed amongst the members of the company. What does "member" mean? Surely a shareholder. If this is so, this provision is not in keeping with the remaining provisions. Surely any surplus profit should be distributed amongst the grain growers on the basis of the quantity of grain delivered by them to the company.

The CHAIRMAN: What portion of the amendment are you dealing with?

Mr. ANGELO: This affects the interests of all grain growers.

The CHAIRMAN: We cannot get away from the question before the Chair, namely, the amendment of the hon. member for South Fremantle.

Mr. TROY: On a point of order, I understand that the Premier has moved the insertion of a new schedule.

The CHAIRMAN: I pointed out that the schedule cannot be amended. It is not before the Committee, but for the convenience of members it is being considered in order to allow of its being modified by the insertion of new paragraphs.

Mr. TROY: If it is reasonable to move an amendment to modify the schedule, is it not equally reasonable to move an amendment in terms of the schedule?

The CHAIRMAN: The question now before the Chair is to insert the subclause moved by the member for South Fremantle.

Mr. TROY: Can the schedule then be dealt with?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, in its turn.

The PREMIER: I hope the hon. member will not persist in his amendment. He asks me to say whether a man in 10 years' time will be able to buy a share and so benefit by the distribution of surplus profits.

Mr. McCallum: After the $1\frac{1}{2}$ million shares are taken up.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is worrying himself unnecessarily. It will be very difficult to get the $1\frac{1}{2}$ million shares taken up in that period. If a greater number should happen to be applied for, the company must have more capital and so issue more shares. To say to the public "You must not apply for more than 100 shares, and if you hold those shares for some years without getting anything in return and, if then the shares become of value, you must surrender them at the price you paid for them," is I think, altogether wrong. The

wheat grower is amply protected. The company must provide with shares any man who applies for shares. If the company fail in that respect the lease can be cancelled. It is not right to suppose that the company have a monopoly of the handling of wheat. They merely have a monopoly of the handling of wheat in bulk. For a long time to come it will be handled in bags. Indeed one can continue handling it in bags for all time. I want to see the Bill go through in workable shape. If we are to limit to 100 the number of shares which a farmer may hold, there will be great trouble in raising the necessary capital. Not all the farmers of the State are shareholders. The company would be glad to have them all. The hon. member is concerned about the farmer who may want to come in later. I can assure the hon. member that such a man is amply protected. The company must live up to its agreement, the provisions of which are very drastic in their protection of the wheatgrowers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The intention of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. MacCallum) has been overlooked by the Premier. It has been frequently impressed upon us that this is a wheatgrowers' company.

The Premier: So it is.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Seeing that a monopoly is being given to this wheatgrowers' company for a period of 25 years, the hon. member for South Fremantle desires to see that it shall continue to be a wheatgrowers' company. There is such a thing as the watering of stock. Then, when the thing becomes a profitable undertaking, the original shareholders can subscribe the full amount of capital and so debar others from coming in. After all the shares have been taken up, no power in the world can force the company to allot further shares which do not exist. The member for South Fremantle wishes to be sure that this will be a farmers' company for all time. Ten or twelve years hence this may be a paying proposition. Then the full capital will be subscribed by the shareholders, and outside farmers will be denied shares. That is what the member for South Fremantle wishes to provide against. The member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith) was nearly right when he said that about 75 per cent. of the wheat will come into the Fremantle zone.

Mr. Troy: About 60 per cent.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In 1919-20 it was nearly 75 per cent.

Mr. Troy: That is not a test of the future.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No one can say what it will be 10 years hence. I, too, would like an assurance that the company will remain a wheatgrowers' company.

Mr. LAMBERT: The objection raised by the member for South Fremantle can be easily overcome. If there be a desire to keep this a purely co-operative concern, three conditions are essential. First, no shares should be issued in lieu of accumulated cash reserve; secondly, there should be a limit to the de-

visible profits; and, thirdly, Parliament should have the right to review the position of the company and order an increase of capital in proportion with the increase in the number of wheatgrowers, or with the increase in the aggregate yield. Would the hon. member agree to that?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It is not necessary.

Mr. LAMBERT: There must be some safeguard. It is not fair that the danger feared by the member for South Fremantle should be allowed to continue. Parliament, which gives the desired monopoly, should have the right to review the position of the company and order the company to increase its capital. That would overcome the objection raised.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is already provided for.

Mr. LAMBERT: Where?

The Minister for Agriculture: In paragraph (1).

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You want to choke the company with all sorts of absurd restrictions.

Mr. LAMBERT: Paragraph (1) is a very different thing. With the expansion of our wheat areas we hope that the acreage under wheat will also be increased. In five or 10 years' time the whole of the capital may be taken up by the present wheat growers in the State.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: And the company would be compelled to issue extra shares.

Mr. LAMBERT: Shares cannot be issued beyond the capital of the company.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The capital must be increased.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is no provision giving Parliament the right to direct the company to increase its capital.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Parliament will have the right to cancel the agreement.

Mr. LAMBERT: This concern cannot pay for many years. Unless Parliament has the right to direct that the capital of the company shall be increased, the stipulation that anyone can acquire shares is of no use whatever.

Mr. Money: The company runs the risk of losing its lease.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is not stipulated.

Mr. Money: If the company does not keep its covenants to give shares to the shareholders, it loses its lease.

Mr. LAMBERT: So long as there are shares available, but the company may say it has issued all its shares. Most members of this side of the House are with the farmers in their desire to run their business on co-operative lines, but feel that this should only be done with reasonable safeguards to the general community. There should be some provision giving Parliament the right to review the operations of the company to see that they are giving co-operative services to the wheat growers of the State, and to ensure that the full functions of co-operation shall be provided for. Parliament could then direct that the company shall increase its share capital if necessary. This is not a harassing

stipulation, and would not endanger the standing of the company.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Look at the second last word in paragraph (1) of the agreement. We have to issue shares to any applicant, that is to any grain grower, on the same terms as they were issued to the original shareholders.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the 1½ million odd shares had all been allotted, there would be no more shares to be issued.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The company is bound hand and foot.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the member for North Perth is prepared to put in some such provision—

Mr. MacCallum Smith: He is prepared to drop the scheme instead. That is what will happen.

Mr. LAMBERT: That threat may break me down in my ultimate negotiations with the hon. member, but will not prevent me from reasoning with him at this moment. I feel that, although the company may have difficulties in its initial stages, Western Australia will ultimately make good as a wheat producing State. I appeal to the member for North Perth to agree to the embodiment of a provision along the lines suggested.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We have given away enough already.

Mr. TROY: I do not propose to support the member for South Fremantle in his amendment because, in my opinion, it would be unfair. He suggests that the shareholders who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of financing their scheme and taking the risk of carrying it to a successful issue, shall be compelled to divide their shares among others who would not take the risk at the inception. I am not a shareholder myself and I do not think that I should come in under any such amendments.

Mr. MacCallum: You have to do that under paragraph (1).

Mr. TROY: I admit that the people who are shareholders to-day, may not be the wheat growers of the future, but there should be another way of getting over the difficulty. I favour the suggestion put forward by the member for Gascoyne, whose desire is that the farmers of the future shall not be debarred from the profits.

Mr. Angelo: That would be, after the preferential shareholders had received their dues.

Mr. TROY: As this company is being given a monopoly and as many farmers who may desire to take up shares will not be able to do so, once the capital is fully subscribed, I think the word "members" appearing in paragraph (1) should be altered to read "grain growers." Under that provision, after the shareholders have received 8 per cent., the grain growers will get their profits as well.

Mr. Angelo: The shareholders will get their percentage of the profits, if they are grain growers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Bill does not provide for that.

The CHAIRMAN: It will be open for the hon. member to move for the addition of a new clause to deal with that aspect.

Mr. TROY: In view of the fact that the company has asked Parliament to give it a monopoly, on the understanding that they will only ask 8 per cent. for their shareholders, and further, in view of the contention that the business is in the interests of the grain growers of the State, we should provide that the grain growers shall have the profits over and above that 8 per cent.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Every grain grower can become a shareholder.

Mr. TROY: I do not agree that that is provided for. It is only fair that the grain growers should receive the benefit of profits resulting from the handling of the commodities they produce. The company will be given a monopoly for a period of 25 years.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We will still have to compete with the bagging system.

Mr. TROY: Parliament has given the company that right on the understanding that it will be a co-operative concern. How is it possible for other farmers to get shares in the company after the full amount of the capital is subscribed?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: By increasing the capital of the company. We are compelled to do that under the latter portion of paragraph (1).

Mr. TROY: That is not so. Where does it provide that the company must issue the shares?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: How can we provide them with shares, unless we issue them?

Mr. TROY: I consider that the existing provision means that the shareholders who come in before the full amount of the capital is subscribed, will come in under the same terms as the original shareholders. I cannot see any provision, however, that will compel the company to issue further capital to enable other grain growers to come in.

Mr. MONEY: Paragraph (1) is perfectly clear. It provides that after the dividend of 8 per cent. has been paid, the balance will be distributed amongst the members of the company on the basis of the grain delivered by them. If members do not deliver grain, they will not participate in the balance of those profits. The paragraph makes it perfectly clear that any grain grower in Western Australia participating in the bulk handling scheme, has a right to acquire shares from the company. There is no doubt on that point. It is argued that the company may not carry out what it has undertaken to do, that the company has already issued shares and will not take steps to issue more capital in order to allow other people to take shares as well. That is entirely wrong. The company is bound to carry out the covenants in the lease. It is provided in Clause 8 that if the company fails to observe all or any of their covenants the lease can be forfeited. There is provision under the Companies Act to enable the company to apply for the right to increase their

capital if it is necessary to provide that capital, so that extra shares may be issued.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Suppose the company does not want the capital. Is it compelled to issue it?

Mr. MONEY: Undoubtedly. The lease will be liable to forfeiture if the company does not do that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No court would agree to such an application.

Mr. MONEY: The company must take every reasonable step to carry out the covenant.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No court would compel a company to take capital that was not required.

Mr. MONEY: The capital would be required if a person desired to take up shares, after the capital had been fully subscribed. I have no hesitation in saying that the company would be compelled to provide shares applied for in that manner.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The court would say that as the company did not require any more funds, they would not be justified in granting any such application.

Mr. MONEY: There is no doubt that the company will have to do all in its power to carry out the covenants of the lease.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Executive Council would consider that the company had done its best under the Act if it did not require the money.

Mr. MONEY: It is clear that if an application were made to compel the company to issue shares, it would be granted. I have been informed that if it will satisfy those who object to this aspect, provision can be inserted in the lease that, if it is necessary to supply shares, the company will agree to increase its capital in order to supply the shares as requested from time to time. I am satisfied, however, that such a provision would not be necessary. It has been said that the lease is not forfeitable because there is provision for matters being referred to arbitration. That is not the position. If there is a breach of the covenant alleged, which is disputed by the company, the only question that will go to arbitration is as to whether a breach has been committed. After all, the arbitration would represent a court of law on the question of fact. If the court found that a breach had been committed, the lease would be forfeitable. The company would not risk the forfeiture of a million of capital for the sake of issuing a few additional shares.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I have a suggestion to offer which may overcome the objection of hon. members opposite. It is to add to the Bill a new clause providing that the company shall increase its capital from time to time to provide any shares applied for as specified.

Mr. McCALLUM: It has been argued that my amendment is unfair because it means that some holders may have to surrender to newcomers shares on which for years they

may not have received any dividends. Clause 2 of the agreement, however, by paragraph (1) provides for that very thing.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: But not as regards the shares of other shareholders.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is one of the conditions under which the lease is granted. The question under consideration is not merely one of dividing the spoils, but of having a share in the management of the company, and this latter is the vital point. If that difficulty could be overcome, objection could logically be raised to my amendment. The Premier and the member for North Perth say that this will be done and that that will be done; but how can they speak for what the company's directorate will do in 25 years' time?

The Premier: Will not the suggested amendment of the member for North Perth meet your wishes?

Mr. McCALLUM: That amendment represents an unfair load for the company to carry, because the company might not be able to use the additional capital.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. ANGELO: I move an amendment—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—"Paragraph (1) of clause 2 of the agreement is amended by the striking out of the words 'its members' and the insertion of 'the grain-growers' in lieu."

The need for co-operation among the grain growers was the slogan with which the Government introduced the Bill, and represented one of the arguments in favour of giving the company a monopoly for 25 years, subject to a limitation of dividends to 8 per cent. Any additional profits, we were told, would go to the grain-growers. But the paragraph referred to means that the surplus profits will be divided among shareholders who are grain-growers.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Yes, on the basis of wheat delivered to the elevators. If the grain-grower does not come in, surely he should not be entitled to share in the profits.

Mr. ANGELO: Some of the grain growers might not have the money to come in. To the contention that my amendment is against the company's interests, the reply is that a prospective share of surplus profits would represent an inducement to grain-growers who are not shareholders to deal with the company. The principle is on all-fours with a principle obtaining in the conduct of a stock-dealing company with which I am connected. According to the agreement as it stands, the intention is to retain any profits above 8 per cent. for distribution among shareholders who are grain-growers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On a point of order, paragraph (c) of Subclause 2 of Clause 3 of the Bill, which has already been passed, makes a provision almost identical in terms with that proposed by the amendment of the member for Gascoyne.

The CHAIRMAN: The point of order raised by the member for North-East Fre-

mantle is clear and distinct. I cannot accept the amendment of the member for Gaseoyne, as it is identical with a provision already passed.

Mr. PICKERING: I ask your ruling, Mr. Chairman, as to whether it would be possible to amend the interpretation clause so that a member of the co-operative company would mean a grain-grower.

The CHAIRMAN: The Bill can be re-committed for that purpose. Such an amendment cannot be moved at this stage.

Schedule put and passed.

Postponed Clause 19:

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That Subclause 2 be struck out.

The subclause refers to the personnel of the board, two members of whom it was provided should be nominated by the wheat-growers, one by the Perth Chamber of Commerce, and one by the directors of the company.

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

Postponed Clause 20:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added:

—“No member of the board or the secretary or any officer shall directly or indirectly deal in or be financially interested in grain, nor hold any interest in any grain elevator or warehouse or partnership, corporation or business engaged in the grain trade or in the transportation or storage of grain.

I had also intended to provide that each member or officer of the board should subscribe to an oath of office. I do not, however, intend to move that.

The PREMIER: I do not know what the hon. member's object is. He seems to want to adopt everything that is in force in Canada.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If I did you would have a far bigger Bill.

The PREMIER: Does the hon. member seriously object to a wheatgrower becoming a member of the board? The board would have certain duties apart from managing the elevator system. If the hon. member will alter the amendment to provide that a majority shall not be interested, I will accept it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The board have to see fair play between the company and their customers and between the buyers and sellers of wheat. They have to appoint officers to issue certificates carrying the hall mark of the Government for all wheat sold and sent overseas. The board will not give satisfaction by a long way. In Canada, where they had a similar board of three commissioners, there were grievances between the elevator companies and the farmers and another board had to be appointed to consider appeals

against the decisions of the commissioners. The amendment would make for smoother working for the company and for the farmer.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You should have on the board men who know something about grain.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Quite so, and there are many such men who are not financially interested in grain. There are some in the Government departments, in my opinion, second to none in the State.

The Premier: They must know nothing about wheat or the handling of wheat.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The amendment does not say so; it says they must not be financially interested in grain. If the Government had accepted a board of three, it would have been less expensive. Most of the disputes that will arise will be between the company and the wheatgrowers.

Mr. Harrison: You must have on the board men with technical knowledge.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There are plenty such men who are not wheatgrowers. I accept the Premier's suggestion.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out “no member” and inserting the words “not less than three of the members.”

Amendment on amendment put and passed; the amendment, as amended, agreed to; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Postponed Clause 41—Regulations:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (a) of Subclause 2 be struck out.

This paragraph is now unnecessary.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1921-22.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from 15th November; Mr. Angelo in the Chair.

Department of Mines; Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister. (The Colonial Secretary in charge of the Estimates.)

Vote—Mines, £67,738:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [9.34]: This task would give me greater pleasure if I could show that there had been an increase instead of a decrease in the output of gold. In this State mining is a most important industry.

Mr. Troy: We rarely hear it mentioned.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has played a very important part in the development of the State. I remember the discovery of the goldfields. The population in this State was then very small. With the opening up of the goldfields the population increased and, as a result, what other industries the State had became very active. At that time even agriculture was of but little account. We had difficulty in getting rid of our products from the soil. I hope the time may come when mining will again play an active part in the development of the State. The total mineral production, other than gold and coal, to 31st July last was valued at £7,707,987; and for the seven months ended July £69,999. The total production of gold to the end of September was valued at £145,053,769. The total production of coal to 30th September was £2,970,118, and during 1920, £350,346—an increase of £79,991 over the preceding year. The total number of men employed in the industry in 1919 was 8,346, and in 1920, 8,496—an increase of 150. The men employed in gold mining decreased by 155; but those engaged in mining coal and other minerals increased by 305. During 1920 Western Australia produced 44.29 per cent. of the total output of gold for the Commonwealth, Papua and New Zealand. For the year ended December, 1920, the value of the gold production of the State was £2,624,427, exclusive of the gold premium, which was £974,504, or a total of £3,598,931. For the six months ended June, 1921, it amounted to £1,064,641. The gold premium was £273,613—a total of £1,338,254; and for the three months ended September, £635,074, exclusive of the gold premium, which, of course, is not yet known. The decrease in 1920 was the result of lessened outputs from all goldfields except Coolgardie, Peak Hill, Pilbara and East Coolgardie. The last-named field, whence comes over 50 per cent. of the State's yield, increased its output by 4,441 ounces. The decrease in gold in 1920 was somewhat compensated for by an increased copper production to the value of £15,000; arsenical and pyritic ores, £6,600, and an increase in export of lead, silver lead and pig lead to the value of nearly £102,000. The value of asbestos produced was £5,800, and mining for this mineral is very active, some good deposits at Nullagine and elsewhere on the Pilbara field being vigorously opened up. Recently a prospector brought under the Minister's notice the existence of very promising beds in the West Pilbara field, and one of the geological staff was despatched to report on them all, with a view to deciding how best to help the development of this industry. Unfortunately the drop in market prices for the base metals has given a check to activities. Considerable interest is being evinced at the moment in the search for oil; and reports of its occurrence have been received from a concession in the South of the State, and also from two areas in Kimberley. Unfortunately the analysis of the former has not revealed anything of a satisfactory nature; but more favourable indications have

been disclosed in samples which have been treated from Kimberley. A considerable number of licenses, embracing a very big area, are held, giving the holders the exclusive right to search for mineral oil on Crown lands.

Mr. Underwood: What number of licenses?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot say. Practically the whole of the State is taken up with these licenses.

Mr. Mann: Has anything been done on the leases?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. Of course if those who have taken the licenses do not comply with the Act and the regulations, they will be made to forfeit. Naturally they must be given a certain time in which to prepare for their operations and raise money for the purpose of prospecting. It is impossible for them to do that without capital. They will report to the department within a certain time, and if their operations are not satisfactory to the department the licenses can be cancelled.

Mr. Mann: Is there any limit to the area which they can take up?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No, not for a license. The dividends paid by mining companies during the eight months ended 31st August totalled £176,858; and the total dividends paid to the same date amounted to £27,985,605. The Government are fully seized of the necessity for action in checking, if possible, the continued decrease in the gold output, and assistance to prospecting has been continued. This is now under the supervision of a prospecting board comprised of representatives of the various mining bodies, the Returned Soldiers' Association, and certain executive officers of the Mines Department. The central board is assisted by the advisory board, which sits at Kalgoorlie, and arrangements are being completed for the establishment of additional advisory boards, to sit at other mining centres. Since the board's inception it has assisted 236 parties of prospectors, and at the present moment there are 82 approved parties in various parts of the State. Ives' Find is the only discovery of any note made by a prospector assisted by the board, but other prospectors report hopefully of other discoveries made by them. When appointing the prospecting board the Minister requested members to submit a recommendation as to what action might be taken in regard to prospecting, supplementary to, or in substitution of, what was already being done. The board recommended the continuance of the assistance being given, and, further, that prospectors should be granted supplies of rations to enable them to remain in the field. The board also submitted a scheme for the prospecting of the State's metalliferous areas, but for financial and other reasons this has not been adopted in full.

Mr. Corboy: They are doing good work with what they have got.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A modified scheme, covering portion of the original scheme, and providing for the systematic pro-

specting of a specified area by a party of approved men under the leadership of an experienced and qualified leader, will be launched shortly.

Mr. Teesdale: Will there be any work done up North, do you think?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This will operate over the whole State, but owing to the lack of money the area over which the operations will be conducted must of necessity be limited. Boring operations to prove the existence of coal measures at Wilga and Irwin River have recently been completed, and the results to date are very encouraging. Advances for development in mining are being continued in all cases where there appear to be reasonable chances of success. The advances for the year ended 30th June last amounted to £35,206; whilst for the year ended 30th June, 1920, the amount was £25,024, and the average for the three years previous to this was £22,917—indicating a considerable increase in assistance granted during the last two years. Assistance has been rendered in every case in which the professional officers have been able to recommend that there was a reasonable prospect of success. The policy with regard to State batteries has been continued, and at the present moment there are 28 operating, this number working 175 head of stamps. The capital expenditure on State batteries to the end of 1920 was £384,577, and the loss on working was £91,790. The total value of the output from the inception of these batteries to 30th July is estimated at £4,457,994. A new plant has been erected at St. Ives and should be in active operation within the next couple of weeks. It would have started sooner but for the unfortunate difficulty that has been experienced in locating an ample water supply, but indications during the last few days are that this will shortly be surmounted. Owing to the activity in oil, for instance, and the necessity for investigations and reports on mineral deposits, such as asbestos, etc., the technical staff, both in the field and the laboratory, has been exceedingly hard worked for some time; but, realising that this activity might be only of a temporary nature, the Minister refrained from increasing the staff, and the remaining members have loyally endeavoured to cope with the work. The Minister has informed me that every step has been taken to economise in the department so far as the staff is concerned. The staff is scattered all over the place in different offices, and it has been difficult to effect any material reduction. He has in view the re-organisation of the offices, and before long he hopes to be able to effect a material reduction in the staff by having all members of it under the one roof. In this way the work can be carried out more easily than under present conditions. I know that members who represent goldfields constituencies will have a good deal to say on these Estimates. Any points that are raised during the discussion I will reply to as far as I am able. I will see that anything that is brought forward that

is likely to prove of benefit to the goldfields is brought under the notice of the Minister on his return. I recognise that the mining industry is of great importance to the State. Whatever I can do to assist that industry, I will do. It is, of course, difficult to provide money to enable us to do all we would like to do in the many different directions in which expansion may be necessary, but all that can be done will be done. I commend the Estimates to the attention of hon. members.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [9.43]: I feel that very sympathetic consideration is being given by the Minister to those persons who require assistance. I have taken a number of cases to the department, and in every case favourable consideration has been given to the requests made. I have not asked for a great deal on any occasion, but the requests have always been favourably considered. The Minister has been responsible for sending out 15 parties of prospectors in my electorate since the election.

Mr. Teesdale: Not one has ever been sent up North.

Mr. CORBOY: Possibly the hon. member talked to the Minister as he talks to some of us, in which case he could not expect to receive much in the way of assistance.

Mr. Troy: Why should he not get it?

Mr. CORBOY: There is no need to crawl in order to get assistance, but one can ask for it in a quiet manner. My experience is that the department is usually ready to do all that is possible. In no case have any practical men been turned down. Most of the mining operations in my electorate are restricted to prospecting, and assistance wherever possible is being given to enable that work to go on. I wish to deal at some length with the operations of the smelters at Ravensthorpe, covering the period since the Government leased them in 1913. In that year a request was made that the Government should take over the smelters on lease, and smelt the ores for the ore producers of the district. After protracted negotiations an agreement was arrived at with the owners of the works under which the Government agreed to lease them for seven years with the right of renewal, the rental being paid on the basis of the tonnage of ore treated. The Government commenced to operate under that agreement, and found it necessary to formulate charges and arrange other details in connection with the smelting of ores in that district. The regulations that were framed have an important bearing upon subsequent events in Ravensthorpe. The first proposition put up for the treatment of the ore there was that the Government in purchasing the ore should take it over and treat it at a flat rate of £3 per ton to cover all expenses for smelting, shipping, realisation, and all other charges against the ore. These regulations were only in force for a few months. They were then withdrawn in favour of other regulations, with which I will deal later. I would draw the attention of the Committee to the state-

ment, which I find on the files, made by Mr. Montgomery, the State Mining Engineer, when the regulations were first framed. He says—

These, however (that is the ores), at a tariff of £3 per ton should recoup all the expenditure.

He goes on to say—

The Government would take all the risks of the smelting experiment.

He then deals with the credit that would be required by the works, namely, between £40,000 and £50,000, and indicates that the only risk of loss lies in the cost of the operations possibly exceeding the tariff charges. He continues—

If a loss was made it would not be great, and would be more than made up in other directions by an increase of railway and other revenue resulting from the working of the mines and the smelter.

The particular point is that at the initial stages the Government recognised that they were taking a risk in conducting these smelting operations. It was claimed that the new regulations that were framed would be more equitable in the distribution of the cost of operating, and would still recoup the Government for all their expenditure, as well as distribute the cost of the work more fairly amongst the ore sellers. In commenting upon the new regulations, Mr. Montgomery explains the reasons for the change. They are good reasons, and he then puts the new regulations up to the Minister for approval. In place of the £3 per ton charge, he suggested imposing a charge of 30s. per ton for receiving and smelting to matte only. May I explain for the benefit of members not acquainted with smelting operations that when ore is smelted, as a general rule it is reduced to what is known as matte, which comprises half copper and half residue. The matte is a product which can be sold in the market and taken over by other firms, who extract the copper from it. They proposed to charge 30s. per ton for smelting to matte and 3s. 6d. per unit to cover all other charges of realisation, etc. That proposal was agreed to and the alterations were gazetted on the 25th February, 1914. All ore was subsequently purchased in accordance with that new decision. The cost of 3s. 6d. per unit for realisation charges covered the cost of transshipment from Ravensthorpe to the place of sale in London, New York or elsewhere, commission, insurance and every other charge against the actual realisation. These amended regulations were explained to the people at Ravensthorpe. I have copies of the regulations which go into details of the matter fully, and they bear out what I have said regarding the charge of 30s. for smelting and 3s. 6d. per unit for realisation. In April, 1914, Mr. Shepherd, the manager of the Smelting Works, wrote to the State Mining Engineer, Mr. Montgomery, and stated in the letter that he anticipated a loss would be made on the smelting of the ore to matte,

but he hoped to make sufficient profit on the realisation charges to make up that loss to within 1s. per ton on the ore treated. In other words, while he expected to make a loss on the smelting, the charge of 3s. 6d. per unit for realisation would recover that loss. The State Mining Engineer replied on the 26th April that he was disappointed that Mr. Shepherd anticipated a loss, and he pointed out that the company which had lately been carrying on the smelting works—this was prior to the war—were smelting with the same plant and treating the same type of ore at as low a figure as 20s. per ton. In April, 1914, the State Mining Engineer asked Mr. Shepherd if he thought it was advisable to raise the tariff charges, to which Mr. Shepherd replied that he did not think it was advisable to raise the charges because of the bad impression it would create from a business point of view. It is somewhat notorious that people running smelters—I do not refer to Mr. Shepherd in particular—endeavour to give the impression that they are good and smart business people, and they always resent anything that will give the public an impression that they are not good business men who run the smelting business.

The Minister for Agriculture: Does this not refer to the Ravensthorpe case?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes.

The Minister for Agriculture: But that matter is sub judice.

Mr. CORBOY: Not so far as this House is concerned. Two people have instituted proceedings against the Government, but there are from 98 to 100 people who are considerably interested in the matter, who have not taken any such action. At any rate, I think I am in order in discussing this matter.

The Minister for Agriculture: I was ruled out of order some time ago under similar conditions.

Mr. CORBOY: If the Minister desires to ask for a ruling, I am prepared to let it go at that. In the meantime, however, I wish to stress this point because it is inflicting a hardship on many people in this particular part of the State. The effect of this business has been to withhold settlement in the district, and is inflicting great hardships upon the people who remain there. This trouble has practically been the cause of the bankruptcy of at least two persons that I know of and many other people have suffered from the hardships to which I have referred. Less than a month ago a man in business at Ravensthorpe had to get out because he could not carry on any longer. These people have advanced stores to the residents in anticipation of the Government settling this dispute. The Government have not adopted that course, however, and the business people who have advanced so much on account of goods have to pay high rates of interest to the banks or wholesale merchants on account of these goods. They cannot get payment from their customers, with the result that they are suffering considerably. I think the Government should give serious consideration to the whole

question. I do not want to become heated in the matter, but I want to place the position before the Committee in a fair and impartial manner. I am honestly convinced that the Government do not know what has happened there or they would not go on with any appeal in connection with the litigation.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: If they had read the judge's summing up, they would have known what has happened.

Mr. CORBOY: Even if the members of the Government read the judge's summing up, they would not know all, but they would not go on with the appeal. Members may not be aware that the Government are appealing to the High Court in Melbourne from the decision in this case. When the Government took over the smelters, they took over all the necessary plant to carry on the works, but they did not take over certain dumps of slags and other goods owned by the Phillips River Copper Company. The slags were dumped on the site. An agreement, however, was reached between the Government and the company which provided that any slags, converter linings or any other goods could be taken over by the Government. Mr. Montgomery minuted the file to the effect that if the Government wanted to use the slags in connection with the works, the slags were to be purchased from the company on the assay value of the copper in the slags, and they were to make a straight-out deal with the company before treating it. One of the greatest causes of trouble has been this: Mr. Shepherd has found himself, campaign after campaign, threatened with a loss. His reputation as a manager has been at stake, and if he shows a loss and cannot account for it, his reputation is correspondingly adversely affected. What he has done has been to go to the dumps, take hundreds of tons of slag and smelt it. He does not charge the department a penny for the smelting or tell McNeil or Bernales, who own the slag, anything about it. He puts the slag through with surplus ore and runs the lot through the smelter, taking credit for the result of the enormous rates which obtained during the war period and charging the cost of smelting against the poor beggars, who put their ore through the smelter. That is how people have lost their ore and that is why they have issued their claims against the Government. The cost is charged against the smelting of the other ores in order to cover the cost to the works of doing that work. I will endeavour to show the Minister what has been happening on the spot. There is another detail in connection with these high smelting costs which has led to a great deal of dissatisfaction. The Ravensthorpe ores, generally speaking, contain copper only. The ores from Kundip, which are siliceous, are more difficult to smelt seeing they contain but little copper and a high percentage of gold. I am told by people who are competent in the smelting business that they would not

attempt to smelt that ore for £3 10s. per ton. They would not try to do it for a moment. The Government have been doing it for 30s. per ton for a number of years, and they have made, in consequence, considerable losses on the smelting of these highly siliceous ores. Mr. Shepherd, in writing to Mr. Montgomery in August, 1914, pointed out that these gold ores from Kundip caused considerable difficulty at the works and he was trying to get them together and make a clean sweep of them. Shortly after the Government started the first campaign at the smelters the war broke out. The condition that had been laid down regarding the payment was that as soon as the ore was sampled at the work and an agreement had been arrived at regarding the sampling, and the copper contents were determined, the Government would advance 75 per cent. on the purchase price or value of the copper content in the ore, on the basis of a price of copper at £56 per ton. Then eight weeks after the advances had been arrived at, they would make their final payment on the price then ruling for copper in London. Before the first settlement was made under that arrangement, the war broke out. The bottom fell out of the copper market and copper was worth practically nothing. If a settlement had been effected at that stage, the copper would have been practically valueless to the owners of the ore and they would have got practically nothing for their commodity. As a result, the Government were approached with the suggestion that the settlement on the final payment should be deferred until such times as the market became stable and it was possible to get the real, instead of the imaginary, quote for copper. The Government, after a lengthy correspondence, agreed to the suggestion to defer settlement and posted a notice at the works which practically set up what was a new contract. Mr. Justice Burnside practically ruled that this notice set up a new contract dealing with one phase of the business only. I will read the notice which was posted up, because it has an important bearing on the position which I will deal with later on. The notice read as follows—

Settlement for all ore received prior to the date of posting of notice at Ravensthorpe will be made in accordance with regulation 13 of the 25th February, 1914, unless written notice is given to the ore buyers forthwith by the owners of the ore that they wish such settlement to be deferred and made in accordance with the price actually realised for the matte and that they agree to the matte being disposed of by the Minister on such terms, in such market and at such time as in his sole discretion he may think most advisable. Final settlement for all ore received at the smelting works after (the date of posting of this notice at

Ravensthorpe) will be by payment to the sellers of such balance as may accrue from the actual sale, on such terms as the Minister may determine, of the product of his ore after deducting advances, interest and all other expenses incurred in placing such product upon the market and selling it.

The Minister was to find the best market he could get when the price of copper was more advantageous and settle with the owner of the ore on the price that was actually received for the ore. The second paragraph of the notice reads—

Settlement for all ore received at the smelting works after the date of the posting of this notice at Ravensthorpe will be by payment to the seller of such balance as may accrue from the actual sale, on such terms as the Minister may determine, of the product of his ore after deduction of advances, interest, and all other expenses incurred in placing such product upon the market and selling it.

There is one important thing in that notice to which I desire to draw the careful attention of hon. members. The Minister is to adhere to his charges as fixed by the Act, with the exception that he is allowed to charge all the other expenses incurred in placing the product on the market. Instead of charging the 3s. 6d. per unit provided for realisation in the regulations, he may charge the actual cost of realisation. That is what the notice provided, and that is how Mr. Justice Burnside interpreted that notice—that all the rest of the regulations were binding as a contract, and that it was no more competent on the part of the Minister to vary the charge for smelting than it was competent for him to vary the rate of interest charged on the advance; that it was not competent for the Minister to vary any charge under the regulations except, in accordance with the notice, the charge for realisation, in respect of which he was to be allowed the actual expenses incurred in placing the product on the market. In September of 1914 Mr. Shepherd sent a statement—this is just a sideline—showing from a business point of view the position of the work to the 31st August, a position pointing to a loss of £1,431 2s. 3d., taking credit, however, for all surplus metals—to which he was not really entitled, because he himself said they were the product of old converter linings, slags, etc. This bears out what I said a moment ago, that Shepherd was taking credit for the surplus metals, which he himself said he had produced from the old converter linings, slags, etc., really belonging to the company, and which he had no right, therefore, to touch. These converter linings and slags and so on are referred to in a minute of the State Mining Engineer to Mr. McNeil. Mr. Montgomery writes—

The owners are to retain full rights to any metals in the dumps of slags. So if

any of these are used by us, we must arrange for them to be paid for at whatever rate may be agreed.

That was not done. Shepherd tried to get a few tons of copper with a view to squaring his losses. Later Mr. Shepherd writes on the same subject, and from his letter it is apparent that he is quite willing to take these surplus extractions in order to make up his loss on the smelting process. In his report for September, 1914, Mr. Shepherd states that 62 tons of old slag left by the Phillips River Company had been smelted, and that the costs would be benefited, as the slag had not been paid for. He says, in effect, that the Government had not paid for the old slags left by Bernaldes. About this time the department began to realise that they were losing money somewhere, and they considered that they would have to get another 10s. per ton. The Minister made repeated requests to the officials to inform him of the position, and the officials repeatedly informed the Minister that they were not carrying on at a loss. In reply to the State Mining Engineer the officials advised that they would have to get another 10s. per ton on all shipments right back to February, 1915, and that then, with regular running and proper business arrangements, the works should be carried on without loss. On the 20th March, 1915, the Minister put on the file a minute stating that the charges would have to be increased by 10s. per ton. Again, the manager of the works, Mr. Shepherd, assured the head office that there was no necessity for that further increase. On the 20th April, 1915, he wrote stating that he estimated that when the campaign closed a few days later, the losses would be anywhere between £1,000 and £3,000, depending on the metal recoveries and on the prices at which the surpluses were sold. The extractions from the slag, and the prices he got for the extractions, he expected would bring the loss down to about £1,000. In regard to this I may point out that it was being put up to the Minister by the manager and the officials that the loss would probably be only £1,000 and would certainly not exceed £3,000. As a matter of fact, when the campaign closed 10 days later and the accounts had been made up, the true loss on the campaign proved to be no less than £12,919. I want to draw the attention of the Committee to the actions of the departmental officials on this occasion. Ten days previously they had assured the Minister that the loss would be only about £1,000. When they made up their accounts at the conclusion of the campaign, they found that they had lost £12,919. They never showed to the Minister the minute stating that loss. At that time the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) was Minister for Mines. He was kept in complete ignorance of the fact of that loss. Every other Minister since then has been kept in ignorance of the fact that that loss was made. Immediately the officials ascertained the extent of the loss, they started to look around for means of recovery. All

this was done by the officials without any disclosure to the Minister of their actions. After they had informed the Minister that the loss would be only between £1,000 and £3,000, they put up new regulations to cover the loss. A sum of £3,000 had been lost on the 8,000 tons treated, equal to 7s. 6d. per ton loss. The officials worked out that they could get even by making an all-round rise of 5s. in the tariff. That, they considered, would suffice to square the account. Mr. Shepherd said it would not be politic to alter the charge of 30s. per ton for smelting, as some of the ores could have been smelted for less than 30s., but that the gold ores from Kundip, being highly silicious and also fine, had slowed down the furnace and put up costs for fluxes et cetera. He suggested increasing the excess silica charges, and charging for screening and sintering the fine ore. The regulations were amended in 1915 to cover the loss that was anticipated. In the case presented to the court the Government endeavoured to rely upon the new regulations as showing that when they were made they were intended to cover all costs, whatever they were, that might be involved in the operation of the works. By the way, on the 26th April the manager of the works, Mr. Shepherd, assured the State Mining Engineer that the loss was not likely to be serious. Now I wish just briefly to explain the excess, the excess silica charges and so on, and what the Government did in order to cover the loss which had been made according to the official statement, but which of course was not the real loss. The charge for excess silica under the 1914 regulations was 9d. for each unit of silica over 60 per cent. in the ore. The Government amended that so as to provide a charge of 6d. for every unit of excess silica over 40 per cent. This gave them another 20 per cent. of silica to operate on with the charge of 6d. as against the former charge of 9d. They also put on a charge of 5s. per ton for sintering. On the 2nd July, 1915, the regulations of 15 clauses issued on the 28th February, 1914, were cancelled, and new regulations of 17 clauses, embodying Mr. Shepherd's proposals for increased silica charges and also increased screening and sintering charges, were gazetted. Otherwise the conditions as to, and the charges against, ore being purchased were unaltered. In fact, Clauses 1. to 10 in the two sets of regulations were fac simile. The files disclose that in August of 1915 the smelting works had made 9.29 tons of copper and 17.39 ounces of gold more than had been paid for. Mr. Shepherd wrote in reference to these surpluses—

It seems probable that the 238.89 tons of old converter slags (Mr. McNeill's) put through during the period, contained considerably better values than expected. The surpluses are a fair set off against the high smelting costs.

In September, having again a surplus of 3 tons of copper, he wrote that there was nothing wrong with the recoveries; but he again smelted a lot of slag and converter linings.

In 1916 some of the people concerned in this business, some of the ore sellers, began to inquire what they were going to get out of the first campaign. Up till then they had not got a final settlement in respect of the first campaign, that of 1914; and it was getting into 1916. They were anxious to have a final settlement and find out what they were to get out of the business. So on the 26th January, 1916, Mr. Shepherd wired from Ravenshorpe to the State Mining Engineer that Mr. McNeill's final payments would be approximately the difference between £56 10s. (the price advanced on) and the sale price obtained on the 41 tons of copper less excess cost of realisation. Mr. Shepherd makes no definite statement regarding what the ore sellers are to get as the final proceeds of the sales. Two days later, that is, on the 28th January, Shepherd makes the discovery that heavy losses are being incurred, and he suggests writing up the realisation costs to the extent of 2s. per unit. In a second letter of the same date, namely the 28th January, he says he would like to be given an opportunity of reviewing the whole position of the State smelter from a business view-point before the final payments are made. The 3rd February, 1916, appears to be the date on which for the first time the accounts were looked into sufficiently closely to permit of its being realised what heavy losses were actually being made. The accounts showed a loss of £27,510 4s. 4d. to the end of 1915. After taking credit for metals which have been extracted from the slags, they still show a loss of £18,531. By charging the actual cost of realisation instead of 3s. 6d. per unit the loss is reduced to £15,996. There we got down to bedrock—the actual loss disclosed is £15,996. It is worth while remembering the remark of the State Mining Engineer that the Government would have to bear the risk of this smelting experiment. Mr. Shepherd, in a long letter in which he explains this loss, put forward the suggestion to write up the realisation charges from the actual cost of 4s. per unit to 7s. 4d. per unit, and he blames the high freights of the steamers and railways, together with the high price of coke, for the loss.

Mr. Teesdale: Who was that addressed to?

Mr. CORBOY: The State Mining Engineer. None of this correspondence was ever disclosed to a Minister. The State Mining Engineer and the manager of the works communicated with one another, hatching this thing, and working out how they were going to get at the ore sellers, and they never consulted the Minister at all.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: When did the Minister first come to know of it?

Hon. P. Collier: I never knew anything of it while I was there.

Mr. CORBOY: Mr. Hudson did not hear of it while he was there. One Minister did know of it when the claims came in against the Government. That Minister was Mr. Robinson. Of course, when the claims came

in, these people had no option but to disclose to the Minister what had happened.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: I presume all these employees were dismissed?

Mr. CORBOY: I will read a little comment to show the way this thing has been handled. When Mr. Robinson got to know what had happened, these officials wanted him to try to square it so that he should not allow it to go to the court. They suggested that Shepherd should be allotted £10,000 out of the Mining Development Vote. Mr. Montgomery sends on this proposal to the Under Secretary who recommends it. Then it goes to the Minister, and Mr. Robinson's minute which is on the file is rather to the point, if it is nothing else. He says:—

Regarding Phillips River: I agree to the State Mining Engineer's recommendation, but operate on it only so far as those persons are concerned who do not make claims against the Government.

and he goes on to say:—

I wish to see McNeil, Dunstan and Bernales and propose to tell them that unless their claims are abandoned we will enforce the full conditions against them. If they withdraw we will help.

In other words the Minister for Mines held a pistol at their heads and told them "If you agree to withdraw, I will ignore a lot of things in the Act. If you do not, I will use every power I have against you." That is what it amounts to. That £10,000 was allotted and some of it has been used. There were five of the ore producers who gave evidence favourable to the Government, but everyone got his cut out of the £10,000. I am not saying they were bought. One man was in partnership with five others down there. All the six were on an equal footing; they had a claim against the Government for £200 each. This one man, however, received £400, or twice the amount he was entitled to, and he gave evidence in favour of the Government against his five partners who got nothing. I have the minute written by Mr. Robinson at that time. I have seen lots of things on departmental files, but I do not think I have ever seen anything quite so hot as that particular minute. The minute is dated 8th May, 1919.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Did Shepherd get a share of the £10,000?

Mr. Marshall: He deserved it.

Mr. CORBOY: The files do not disclose that.

Mr. Mann: Is Shepherd still down there?

Mr. CORBOY: I believe the Government are handing the smelters back to the owners of the smelting works, but what their intention is in regard to Mr. Shepherd I do not know. So far as I know he is still in the employment of the department.

Hon. P. Collier: The smelters have been closed down for two years and he has been drawing wages all the time.

Mr. CORBOY: I am honestly convinced that Ministers did not know what was happening down there.

The Colonial Secretary: Publicity has been given to the matter.

Mr. CORBOY: Not to everything, and certainly not to the minute by Mr. Robinson. I am hoping that the Government will realise that a grave injustice has been done, and it is up to them now to prevent further waste of money, and not send good money after bad by appealing to the High Court, as they would be sure to lose. After the discovery about making the loss, there is a great deal of correspondence as to how they are to get it back. Shepherd wrote suggesting three ways in which that could be done. On the 15th March, 1916, he wrote that his first method was to "write up" the realisation actual costs from 4s. 1d. to 7s. 5d. This would reclaim £10,378, but he was afraid the ore sellers knew too much, as he explained that "writing up the realisation costs would have been the simplest way, but giving the ore sellers so much detailed information had opened the door to a lot of argument." He added that the giving of details which were open to misconstruction, either accidental or deliberate, had made this method difficult of application. A second way he suggested was to charge the actual average realisation costs, namely, 4s. 1d. per unit, and pay on the average standard price of copper on the "three days on which the shipments were sold," instead of the price of electrolytic copper at which they were sold, but this method would not reclaim enough, and it would be necessary to do too much faking, as Shepherd explained, "it would be necessary to have a difference between standard and electrolytic of about £33 to get square." The third method he suggested was for the Government to guarantee the ore sellers the flat rate of £100 per ton to the end of 1916. It could then for itself take the chance of making a profit on that rate by selling at market rates. He finished his letter by recommending the third method as being likely to give the most satisfaction. These people discussed between them the various methods of getting this money back and on the 15th May, 1916, Shepherd wrote to the State Mining Engineer—

In order to avoid sudden disappointment among the ore sellers, I have ventured to tell inquirers that the distribution will not be so large as the interim dividend (£100,000) owing to the rise in costs and the fact that most of the copper was, after all, sold too soon but that the second campaign will probably be more satisfactory.

He is preparing the way. On the 7th June he wrote again—

Following up my letter of the 31st March dealing with the deficit question, and in the absence of instructions to the contrary, this deficit has been reclaimed in the final payment vouchers by "writing up" the realisation costs on the 622.72 tons of copper purchased by 3s. 10d. per unit.

The letter of the 31st March to which he refers is not on the file, and it is impossible to say what it contains. Not only is the

original letter missing from the head office file, but a copy of the letter is also missing from the works file.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Silver fish, I suppose.

Mr. CORBOY: It is apparent that the head office received this letter because he says—"Referring to my letter of the 31st March," and there is no reply from head office to say that it did not come to hand. On his own responsibility, in the absence of instructions to the contrary—no instructions from the Minister or from the State Mining Engineer—he deliberately writes up the realisation costs by 3s. 10d. per unit. I do not know whether hon. members know what that means. It means the writing up of £17 per ton on every ton of copper, and that £17 a ton was deliberately stolen from those people who sold the ore to the Government. He goes on to explain that writing up the realisation costs is more likely to be accepted than any other method "because it is understood that freights, insurance, commissions, etc., have greatly increased owing to the war and because it looks less like a permanent increase." He also says the fact that the realisation charge would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 7s. per unit has been allowed to leak out so as to save shock when the payments are made.

Mr. Lambert: He is a bit of a diplomat.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. What he says is quite correct. These people were practically buried in the backblocks. They had heard that the price of everything was soaring during the war, and when he told them that freights, insurance, and commissions had increased so much that realisation was costing 7s. per unit, they accepted his statement. If members take the evidence and read it through, they will find that one of the Government's two grounds of defence was that even if this cost had been written up excessively the people knew it was being done and tacitly agreed to it. Here is Mr. Shepherd's own admission that he allowed it to leak out that it was due to increased freights, insurance, and commissions owing to the war, and the people accepted his statement. One of the grounds on which the Government are appealing to the High Court is that the people knew the cost had been written up. In 1916, the Minister—

Mr. Lambert: Who was the Minister then?

Mr. CORBOY: The present Leader of the Opposition. I want to make it clear, however, that Ministers, with one exception, have not been involved in this matter. The minute I have already quoted discloses that one particular Minister was equally black with the officials. The State Mining Engineer, in a letter written following on the visit to Ravensthorpe of Mr. Collier, said they were anxious to get final settlements, and added—

The method of distribution balances first campaign was fairly equitable, but

was not in accordance with the conditions gazetted on the 2nd July, 1915.

The State Mining Engineer definitely said that they had not paid in accordance with the gazetted conditions, and yet the Government are appealing on the ground that the conditions did cover the charges they levied. A letter dated the 24th June, 1916, from the accountant at Ravensthorpe to the head office, stated that 3s. 10d. per unit was being added to the realisation charges to meet the difference between the actual cost of smelting and the rate charged. There is another point which shows what was going on. A sum of 3s. 10d. was added to the realisation charges for this purpose and, in addition, it has to be remembered that through smelting these old slugs, the costs were very high and an amount representing the additional cost was added to the cost of realisation. This was grossly unfair. Even if the cost had been legitimately charged, it would have been unfair, because it was imposing a burden on people whose ore had not cost 30s. a ton to smelt. In September, 1916, when they again made up their public accounts, Shepherd wrote—

Completed vouchers for final payments second campaign are going forward by this mail together with statements showing a loss for smelting of £10,641 10s. 1d.

He again bames the high cost of coke and stores, owing to war conditions, and loss of time waiting for ore supplies. After taking credit for all surplus metals it is still necessary in order to square the ledger to write up the realisation charges on the copper sold to 9.169 shillings per unit. Members should note the increase from 7s. 4d. per unit to over 9s. per unit.

Mr. Pickering: Did not they notify the proposed increased charges?

Mr. CORBOY: They gazetted their regulations under which they fixed their charges.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: They tried to make them retrospective.

Mr. CORBOY: The member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith) objected at the time. There is some correspondence on the file referring to that. The officials apparently got a bit of a scare and put minutes on the files assuring one another that the member for North Perth was under a misapprehension with regard to the whole business. It is rather regrettable that further light was not thrown on the matter at that time, as it would have saved a considerable amount of additional trouble. The same thing went on in connection with every campaign. Shepherd, in order to get what he was losing on smelting, instead of going to the Minister and explaining that he could not smelt the ore for 30s. a ton, tried to make out what a fine smelting manager he was by giving out that in spite of the war, he was still smelting at 30s. per ton, though at the same time he was boosting up realisation charges in order to get his money back. In a letter to the State

Mining Engineer on the 21st November, 1916, Shepherd issued a table for the information of sellers showing what good profits could be obtained from $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to 8 per cent. copper ore and added—

It was thought advisable to give the bald results per ton of crude ore without details for simplicity's sake and also to obviate unprofitable argument.

Shepherd was evidently uneasy about the overcharging on realisation costs being found out, for in this letter he wrote—

The method of writing up realisation per unit to cover increased cost of smelting can, of course, be criticised as throwing an unfair cost on the ores of higher grade, but if this aspect of the policy is not drawn attention to, it will in all probability not be objected to by the works' customers.

In other words if they did not find out, they could not kick up a row about it.

Mr. Pickering: That was pretty shrewd.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. One of the principal grounds of defence on the part of the Government was that the people themselves knew this was being done and that, therefore, they could not now come along with a claim. Shepherd said in effect that if attention was not drawn to this aspect of the policy, they would not get any claims. If the people did not find out, they would not squeal. That is the only interpretation which can be placed on his letter. Otherwise, if these people knew that this was being done, what meaning could be placed on Shepherd's letter to the State Mining Engineer. I do not want to go through the whole of the papers dealing with this matter, as they are very lengthy, but I wish to run briefly through the actual events in connection with the campaigns. On the first campaign—the ore was supplied from January 1914 to April 1915, and the final account sales were issued by the Government in August 1916—the quantity purchased and dealt with by the department was 7,950 tons. The amount of cash received by the Mines Department from the sales of the products of this 7,950 tons of ore was £78,824 15s. 9d. The Government were entitled to deduct from that account certain expenses provided for. They were entitled to deduct first of all their smelting charge of 30s. plus any excess charge for silica. Under that heading they were entitled to charge £12,950 15s. 5d. The actual cost of smelting was very much higher; it exceeded this sum by approximately £9,000 or £10,000. The charges they were entitled to deduct were: sintering charges, £153 14s. 6d.; sampling of small lots,—if a man brings in less than five tons, he is charged £1 1s.—£26 5s.; prepaid railway freight, £312 10s.; rent of smelter, £859 16s. 1d.; and interest on advances, £124 14s. 1d. Those are the whole of the charges they were entitled to deduct under the regulations.

The Premier: Do you know this case is sub judice?

Mr. CORBOY: I wish the Premier had been in the Chamber during the earlier part of my remarks. I do not think the case would be sub judice at the present moment, if he had heard what I said on that occasion.

The Premier: I heard a good deal about it.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not think the Government should allow these officials to stand up against this and use the State Treasury and the Crown Law Department to go further with the matter. The Government are merely throwing good money after bad by taking this case to the High Court and trying to fight it out. I am convinced that it is not a Government fight at all. The Government are allowing these people to go ahead and fight the case, and they are only fighting it because they hope to win, on the ground that the owners of the stuff knew all about it. The total of these charges on smelting to matte imposed under the regulations amounted to £14,427. They are also entitled to deduct the actual costs on the realisation of that ore. The actual cost amounted to £12,574 9s. 6d., making a total permissible charge of £27,001 14s. 7d., leaving a balance to be distributed amongst the ore sellers of £51,823 1s. 1d. The Government actually distributed various amounts which leaves an amount of £13,438 9s. 2d. still unpaid.

The Premier: Your figures may be wrong.

Mr. CORBOY: I am open to correction. If the Premier will bring any other figures to show where these are wrong I will be glad to accept them, but these figures are extracted from the files of the Mines Department and should be correct. They were also taken from the books of the smelting works and that is what is disclosed. The actual costs of realisation amounted to £12,574 9s. 6d., and the Government actually charged £22,833 1s. 4d. or £10,300, roughly, more than it actually cost them. That was the result of the first campaign. I will traverse briefly the other campaigns. The second campaign cost £6,500, in round figures, and the Government charged £14,000. The third campaign cost actually £4,200, and the Government charged £9,400. The amount of the actual cost of realisation worked out at 3s. 8.407d., while the Government charged 8.735s. per unit, or more than double. So it goes on right through the several campaigns. For the fourth campaign, the actual cost amounted to £4,600, and the Government charged £8,900. The fifth campaign resulted in the actual cost amounting to £4,800, and the Government charged £12,400. The cost has been bolstered up repeatedly. On the seventh and eighth campaigns, the Government charged £12,118 for services that actually cost them £3,708. The figures for the ninth and final campaign have not been provided yet, and it is impossible to find out what they were. For the first six campaigns there is a total overcharge on realisation of £45,216 18s. The overcharges on the seventh, eighth and ninth campaigns have to be added to that total. I would like to read

extracts for the benefit of the House from the judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Burnside in connection with this matter. He says—

Was there any duty imposed upon the servants of the Crown by the terms of the contracts to render an account, accurate in all material respects of the facts, relative to the carrying out of the contract, of which they had alone the peculiar knowledge and upon which the petitioners were entitled to reply? Was it the duty of the defendant to inform the petitioners what were the costs of "shipping, transporting, and smelting the matte," in other words, of realising on the matte which, by the contract, was left to the discretion of the Minister?

The answer to those questions by Mr. Justice Burnside was that, in his opinion, that duty was clearly imposed upon servants of the Crown. I would like Ministers to listen to this particular part of the judgment of Mr. Justice Burnside. He says—

Did the vouchers clearly and accurately disclose these costs. The answer, in my opinion, is that they did not.

There is another point I would like the Premier in particular to notice. Mr. Justice Burnside says—

Were these vouchers made out in the form intentionally calculated to produce a false impression?

In other words, were they deliberately made out fraudulently?—

The answer is supplied by the letter of the 7th June, 1916, which accompanied them, as follows:—

"The writing up of the realisation deduction would cause less dissatisfaction than raising the smelting charge would because it was understood that freights, insurances, commissions, etc., had greatly increased owing to the war, and because it looked less like a permanent increase in cost."

The fact that the realisation charge would be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 7a. per unit had been allowed to leak out "in order to save shock when payment was made!"

The answer to that question by His Honour is also "Yes." The judge clearly indicates there that these documents were sent out to create a false impression, and that these people deliberately issued fraudulent accounts. His Honour further gives a decision on the question of whether the contention put up by the department that the petitioners knew what was going on and, as they did not complain about it, that that fact was a good defence. His Honour held that, in his opinion, it was no defence. He also puts the question as to whether the petitioners were in fact misled, and he expresses the opinion that they were misled. I would like the Premier to give this case the consideration that I think it deserves. At the present time grave hardship is actually being inflicted upon the

people in this district, people who have claims against the department for various sums of money under this scheme. One man in business down there has had his stock taken away from him. He is now in Perth working as a labourer. If that individual had received the £800 due to him, he would have been rendering better service to the State in his position at Ravenshorpe than he is now doing as a labourer in the city. Another man who was a storekeeper has been driven out of business altogether. I want to impress upon members that the officials in the department hatched this case to get back the money that they lost. They did not disclose to Ministers what was taking place, and now that it is realised what has happened, this case has been fought. Cabinet has weakly permitted these men to use the Treasury and the Crown Law Department to fight a case which, on the face of it, looks absolutely hopeless. The judgment of Mr. Justice Burnside indicates that there was no doubt in his mind that those people had deliberately issued fraudulent accounts, making charges on the Ravenshorpe producers which they were not entitled to make, and that it was a case which the Government would have to settle. I know there is a difficulty about finding the money. At the same time—

The Premier: Have you read Dunstan's letter?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes. He used fairly strong expressions in that letter to the Premier, but he endeavoured to tell the truth about what had happened in this case. The Premier's reply was a threat of the application of the blackmail law to him if he did not keep quiet. Is that correct?

The Premier: No, but his was a strong letter.

Mr. CORBOY: He told you the truth. When officials have done this sort of thing, ought not you to do something?

The Premier: It was not the officials. He referred to the election.

Mr. CORBOY: Dunstan was then one of the political supporters of the Premier's party.

The Premier: It did not justify that letter, all the same.

Mr. CORBOY: Still, he was very decent about it. He did not disclose anything until the elections were over.

Mr. Underwood: Don't worry about his disclosing things.

Mr. CORBOY: I am not condemning the reply which the Premier sent to Dunstan, but I do not think there was any occasion for resenting the letter.

Mr. Underwood: Dunstan was an officer in the department some years ago.

Mr. CORBOY: The man knows what he is talking about. In any case it is not a question of Dunstan's character, but of whether those officials robbed the people down there. Mr. Justice Burnside said definitely that the regulations did not per-

mit them to alter their charges for smelting or screening, or for interest, or for any of those things definitely fixed by regulation; that the only thing they were permitted to alter was the realisation charge. There is no word of getting back any excess cost of smelting, but a charge was to be made of the actual cost of realisation. When those officials made a loss on smelting they made an excess charge on realisation. I urge Ministers to give earnest consideration to this appeal lodged in the High Court. It is foolish to go to the High Court and lose further money. There will be enormous expense, and it will be only throwing money away and doing great injustice to those battling in the back blocks.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [11.10]: I should like to draw attention to the position of the mining field in my electorate, because it means probably the loss of the field as a gold producer. A little while ago we had an amendment of the Mining Act to permit of certain necessary operations on that field. The Edna May machinery was there and obligations were entered into.

Mr. J. H. Smith drew attention to the state of the House. Quorum formed.

Mr. HARRISON: If we cannot get Government assistance, I am told by telegram and letter received last week, it will be impossible to unwater the field. I have also been given the position in regard to mining operations there. I understand there is five years' work in sight on the present development. The business centre and the production of those mines will not be able to continue, on account of the water, and so we shall lose the whole field. Since 1912 Westonias has given to the State 416,129 tons of ore, producing 289,442 ounces of fine gold, which, together with some dollied gold, give a total production of 289,458.9 ounces. Taking the value of £4 5s. per ounce, which is a low estimate, we get a total value of £1,230,200 in gold won. I am not quite certain as to the dividend duty paid, but the Edna May has paid in dividends £325,649, the Edna May Central £14,790, the Consolidated £3,000, and the Edna May Deeps £12,500. Thus the four mines in that centre have paid dividends totalling £355,939. Taking the tax at about 1s. 6d.—

The Premier: It means about £21,000.

Mr. HARRISON: At all events, it is a large sum.

Mr. Mann: Most of the dividend money went to Victoria.

Mr. HARRISON: Then there is to be considered the income taxation on the business people of the township and those engaged in the mines. That source of revenue will be entirely lost if the field be not unwatered. I should add that the revenue derived by the State from the water supply on the field has been as follows: 1919, £6,987; 1920, £3,589; 1921, £692; total, £11,268. I urge Ministers to seriously consider the giv-

ing of assistance to unwater the mines. The Central company recently, I understand, spent £20,000 on a new pumping plant, which, however, broke down, not being able to cope with the water. Now they ask assistance from the Government towards unwatering the field. The proposition is that, even having regard to the straitened condition of the finances, the State cannot afford to lose this particular field. If what my informants state is correct, they have in sight sufficient ore to keep the mines working for a period of five years. I am not asking the Government to do anything but what is just and right, but I do want Ministers to consider the position seriously. Mining inspectors, I believe, are now making investigations with a view to advising the Government on the matter. I wish Cabinet to take all the facts into consideration. Is the field worth saving to the State, or is it not? The question should receive the closest attention of the Government, because if the mines are lost the township will also be lost, and the entire district will, in a sense, be lost unless the land should be taken up for agricultural purposes. The matter is of the most urgent importance. I have known the adjournment of the House to be moved by way of drawing attention to questions of less moment than the position which obtains to-day at Westonias.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet): I move—

That progress be reported.

No interest is being taken in the debate. So much is evident from the state of the Committee.

Motion (progress) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	..	..	18

Majority against .. 8

AYES.

Mr. Boyland	Mr. Troy
Mr. Collier	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Munroe	(Teller.)
Mr. Simons	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Carter	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Denton	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Durack	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Mann	Mr. Underwood
Sir James Mitchell	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Money	(Teller.)
Mr. Richardson	

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [11.21]: I have no intention of dealing with the subject of mining generally, but I do desire to say

something regarding the manner in which this State has been pegged out as an oil prospecting area. I ask the Premier—not the acting Minister for Mines—to give some consideration to the matter, not altogether on behalf of the peggers, but for the sake of Western Australia's reputation. The whole of this huge area known as Western Australia has been pegged out, or rather marked out on the map, by about 20 people. Those people are paying about £5 per annum, I think, for the right to hold that enormous territory for the purpose of prospecting for oil.

The Premier: For five years.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am unable to credit that those people are putting in their money with the object of helping to reduce the deficit. Neither do I believe that they are putting it in for the good of their health. My view is that they have taken up those areas with the object of getting some money from persons who are always prepared to gamble, that the great bulk of those areas have been taken up with the deliberate intention of taking down one's fellow citizens. As regards by far the largest part of Western Australia, one would have an infinitely better chance of discovering whisky at a Women's Christian Temperance Union meeting than of finding oil in that largest part of this State.

The Premier: One might find whisky in the place you indicate.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Possibly; but it would not be a good place in which to prospect for whisky. An ordinarily sane individual does not expect to find feathers on a frog, nor does he expect to find mineral oil in bedrock granite country; and a very great portion of Western Australia is bedrock granite country, and there is no possible chance of ever finding mineral oil in it. Yet that country has been pegged out by prospectors. Prospectors! I have heard of some individuals—I will not mention names—who are farmers in the sense that they farm the farmers. And the people who are prospecting that bedrock granite country are prospecting the prospectors. However, I have a strong belief that sooner or later oil will be found in the Kimberleys of this State, and also in the Northern Territory. If one looks at the country which has been taken up—that part of the country where oil is likely to be found—it will be seen that Freney has a license over 94,000 square miles, not acres. He has a right under his lease or agreement to prospect over that area. Freney cannot possibly prospect all that country. What Freney possesses is not so much the right to prospect, but the right to prevent others from prospecting. I am speaking on behalf of many Western Australian prospectors, who have put in the best of their physical lives as prospectors. They have been looking for anything that is in the ground. These people are now debarred from any possible chance of finding oil.

Mr. Durack: No.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am putting the case from the point of view of Western Australia. By debarring these prospectors from reporting oil if they find it we are retarding the possibilities of developing our oil resources, if we have any. The country upon which we have recently had reports is all contained in Freney's 90,000 square miles. There are only four persons who hold that huge area. There are only four leases in the whole country that are likely to produce oil. In my own electorate, where I do not think there is any oil, there are two leases or prospecting areas marked out in country upon which no white man has ever set foot, except those who have travelled on the Canning stock route. A man in Perth can apparently mark out a huge area of country, and the Government are prepared to give him control over it for five years. He has never seen it and never intends to see it; he never intends to do anything at all in regard to prospecting that area.

The Colonial Secretary: He must do it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is the point. He must do it. If he does not do it will the Minister forfeit his lease?

The Colonial Secretary: Undoubtedly.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then why is it not forfeited already?

The Colonial Secretary: Because the time has not expired. You must give people reasonable time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What is reasonable time?

The Colonial Secretary: It depends on the reports they have sent in. They may be raising money.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Who sends in the report?

The Colonial Secretary: The persons who hold the licenses.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I would not put too much reliance upon the reports of people who hold these licenses. Their reports will be good, for they can use good English. There will be no doubt about their reports.

The Colonial Secretary: Their reports must be satisfactory, otherwise they will not be allowed to continue.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Is the Minister prepared to say that if a man can write a satisfactory report he will be allowed to continue on that report?

The Colonial Secretary: He has to give proof of what he has done.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: When do we reach the time when we shall be afforded this proof?

Mr. Willecock: In 12 months or two years.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: In one year, two years, sometime or never? The Government have made a serious mistake. When we passed the amendment to the Mining Act we gave the Minister discretionary powers. I have always advocated giving full discretionary powers to a Minister. At that time I thought the Minister had discretion.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

The Colonial Secretary: People cannot get the necessary capital together in a few days.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There would be no chance of passing that Bill again after the way the Minister has dealt with it.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The Minister has taken us down. We gave him a blank cheque.

Mr. Willcock: He filled in three noughts at the end of it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: He added a good many noughts.

Mr. Marshall: That applies to gold mining leases.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That may be so. A few people held prospecting areas for oil upon which there is no earthly chance of finding any. They never intend to work these propositions. They have marked off on the map a block of country upon which no white man has ever been.

Hon. P. Collier: They do not intend to prospect it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, their intention is to get some people to put in a few pounds. To put the matter in plain words, they hold the area with a view to robbing someone in connection with some oil flotation.

Hon. P. Collier: Would it be fair to ask if there are any Ministers interested in these leases?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member can ask that question for himself.

Hon. P. Collier: I will ask that before the debate is over.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I ask the acting Minister for Mines, and particularly the Premier, to do as the Federal authorities have done in the Northern territory. They have said, "We are not going to allow people merely to take up land with a view not to finding mineral oil, but to finding possibly a bit of silver or some notes in the pockets of some fellow citizen." For the sake of the credit of Western Australia I ask the Premier to forfeit these leases. In regard to the Kimberleys I ask him to reduce the areas materially, because those who hold these leases, where possibly oil may be found, cannot prospect them thoroughly. While they are holding these leases they are preventing others from prospecting them. Our object is to find oil in this State. That would benefit everyone. I do not care how much any particular individual makes out of it. There is wealth in it for Western Australia. We must find oil if we can, but if we lock up these huge areas we are preventing oil being discovered there. I trust the Minister will go into the matter and will cancel these prospecting oil areas. It is an easy matter to cancel them. No attempt has been made to fulfil these conditions. If they are cancelled we can draw up a reasonable scheme for prospecting for oil in Western Australia.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [11.35]: I regret that at this hour of the night we are compelled to discuss such an important matter as the Mines Estimates. Apparently mem-

bers are not much interested in this particular industry, if we may judge from the number present to give the Estimates consideration. It might be regarded as bad taste if I expressed an opinion regarding the absence of the Minister controlling this department, but had taste or not, I am going to express it. It is not to be expected that the Colonial Secretary, who introduced the Mines Estimates, would be able to give much information regarding the industry, apart from that supplied by the officers of the department. So far as that is concerned, he has done very well. Mining is an industry which has contributed to the wealth of Western Australia no less than 143 million pounds; it is the industry which brought this State from a position of utter stagnation to one of great prosperity; it is the industry which made Western Australia known, not only throughout the Commonwealth, but throughout the whole world; it is the industry which has enabled the State to borrow those huge sums of money which have materially assisted in the development of other industries which are of so much importance today. The industry reached its zenith in 1903 since when it has shown a very regrettable decrease, and the last two years have witnessed a greater decline in gold-mining than has been evidenced at any time since the first discovery of gold. This big department is controlled by one Minister who also controls another big department, the Railways, in addition to the Police and Forests, and who is also Minister for Industries. It requires two Ministers to look after the agricultural industry, and at times we have had an Honorary Minister as well to assist them in the work. The Premier attends to the Lands Department and the Minister for Agriculture has charge of the Department of Agriculture; but one Minister is saddled with the responsibilities of giving attention to a great industry like mining, which is in a serious state of decline. That Minister is not in his place to-night, and has not been able to give much consideration to this department during the time he has been in office.

Hon. P. Collier: It has been only a side line.

Mr. TROY: Yes, it is obvious to all of us that the mining industry is only a side line with the Minister. It may be considered by some to be cowardly to discuss the Minister for Mines in his absence but there will be no other opportunity to do so. He did not go to Java with the concurrence of members of this House. The industry requires the attendance and the whole time of the Minister if it is to receive that encouragement and consideration which it received in previous years. I know the general opinion throughout Western Australia is that the present Ministry give attention to only one industry and that is agriculture. I do not deny the importance of agriculture, because it is a permanent industry of very great value to this country. The fact remains that the gen-

eral opinion held by the community is that the Ministry have very little regard for the mining industry. They are prepared to let it take its chance. If there should be a rich discovery of gold, well and good, they would welcome it, but they will not exert any great effort to bring about such a discovery. My opinion is that the Minister for Mines should control the Mines Department alone. Yet we have the spectacle of this Minister controlling also the Railways, in addition to two or three other departments, and it is worthy of note that the two major departments are not reflecting anything in the way of prosperity. The Railways are showing great losses. Critics of the Government tell us that the Railways are in a chaotic state; the mining industry is in a state of stagnation. I think the Minister should not have left the State. There was no necessity for him to go to Java. If the mission to Java is for trade and is not a diplomatic mission, what necessity was there for a Minister, who is not connected with trade at all, to go there? His attention should have been centred in the State where he controls two of the greatest departments concerned in the welfare of the State. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) referred to the assistance which the prospectors in his electorate had received. If they have received the assistance he mentioned, and I do not doubt his word, he is to be congratulated upon his district having received consideration which has been denied to many other localities. I do not question his statement because, in the Mines report presented to the House, I find that advances to prospectors for the year ended the 31st December, 1920, amounted to £17,000. It is remarkable that of this sum no less than £10,000 was advanced to prospectors in the Yilgarn electorate. At the time these advances were made, Yilgarn was represented by Mr. Hudson. Looking down the list one cannot fail to be struck with the number of advances given to this one constituency to the utter neglect of other constituencies of equal magnitude and equal possibilities.

Hon. P. Collier: Yilgarn received £10,000 out of £17,000?

Mr. TROY: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: It is good to have as representative the Minister for Mines.

Mr. TROY: I understand there is a mining board which confers with the Minister regarding assistance to prospectors.

The Colonial Secretary: That is right.

Mr. TROY: But where are the board? Who are the gentlemen who have been favoured with seats on the board?

Hon. P. Collier: That amount does not include £1,000 or £2,000 to mine owners. There is no mines development in that.

Mr. TROY: There is a mines development board which considers advances of this character to prospectors, and there is not a member from this side of the House on that board.

Hon. P. Collier: Nor on the prospectors' board.

Mr. TROY: Members on this side of the House represent 90 per cent. of the mining electors, and yet not one member has been asked to take a seat on the board nor has any one of them been notified that the board are in existence.

Hon. P. Collier: But is not there only one prospectors' board, namely, at Kalgoorlie.

Mr. TROY: This is a mining board in Perth.

Hon. P. Collier: Consisting of one or two St. George's-terrace representatives?

The Colonial Secretary: No, the prospectors' board, consisting of a representative of the Returned Soldiers' League, a representative of the mining officials, Mr. Cornell, and I think Mr. Ardagh.

Mr. TROY: I know that those two members, Mr. Ardagh and Mr. Cornell, sit on this board. As far as members of this House are concerned, however, this is the first knowledge we have gained of this board. No member of this Chamber has been consulted or asked to sit on that body, although we represent 90 per cent. of the goldfields constituencies. I have my suspicions as to how and to whom these amounts were advanced. It is a fine thing to have Ministerial patronage. This occurrence reminds me of what used to happen in earlier days in connection with Menzies. When Mr. Gregory was Minister for Mines we found that 85 per cent. of the money spent on the development of the mining industry was expended in his electorate and usually we found that there was as much spent in the Menzies electorate as in the other seven mining electorates put together. That was a scandalous state of affairs and such a Minister has no right to have control of any such department. Of this £17,000 which has been spent in the development of the mining industry, £2,000 was spent in the Avon electorate to assist the Edna May Battler Gold Mining Company at Westonia. Probably that expenditure was perfectly legitimate. We find, however, that £10,000 was spent in the Yilgarn electorate, £2,083 in the Avon electorate, £1,534 in the Menzies electorate, and £1,411 in the Pilbara electorate, making a total of about £15,000 out of the total expenditure of £17,000. On the other hand, we find that the three Murchison electorates of Murchison, Cue and Mount Magnet, where the greatest body of prospectors is operating, received the magnificent sum of £36 18s. 3d.

Mr. Harrison: The amount you say was spent in the Avon electorate for the Edna May Battler was not spent in Avon but in the Yilgarn electorate.

Mr. TROY: Then that amount is additional to the £10,000 I have already mentioned.

Mr. Harrison: It was spent in Trafalgar.

Mr. TROY: Well, that will simply swell the figures for Yilgarn. It means that

Yilgarn received £12,000 out of the £17,000 spent under this heading. I do not desire to speak detrimentally of prospectors in other parts but I think it will be admitted that in the three Murchison electorates, the greatest body of genuine prospectors is to be found. Yet only £36 18s. 3d. could be spent in those three centres.

Mr. Money: Did they not put in any applications for assistance?

Mr. TROY: Yes, they were put in.

Mr. A. Thomson: Surely the applications could not have been genuine or they would have received greater consideration than that.

Mr. TROY: They must have been genuine and yet Yilgarn can receive as much as £12,000.

Mr. A. Thomson: It certainly seems astounding that one electorate could get that amount and the other three only £36 odd.

Mr. TROY: I have frequently made applications for assistance.

Hon. P. Collier: It should be remembered that Yilgarn was considered a bit shaky last year from a National Party point of view.

Mr. A. Thomson: I would not suggest anything of that sort.

Hon. P. Collier: I know there was nothing else behind some of that sort of thing.

Mr. Money: The member for Yilgarn on that occasion was not a Minister.

Mr. TROY: No, but he sat on the National side of the House. I will give some of the items under the summary of expenditure to show where this money went. There was an expenditure of £2,772 7s. for the Harbort View Gold Mine at Phillips River.

Hon. P. Collier: That was a bare-faced ramp.

Mr. TROY: Dunn and Parkinson at Phillips River received £350; Hamilton and Congdon at Ravensthorpe, £123 15s.; Bird and Taylor of Phillips River, £183 15s.; Purchase of pump at "Ardpatrick," Phillips River, £268 8s. 8d.; Keeley, Henderson and Kuhlmann at Ravensthorpe, £297 17s. 2d.; Nicholson and Mackay, Marvel Loch, £313 12s. 8d.; W. F. Smith at Phillips River, £175 10s.; Grant, Mount Iron Gold Mine at Kundip, £78 15s.; Colreavy and party, Forresteria, £165 11s. 6d.; Bryan and party at Ardpatrick, Phillips River, £804 6s. 4d.; Johnston and Stennett at Ravensthorpe, £122; Clarkson and Sons at Ravensthorpe, £104 7s. 6d.; G. Bickerton at Phillips River, £71 15s.; Osborne and Fallows at Ravensthorpe, £47; Reynolds and Scott of Phillips River, £500, and so I could go on through the rest of the items. The only assistance given in Westonia was to the Edna May Battler.

Mr. Harrison: That amount was spent at Trafalgar. It was given to the Edna May Battler but was spent on their branch mine at Southern Cross.

Mr. TROY: In any case, it brings the figures for Yilgarn up to £12,000 out of an aggregate of £17,000.

Mr. A. Thomson: They did very well.

Mr. TROY: I thought so too. As I have already mentioned, it brings my memory back to the time when, under the old administration of the Mines Department, in Mr. Gregory's time, the bulk of the expenditure went year after year to the Menzies electorate. Something is wrong when genuine prospectors can be turned down and such grants can be allocated.

Mr. A. Thompson: Should not there be an independent board?

Mr. TROY: I object strongly to the existing board.

Mr. Money: Is this practice in accordance with party politics generally?

Mr. TROY: I do not know, except from my experience of members sitting on the Government side of the House from time to time but I hope it is not the general practice.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not the general practice but it does happen occasionally.

Mr. TROY: It is a scandal. No member on the Opposition side of this Chamber was ever consulted about this particular board. These figures I have quoted cover the expenditure for the year 1920.

Hon. P. Collier: It must be the result of the influence of recent environment.

Mr. TROY: I protest against the personnel of the board because it is not representative. It is not fair for the Minister to appoint a hole and corner board, without providing adequate representation by men who know more about the industry than those who are at present sitting on the board. It was not until just recently that we knew of the existence of the board. How the Minister could adopt such an attitude, I do not know. I think that if he desired anyone to assist and consult in connection with matters affecting the mining industry, he should at least have given an opportunity to those representing the mining constituencies in this Chamber, but he has not done so. Reference was made to the State batteries and the value the system has been in connection with the mining industry. Since the erection of those batteries, gold to the extent of about five million pounds worth has been won and that in itself is a very big asset. But I know there has appeared in the "Government Gazette" an advertisement stating that the Minister intended to lease a number of the batteries. I have a suspicion that this is in accordance with the policy which is now in operation, under which the mining industry is not to be considered in future. I have been given to understand that a number of batteries are in a bad state of repair and that the department is averse to spending money on repairs, the policy of the department being to let the batteries go. If that policy be pursued it will be the end of mining in the back country.

Hon. P. Collier: Some of them were leased without any publicity at all.

13 o'clock midnight.

Mr. TROY: The money spent on the State batteries has not been lost. I know fields in which there has been a revival which could not have been experienced had there not been a State battery available for crushing. Men went out into the virtually abandoned field, their efforts were rewarded with success, and the battery was there to deal with their stone, with the result that those districts are again flourishing. This applies more particularly to the Field's Find district, where numbers of prospectors are now working shows. Quite recently a good property there was sold for £2,000. In the near future the public battery there will be working full time. I hope the Minister will not pursue the policy of leasing the batteries, much less than of getting rid of them, as was the policy of a former superintendent of batteries. Unless the State batteries are kept in a condition of repair, the industry cannot survive in the back country. It should not be necessary to impress upon agricultural members the value of a goldfields population as a market for their products. If Western Australia had a goldfields population of, say, 100,000, the agriculturist would not be dependent on outside markets. A goldfields population always has money with which to pay cash. It is to the interests of all to keep the goldfields going and create on the fields a big purchasing population. Very little has been said to-night regarding the policy of the department in respect of assisting the industry in the future. I excuse the Minister for Mines his want of knowledge, because it is not really his department. The department was forced on him. He has had no personal contact with the industry. He does not understand it. The sooner the Government initiate a policy of mining development, the better it will be for the State. I have found the utmost difficulty in including successive Ministers controlling mining water supplies to provide water for prospectors. Many new finds are made by the system of loaming. The prospector of to-day, with more knowledge than his predecessor, carries out a process of loaming in order to discover where the gold came from. For that process he must have plenty of water.

Mr. Teesdale: Ten years ago they did not know of that process.

Mr. TROY: That is so, but 90 per cent. of the new finds of to-day would not have been made without it. Still, the utmost difficulty is experienced in including the Minister to put down wells and bores.

The Premier: The Murchison is well watered. A lot of money has been spent up there.

Mr. TROY: It is well watered. The natural conditions are favourable, but the prospector requires help to get to the water. There is subterranean water everywhere on the Murchison, but the prospector must have water to camp at, and additional water for use in the loaming process. Every well sunk is an asset to the State assisting, as it does, in the development of the country. Why, the

development of the pastoral industry, following on that of the mining industry, was assisted greatly by the provision of water supplies. Men going into new country are very materially assisted by the fact of knowing where to find water. The finding of water is work that the Government must undertake with a view to the development of new country. If the Minister wants to help in the development of our back country, he must not be niggardly as regards the provision of water supplies, which represent a first essential. But recently I have experienced the greatest difficulty in getting the Government to supply water where it is absolutely essential—not only for loaming purposes, but also for domestic purposes. In connection with an application for a mining centre, one Minister said to me, "Why do not the mining company find water?" But that is not the business of a mining company. Their business is to prospect and develop their mine. The Minister who replied to me in that manner has not asked that the agriculturists should establish water supplies at sidings. Throughout the agricultural areas Government dams are put down for the development of each district. The policy there is that the Government shall put down dams but that the people shall keep the dams in order.

The Premier: Which they do not do.

Mr. TROY: No; but they should do it. In every agricultural centre a dam is put down to supply water for domestic purposes and stock requirements. That is a necessary work, which I would encourage. But every small man carrying stock puts down a well in the same way as the pastoralists do. In a mineral field, however—and a mineral field is a locality just like an agricultural locality—the people are not carrying stock. Nevertheless, they must have water supplied for their home requirements. I ask the Government not to cut out that absolute necessity. A domestic water supply is obviously a first essential in every locality where a community is congregated. I discover in Ministers a tendency to cheese-pare in that respect, and to say, "Let the people do it themselves." I repeat, water supply is in my opinion a proper Government enterprise. Nothing has been said to-night about base metals. The production of copper, tin, lead—

Mr. Harrison: Not forgetting coal.

Mr. Marshall: I think we heard a good deal about copper from the member for Yilgarn.

Mr. TROY: Something was heard to-night about coal. I would have liked to hear something from the Minister regarding the possibilities of the markets for base metals, the production of which proved so valuable to Western Australia in years gone by. In the electorate of the Minister for Agriculture the lead and copper mines have closed down for want of a market for their products. It ought to be within the knowledge of the Minister administering the Mines Department whether there is a possibility of those markets re-opening. The Minister ought to tell

us what are the prospects of the industry, so far as he understands them, in the world's markets.

The Colonial Secretary: You might as well ask me what the price of wheat is going to be.

Mr. TROY: The Minister cannot give that information regarding base metals, but the departmental officials ought to know. The Minister administering the Mines Department controls a staff who ought to keep in touch with the markets of the outside world.

The Colonial Secretary: So they do.

Mr. TROY: They ought to be able to inform the people of this country whether the oversea markets for base metals are likely to become good or to become worse.

The Colonial Secretary: That is a difficult thing to do.

Mr. TROY: Those engaged in the base metals industry want information from the Mines Department, but they do not get it. I have a very high respect for the great majority of the men in the Mines Department. The great majority of them are capable, obliging, and hard-working officials.

Mr. Harrison: The Press publishes lots of mining information.

Mr. TROY: But in the back country people are not able to follow the Press; they get a newspaper only occasionally. The policy of the department should be to keep the people of this country in touch with overseas markets, affording information in that regard from time to time. The Government pursue that course in connection with agricultural and other industries. We hear about the price of flour in the Argentine, in the United States, in Egypt, and in India; but we never get any advice regarding the metal markets, not even a hint. I do not blame the officers of the Mines Department, from whom I have always received the greatest consideration and in whom I have the utmost confidence. The policy of the department, however, should be to display some enterprise. Apparently it has none at all. It has none because it gets no lead. With lead and enterprise the department might react on the mining community. But at present it does not. A lead cannot be given to the department so long as the Minister for Mines is out of the country on such a journey as that upon which he is now engaged, or, for that matter, so long as he is supposed to control several departments, whereas the Mines Department would occupy all his time. I leave the matter at that. I am not discussing these Mines Estimates with much satisfaction. I sympathise with the Minister who is present; and I urge the Minister who is not present—my words are recorded in "Hansard," if Ministers read "Hansard" at all—to give more encouragement in the way of water supply than has been the case in the past, and also to see that the State batteries do not remain in their present condition of disrepair, but to ensure that they are brought up to date, and also to bring it about that the Mines Department keep step with those

of our people who are engaged in mining—with the prospectors, who should not be asked to crush at obsolete plants where the crushing is costly to the State and unsatisfactory to the prospector. The department can give a lead, but to-day it is not giving a lead. That is my opinion of the department in its present condition. The State batteries are obsolete plants out of repair; and how can good results be expected from them? It is under such conditions that the mining industry is asked to keep pace with the other industries of Western Australia. I hope the Premier will see that the Mines Department again receives the entire attention of one Minister, and that that Minister shall be a man who has at heart the interests of the industry which the department administers, and a man who will give a lead to the people engaged in mining development, a lead of which they are sorely in need to-day.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Vote put and passed.

Mr. BOYLAND: I want to speak on this vote.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has passed it.

Mr. Troy: You are too late now.

Mr. BOYLAND: I wish to speak in the first place—

The CHAIRMAN: The vote has been passed but I will ask the Committee, if the hon. member desires, to give him permission to be heard.

Mr. BOYLAND: I was waiting for the member for Murchison to speak. I have prepared my matter for a speech, and am ready to go on. I will not be gagged now.

Mr. Troy: Has the vote been passed or not? That is a matter for the Chair to determine. The Committee has no power to give permission to the hon. member to speak if the vote has been determined.

The CHAIRMAN: I can only say that the vote has been passed.

Mr. Troy: I am personally willing that the member for Kalgoorlie should have leave to speak on the vote, but it is for you to say if the vote has been passed.

The Premier: The vote in connection with State batteries will come on later, and the hon. member can speak then.

Mr. BOYLAND: That is not the vote I want to speak upon. I am representing the greatest mining constituency in the State. I was waiting for the member for Murchison to speak following upon his motion to report progress, and now I am prevented from speaking. It is not fair or just. You know the state of my health, Mr. Chairman. I have prepared my notes for a speech, and I should be allowed to say what I want to.

Mr. Harrison: I think in the circumstances as the hon. member is new to the practice of the House and represents a goldfields con-

stituency, he might be permitted to speak on this vote.

Mr. Marshall: I, too, am a new member and want to speak on this vote. I am surprised at the attitude taken up by other hon. members. This is one of the most important matters that comes before us.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member rising to a point of order?

Mr. Marshall: I am. The whole thing is a disgrace. I am going to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Kalgoorlie may proceed.

Mr. BOYLAND (Kalgoorlie) [12.17]: It is idle for members to speak on these Estimates because we can do nothing with regard to them. If we move to reduce the amount, it is taken as a motion of want of confidence in the Government. We deal with these matters in general terms and cannot alter the Estimates in any way. On the Address-in-reply I indicated what was likely to happen in the Kalgoorlie district and its environments. I gave members information which they had not in their possession. At that time they thought I was rather optimistic, but as things have turned out I was very conservative in my prognostications. The news I gave to the House concerning the Mt. Monger field has proved better than I anticipated. There was a crushing on McMahon's mine of 300 tons from which there was a return averaging over 11ozs. of gold to the ton. I stated that a crushing of 200 tons was expected to go 10 ounces to the ton. Since then other shows have been taken up and are crushing well. We also have the South end bore and Williams' bore, and very fine reports have come to hand with regard to these. Williams' bore has picked up the Golden Mile lodes and I believe a survey has been made, as well as in connection with the South end bore and other bores. It is intended to continue boring, with the help of the Mines Department, in the hope of proving the permanency of these lodes. There is need for encouragement for the mining industry in the near future on the Eastern goldfields. Some fine reports have come through from the Golden Mile. The Golden Horseshoe has now proved a lode at 2,700 feet and is getting ore worth 95s. a ton. In the Ivanhoe mine, the lode was lost some few years ago; this has now been picked up again at the 2,800-foot level, and the returns average, over a distance of about 800 feet, 46s. per ton. Then there is the Broad Arrow centre. I find that they have picked up a rich chute of stone there in the old Golden Arrow. The pessimism which has been expressed at times regarding the goldfields is not warranted. The outlook is better to-day than it has been for some time past. It was stated in the House, I think, that the outlook for next year should be very good indeed. I am not surprised that this should be the opinion. This pessimism to which I have referred was engineered entirely for the purpose of helping certain people in the mining industry, and

it was unwarranted by the circumstances. I notice that the Mines Department have put off one of their inspectors on the Eastern goldfields, and I believe another has yet to go. Instances of death from accident have been numerous in the past on the goldfields. The number of cases of miners' complaint also indicates that the department have not had too many inspectors in the past. Notwithstanding the reduction in the number of inspectors on the Eastern goldfields, the department has done nothing in the way of reductions at the central office. The same expense is still going on there. Apparently more consideration is paid to giving good jobs to officials in Perth than to safeguarding the lives of the men who are engaged in building up this important, this hazardous industry. It is time the Minister did something to clean up the office in Perth and insisted upon some attention being paid to safeguarding the lives of the miners. Their lives should be protected, but at the present time adequate protection is not afforded to them. We are told that the dust nuisance has been alleviated. Although that is supposed to be the case, and although it is stated that there is now no dust in the mines, I find that reference is made to this question in the last annual report of the Mines Department. Mr. T. N. Kirton, inspector of explosives, makes the following statement—

I must make special mention of samples Nos. 2 and 3. Here we found a man filling trucks from a chute which is on a level where there is a good current of air passing, and the dust was being carried away from the mouth of the chute in the direction the air was travelling, as will be seen from the figures obtained. If this man had stood and worked from the other side of the chute he would have been breathing air containing only one-sixth the amount of dust, and it is difficult to understand how any man can have so little regard for his own health.

We have been told over and over again that the dust has been combated, and that there is now no dust in the mines of the Golden Mile. A few weeks ago I differed from a man who told me there was an appalling amount of dust in the mine in which he was working, and I did that on information supplied by officers of the Mines Department. Yet we have this significant report from the Inspector of Explosives. The Minister has told us that provision is being made to amalgamate the offices of the Mines Department and the Government claim that they are going to effect a big saving. We have been told before about similar improvements; yet the Government go on from year to year and the improvements are never effected. When I came into this House I did so with a desire to help the State. I spoke on the Address-in-reply and I spoke cleanly, attacking no member and saying no word against anyone. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron), however, who spoke subse-

quently, went out of his way to refer to me. I shall not say I am sorry he is not in his seat at present, but I am going to take the opportunity to refute the unfounded statements he then made. The portion of the hon. member's speech to which I refer, together with my interjections, was as follows:—

That brings me to the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Boyland). I listened attentively to his remarks the other night. I cannot reconcile the position he holds to-day with that which he held two or three years ago. To-day he sits here practically the direct representative of the Chamber of Mines.

Mr. Boyland: That is untrue; quite incorrect. I sit here a free man, freer than are you.

Mr. Heron: The hon. member is a Nationalist. Who voted for him? Not the workers. He may have had a percentage of workers supporting him, but they did not put him into the position he holds. His thanks are due to those representing the employer class. Therefore I say I cannot reconcile his position with that which he held three or four years ago as leader of the workers. The hon. member says he is a free man. In the course of the next month or two he will have an opportunity to show whether he is free and whether he stands for the worker.

Mr. Boyland: I shall show more freedom than you.

Mr. Heron: The hon. member, being a Nationalist, thinks he will be able to get everything he wants.

Mr. Boyland: You were a Nationalist, were you not? Where are you to-day?

Mr. Heron: A few years ago the hon. member was stricken with miner's phthisis, and I am honestly sorry for his bad state of health to-day. When he was stricken with that disease, who assisted him? Was it the men he is supporting to-day?

Mr. Boyland: No, nor the workers either.

Mr. Heron: Was it the workers whom he deserted?

Mr. Boyland: They never assisted me.

Mr. Heron: I do not want to enter into private matters—

Mr. Boyland: You can go into anything you like concerning that.

Mr. Heron: I know who assisted him and who did not.

The member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen), when speaking on the question of the appointment of a select committee, made the following statement in reply to some unfounded charges which had been made by people outside this Chamber:—

It has gone out that Millars' had me bought. I may say that in all the 14 years I have represented my electorate,

Millars' have never asked me to do a favour for them.

The member for Forrest, being an honest, upright and just man, naturally strongly objected to anyone, even outside this Chamber, impugning his character. Yet we have a member who occupies a seat in this Chamber, who knows me of old, and knows that I stood to my principles, saying one of the worst things that could have been said regarding me, namely that I was practically the direct nominee of the Chamber of Mines. I know nothing of this statement. I stood alone; I paid my own expenses; I had no committee to help me. Two or three firm friends rallied around me and I won my election honestly, fairly and squarely, without being the direct representative of any organisation. To show where the member for Leonora stands, let me quote the following from his speech on the Address-in-reply:—

In my own district we had the unfortunate fire. By the last papers I had from there, I saw that the company does not intend to rebuild. Why? To defeat the award. I do not think that the decision rested with those in control in Australia. I am sure the local manager had nothing to do with it, and even those representing the company in Kalgoorlie had nothing to do with it. Who, then, said that the worker should not have the benefit of the award? None but the Jews in London decided that the mine should not be rebuilt until the return of normal times.

The CHAIRMAN: What has this to do with the Estimates?

Mr. BOYLAND: The member for Leonora attacked me and tried to make it appear that I was the nominee of the Chamber of Mines. I am quoting the hon. member's own words. There is no need for me to comment on his remarks, because they speak for themselves. I think I am quite justified in protecting my honour and character against the aspersions of the hon. member. What the hon. member said could be used against me to my detriment if I did not answer his statements. If you, Mr. Chairman, knew what it meant to be branded as a nominee of any special party, and more especially of a capitalist party—

The CHAIRMAN: That has very little to do with the Mines Estimates. It is more in the nature of a personal explanation.

Mr. BOYLAND: The member for Leonora, referring further to the fire, stated that—

Mr. Troy: On a point of order, the member for Kalgoorlie may be new to the House, but if the member for Leonora made statements to which he takes exception, he should have refuted them at the time. The Standing Orders set out that, if a member feels injured by anything another hon. member may say regarding him, he must take exception at once. No one in the House wishes

to hear all these things to which the hon. member is referring. I am often told that someone has said something about me in my absence, but I do not trouble about those things. I would rather forget them.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to keep to the matter before the Chair.

Mr. BOYLAND: I was told at the time that I could bring up the matter on this occasion.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can only discuss the Mines Estimates or matters which come under the administration of the Mines Department.

Mr. BOYLAND: I have a cutting from the "Kalgoorlie Miner," which states—

Needs of Miners. Deputation to wait on Premier. Recently Mr. J. Cornell, M.L.C., addressed a public meeting at Boulder on the question of miners' phthisis, at which the following resolutions were carried:—"That in the opinion of this meeting the Government should without delay institute a commission of inquiry to (a) ascertain whether or not the mineral dust now produced by mining operations in our metaliferous mines is of such a nature as to cause phthisis or be a factor in the predisposing cause thereof, the commission to be equipped with similar instruments, together with the necessary expert direction, as are in use in the phthisis mines of South Africa for the determination of dust in suspension; and (b) determine whether or not the mineral dust produced in the past by mining operations in our metaliferous mines was of such a nature as to cause miners' phthisis or be a contributing factor in the predisposing cause thereof; and (c) determine whether or not persons affected with tuberculosis should be excluded from underground work.

There is no secret about miners' phthisis, and the extent to which the disease is rampant in Western Australia. As the result of a Royal Commission and the investigations conducted into this disease, it has been proved beyond doubt that it exists to an alarming extent. I have information to show conclusively that it is absolutely cruel to permit men suffering from miners' phthisis and fibrosis to continue in the mining industry. In May of 1920 the triennial congress of the general council of the Western Australian division of the Australian Labour Federation was held, and among other things, the subject of miners' complaint was discussed. On page 31 of their report is the following record of the proceedings:—

Mr. Cornell submitted the following from the Mining Committee:—That a Bill should be introduced into Parliament making provision for men suffering from miners' complaint, the money needed for such purpose to be raised from mining companies in accordance with the number of men employed. Mr. Dodd moved as an amendment—"That the Government be urged to

erect a modern sanatorium for the treatment of consumptives in some suitable portion of the State, whereby discrimination could be adopted in separating curable and incurable cases, and where patients, who are physically able to do so, might undertake some light employment in order to assist in their maintenance." Mr. Munsie seconded the amendment, which was carried on the voices and adopted as the motion.

The congress recognised that miners' complaint was rife in our midst and carried a motion in favour of a sanatorium being erected. With the advent of the Labour Government shortly afterwards, effect was given to the motion as the provision of a sanatorium was commenced.

Member: That is so.

[Mr. Stubbs took the Chair.]

Mr. BOYLAND: The sanatorium is serving a very good purpose indeed. In 1905 a Royal Commission was appointed and the evidence taken before that body showed what was going on in connection with the mining industry. Dr. Cumpston conducted a thorough examination among the miners in 1907 and found that 33 per cent. of the miners were suffering from this dread disease. There was another report furnished in 1912 and a recommendation was brought forward that a scheme of contributions should be established in the interests of the miners. Nothing was done at the time, however, because there was some feeling exhibited. In 1913 the triennial Congress of the Australian Labour Party was again held. On that occasion I was a delegate representing the Miners' Union which had at that time about 2,000 members. I was appointed to the committee to deal with miners' complaint. We could not agree. I wanted a scheme established embracing the whole State so that the contributions from all over Western Australia should be received on behalf of the miners who were stricken with this disease, seeing that they had worked on the mines and that the mining industry had built up the State. I could not get sufficient support and we referred the matter to the Parliamentary Labour Party. At that time it was fully recognised that this complaint was rife. In 1914 a Wesleyan Minister, the Rev. Otto Schroeder, was asked by some of the miners, who were directly interested in this matter, to deliver an address on miners' complaint.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to burke discussion. But is there anything on the Mines Estimates dealing with hospital matters?

Mr. BOYLAND: Yes, there is an item in the Estimates dealing with the contributions towards the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, an amount of £5,000 being on the Estimates. I have taken the trouble to condense what Mr. Schroeder said on that occasion. I do not wish to read the whole of his address to the

House, but I desire to place before hon. members the effect of which he stated. He said—

We boasted of our modern civilisation, but if we looked around in the world of to-day we had to admit that men were cheap. If a man's life and a dividend were weighed in the balance, the man would have to go. A man going down the mines to work, might be sent to Eternity by a fall of earth, or if he escaped, he could look forward to a lingering death by disease or dust. The average age of miners buried in the cemeteries was 42 years. The life of a miner on these fields was a short and a hard one. The responsibility of the bad conditions and disease rested firstly on the heads of the unions, who were too busy trying to get into Parliament. On the politicians lay a certain amount of blame, as the onus of doing something rested on their shoulders, and what had they done? The responsibilities of the mining companies was a great one. But the Chief Justice of England had said that corporations had no souls, and the sooner people realised the truth of that remark the better. On the country lay the responsibility of providing better conditions of work. Royal Commission recommendations were taken no notice of, although there were some good ones proposed. Because of some political rivalry, the Commission report had been shelved. Upon those who were responsible lay the blood of those who perished. They were not dealing with votes or with elections, but with the lives of men.

Mr. Teesdale: What is the name of that minister?

Mr. BOYLAND. Otto Schroeder.

Mr. Teesdale: It is not too good a name.

Mr. BOYLAND: Perhaps not. But he went to the war and fought for us all. He fought for the hon. member and he fought for me, so he is not too bad a man, although a parson. As a result of his first address, a motion was passed by the Miners' Union at the instance of a man who, I think, was a brother-in-law of Mr. G. Foley, who was formerly a member of this House, asking Mr. Schroeder to deliver a further address. Before Mr. Schroeder had an opportunity of delivering that address, the man, at whose instigation it was delivered, was dead. I have a report of the address. It is headed "Patchwork Politics," and reads as follows:—

It is better to prevent miners' complaint than to compensate crippled miners and their widows and orphans. He stated that he did not think any person could honestly contradict the death-dealing nature of the complaint, and its alarming prevalence on the mines. Since he last spoke, he had gathered evidence to prove that if the trouble was permitted to go on unchecked as at present, it would produce such a crop of disease that would surprise doctors, mine managers, and everyone concerned.

The Government, he believed, was sincere in its objects when they introduced the Mine Workers' Relief Fund scheme. The majority of the men that comprised the existing Cabinet had had many years' experience on the goldfields, but they did not, he was convinced, realise the full extent of the trouble. They resided in comfortable homes at the seaboard, far remote from the stress and turmoil of mining, and they did not give the attention to the lot of the miner that they should. They could not get away from the old axiom "out of sight out of mind." To his idea, it was no time for party politics when the lives of men were at stake. He considered that the miner should not be asked to contribute to the scheme that was to better them. The average married miner in the district had a big enough demand on his limited earnings, without being asked to contribute to this fund. An industry must be in an impecunious condition if it could not find it possible to contribute one half towards the fund that was to provide for the wives and families of the men who had sacrificed their lives in the interests of the companies controlling that industry, and the Government that would not pay the other half was, he would say, guilty of criminal negligence. There were too many widows on these fields, and too many benefit concerts for those who were deprived of their breadwinners. He asked was compensation enough? It reminded him of the proverb of the farmer locking the stable door after the horse had gone. Where was the comparison between a small compensation and the fact that a widow and orphans had been deprived of a husband and father? It appeared to him to be nothing more than patchwork politics if things were permitted to remain as at present. As he had said, he believed in compensation, but it was better to have a fence round the edge of the precipice than an ambulance cart at the bottom. It was better to save men than to compensate widows and orphans, and life in the open air was the only way to do it.

On the Address-in-reply I said a prominent doctor had informed me that miners were going to him with tuberculosis, proving that the mines were impregnated with tubercular germs. Whereas the surface workers were going to him with fibrosis, underground miners visiting him were affected with tuberculosis. I also stated that a scheme of compulsory insurance against accident and sickness should be initiated by the Government. The Minister for Mines by interjection asked what about preventing men getting to that stage, why not relieve the men before they reached that stage. I told him that as Minister for Mines he should act; that he and his predecessors in office were responsible for the diseased condition of the men. I resisted the interjection, but I could not then deal fully with the matter; the present occasion gives me that opportunity. The Minister

for Mines is fully aware of the ravages of the disease on the goldfields. Yet instead of doing anything to relieve the sufferers, he goes gallivanting off to Java on a job which should have been given to a trade commissioner. As member for Kalgoorlie, I deeply resent that. He and his colleagues are allowing the best men in the State to be killed off in the mines. Take my own case; I was one of the finest athletes on the Eastern Goldfields. Yet to-day I weigh only 9½ stone. I am a total wreck. It is up to the Government to protect the lives of men in the mines and to compensate them while they are dying, instead of allowing them to starve for the necessities of life.

Mr. Teesdale: We have provided good homes for them. They are not allowed to starve. It is a libel on the State. You should not say such things for publication!

Mr. BOYLAND: We have the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. From it a married man gets 25s. a week for himself and his wife, and 5s. for each child. What do the invalid pensions and the old age pension payments represent? Fifteen shillings weekly. The State aid gives 9s. per week. What does it all amount to?

Mr. Mann: Is not more done in that respect in this State than in any other State in the Commonwealth?

Mr. BOYLAND: That is not the question. We have men working for a minimum wage of £4 weekly, and we have men dying on 12s. 6d. a week, and having to provide for their children out of 5s. per week. I am not making statements that ought not to go into the public Press. It should all have been published years ago.

Mr. Teesdale: Not the statement to the effect that the men are starving.

Mr. BOYLAND: They are being starved, and it ought to be stopped. Look at my own health?

Mr. Teesdale: You can go to one of the homes if you like.

Mr. Marshall: To the sanatorium? Is that a fit place for human beings? You ought to be ashamed to make a statement like that.

Mr. Teesdale: I should like to tell you where you ought to go.

Mr. Marshall: You shall not tell me anything.

Mr. Teesdale: I should like to, nevertheless.

Mr. Marshall: Well, you say it and then come outside.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BOYLAND: If a man goes into the sanatorium, what are his wife and children to do? He is a moral coward to neglect his good wife and little children. A decent man could not do it. The men do go in there, but they soon want to come out again. I am not making any hot-air statements. If the member for Roebourne thinks that sufficient is being done for the men who are dying from industrial disease, I cannot understand what manner of man he is. On the Address-in-reply the Minister for Mines said,

referring to a system of effective inspection—

If we had a system of effective inspection, then when a man showed the first symptoms of the disease, we could tell him to come out of the mines, we to undertake to find employment suitable to his physical condition and such as would give him an opportunity to throw off the disease.

One cannot do that. The man who has miner's complaint is dying by inches every day. A week or two ago I was at the sanatorium, and there I saw a man who had left the mines 12 years ago. He is in the sanatorium to-day—to die. Men with miner's complaint in any form go down every day they live. It is a cruel, insidious disease that absolutely robs a man of his strength. One cannot get away from that fact.

Mr. Teesdale: The patients at Wooroloo are comfortable and well fed.

Mr. BOYLAND: But what about their families? They have a feeling for their families. The Minister for Mines proceeded—

A system such as this would not only benefit the Government but would be in the interests of the community, because the men to whom we would have to dole out charity would be provided with employment which would enable them to go on producing wealth instead of absorbing or consuming it. We have to set ourselves to that task.

Mr. Boyland: Why don't you bring in a Bill?

The Minister for Mines: First of all we have to get the public to appreciate the value of a proposal. I fear that the miners themselves do not always realise its value. They want their freedom; they want to be able to come and go as they please. I do not think that if we attempted to bring in a Bill to compel the men to get out of the mines they would accept it.

1 o'clock a.m.

At this stage the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) interjected: "The liberty of the subject would come in." But, I ask, where is the liberty of the subject when men are compelled to enter the sanatorium in order to receive relief? Single men, let me mention, get an allowance of 5s. a week. The Minister for Mines went on to say—

Before I set out I want to be in a position to learn from the men to whom I guarantee employment that such employment is favourable to them. I have asked the departments, particularly the Forests Department, to earmark a certain amount of work each year for those who will be compulsorily withdrawn from the mining industry, in order that the men have plenty of open air and are given every opportunity of recovering and going back to the industry subject to medical inspection. For sewerage work no men are better fitted than miners. Just as we give preference to our

returned soldiers who fought for us, so should we give preference to those who are fighting for us in mines, and endeavour to find satisfactory employment for them before they reach the stage of becoming physical wrecks. I know of no proposition that has ever been put up under which the Government would undertake to put men into other industries after they had been compulsorily taken out of the mining industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member kindly tell me when that speech was delivered?

Mr. BOYLAND: The Minister was speaking on the Address-in-reply.

The CHAIRMAN: I must inform the hon. member, right here, that the Committee cannot listen to anything that has been uttered here this session. The hon. member cannot read extracts from the current session's "Hansard."

Mr. BOYLAND: But what I am reading is what I took down at the time. I made a note of it.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot read from the current session's "Hansard."

Mr. BOYLAND: What I am quoting is by way of answer to remarks I had made.

The CHAIRMAN: Any such quotation is against the Standing Orders.

Mr. BOYLAND: I am referring to what another member said by way of reply to—

The CHAIRMAN: To quote extracts from speeches delivered in the same session is absolutely against the Standing Orders, and cannot be allowed.

Mr. BOYLAND: I can get over that difficulty very easily. I shall now deal in a general way with what the Minister for Mines then said. There can be no objection to that, I trust. The Minister stated—

The only alternative is to place a charge upon the mining industry for the welfare of these men. If we were to place such an impost upon the industry, in the form of an annual payment, I am afraid it would kill the industry. It is better to put the men into healthy occupations where they may have every reasonable chance of recovery. It is the duty of the Government to do what they can for them, but let us be given a chance of finding a solution of the problem before we actually tackle the position. I have no desire to rush into a matter like this; it is too important.

Mr. Boyland: That has been the opinion of the Government for the past eight years, but nothing has yet been done except under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

The Minister for Mines: It is known in South Africa. They have introduced methods there, but I do not know that the position has been solved. They are doing it by imposing a tax of about £800,000 a year on the mining industry. They would do a great deal better if they told the men to get out of the industry.

Mr. Boyland: They are taking them out; I have information on that point.

The Minister for Mines: I say they are not.

Mr. Boyland: I will bring the matter before the House.

The Minister for Mines: They are advising the men to get out, but telling them that if they wish to stay they may do so. If a man does not leave the industry and reaches the second stage of miner's phthisis, he loses a certain amount of the pension which he would otherwise get. He is not compelled to leave the industry. For his own sake and for the sake of the State I want to compel him to do so.

We all know, and over and over again I have stated in the Press, that in these men of the mining industry we are losing one of our finest assets. We should prevent them from dying; we should save them to the country. The Minister for Mines said that we must set ourselves to that task. I then interjected, "Why don't you bring in a Bill to deal with it?" However, the Minister merely made empty statements with no meaning attaching to them. About 15 months ago, on returning from the East, the Minister for Mines said that he had conferred with the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and that he was to put up to the Federal Government a scheme for helping the miners. What has been done? Nothing has come of it. Whilst the problem is not solved the Minister for Mines is away as a trade commissioner, and this during the busiest part of the session, at a time when he should be here attending to his duties as Minister for Mines. I do not know where the general public comes in so far as this is concerned. The position really proves that the Minister for Mines has not seriously considered the matter. He has not given thought to what should be done for these men; otherwise he would have ere this put forward some definite proposal for helping the poor fellows who are dying from miner's complaint. When I first took my position on the board administering the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, the man with tuberculosis had to go to the sanatorium, whether married or single, and stay there until he was carried over the hill at Wooroloo to the cemetery; but after being on the board for some time we got that condition abolished. We brought in a system of home treatment, so that a married man could get out of the sanatorium after remaining there for a period of six months, during which he would learn how to protect himself and also how to protect his wife and children. But as regards the single man, although he may have contributed to the fund right from its inception, he has to go to the sanatorium, where he is granted an indigent allowance of 5s. per week. If he likes to apply for an invalid pension, he can get 15s. per week from the Federal Government. The mine workers are not content to have such an embargo placed on them. At the time I was writing letters to the Press for the purpose of stirring up

public opinion upon this matter, I was taken to task for having advocated that these men "should not be sent to prison for having given their lives to the industry." To the gentlemen who took me to task I replied, "I do not arrogate to myself to say what a board of five members should do." The board had said that these sufferers should be segregated in the sanatorium until they died. I acknowledge that the sanatorium is a good one, but the disease is one of the worst diseases known to us. In the British Isles 40,000 to 50,000 people die every year from this disease. Some people have said it is not so catching. Let them live with a tubercular person, and not be in good health themselves, and they will soon find out how catching this disease is. I had to acknowledge to that gentleman that the sanatorium was the best place for a tubercular person. I also asked why the miner, who has given his life to the industry, should be singled out, and why the ordinary tubercular person could go and come as he pleased so far as the sanatorium was concerned. There are some people who would segregate the worker in the sanatorium. To-day I am pleased to say that after six months, and a satisfactory report being given, a man can get out with a knowledge of how to control what comes from him in the way of germs, and destroy it so that it will not affect anyone else. The Minister for Mines proposed to absorb these men in the Forestry and Sewerage Departments, but he must have forgotten the answer he gave to the Tributing Association a little over 12 months ago when they waited on him in regard to this question. He said they needed strong men. I know of strong men who were working under the Sewerage Department but who had to give it up. And yet it is proposed to put into that work men who are impregnated with this disease. The Minister tried to show that he possesses a lot of sympathy for these men, and that they should receive a great amount of consideration. The other day he issued two free passes to members of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund Board to enable them to proceed to the Murchison in order to bring back to Kalgoorlie those members who had refused to pay any longer into the fund. That proves that the Government take the line of least resistance. This is discreditable to them. It also proves that the Government are out to keep this scheme of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund going as long as possible. I will show later what is actually being done. During the earlier part of this year the Government raised the contributions to the fund from 33 1/3 per cent. to 50 per cent. The Premier referred to what had been done for the miners in his policy speech. It is only begging the question to spend money upon a fund which is gradually dying. I have here a report of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration dealing with the case of the Federated Mining Employees' Association of Australian and the Edna May Gold Mining

Company, No Liability, and others, in which Mr. Justice Powers, dealing with miners' complaint, says:—

The additional strong objection the respondents in Western Australia have to the granting of 44 hours was that the extra cost of paying the same rates for 44 hours as they did for 47 hours, and the further loss expected by less work done in the 44 hours, was raised and pressed strongly in Victoria and Tasmania, but means have apparently been devised to overcome them. Even if the difficulty could not be overcome when the question of life and expense is in the balance the life of the worker in this court outweighs all other considerations. The evidence proved that a large percentage of men do suffer from miners' complaint in Western Australia. A doctor in his evidence before a Royal Commission in 1907 declared that a large percentage of miners were suffering from miners' complaint. It was asserted by the respondents, but not proved, that the majority of cases had been contracted in the East and miners had gone to Western Australia who were affected with the disease. No evidence was called by the respondents to disprove the evidence submitted or to prove that it had been contracted elsewhere. It was also admitted that a miners' sick fund had lately been established at Kalgoorlie, subsidised by the State to the extent of one-third. The balance of the fund is contributed by the employers and unions in equal shares. It was proved during the hearing that the board relieved 116 applicants in the year prior to 31st January, 1916, and 170 applicants in the year prior to 31st January, 1917. It was also admitted that the cases included those suffering from miners' complaint—the respondents said about 25 per cent., the claimant's representative about 60 per cent. I have no doubt from the evidence and information I obtained at Kalgoorlie that miners do contract miners' complaint in Kalgoorlie and in Western Australia generally, especially when working in the deep mines.

This is what the judge of the Federal Arbitration Court thought on the evidence submitted to him. I contributed to that evidence myself. I pointed out that so far as the miners in Western Australia were concerned, the rate of death from fatal accidents was far in excess of the deaths in the other States. Mr. Knibbs shows that 70 per cent. of the deaths from accidents occur in Western Australia.

Mr. Mann: Do you mean 70 per cent. of the deaths in the Commonwealth?

Mr. BOYLAND: I refer to the fatal accidents that have occurred in the Commonwealth amongst the men actually working in the industry. I have here the Consolidated Miners' Phthisis Act of South Africa of 1919 as published by Mr. J. Forrester Brown, the secretary of the South African Mine Workers' Union, for the information of

miners and other persons who may be interested. The Minister for Mines challenged my statement in connection with the treatment of miners' phthisis in South Africa, and I am going to quote from this pamphlet in reply to him.

1. **Scheduled Mines.**—These are mines which have been placed on a list as producing miners' phthisis. Underground service on these mines counts for compensation. Miners may petition for mines to be withdrawn from the list or for mines to be put on the list. Underground service on the Sheba Mine or any other mine notified in the "Gazette" will be reckoned as service on a phthisis mine. Compensation paid by a mine to or in respect of any miner on account of phthisis will be deducted from the amount due by the board to or in respect of such miner.

2. **Miners' Phthisis Board.**—The board has the power, among other things:—(a) To acquire land to be devoted to small agricultural holdings, and to establish on such holdings miners who are beneficiaries under this Act or the prior law, as well as other suitable persons. (b) To assist by means of loans beneficiaries who are already established in business or any farming operations. (c) To provide for the training in trades or industries of beneficiaries. (d) To conduct a bureau for the purpose of obtaining employment for beneficiaries or the dependants of beneficiaries. (e) To assist financially, by means of loans or otherwise, in establishing or in carrying on industrial undertakings or collieries which undertake to employ or are employing at the board's request beneficiaries or the dependants of beneficiaries. (f) To assist financially in defraying the expenses incidental to the transport of beneficiaries to places where employment for them has been obtained. (g) To establish co-operative workshops. (h) To invest moneys received from miners in land and improvements with a view to settling miners upon such land.

3. **Witnesses and Evidence.**—The board has the right to summon any person to appear before it to give evidence in a case, and to demand the production of any documents or articles in connection with investigations. Any person who does not respond to the summons, or who refuses to answer questions to the best of his knowledge, may be fined up to £10.

4. **Contributions by Miners.**—The contribution by miners of sixpence in the £1 on their earnings stops on the 31st July, 1919.

5. **Funds.**—From the 1st August, 1919, the mines will provide the money required to pay compensation, etc.: 45 per cent. of the money will be calculated according to the earnings of the underground workers; 35 per cent. according to the rate of miners' phthisis on each scheduled mine; and 20 per cent. in proportion to the amount on which each mine has to pay income tax.

The Government pays the whole cost of administration.

6. **Stages of Miners' Phthisis (Silicosis).**—From the 1st August, 1919, there will be three stages of miners' phthisis, and compensation will be paid by the board for each stage. The earliest stage is called the "ante-primary," and means that the Medical Bureau has found that the lungs have been damaged through mining, although the signs of miners' phthisis in the lungs may not be definite. The next stage is called the "primary stage." This means that the bureau has found definite signs of miners' phthisis in the lungs, and that the miner's capacity for work has been reduced, though not seriously and permanently. The other stage is called the "secondary" stage." This means that the bureau has found miners' phthisis to be present to such an extent as to seriously and permanently affect a miner's capacity for work.

Important.—If the bureau at a periodical examination find a miner is in the ante-primary, primary, or secondary stage of miners' phthisis, the bureau will advise him accordingly. If a miner who has been advised that he is in the ante-primary or primary stage does not claim compensation within three months, he will not be entitled thereafter to the compensation for an advanced stage. In other words, a miner who continues at underground work for more than three months after having been advised that he is in, say, the ante-primary stage, will receive at any future time only the compensation for that stage, even although his condition has advanced to the primary or secondary stage. On the other hand, if he leaves the mine when in the ante-primary or primary stage within three months of such notification and his condition afterwards becomes worse, he will be entitled to the further benefits for an advanced stage.

7. **Compensation to Miners who have not received Benefits.**—(1) The amount of compensation due for the stages called ante-primary and primary will be according to the wages which the miner has earned during the last 156 days he worked prior to being notified by the bureau of his condition. (2) The compensation for the ante-primary stage will be paid by the board in one lump sum. (3) The compensation due for the primary stage will generally be paid by the board in one lump sum, but it may be paid in instalments in the interest of the miner or of his dependants. If the compensation is paid in instalments, interest at the rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum will be added to the balance due to a miner at the 30th September and the 31st March in each year. (4) The following tables show the compensation due to a miner who is entitled to compensation for the ante-primary, or for the primary stage, as the case may be:

(a) To a miner who earned on an average between £20 and £29 8s. 4d. per month.

TABLE I. TABLE II.

Average per Month of:			Ante-primary Stage.			Primary Stage.		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
20	0	0	240	0	0	360	0	0
21	0	0	252	0	0	378	0	0
22	0	0	264	0	0	396	0	0
23	0	0	276	0	0	414	0	0
24	0	0	288	0	0	432	0	0
25	0	0	300	0	0	450	0	0
26	0	0	312	0	0	468	0	0
27	0	0	324	0	0	486	0	0
28	0	0	336	0	0	504	0	0
29	0	0	348	0	0	522	0	0
29	3	4	350	0	0	525	0	0

(b) To a miner who earned on an average between £30 and £37 10s. per month.

TABLE I. TABLE II.

Average per Month of:			Ante-primary Stage.			Primary Stage.		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
30	0	0	355	0	0	532	10	0
31	0	0	361	0	0	541	10	0
32	0	0	367	0	0	550	10	0
33	0	0	373	0	0	559	10	0
34	0	0	379	0	0	568	10	0
35	0	0	385	0	0	577	10	0
36	0	0	391	0	0	586	10	0
37	0	0	397	0	0	595	10	0
37	10	0	400	0	0	600	0	0

(c) To a miner who earned on an average between £37 10s. and £70 per month.

TABLE I. TABLE II.

Average per Month of:			Ante-primary Stage.			Primary Stage.		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
38	0	0	401	10	0	602	5	0
39	0	0	404	10	0	606	15	0
40	0	0	407	10	0	611	5	0
41	0	0	410	10	0	615	15	0
42	0	0	413	10	0	620	5	0
43	0	0	416	10	0	624	15	0
44	0	0	419	10	0	629	5	0
45	0	0	422	10	0	633	15	0
46	0	0	425	10	0	638	5	0
47	0	0	428	10	0	642	15	0
48	0	0	431	10	0	647	5	0
49	0	0	434	10	0	651	15	0
50	0	0	437	10	0	656	5	0
60	0	0	467	10	0	701	5	0
70	0	0	497	10	0	746	5	0

This table is worked up to £70, but there is no limit to the amount payable. (d) For the secondary stage the compensation will be paid for life to those residing in South Africa, but ending as soon as £750 has been paid when a beneficiary leaves South Africa permanently or without the written permission of the board. Under no circumstances can the board pay lump sums to miners in the second stage. The amount due to miners and their wives and children will depend upon the miners' average monthly earnings during the 156 days actually worked prior to being notified of second stage condition. (The average monthly earnings of a miner who received compensation before the 1st August, 1919, will be reckoned as £30, excepting when

they obviously amounted to less; in the latter cases the board will fix an amount.) The following table gives an idea of the amount of the monthly allowance due:—

TABLE III.	Man, Wife and Three Children.		Man, Wife and Two Children.		Man, Wife and One Child.		Man and Wife.		Man.		Men Earning per Month.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
	2	15 0 0	2	15 0 0	2	15 0 0	2	15 0 0	2	15 0 0	2	15 0 0
	3	15 0 0	3	15 0 0	3	15 0 0	3	15 0 0	3	15 0 0	3	15 0 0
20	0	0	13	0	0	13	0	0	10	0	0	0
21	0	0	13 6	0	13 6	0	13 6	0	10 6	0	0	0
22	0	0	14 0	0	14 0	0	14 0	0	11 0	0	0	0
23	0	0	14 6	0	14 6	0	14 6	0	11 6	0	0	0
24	0	0	15 0	0	15 0	0	15 0	0	12 0	0	0	0
25	0	0	15 6	0	15 6	0	15 6	0	12 6	0	0	0
26	0	0	16 0	0	16 0	0	16 0	0	13 0	0	0	0
27	0	0	16 6	0	16 6	0	16 6	0	13 6	0	0	0
28	0	0	17 0	0	17 0	0	17 0	0	14 0	0	0	0
29	0	0	17 6	0	17 6	0	17 6	0	14 6	0	0	0
30	0	0	18 0	0	18 0	0	18 0	0	15 0	0	0	0
31	0	0	18 6	0	18 6	0	18 6	0	15 6	0	0	0
32	0	0	19 0	0	19 0	0	19 0	0	16 0	0	0	0
33	0	0	19 6	0	19 6	0	19 6	0	16 6	0	0	0
34	0	0	20 0	0	20 0	0	20 0	0	17 0	0	0	0
35	0	0	20 6	0	20 6	0	20 6	0	17 6	0	0	0
36	0	0	21 0	0	21 0	0	21 0	0	18 0	0	0	0
37	0	0	21 6	0	21 6	0	21 6	0	18 6	0	0	0
38	0	0	22 0	0	22 0	0	22 0	0	19 0	0	0	0
39	0	0	22 6	0	22 6	0	22 6	0	19 6	0	0	0
40	0	0	23 0	0	23 0	0	23 0	0	20 0	0	0	0
41	0	0	23 6	0	23 6	0	23 6	0	20 6	0	0	0
42	0	0	24 0	0	24 0	0	24 0	0	21 0	0	0	0
43	0	0	24 6	0	24 6	0	24 6	0	21 6	0	0	0
44	0	0	25 0	0	25 0	0	25 0	0	22 0	0	0	0
45	0	0	25 6	0	25 6	0	25 6	0	22 6	0	0	0
46	0	0	26 0	0	26 0	0	26 0	0	23 0	0	0	0
47	0	0	26 6	0	26 6	0	26 6	0	23 6	0	0	0
48	0	0	27 0	0	27 0	0	27 0	0	24 0	0	0	0
49	0	0	27 6	0	27 6	0	27 6	0	24 6	0	0	0
50	0	0	28 0	0	28 0	0	28 0	0	25 0	0	0	0
51	0	0	28 6	0	28 6	0	28 6	0	25 6	0	0	0
52	0	0	29 0	0	29 0	0	29 0	0	26 0	0	0	0
53	0	0	29 6	0	29 6	0	29 6	0	26 6	0	0	0
54	0	0	30 0	0	30 0	0	30 0	0	27 0	0	0	0
55	0	0	30 6	0	30 6	0	30 6	0	27 6	0	0	0
56	0	0	31 0	0	31 0	0	31 0	0	28 0	0	0	0
57	0	0	31 6	0	31 6	0	31 6	0	28 6	0	0	0
58	0	0	32 0	0	32 0	0	32 0	0	29 0	0	0	0
59	0	0	32 6	0	32 6	0	32 6	0	29 6	0	0	0
60	0	0	33 0	0	33 0	0	33 0	0	30 0	0	0	0
61	0	0	33 6	0	33 6	0	33 6	0	30 6	0	0	0
62	0	0	34 0	0	34 0	0	34 0	0	31 0	0	0	0
63	0	0	34 6	0	34 6	0	34 6	0	31 6	0	0	0
64	0	0	35 0	0	35 0	0	35 0	0	32 0	0	0	0
65	0	0	35 6	0	35 6	0	35 6	0	32 6	0	0	0
66	0	0	36 0	0	36 0	0	36 0	0	33 0	0	0	0
67	0	0	36 6	0	36 6	0	36 6	0	33 6	0	0	0
68	0	0	37 0	0	37 0	0	37 0	0	34 0	0	0	0
69	0	0	37 6	0	37 6	0	37 6	0	34 6	0	0	0
70	0	0	38 0	0	38 0	0	38 0	0	35 0	0	0	0

If a miner leaves South Africa for good, after having been granted the monthly allowance, the allowance will stop as soon as a total of £750 has been paid. The board has power to grant permission to a miner who wants to leave South Africa temporarily, and who intends returning again—in other words, he has to satisfy the board that his home is in South Africa—and if this is done the monthly allowance will be paid for life. Such permission should be obtained from the board prior to leaving South Africa. The allowance for a child will be paid only until it reaches the age of 16. This allowance will not be paid for more than three children, but will be paid while any three children are under the age of 16. The allowance will continue to be paid with respect to a child over 16 if the bureau considers that it is unable to earn a living owing to ill health. The allowance for a child will also be paid in the case of the child of a miner which was born *after* the date compensation has been awarded, but no allowance will be paid for a child thereafter *adopted*. The allowance for wife or child will stop on the death of wife or child. On the death of a miner the monthly allowance previously paid for the wife and each child will be doubled, and continue to be paid in the case of the widow for life. If the widow re-marries, her allowance will stop, but not the allowance of the children. If a miner leaves neither widow nor child, the amount allowed for a widow will be paid to his dependants. The order of de-

pendants is as follows:—(a) his wife; (b) his son or daughter, legitimate or illegitimate, or any stepson or stepdaughter; (c) his father, mother, stepfather or stepmother; (d) his brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, or any of their children; (e) his grandfather, grandmother, grandson or granddaughter; (f) any other relative of the deceased person by consanguinity or affinity. In the case of relatives, proof of dependency must be supplied.

8. Compensation to Miners who became Beneficiaries before 1st August, 1919.—

(1) Miners who received first-stage compensation before the 1st August, 1919, will not benefit under the new Act if they are found to be still in the same stage. When a miner's condition has become worse and he has been put into the secondary stage by the bureau, he will then come under the new Act. (2) The monthly allowances for life, mentioned in Table III., will also be granted to a miner and his dependants who received compensation before the 1st August, 1919, for phthisis, and who has been or is certified by the bureau to be in the secondary stage or to be suffering from tuberculosis complicated by silicosis, provided that the miner satisfies the board that he has been resident in South Africa since 31st July, 1916. (3) A miner who left South Africa after receiving compensation before the 1st August, 1916, and who would have been entitled to further compensation had he remained in South Africa, will under the new Act be entitled to the further compensation provided for in the Act of 1916, or any amendment thereof, if he satisfies the board that he returned to South Africa between the 31st July, 1916, and the 1st June, 1919, and that he is in necessitous circumstances. Section 3 of the Public Welfare and Moratorium Act, 1919, also provides: "Whenever any statutory officer or other statutory authority is satisfied that any person was prevented from doing any act, or making any application or lodging or transmitting any document within a time prescribed by the statute concerned or a regulation made thereunder, by reason of such person being on active service, or of his enforced absence from the Union, or of any other circumstances arising out of the present war, such officer or authority may, unless the statutory rights of any other person will be detrimentally affected, extend the prescribed time for such further period as seems to him or it to be equitable in the circumstances."

9. Compensation to Miners who have been stopped from working underground on the Scheduled Mines owing to tuberculosis.—(1) A miner who is found by the bureau to be suffering from tuberculosis will receive the same compensation as that paid to a miner who is in the primary stage of miners' phthisis. (See Table II.)

(2) If the tuberculosis is complicated by silicosis (miners' phthisis), he will be paid the same compensation as for the secondary stage of miners' phthisis. (See Table III.) (3) Compensation in cases of tuberculosis will be paid only if the miner has worked underground within a year previous to his last periodical examination, unless he has just returned from active service and falls under paragraph 8 (3) above.

10. Appeals from Miners against decisions of Bureau.—(1) Any miner who has applied for compensation, and who is not satisfied with the decision of the bureau, may appeal against such decision. (2) Any miner who is not satisfied with the bureau's decision as the result of a periodical examination may also appeal against such decision. (3) Notice of appeal must be sent to the Secretary of the bureau within 30 days. The miner will be notified to present himself for medical re-examination by the bureau after the secretary has received the notice of appeal.

11. Applications by Miners for Compensation.—Applications for compensation must be made on a form which can be obtained from the secretary of the Miners' Phthisis Board, Box 4566, Johannesburg. When the form has been filled in, it should be sent to the secretary of the board. The applicant must satisfy the board that he has been working underground on a scheduled mine for two years since the last August, 1908, or has contracted miners' phthisis while employed on a scheduled mine. A miner who works underground over three months after he has been advised that he is in the ante-primary or the primary stage can claim compensation only for the stage that he was first notified to be suffering in. An applicant will be examined at his home if he produces a doctor's certificate to the effect that he is too ill to go to the office of the bureau for examination. Unless a miner has been advised by the bureau, as the result of his periodical examination, not longer than six months back, that he has phthisis in either the ante-primary, primary, or secondary stage, he may be wasting time and money, etc., applying for the first time to the board for benefits. This suggestion is given merely in order to save miners' time and expense.

12. Compensation to Dependants of Miners who died after 1st August, 1919.—

(a) The dependants of a miner who dies from any cause after the 1st August, 1919, who had been awarded compensation under the new Act, will receive the balance of the compensation in such monthly instalments as the board may decide. (b) If the miner was receiving a monthly allowance for life for the secondary stage be-

fore his death, his dependants will receive an allowance for life, as follows:—

TABLE IV.

Man Earning per Month.	Widow.		Widow and One Child.		Widow and Two Children.		Widow and Three Children.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
	20	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
21	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
22	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
23	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
24	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
25	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
26	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
27	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
28	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
29	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
30	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
35	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
40	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
50	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
60	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0
70	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Do you suggest those conditions should be introduced here?

Mr. BOYLAND: I am making these suggestions to the Government because I want to help, not to hamper them.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Have not those conditions been altered in South Africa recently?

Mr. BOYLAND: These are the new conditions.

Mr. Marshall: Keep on going; we will keep them here till morning. I will follow you and we will keep them till daylight.

Mr. BOYLAND: I can keep going for a long time yet. The pamphlet proceeds—

If the miner left neither widow nor child, a relative who was entirely dependent upon him will receive the monthly allowance fixed for a widow. (c) The dependants of a miner who dies after the 1st August, 1919, and who had not been awarded compensation, will receive compensation equal to the amount which the miner would have received if he had lived, provided that the bureau certifies that phthisis was a contributing cause of his death. (i.) If the bureau certifies that the deceased miner had silicosis in the ante-primary or the primary stage, the dependants will receive the compensation for either of those stages, as the case may be, according to Tables I. or II., and in such instalments as the board may decide. (ii.) If the deceased miner would have been entitled to an allowance during his life, as for the secondary stage, then the dependants will be paid the allowance mentioned in Table IV. (d) In every case of doubt as to the condition of a miner at the time of his death it is advisable, though not absolutely essential, that a post-mortem examination be made. This examination can be arranged through the secretary of the board, telephone No. 2633, Central, Johannesburg, or by telegram to him. (e) The monthly allowance for the

second stage will be paid to dependants only if they reside permanently in South Africa. If they leave South Africa, and do not intend to return, then they will be paid such instalments as the Board may decide up to £750 in all. These are the same conditions as those laid down for a miner who was granted the monthly allowance.

13. Compensation to dependants of Miners who died before the 1st August, 1919.—The allowances mentioned in Clause 12 (b) will be paid to the dependants of miners who died before the 1st August, 1919, under either of the following conditions:—(a) That the deceased miner had received compensation for phthisis. (b) That the deceased miner had received compensation, and that the bureau certifies that he died from silicosis or from any other cause if silicosis (phthisis) was present as a contributing factor. (c) That the deceased miner died between the last day of July, 1916, and the first day of August, 1919, and had not received compensation; provided that the bureau certifies that phthisis was a contributing cause of his death, and that he should have been entitled to compensation. (d) That the dependants had received compensation in respect of a miner who had not himself received compensation. The dependants referred to in this clause must make application for the monthly allowance before the 31st July, 1920; it cannot be claimed after that date. They must also satisfy the board that they have been resident in South Africa since the last day of July, 1916, or from the date of the miner's death (whichever is the latest) to the date of the award of the allowance. The allowance will stop as soon as £750 has been paid if they leave South Africa and do not intend to return, or leave South Africa temporarily without the written permission of the board. Whenever any person is awarded benefits under this Act, and who had previously been granted benefits under Section 11 of Act 44 of 1916 or any amendments thereof (this was a poverty clause granting extra benefits to those in necessitous circumstances), the amount of such extra benefits granted under that clause shall be deducted from the benefit awarded under this Act. The allowance will not be granted to a woman who was the widow of a miner, but who remarried before 1st August, 1919.

14. General Provisions regarding Compensation.—(a) The lawful representative of a deceased miner may claim or continue to claim for compensation on behalf of the dependants of the deceased. (b) Upon the death of a beneficiary the board may in its absolute discretion pay any moneys which are due by the board to the estate of such beneficiary, either to the executor, administrator, or other legal representative, or to any other person whom the board considers to be a creditor or relative of the deceased. (c) No amount payable as a benefit under

the new Act or the prior law will be assignable or transferable, or be capable of being hypothecated or pledged, nor will any such amount be liable to be attached or subjected to any form of execution under a judgment or order of any court of law. (d) No amount paid as compensation under this Act or the prior law, nor any property, movable or immovable, purchased with such amount or any part thereof, will be liable to be attached or subjected to any form of execution under a judgment or order of any court of law based upon a cause of action arising before such benefit was awarded.

The CHAIRMAN: What is all this leading up to?

Mr. BOYLAND: I am sorry if you are getting tired. I am not.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not talk to me like that! I will not allow you to. What reference has this to the Mining Estimates?

Mr. BOYLAND: The Minister for Mines said they had not dealt completely with the question in South Africa. I said they had. I am now proving it. As I read on, you will find that a man affected with tuberculosis is taken right out of the mine. Our Minister for Mines here is merely playing with the question. He is not in earnest. I cannot sit down and see those men suffering without being looked after on comprehensive lines. The Minister begged the question when he made that inane interjection while I was speaking.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Is it not rather unfair to attack him in his absence?

Mr. BOYLAND: Perhaps it is, but the Minister should be here. He is no trade commissioner. The electors have returned us to do our best for them. We cannot look after their interests while we are away pretending to be trade commissioners. The report continues—

15. Disqualifications.—(a) Any person convicted of working underground after having received compensation will not receive any further award, nor will any further award be made in respect of him. This disqualification has been removed in the cases of those who were convicted of working underground before the 1st August, 1916. (b) No compensation will be paid to any miner who was in South Africa on or after the 1st August, 1917, without first undergoing an examination by the Medical Bureau.

16. Medical and Funeral Expenses.—The board may pay up to £25 towards the reasonable medical and funeral expenses of a deceased miner if he was a beneficiary or if the bureau certifies that he died from phthisis. Such expenses must be paid in the first instance by the person incurring same, and afterwards claimed from the board.

17. Certificates for going Underground.—(a) Every person who goes underground to work as a miner must be in possession of the bureau's "initial" or "Periodi-

cal" certificate. (b) The initial certificate signifies that the holder is physically fit to become a miner. The periodical certificate is issued to a miner provided that he is free from tuberculosis. (c) A "special" certificate may be issued by the bureau. This signifies that the holder is free from tuberculosis and may go underground, but he cannot work as a miner.

18. Periodical Examination of Miners.—(a) Every underground worker on a scheduled mine will be medically examined by the bureau every six months, or oftener if the bureau considers this necessary. (b) If the miner is free from tuberculosis he will receive the bureau's periodical certificate ("C"); such certificate entitles the holder to continue in underground work.

The CHAIRMAN: I fail to see that the matter you are reading has anything to do with the Estimates before the Chair. I should like you to show what it is leading up to.

Mr. BOYLAND: There is on the Estimates an amount of £5,000 for the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

The CHAIRMAN: But what is the object of reading this? Is it to increase the vote?

Mr. BOYLAND: No, I cannot do that, as you know. We can do nothing with the Estimates. My aim is to get a compulsory national insurance scheme instituted by the Government, and then cut out this £5,000.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it not be better to give notice that you intend to move in that direction? I do not think any good purpose is being served by the address you are giving us. It cannot help us with the Mines Estimates.

Mr. BOYLAND: But it will help the miners. They should be taken out of the mines. If we are not going to consider miners when dealing with the Mines Estimates, what shall we consider? I have no desire to go on reading if you will take the pamphlet as read. I was tired when I started.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a question of being tired. It is a question of getting on with the business of the House.

Mr. BOYLAND: Well, I am not stopping it. The balance of this pamphlet can be taken as read if you will accept it from me and hand it to the "Hansard" reporter.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot do that.

Mr. BOYLAND: Well, I will continue reading the report as follows:—

(c) A miner not working on a scheduled mine will be examined by the bureau on the date shown on his last periodical certificate for his next examination, or up to two years from the date of his last certificate. (d) A miner who fails to be examined within two years will not be allowed to resume underground work unless he has the initial certificate that he is fit for such work. If he fails to obtain such certificate he may also fail to get compensation. (e) If a miner be found at a periodical examination to be suffering

from tuberculosis he will be notified accordingly by the bureau, and must immediately stop going underground. (f) A miner found at a periodical examination to be in the ante-primary, primary, or secondary stage of silicosis will be notified by letter by the secretary of the bureau. (g) The mines managements pay the fares of their underground workers when they go to Johannesburg for their periodical examination, also wages for the time lost on account of such examination. These are privileges which are not, however, provided for in the Miners' Phtthisis Act. (h) No award made before the commencement of this Act shall be reduced or avoided by any provision of this Act; but whenever any person is granted an allowance during his life, any balance still due to him under any prior award lapses to the compensation fund.

That comprehensive, compact scheme has absolutely disposed of the phtthisis trouble in that country. There is not any problem, as the Minister for Mines has asserted. The problem has been solved, and information regarding its solution is available here, and thus something can be done for Western Australia's miners. To assert that the question has not been comprehensively dealt with in South Africa is to assert something that is absolutely incorrect. The newspapers recently stated that 75 per cent. of the miners going from this State to South Africa were turned down there; and according to a letter received by Mr. Cornell 80 per cent. are being turned down. During the war men were enlisted for the Miners' Corps, and of the miners presenting themselves some 60 per cent. were rejected. That was in 1915. The facts prove that the trouble has been prevalent for many years. I have here a statement of the compensation granted by the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, which receives an annual contribution of £5,000 from the Western Australian Government. The scale of relief, as it is termed, reads as follows:—

Married couples and widowers—25s. per week, plus 5s. for each child under 14 (maximum allowance, £2 5s.). Single men—25s. per week. Widows—Age—Under 40, no children—20s. per week for 3 months after husband's death, and then 10s. per week for 3 months. Under 40, 1 child—30s. per week for 6 months after husband's death, and then 7s. 6d. per week for child until attaining age of 14. Under 40, 2 or more children—15s. per week and 5s. per week for each child until age of 14. 40 to 50—20s. per week for 3 months after husband's death, then 15s. per week for 3 months, and then 10s. per week until marriage or death. An extra 5s. per week to be allowed for each child to age of 14 years. 50 to 60—20s. per week until remarriage or death. An extra 5s. per week allowed for each child until age of 14. 60 and upwards—10s. per week and assistance rendered in applying for old age pension. An extra 5s. per week allowed for each child

to 14 years of age. Widows remarried—Where there are children of former marriage, 5s. per week for one child, and more than one 3s. 6d. per week.

The figures demonstrate conclusively that the fund does not afford anything like adequate sustenance allowance to women and children who have lost their bread-winners in a vitally important industry of this State. Again, the allowances granted to disabled miners are utterly inadequate. The miner with fibrosis can get only 25s. per week. A tubercular case must go into the sanatorium, where he receives an "indigent allowance" of 5s. per week. The disabled miner who is married receives 25s. per week as a basis on which to maintain himself and his family. It is a crying shame that such things can happen in this young country, this white country. In South Africa—a nigger country—the problem has been solved. Certainly, they have the money in South Africa, but the mine owners have to contribute, and the cost of administering the compensation scheme is borne by the Government. Although our mines cannot afford to pay similarly to-day, yet this State can do something by way of an all-round pension scheme, if the Commonwealth will not undertake such a scheme. The Federal Government ought to introduce a national compulsory insurance scheme. Incidentally I may point out that in our Railway Department both officers and wages men are asking for a superannuation scheme. Why not institute a scheme embracing all the people in the State? It has been done in Germany and England. I would not mind betting—if betting were permitted—that the necessary data are to be found in the reports of Mr. Bennett, our Government Actuary. Or else Mr. Knibbs has given them. I spoke to that gentleman on the subject when he was in Western Australia, and he agreed that a national compulsory insurance scheme would be a very fine thing to bring about. The Mine Workers' Relief Fund has been contributed to ever since its inauguration by the State Government, the mine owners, and the miners. The fund's report for 1921 states the average number of members since the inception of the scheme in 1915, when the figure was 7,610. In 1920 the contributors totalled only 4,465—a drop of some 3,000 as compared with 1915. The effect has been to raise the rate of contribution: the miners nowadays pay 3s. per month, besides contributing their very lives to the maintenance of the industry. The decrease in the number of contributors is, of course, partly due to the closing down of various of our mines, which means that the miners leave this country. In 1921 the number of contributors to the fund recovered slightly—to 4,705, which figure, however, shows a decrease of 2,905 as compared with the 1915 figure. It only needs a little further decline of the mining industry to bring about a position in which there will be no assistance available to sufferers from miner's complaint for the support of them—

selves or their dependants. Do the people of this State want the industry closed down? They have not said so. In the first year the number of miners granted relief under the fund was 116; in the second year 170; in the third year 199; in the fourth year 232; in the fifth year 256, and in the sixth year 247. It is said that there is a diminution in the number of cases now coming forward. It is not fair to say that. The whole business has been hedged in by resolutions. These people have the right to move resolutions when they like and alter the whole scheme. In the first place it was a matter of contributing to the fund because a man was working in the industry. I never contributed anything myself. If I wanted to apply for compensation I could get nothing because of that fact. A man was dealt with retrospectively over a period of two years. The fund was inaugurated in 1915. The 1917 report in connection with the fund shows that the following resolutions in connection with contributions was carried, and this was published in the leading papers of the State:—

Notice is hereby given that after June 30th next the Board of Control of Mine Workers' Relief Fund will not entertain applications for relief from men, or the dependants of men, who, although employed in the mining industry have not contributed to the fund. Workers, whose employers will not collect their contributions, are notified that they can pay through the local agent for the fund in their district, a list of whom is published in the fund's annual report.

That practically cut out the prospector. I remember fighting a case on behalf of a prospector who was stricken down. His mate came along, and suggested that they should go out to some new ground. They went out to the Carbine district and found something fairly good. They worked for four months, but the man's health became very bad and he had to return home to his wife and three children. These men had to wait two months for the battery to crush their stone, so that altogether they were held up six months before they could get any results from their operations. After that period the man was in a position to pay money to the fund, but because he did not fulfil the conditions within the time he was turned down. There was a newspaper controversy on the subject, and the other side did not come out very well. I was able to prove that the man had no time in which to pay, and that he could not pay until after his crushing. Out of the crushing they had to pay their debts, and therefore made no profit. It was out of the second crushing that they were going to make a profit. Unfortunately the man died after a little time, but neither his widow nor his children received any compensation. I know of another case in which a man was treated in the same way. These people

can do just as they please. We have been perpetuating this sort of thing and the Government are still doing it. Whether the Government will do anything in the face of the facts I have brought forward, I do not know. The Government raised their contributions to the fund 50 per cent. for a short time, from 33½ per cent., and the miners have had their contributions raised 200 per cent. The salary of the secretary of the fund has now gone up from £400 to £500 a year. The member for Leonora said he believed in men being well paid. In face of the fact that beneficiaries are receiving so small an amount upon which to live I cannot see what justification there was for this increase in salary to the secretary, from £8 to £10 a week. It is all very well to do a thing like that, but the first call upon the fund is to assist those who are starving. I am pleased that the acting Minister for Mines has agreed to the erection of a hall at Wooroloo. We have about 40 per cent. of our miners in that institution. He has stated that the work will be put in hand, but that the Government are waiting for money from Kalgoorlie. He also said that blinds are to be put up in order to make the conditions more happy for those people who are in the institution. With regard to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund scheme, the miners are contributing to this for their own benefit. It is not right that they should be called upon to do so. The Fund also takes advantage of the invalid and old age pensions in the way of augmenting the payments to the beneficiaries. If a man is old enough he has to apply for his old age pension. If he is ill enough he has to apply for the invalid pension. The fund is being asked to do what the Government ought to be doing. They are using more than half of the money provided by the Government in order to carry on. Widows, however, are cut out so far as the fund is concerned. Men who have come back from the war have been called upon to keep their mothers; their fathers had previously contributed to the fund and the widows were fully entitled to this benefit. When prospectors got too old for ordinary mining they went out prospecting, but were not able to earn much. They had to get what they could from the ground in the way of gold. They had no money with which to pay contributions to the fund, and these men also have been cut out and cannot get any benefit from the fund. The man who refuses to go to the sanatorium is also denied any contribution from the fund. It is said that if a man does not go there he cannot get any money from the fund, of which one-third is contributed by the Government and another one-third contributed by the miners. Single men are not compensated in any way. A deputation waited on the Premier recently, in Kalgoorlie, in respect to these men. It was introduced by the mayor of Boulder. The Premier said he claimed he was doing all he could for the miners.

In face of that I have brought before members this evening it will be seen that not very much has been done.

The Premier: I said I would go into the matter.

2 o'clock a.m.

[Hon. G. Taylor took the Chair.]

Mr. BOYLAND: I was going to point that out to the Premier. The Premier said it was very distressing to know that men were dying from this complaint and he would do all he could for them. He also expressed his deep sympathy with them. After what I have stated, I hope his sympathy will be demonstrated in some practical way. There has been some criticism of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund administration. Although the secretary's salary was increased and money has been expended in order to carry on the fund, members should realise that if the whole of the expenses were cut out, the men themselves would not gain a great deal of benefit. The question arises, What are we going to do for our miners? The mines cannot bear any expense proportionable to that of South Africa. Our mines are living from hand to mouth. We have heard many statements that they cannot continue under the present high costs. There has been a good deal of pessimism over the rise in wages. Those controlling the industry have their jobs to look after. I told the Minister for Mines at the time that I recognised the industry could not bear any further increase. If we had a comprehensive scheme to cover unemployment, sickness and accident, we could build up benefits for all the workers in this industry and for all the people in this State. All said and done, we are all workers. Some are organisers and managers of industry, but all are workers. The head of the Government is one of the hardest worked men in the State, and the same may be said of the Leader of the Opposition. Some people think that mine managers do not work. They are working day and night and working hard, too. They are the organisers of the industry. They may be able to put something by out of their salaries, but the accountants and others employed on the mines live up to their social position and cannot save. A compulsory insurance scheme would assist all, from the highest to the lowest. It is time such a scheme was adopted. It would have the effect of cutting out charity doles and it would prevent us from becoming the mendicant nation into which we are developing. Too much is left to charity. Men would prefer to set aside 5s. a week for the benefit of their wives and children in the event of dying, or as a guarantee against sickness, accident, or incapacity through old age. They would then have the right to demand what they had subscribed for. The large amount of money expended by the Government on charities could be better devoted to a compulsory insurance

scheme. I ask the Government on behalf of the miners to do something for these men, if not for the other people of the State. I would far sooner that such a scheme covered the whole of the people, but I must plead particularly for the miners who are following an occupation which is killing them off day by day. If a medical examination were made of the miners, it would be found that 70 to 80 per cent. are affected with dust, tuberculosis and kindred diseases. The Government compel members of the Civil Service to insure themselves for a small amount—about £250. If we had a compulsory national scheme to which all contributed, there would be something for them in old age. Under the present system an amount of £250 or £500 is a mere nothing, whereas the payment under an insurance scheme would be more beneficial. We have heard about the railway insurance scheme inaugurated by the Government, and what a fine reserve has been built up. The A.M.P. Society, with assets of over forty-two millions, is another instance of what can be accomplished. If the Government would only undertake a compulsory scheme the people of the State would be benefited immediately, and it would make for industrial peace.

Mr. Marshall I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [2.10]: It seems somewhat extraordinary that, after about 23 years' experience in the mining industry during which I took my turn with others on the night shift, I should be here at this unearthly hour discussing the Estimates covering this particular industry. In view of the fact that members have just intimated their desire to continue the debate, I will do my best to entertain them till daylight.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in making a threat like that.

Mr. MARSHALL: I did not intend it as a threat; they are too small for me to threaten. I am not too well satisfied with the Estimates as submitted, as the vote is very low considering the value of the industry to the State. As a new member, I have listened attentively to the discussion on the whole of the Estimates so far, and it seems to be the custom for members to point out to the Government where they are neglecting to assist particular industries peculiar to the constituencies they represent. I also have some grievances regarding the Government's attitude to the mining industry. I venture to say that all other industries in this State owe their origin to the mining industry. This State would never have sprung into prominence with the rapidity it did but for the discovery of gold. By virtue of the gold production, we secured some of the finest workers, not only from other parts of the Commonwealth, but from all parts of the globe. Men who had been accustomed to mining for many years flocked here to take a hand in the

industry. Western Australia would never have been able to secure in such a short period the capital which has come into the State to develop other industries if it had not been for the importance of its gold mining and the fact of gold being discovered in such large quantities. Many members seem to think that the industry is about to become defunct. This is most unfair criticism. If the Government gave to the mining industry to-day the same consideration as they are giving to other industries, and offered similar concessions to those being given to the agricultural industry, mining would again become one of the most prosperous industries in the State. It is remarkable that the representations of members who have spoken on the Estimates have whirled round two important factors. One is the amount of money required to develop industries and the other is to find a ready market for products. It will appeal to hon. members that neither of those factors governs the position in connection with the mining industry. We have any number of men with capital who are ready to invest it in the mining industry but, unfortunately, the Government have not given the industry the attention it deserves. From my experience during the past few years, and particularly after perusing the Estimates this year, I am convinced that the mining industry is sorely neglected by the Government. I think that is due to the fact that the Government are somewhat inclined to give the Minister for Mines powers altogether beyond those which he should possess. I do not say this is done from any dishonest standpoint nor that it is intentional, but I think the Minister for Mines allows himself to be governed by outside influences. This has led to granting monopolies which have resulted in the holding up of practically the whole of the gold-producing areas and the ore channels of Western Australia. I will have more to say on that point later on. It will be generally admitted that the mining industry does not produce a commodity for which there is no ready sale. If the industry was as prosperous to-day as it was in 1903, and if it had remained at that prosperous stage throughout that complete period—unfortunately it has not done so—our position as a State would be very different from an economic standpoint. Notwithstanding the fact that gold is about the only commodity that is produced in the Commonwealth to-day for which there is a ready market and a great demand, and the prosperity of which would have great influence on the question of exchange and currency generally, the Government have not had due regard for the interest or progress of that industry. I am sorry to make that statement but it is my candid opinion. I am sorry that the Minister for Mines is not in the Chamber this evening. It has been said that we should not criticise the department because the Minister is absent. I am not the Minister's keeper and I will not have another opportunity of speaking on these Estimates before

he returns. The Minister for Mines knew that and yet he left Perth on his present trip to Java. He cannot blame me for the position which has arisen. While it may look like attacking the Minister behind his back, it is no good backing and filling. I would like hon. members to review the figures showing the decline in the gold mining industry from 1903 to 1920. I do not say that the argument I advanced is the clue to the explanation for that decline, but it does seem to me that the change occurred when recent legislation affecting mining was passed. I consider the Mining Act obsolete and inefficient and one which has a tendency to create monopolies. I am sorry the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) is not present because he opposed the granting of monopolies to a few individuals. That applies equally to the goldmining leases, beyond all doubt. Later mining legislation is responsible for the decline in the gold production of the State. In 1903 we produced two million ounces of gold and at that time gold production was at its best and the administration was carried on under the old Mining Act of 1895. No sooner had the amending legislation been passed in 1904 than the decline in production was manifested. It has continually declined since until 1912. It then took somewhat of a turn, but in 1916 it once again fell away. I want to show the difference between the two measures and also, from the figures furnished by the Mines Department, the connection between the decline in the gold production and the legislation I have referred to. The 1904 Act has had a tendency to lessen the opportunities to encourage gold production in various centres, and to allow one company or one mine to get practically a monopoly over the gold bearing country. Under the old Act of 1895 the position was different. Section 35 of the old Mining Act provided that the leases should not exceed 25 acres. Section 44 of the Act of 1904 prescribes that the area shall not exceed 48 acres. If a prospector went on to a lease and, after doing a little work, abandoned it, another party could come along and take up 48 acres. There has been a marked tendency to extend the area of leases. I should like to point to the harmful effect of the concentration privilege. Section 43 of the old Mining Act provides for amalgamation with the approval of the Minister, but it must be shown to the Minister that the groups of leases, if amalgamated, can be more efficiently worked. At the time that Act was passed, no lessee could hold more than 25 acres, and before he could get amalgamation he had to prove to the Minister that more efficient work would be done if the several leases were worked as one. In the Act of 1904 an entirely different proposition was put up, one which has been most harmful to the industry. Section 86 of that Act prescribes that two or more adjoining leases may be of 96 acres. To-day there is no necessity for one holding a mining lease or group of leases to convince the Minister that more efficient work could be done if

the group were operated as one mine. All that he has to do is to apply for amalgamation and get it, so long as his aggregate area does not exceed 96 acres. We have there an illustration of the policy of the Government. The Minister would tell us that he is doing all he can for the gold production of the State. Yet it is utterly impossible to produce gold at the present time, by virtue of the legislation passed in this Chamber. Nor does the harm finish there. It is not impossible for one person to hold up miles of auriferous country, because in addition to amalgamation he can apply for concentration. Under this, one man could hold up the whole of the gold producing ore channels of the State. Indeed, to a very large extent, one man has been doing that for the past 10 years. Under the Act the Minister has unlimited power. He may be exercising that power in the best interests of the industry, but I say that while concentration and amalgamation are allowed to the extent they are, and while the area of gold mining leases is so large, the gold production of the State can never prosper. At Wiluna one man is flouting the mining laws, and in that attitude is backed up by the Minister. He refuses to produce the gold in his leases, and he refuses to allow anyone else to do so, and the department and the Minister stand up for him. In 1903 the number of leases was 2,328, but in 1920 this fell to 1,347. While in 1903 there were 30,415 acres under leases, that area has since dropped to 23,540, a decrease of just on 19 per cent. It is not necessary to go further in an endeavour to show the effect of monopolising the ore channels of the State. It does not pay the State to allow those people to get a monopoly of the ore channels. During that period the gold production has fallen by over 55 per cent. Those figures in themselves suffice to prove the need for amending the Mining Act. I approached the Minister with a view to getting a comprehensive Mining Act brought into existence. I urged him to refer the present Act to a select committee or a Royal Commission; or he could go into the Act himself. By reason of the unlimited jurisdiction which the Minister has under the existing enactment it is possible for one man to hold up miles of gold-producing country. In confirmation of that statement I may refer briefly to the position at Wiluna. I regret to have to say that the Mining Act prevented the leases there from being forced into production long ere this. It is pathetic that Parliament should meet year after year and grant sums of money for the administrative work of the Mines Department, whilst the Minister extends preferential treatment to persons who might well be behind the bars. Had I done some of the things which to-day are being carried on at Wiluna, I would have found myself behind the bars.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member's reference is not to a member of the House!

Mr. MARSHALL: Oh, no! I am referring to an individual who has flouted the mining laws of this State and has been encouraged in that line of conduct by the Minister for Mines, who had and has power to put an end to it. Ten years ago miners worked for a certain man in this State, and they have not yet received their wages. The man in question is still going about the streets of Perth. Thus it is plain that the Minister has not conscientiously administered the Mining Act. At Wiluna for the past ten years certain leases have been practically hung up. The company was directed mainly by Mr. Claude de Bernales. At that time the company intended to buy some outside properties in that neighbourhood, and this was done. They purchased a lease adjoining certain leases they were already holding. After paying a deposit upon that purchased lease, the man in question informed the employees that they would have to wait for their money until he had paid off the balance of the purchase price of that lease. I may mention that according to the reports of the Mines Department he had paid no rent. Then a discovery was made that the lease was not coupled up with the company's other leases, and certain prospectors applied for the forfeiture of the lease. It was stated in evidence that Mr. de Bernales' secretary or understrapper or under study, forgot to book the lease up with the others. Warden Crockett forfeited the lease, but the Minister for Mines upset the Warden's decision and imposed a fine. I mention these things in order to show what can be done under the Mining Act.

The CHAIRMAN: The Mining Act is not under discussion.

Mr. MARSHALL: Here is the Mining Act absolutely preventing the production of gold; and the object of these Estimates is to grant funds for the administrative expenses of the department which exists principally for promoting the production of gold. I claim I am quite in order.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was discussing the Mining Act. I wish the hon. member would keep to the Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am trying to show the Committee that the amount of money to be granted for the administration of the Mines Department might, so far as gold mining is concerned, be just as well wiped out, since it cannot be well spent under the existing Mining Act. That measure must be amended. However, I am also trying to show how the Minister for Mines allows particular individuals to hold up the gold mining industry. We find the Minister for Mines protecting Mr. de Bernales.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Does Mr. de Bernales still hold those leases?

Mr. MARSHALL: He holds the State as far as gold mining is concerned, apart from the Golden Mile. Up to this day he has never worked the leases in question. He

has re-pegged a lot of country because he is afraid that the mining measure passed here recently will compel him to comply with the mining regulations. While I have every respect for the cunning of Mr. de Bernales, I consider that he needs to be careful, because the people of Wiluna are more tired of him than the Mines Department is. Mr. de Bernales will have to keep going in order to hold these leases. Fancy men waiting for 10 years for their money! Some of them died without being paid. There are people in Wiluna who are prepared to put their money into these leases, and work them. I suggest that the Minister should no longer protect Mr. de Bernales as he has been doing.

The CHAIRMAN: In what way is he protecting him under these Estimates?

Mr. MARSHALL: I will give a complete history of his goings on.

The CHAIRMAN: Not under these Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: The money that is being devoted under these Estimates to the gold mining industry comes from the taxpayers of the State. If that money is to be wasted in protecting men like Mr. de Bernales it is time the representatives of the taxpayers intervened.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the specified item upon the Estimates that protects Mr. de Bernales?

Mr. MARSHALL: The position is covered generally.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must keep to the matter before the Chair.

Mr. MARSHALL: I cannot understand why a new member is not given the scope that other members are given, as will be seen from "Hansard," upon discussions of this nature. I can quote from the remarks of the gentleman who represented my electorate to show that he was given every latitude. I am prepared to produce "Hansard" to show that.

The CHAIRMAN: I have not yet ruled the hon. member out of order.

Mr. MARSHALL: I will show how this affects Mr. de Bernales. I have here the history of the Wiluna Gold Mines, Ltd., in liquidation, and will show how the money on the Estimates is being wasted. If I can do that I must be in order.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. MARSHALL: This is an extract from the evidence taken in connection with an application for the forfeiture of leases. An inquiry was instigated by the present Minister for Mines into the behaviour and goings on of this particular individual in Wiluna. I am going to read a couple of pages from that report, and the remainder of it will confirm what I shall have read.

The CHAIRMAN: Will that be laid on the Table?

Mr. MARSHALL: I would do that without any hesitation. It would be well worth looking at.

Mr. Sampson: Mr. de Bernales has shown great enterprise in developing the gold mining industry.

3 o'clock a.m.

Mr. MARSHALL: If he has I do not know of it. The history to which I refer is as follows:—

History of the Wiluna Gold Mines, Limited, In Liquidation.—This Company formed several years ago, was always looked upon as being mainly managed by Mr. Bernales, Messrs. Urquhart and Strauss acting as local managers. About this time a 10-head mill and other plant were purchased from the Western Machinery Company, Golden Age Lease in 1912. Mr. Bernales is the reputed head of this Company. At the same time the Wiluna Gold Mines purchased a three-quarter interest in the Happy Jack" Lease for £1,200

Mr. Troy: We might call them the "Happy Jack" Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: To continue—

The men working for the old company were informed that they would have to wait for their wages while the Happy Jack Lease was being paid for, a period of three months. They received post-dated cheques for their wages. About March, 1913, immediately after the Happy Jack lease had been paid for, the Company went into liquidation, Mr. Bernales being appointed liquidator. These debts are still owing, one dividend of 2s. 6d. having been paid. No transfer of the Happy Jack interests was made and an application for forfeiture was made by George Gayford. The Company's representative explained at the Warden's Court that their lawyer had overlooked to put this property into the liquidation; that is, it would have been automatically protected by the Supreme Court, to which leave to apply for forfeiture would have to be made. The Warden, under the circumstances, fined them £25. Application for leave to apply was afterwards made to the Court and refused, the applicants being put to large expense. A few tributers worked on various leases and a few men were at times employed, principally pulling down machinery. The latter part of 1917 the Company purchased the Happy Jack South Lease for £750; a crushing was taken out by the Company from the boundary of this and the Happy Jack Leases by three men. By May all work ceased. An application was made for forfeiture on the 20th May. The Registrar refused to take it, stating that the lease had been brought into liquidation and he could not take the application without the leave of the Supreme Court. The matter was brought before the Minister for Mines, who ordered an inquiry before Warden Crockett. He recommended forfeiture subject to Section 114 of the Companies Act. This was altered by the Minister to a fine of £50, the decision being given in Novem-

ber, 1919. Mr. Holman, our then member, was informed in writing by the Minister for Mines that the liquidator had been informed that the lease would have to be worked or exemption obtained, as the liquidation did not exempt them from the labour conditions. At this inquiry the company's representative held out every hope of the liquidation being quickly terminated. The company then immediately began to apply for exemption. Then, after 6½ years protection by the Supreme Court, they had in 1919 fourteen days' total exemption. In 1920 they had seven months 26 days total, 28 days partial, and 28 days concentration. In 1921 they had 14 days total, 28 days partial. This is in addition to the Christmas exemptions. As no work was being done on most of the leases between 15/2/21 and 22/2/21, two applications were made for forfeiture. The warden refused to hear them as the permission of the Supreme Court had not been obtained. At the March, 1920, application the company's representative stated that Mr. Bernales was in negotiation with a French company and was leaving for Europe to complete arrangements. At the September, 1920, hearing he stated he had received a letter from Mr. Bernales stating he had arranged for £10,000 to be put up by the syndicate to unwater the leases; on this and the Violet group owned by the Western Machinery Company, and if the reports of the syndicate's experts were satisfactory the balance of the money, £720,000, would be put up—the vendor taking shares. With so much capital the programme was terribly ambitious, and no one expected anything to materialise. Neither money nor experts have arrived and a further period of six months was just recently applied for as another company is supposed to be going to purchase these leases. The case of 202j is peculiar. This lease was purchased years after the company had been in liquidation. Previously it had been a regular producer, but since purchased by the Wiluna Gold Mines Limited, it shut down. Mr. Bernales is the reputed head in the Wiluna Gold Mines. He is also head of the Western Machinery Company. He is also liquidator of the Wiluna Gold Mines Ltd. A large amount of machinery from these mines has been consigned to the Kalgoorlie Foundry, of which Mr. Bernales is the reputed head. He, therefore, alternately sells this machinery to himself, from himself and back to himself. Since the company has been in liquidation, the fourth interest has been bought in the Happy Jack for £750, thus £1,450 has been found by a company in liquidation to purchase outside properties whilst their debts to the men are still unsettled. Meantime several of these men are dead.

[Mr. Angelo resumed the Chair.]

If any member cares to look through the evidence, he will find some fearful revela-

tions. This sort of thing has been detrimental to the industry and has been instrumental in holding up the gold production in this State. Unless Bernales is forced to work these leases, it is useless for us to pass large votes for the assistance of the mining industry. We should not allow the established ore-hearing channels of this State to be held up in such a disgraceful manner as Claude de Bernales has held up the three-mile line at Wiluna. This state of affairs is not restricted to Wiluna. It applies to Kookynie and Meekatharra and most likely to Kalgoorlie and other centres, and no doubt the same individual is responsible. The Minister should stand up to Bernales and tell him to work his leases or get out. The people of the country are gaining the impression that this man is running the Mines Department, and considerable argument is necessary to convince them to the contrary. I trust that I will not have to bring this matter up again when next year's Estimates are being dealt with. It must be recognised that the mining industry is not nearly so fortunately circumstanced as the agricultural industry. The gold-mining industry is staggering under the burden of taxation both direct and indirect. There is no doubt that the heavy freights are having an effect on the industry as detrimental as any other burden under which it is labouring. We have heard a lot about the co-ordination and co-operation of departments, but it seems to me that the gold-mining industry is not getting a fair go. We are voting large sums of money for administrative purposes and at the same time are imposing staggering embargoes which the industry can ill afford to bear. The question of water at Mt. Magnet has been referred to. It is remarkable that the mining industry should be singled out to pay a special and very heavy tax on water. In Meekatharra the mines are paying no less than 5s. 6d. per thousand gallons for all water used, even for pumping out their residues. This is an unfair charge for water for this purpose. Yet, all requests to the Minister controlling the department are treated with contempt. The Minister claims that it is not possible to favour the mining industry by granting water at a reduced price. He argues that the industry must pay for its supplies. It is extraordinary how many restrictions are imposed in connection with the supply of water. The mines are not free to use 10,000 or 100,000 gallons, as the case may be; the department lays down that they must pay for so much water at a certain price, irrespective of whether they use that quantity. This is a great hardship. When I mention that the water bill for a 15-head mine runs into £300 to £350 a month, members will get some idea of the burden placed on the industry. While the industry was shouldering these staggering burdens, the Minister for Works was able to relieve the position at Harvey by writing off a sum of £11,000 in one act. It is not fair that the mining industry should be singled out for such harsh treatment. I contend it

is the most important industry in the State. I sometimes feel somewhat of a hypocrite for backing the industry up, because I feel that if we rubbed it right out there would not be half the misery, agony and trouble which exists at the present time. However, if the principle of capitalism is to continue, the gold production of the State must be carried on. But the industry should be treated more equitably by the Government. The greatest burdens which the industry has to bear are those inflicted by the Government. By reducing fares, freights and water charges, and lending the industry somewhat the same assistance as is granted to the agricultural industry, the Government would be aiding materially in restoring the industry. Superphosphate for farmers is carried at special rates and wheat is carried at special rates. Wherever the Government can possibly lend assistance to the important industries of the State, such assistance should be given and should not be grudged. I have nothing to say against the system of helping the farmers, but I do say that all the industries of this State should be protected and treated equitably by the administration. I only ask for the gold-mining industry assistance somewhat similar to that meted out to the other industries. Another important factor to be borne in mind when considering these disabilities is the unattractiveness of the mining industry. It is needless for me to traverse at any length that particular aspect, because the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Boyland) has drawn a pathetic picture of the consequences of following occupations in connection with gold mining. Men have not a chance of coming out of that industry in a decent condition of health. A young man who goes into the mines and works there for any lengthy period has confronting him the almost certainty that he will come out of the mines a mass of skin and bone simply hanging together, making him a fit patient to end his days at the Wooroloo Sanatorium. No man can go into the mines and work there with safety and have any hope of coming out a healthy man. We have tried to get certain concessions from the Government in the interests of these men. In the Murchison we tried to get assistance from the Government regarding water supplies so that the miners there could grow their own vegetables, make their homes attractive, and give them some little encouragement to stay in the district. Unfortunately, we find that on every occasion when we endeavour to get anything at all from the department to assist in keeping the mining industry in existence, our application is treated with contempt. I am sorry to have to state that, but it is a fact. I am in accord with the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Boyland) in the views he has expressed, and the sooner the Mines Department spend money in appointing a medical man to examine the miners every six months or so, the better it will be for all concerned. As soon as a miner shows signs of having contracted tuberculosis, he should be taken away from the mines and placed on the land. If the Government se-

cured land and cut it up into small areas for grazing or pastoral purposes, we could place these men on holdings and their work would be productive, and instead of failing in health, they would prove to be an asset to the community as a whole. Under the existing conditions, men suffering from miners' complaint and tuberculosis generally have to live in the same premises as healthy men, because in such centres these men must come in contact with one another, either in the mines or in their homes. The direct consequence of this is that we are getting our outback centres loaded up with tuberculosis. The Government should resume some of the fine lands adjacent to the railway lines in the south-western portion of the State, and if they cut up that land into blocks which would enable a man to carry on and support his wife and family, it would be in the interests of all concerned. The blocks should be sufficiently large to guarantee a man a good living. No such man should be provided with an area of land in excess of his requirements. If a scheme such as that I have suggested could be put into operation, the miners, on developing this serious complaint, could be taken away from their unhealthy occupation and given a chance to regain their health under more advantageous conditions. If more of Western Australia were cut up into smaller holdings—in my opinion, the whole of the State is held up by monopolies—it would have a splendid effect. It would result in the expansion of industry and keep people in the country districts. If some of these holdings were provided in the mining areas, it would tend to keep men who have been engaged in the mining industry still interested in it. We do not know exactly where new goldfields are to be found. We do not know where the next Kalgoorlie or the next Broken Hill will be discovered. I urge the Government to take all the necessary steps to provide the miners with this opportunity and to co-ordinate the efforts of the different departments so that these unfortunate men may look forward to reaping some sort of reward and better health. It will result in an improvement in the general conditions and add to the production of wealth in Western Australia. I trust the Mines Department will make better use of the funds provided in the Estimates this year than they did last year. If that should prove to be the case, there is little doubt but that the industry will progress. A good case was put up by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) regarding the monopolies that exist in Western Australia. We find the same tendency in connection with the mining industry, the existing legislation permitting monopolies to be created. I want to enter an emphatic protest, in common with the member for Pilbara, regarding the area which a man is permitted to hold under the existing laws, an area which results almost in a monopoly. It appears to me that we have done little else than protect some individual or give privileges to others here, there and everywhere. The passing of the Mines Estimates is apparently for the purpose of help-

ing a few people along the road to prosperity. That is not the real function of Parliament. We should pass such a vote for the purpose of expanding and assisting the mining industry. Such a result is utterly impossible unless the Minister for Mines takes it upon himself to introduce legislation to force people to work their own leases, or else to forfeit them. I have already pointed out the effect of the Mining Act upon the industry. If something more tangible, like the Mining Act of 1895, under which the area was limited to a very small extent, is not provided, it goes without saying that a certain amount of the wealth of the State will continue to be hung up. No member of this Chamber would advocate wealth being hung up. We should provide for men having an opportunity of getting a reasonable living under adverse circumstances, as well as under normal conditions. That is all the men should be entitled to ask for. That applies to other industries as well. No mining company or individual can work a lease comprising 96 acres. If an ore channel of any payable character exists, it stands to reason that a large proportion of it will be held up by the one company because they will not be able to operate over the whole lease, and a large proportion of it will have to lie idle. This aspect was dealt with by the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) when he was speaking on the Mining Act Amendment Bill. It is time we got back to such legislation as was in vogue when our gold production was at its height. It is a coincidence that that production started to decline in 1904, and it was not until the goldfields Ministry went into office in 1911 that the reduction ceased and things improved until they left office in 1916. I trust hon. members will take a serious view of the position of the mining industry, which, unless something drastic be done, will go out of existence. Large sums of money are being spent on, but not to the benefit of, the industry, which would again prosper if the necessary attention and assistance were given to it. I hope the area of the oil prospecting leases will be reduced, and that the Minister will see to it that the prospectors who go out to develop that industry and the mining industry will have only so much land as they can properly work. It is absurd that four persons should have an area of thousands of miles. The money we vote is being unwisely spent. Men go out and discover new goldfields, and immediately a whole crowd, not bona fide prospectors, but of motor car prospectors, rush out and take up all the country for miles around without any intention of working it. The Act allows them to hold their areas for at least three months, to the prejudice of the real prospector with the camels. There is a wide difference between the two men. One is a mere exploiter, whereas the other is a bona fide worker. The existing economic conditions are all against the bona fide man. The Government furnish him with an equipment and with £1 per week sus-

tenance, a sum which will not keep many stomachs full. In consequence the bona fide prospector cannot afford to wait until the exploiters are forced off the ground and an opening made for him. Under the existing practice the whole line of reef is decided on the original discovery. If it happens that there is a barren zone where the original discovery was made and the bona fide prospectors touch this, they will report that the values have petered out. Then, unfortunately, the whole line is promptly deserted. In scores of cases on the Murchison, one part of the line of reef will contain valuable ore, while a few feet away there is not a colour to be found. The speculators grab the land in order to exploit the proposition. If they were forced to either work it or get out, the bona fide prospector could step in. The bona fide man does not wait to see the result of the original discovery, but puts in his pegs, applies for his lease and straightaway bucks in. It is high time the money voted here should be more wisely spent. I was astonished to hear the Minister announce to-night that a prospectors' board had been appointed. Like the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) I do not approve of the personnel of that board. It is extraordinary that the Minister should have appointed such a board, consisting wholly of men not directly representative of the industry. I venture to predict that their little efforts will not be attended with much success. Experienced men are needed in the various industries, if success is to be achieved. There is no industry in the State requiring expert knowledge more urgently than does the mining industry at the present time. The board to adjudicate upon who shall be regarded as being bona fide inspectors can hardly be sufficiently conversant with the conditions of the gold mining industry to be able to promote its expansion. Therefore, I, like the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy), protest against the personnel of the board. As regards the pound for pound subsidy—though I do not like making this statement—I cannot approve of the tactics adopted by the Mines Department. Some months ago a mining conference was held at Mt. Magnet, the member for the district being present. The conference was one between the present Minister for Mines and the Murchison Prospectors' Association. It was mooted that the department should give more liberal assistance to the industry. The Minister expressed his readiness to subsidise any syndicate or company formed locally for the purpose of the expansion of gold mining in the district. He said he was ready to spend a pound for every pound the syndicate or company might spend. Somewhat buoyed up by the prospect of having to pay only half the cost involved in examining the surrounding country, the various residents proceeded to form a syndicate. I believe there are more bona fide prospectors on the Murchison than in any other district of this State. I know there are a great many genuine prospectors throughout the State; but the majority of them are, I

believe, to be found on the Murchison. A syndicate was formed at Meekatharra, and carried on; but as soon as these people started operations they discovered that the business was not going to be as simple as at first they had thought. They had believed that the department merely wanted a guarantee as regards the pound for pound arrangement. They negotiated with the department as to whether the promise made by the Minister, namely, to assist the prospectors, was going to be fulfilled. Eventually the syndicate came to the conclusion that they had better wait, and have another conference with the Minister when that hon. gentleman was visiting Nallan. The Minister, while prepared to pay the pound for pound, still held out that certain functions would have to be performed by the syndicate before the Government could make an advance. The syndicate had believed that if they performed a half of what they said they would do—the estimated total cost of the work was £300—the Government would likewise put up the cost of their half, which would mean that £300 would be available. The Meekatharra syndicate took the Minister at his word, and outlined the work they intended to do. They submitted an estimate of the cost, and this was examined by the inspector of mines in accordance with the stipulation of the Minister. The syndicate spent £68 on the work, believing that they would get £68 from the Government by way of subsidy. However, the Government backed out and put up a different argument altogether. Here is a letter from the Mines Department to the syndicate—

In reply to your letter dated 24th ultimo, I beg to inform you that the Hon. Minister has approved of assistance up to £150 on the basis of pound for pound spent by you at such price per foot, not exceeding half cost, as may be fixed from time to time by the inspector of mines as a reasonable estimate of half cost of the work carried out. In your communication you request that an amount equal to that at your credit in the bank be paid in, but I would point out that this is not the method by which advances are made by the department. Such is by a recoup of expenditure proved by signed wages sheets, and receipts for supplies, which have to be forwarded to this office through the inspector of mines. Immediately on their coming to hand, arrangements will be made for payment of the amount involved to your credit, until the total amount has been expended.

The syndicate believed that after furnishing the Mines Department with evidence that the syndicate had expended a total of £68 19s. 10d. in prospecting work, a remittance of £68 19s. 10d. would reach them from the Mines Department; but they discovered that that was not the departmental system. The department claimed that if they paid one-half of that amount of £68 odd, that would be a pound for pound subsidy. I contend that

that is not the way prospectors should be treated. Meantime, Mr. Chairman, I draw your attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. MARSHALL: The department on this occasion practically committed a breach of contract with the gold-mining syndicate in regard to the pound for pound subsidy. If on an agreement with the department I spent £50, an equal sum should be placed on the Estimates under that pound for pound scheme. Under the present system if one spends £50 and the estimated cost of the work is £100, the Government only pay £25. The result is that one has to find more capital to meet the cost of the work. That was so in the case of the syndicate whose operations were endorsed by the inspector of the department after examination, and whose report was backed up by the department. I am sorry so little is allowed on the Estimates for assistance to bona fide prospectors. It is a crying shame that the Government cannot be persuaded to assist the industry in a greater measure than they are doing at present. Much more liberal assistance is offered to other industries. The mining industry, through direct and indirect taxation, is practically instrumental in providing the State Treasury with a great amount of its revenue. One wonders whether the Government intend during their reign to do anything at all in this matter. The Minister should certainly give more liberal allowances to prospectors, with a view to developing the industry. In pre-war days £1 a week was given by way of sustenance allowance to prospectors, but in these days when the cost of living is so much greater and the purchasing power of the sovereign so much less, the allowance is cut down. Reference has been made to the monopolies that have been given in the case of oil licenses. We allow prospectors a small amount of assistance and equipment in order to prospect for oil, and, on the other hand, we bring in legislation to prevent them from prospecting. I trust that the Minister on his return from the Dutch East Indies, will cancel the contracts that have been made in connection with these large areas that have been given under license, so as to allow for these areas being properly prospected. We must endeavour to realise the wealth of the State and, if the Minister for Mines will not take steps to this end, we must force him. This state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue much longer. On the Minister's return, I hope he will review the position as it applies not only to oil but to mining as a whole, and next year I trust there will be a more liberal vote for the encouragement of the industry.

This concluded the general debate on the Mines Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £179,881.

Item—Commissioner, £750:

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I wish to direct the attention of the Minister to the small salary being paid to the Commissioner of Police. His is a very responsible position, and I understand this salary has ruled during the last 25 years. Other officers in the service have had their salaries raised, and something should be done for the Commissioner. Many civil servants occupying inferior positions are receiving higher salaries. The Government Printer, the Government Geologist, the Assistant Public Service Commissioner, and the Government Bacteriologist, each receive £804, and the Medical Inspector of Schools also gets more than the Commissioner of Police. I trust the Minister will consider this matter and give the Commissioner a reasonable remuneration.

Mr. TEESDALE: I support the remarks of the member for North Perth. This salary is altogether out of proportion to the onerous duties of the position. There is something inconsistent when the Rabbit Inspector receives a salary equal to that of the Commissioner of Police. This is one of the important positions in the State. The Commissioner is responsible for a very large department and is one of the few officers who, in certain circumstances, remained loyal to the Government. I trust that, if possible, he will be given a salary commensurate with the importance of his office.

Item—Constabulary, 10s. 6d. per day to 19s. per day, £114,113:

Mr. SAMPSON: Since the police assumed control of the traffic a considerable improvement has taken place. There has been an improvement also with regard to all street matters. We are indebted to the police for the collection of motor fees. The Commissioner now handles a much larger sum of money than previously. Formerly there were many motor vehicles which were not licensed, and we should express our appreciation of the police for having improved the position in this respect. I regret that it is not possible to give greater police protection to some of our country districts. In the hills districts the constables have to control very extensive areas, and I look forward to the time when more adequate protection can be provided.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I agree that the control of traffic has been greatly improved under the police supervision, but I fear that the department has not made a sufficiently serious effort to regulate the pedestrian traffic in the congested centre of the city. In the area bounded by Barrack and William-streets and Hay and Wellington-streets, the pedestrian traffic is chaotic.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Should not the municipal council do that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think it is the duty of the police. The people had been accustomed through long years to keep to a certain side of the footpath and when the alteration was made persistent effort extending over

months was required to get the people trained to observe the new rule.

Mr. Mann: That is being done.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But not sufficiently. I was in Sydney when the change-over was made there. Our department has been content to put notice boards bearing the words "Keep to the left" at the corners of the streets, but they are in such a position that four-fifths of the people do not see them. In Sydney the notices were hung from verandahs immediately above the centre of the footpaths and at a height of only about 7ft. 6in., where pedestrians could not fail to see them. In addition, constables were specially detailed at frequent intervals to direct the people until they were trained to observe the new rule. After about a fortnight there, the people became accustomed to the new system. It is totally different here, and at the present moment it is almost impossible to go 20 yards along the footpath in the central portion of the city area, without having to take to the roadway.

Mr. Teesdale: It is worse than it was before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Much worse. It is confusion worse confounded. It should only require a few extra constables to be detailed for traffic work for two or three weeks, and the difficulty should be overcome. I hope this matter will be brought under the notice of the Minister so that improvements may be effected.

Mr. MANN: I am in a position to know that the Commissioner of Police has already taken this matter in hand. He has a sergeant who has been taken away from general duty and been placed in charge of a number of men who are endeavouring to educate the people regarding the new pedestrian by-laws. The work of getting the people accustomed to the new condition of affairs will take some little time. It might be an improvement if the notices were displayed as in Sydney.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are so conspicuous there that you cannot help seeing them.

Mr. MANN: It should be remembered that we have only a limited force in Western Australia.

This completed the Estimates of the Department of Mines, Forests, and Police.

Department of Minister for Justice (Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Minister); the Premier, Hon. Sir James Mitchell, in charge of the Vote.

Vote—Minister for Justice, £81,198:

[Mr. Stubbs took the Chair.]

Item, Chief Electoral Officer, £528:

Mr. BOYLAND: We have on record in the "West Australian," the fact that the amalgamation of the State and Federal Taxation Departments has not only resulted in a saving of £20,000 but a number of other amounts as well. We have had statements made by hon. members from time to time

that the Electoral Department is not working satisfactorily in Western Australia on account of the starvation funds at the department's disposal. We talk of our shortage of money and the necessity for economy, and seeing that we can save more than £20,000 in the amalgamation of the State and Federal Taxation Departments, the point arises as to whether there should not be a similar amalgamation of the State and Federal Electoral Departments. The state of the rolls in the past has been something awful. On a previous occasion I mentioned that after the rolls had been cleaned up in one province, it was found that the names of 550 voters had to be deleted. The Minister for Works stated that something should happen in connection with the Electoral Department to alter this state of affairs. I think these items could well be cut out and an amalgamation effected. I know the Chief Electoral Officer is not responsible for the position because he has to depend upon clerks of courts and other officials for the information necessary to compile the rolls. These officials have so much to do that they cannot concentrate on electoral work, and the effect is seen in the Electoral Department. The Federal Electoral Department is up to date in my own district and the Federal officers seem to know all about the movements of people and are active in prosecuting those who fail to enrol. The Government would be well advised to consider this aspect, particularly in view of the fact that complaints are made from both sides of the Chamber.

Mr. MONEY: I endorse the remarks of the member for Kalgoorlie. A lot of confusion would be avoided if the qualifications for one roll were sufficient to guarantee enrolment on the other roll. The amalgamation could be effected and the department could do the rest. When an elector has lodged a claim with one department, and it is a valid one, that elector should be placed on the other roll as well.

The Premier: I agree with that.

4 o'clock a.m.

Mr. A. Thomson: Are the Government taking any steps in connection with this matter?

The PREMIER: We have been looking into this matter for some time past. It is a difficult question to deal with. As a matter of fact, the expenditure in connection with the State Electoral Department is not large, but it is essential that that department should be kept in order. The rolls are not in the condition that they should be.

Item, Registration of Titles and Deeds, £636:

Mr. MONEY: I am not certain that the Government are fully aware of the want of space and added safety in connection with the Titles Office.

The Premier: Yes, the Government fully recognise the position and it is receiving attention now.

Mr. MONEY: This is a very important matter because the whole of the titles belonging to the people of Western Australia are concentrated in the present office and the condition of affairs there is one of danger.

The Premier: Increased accommodation is being provided now.

Item, Leave on retirement of officers, £1,750:

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: This seems to be a very large amount for leave to officers on retirement.

The PREMIER: More officers have been retiring this year than, perhaps, at any other time before. That in itself explains the greater part of the increase.

Vote put and passed.

This completed the Estimates of the Minister for Justice.

Department of Colonial Secretary (Hon. F. T. Broun, Minister).

Votes—Office of Colonial Secretary, £12,572; Aborigines, £5,927—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned 4.8 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 24th November, 1896.

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

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many returned soldiers have been settled under the soldiers' settlement scheme in the following districts:—Quellageting, Hindmarsh, Yorkkraine, North