

ADJOURNMENT—CLOSE OF SESSION.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.15]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, the 8th February.

The intention of the Government is that Parliament shall be prorogued by proclamation. In submitting this motion I desire to thank hon. members for their extreme courtesy and kindness to me during what has been a particularly arduous session. I cannot pretend that I am altogether pleased with all the decisions of this House, but it is not for me to question the wisdom or judgment of this Chamber. Members, however, have treated me personally most kindly, and I am particularly grateful to them for the manner in which they have assisted in the completion of the business of the session. I deeply regret it was necessary to recall members to the House after Christmas, but I trust the vacation before us will be more keenly enjoyed by them now that it is practically upon them. To you, Mr. President, I wish a pleasant holiday now that you will be able to rest from your labours. I hope we shall see you back amongst us in full health and strength.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [3.17]: I, with other members in this House, desire to express my thanks to the Leader of the House for the courteous manner in which he has met the requirements of members, and the generous manner in which he has helped every one of us during this most trying session. I hope that he will be able to enjoy some relaxation from his arduous duties. I wish him good health and that he may enjoy long life, happiness and prosperity. I also endorse the words of the Leader of the House in hoping that when we meet again we shall see you, Mr. President, amongst us in full health and vigour.

The PRESIDENT: I have much pleasure in acknowledging the kind remarks of the Leader of the House, and the Chairman of Committees. I also want to add my thanks to members generally for the assistance they have given to me in this my first term as President. They have helped me greatly in my task of carrying out the duties of the House, in the observance of the Standing Orders, and in upholding the dignity of the high office I have the privilege of occupying. We have had a satisfactory session. We have had one or two occasions when some of us have differed in our opinions, but the session generally has been a most pleasant one. I hope member will enjoy their well-earned holiday.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.19 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 1st February, 1923.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: OKES-DURACK OIL LICENSE.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [2.35]: I would like to make a personal explanation. During the last sitting of the House, I made the statement that the Minister for the North-West and Mr. G. Miles, M.L.C., were interested in the Okes-Durack oil license. I have the assurance of the Premier that Mr. Colebatch is not interested and the assurance of Mr. Miles himself that he is not interested. I regret that I was misled. I made the statement believing it to be true. I now express regret for having made the statement, accepting their denials without reservation.

QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, YARRAMONY EASTWARD.

Mr. HARRISON asked the Premier: 1, Is it his intention to introduce a Bill for the construction of a railway from Yarramony eastward to serve the districts of Yorkrakine, North Bannock, etc., this session? 2, If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Owing to the survey not being completed it is not possible to introduce the Bill this session.

It will be introduced as soon as the survey is completed.

QUESTION—PEMBERTON TOWNSITE.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, Has he given consideration to the petition presented by Pemberton residents regarding proclaiming the townsite? 2, If so, will he give a definite reply when effect will be given to the request as the petitioners are very anxious about the matter?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, There are difficulties in the way, but the matter is receiving attention.

QUESTION—COAL INSPECTOR'S APPOINTMENT, PAPERS.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Railways: Is it his intention to lay all the papers in connection with the appointment of Assistant Coal Inspector Thomson on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: It was not so intended but if the hon. member will move in this direction there will be no objection to laying them on the Table.

BILL—CLAREMONT AND PERTH ROAD DISTRICTS RATES.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [2.41] in moving the second reading said: I will briefly give members the reasons for submitting this Bill, and I hope they will see that there is justification for bringing it forward. In August, 1921, the Claremont Road Board levied a general rate of 3d. in the pound for the district. In the east ward, which included Nedlands, there was necessity for extra money being expended owing to the special requirements of that particular ward. The board held a meeting and passed the rate. They went through the necessary formalities but omitted, practically through ignorance, to comply with the exact procedure. It was necessary to obtain the assent of the Minister for the time being. They found out their error next day. At that time I, as the Minister concerned, was ill in bed and could not be approached. Instead of applying to the department to have the matter dealt with by the Acting Minister, the board decided to let the matter stand over until I was well enough to return to the office. When I returned, the matter came before me and the assent was duly given. It appears, however, that this course does not come exactly within the four corners of the legal position under the Act. It is stated that the area should have been declared prior to the levying of the rate, and that the application for such Ministerial assent should have

been made before this had been done. Both actions were taken at the same meeting and were dealt with in the same communication. There is no doubt that the money so raised has been applied for the purposes for which the extra rate was struck. As members well know, wherever we go there are some people who like to take points whenever possible. There are certain ratepayers in the ward affected who know about this point and they have refused to pay the rate although they are benefiting by the expenditure which was levied in good faith, although not strictly in accordance with legal procedure. I ask the House to consider the special circumstances and to agree to the Bill which will validate the board's actions. I know the House has expressed opinions several times during the last few years about validating Bills, and that the House should be very careful in dealing with such legislation. I am convinced that the application on this occasion is bona fide, and I ask the House to assent to this portion of the Bill. As to the Perth Road Board, they are in a peculiar position. From about 1914 onwards the board have been levying rates to meet their liabilities in respect of loans. They have had to estimate each year what they had reason to believe would be the amount required. It appears they over-estimated the amount, and therefore have had a surplus. According to law, that surplus should have been used for loan redemption. However, it did not occur to those gentlemen that that was the correct course. Recently a close audit revealed the position. Immediately the board learned of that position, they asked me to help them out. The money has been used to the benefit of the district, although not in a strictly legal way. It is now asked that by means of the Bill the application of small credit balances on loan account to administrative and similar costs should be validated, so that the board may overcome the difficulty of satisfactorily adjusting their accounts. The board have not attempted to dispute the position, but they claim that they have acted bona fide. I think the House should help them out of their difficulty. I have been closely in touch with the Perth Road Board for the past six years, and have always found them to act honourably and in straightforward manner. Moreover, on going over the work of the board, I am of the opinion that the ratepayers are fortunate in their representatives on that board. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. J. THOMSON (Claremont) [2.48]: I have pleasure in supporting the motion. It is not often that the Minister for Works and I are in agreement, but if I were much longer in the House, I might be found more often supporting the Minister, at all events, in such cases as this.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [2.49]: The Minister said that mem-

bers are chary of accepting validating Bills. Local authorities gratuitously give a great deal of time and attention to their work, and when occasionally they make an error, it is the duty of Parliament to help them out of their difficulty. Local authorities invariably try to keep down the cost of governing. Very few of them aim at increasing the charges on ratepayers; in fact, generally speaking, they keep their rates too low. Of recent years a number of local authorities have been blamed because they have found it necessary to increase the rates. For years the general rating of local authorities, more particularly if municipalities, could not exceed 1s. 6d. in the pound. During that period many of them were getting pound for pound subsidies from the Government, and some as much as £1 2s. 6d. per pound, while road boards, in comparison with the rates they struck, received subsidies even higher. To-day the local authorities are allowed to charge up to 2s. 6d. in the pound. When we take into consideration the increased cost of material, increased wages and the loss of Government subsidies, we begin to realise that even at 2s. 6d. the municipalities are not in as good a position as they were when 1s. 6d. was the maximum. Under the existing laws many of them are finding great difficulty in carrying out necessary works with satisfaction to the ratepayers and to themselves. From what I see of the Bill, it appears the ratepayers of a certain ward in Claremont demanded the execution of special work in that ward. The road board agreed that the special work should be carried out. The error they made was not in consulting the Minister before the rate was struck. That was their only error. It is true, as the Minister says, there are in every municipality a few for ever on the look out for points of this sort with a view to making things difficult for the local authority. I think the Government have done wisely in bringing down the Bill. As for the Perth Road Board, I do not see how we can complain of their doing what we have done ourselves in respect of the goldfields water supply. Had we kept on paying in to that sinking fund, we should have had £500,000 or £600,000 more than necessary to meet the liability. As soon as the Government learned that, they ceased paying in. The road board, on the other hand, maintained their payments, and so have had a surplus, which has been expended to the benefit of the district. Although it has not been used for loan redemption purposes, in all probability the use to which it has been put will obviate the necessity for raising a further loan for carrying out essential works. I will support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

DISCHARGE OF ORDERS.

On motion by the Premier the following Orders of the Day were discharged from the notice Paper—

Noxious Weeds Bill.

Industries Assistance Board, report of select committee.

Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment Bill.

Motion by Mr. Underwood—"That in order to encourage prospecting for mineral oil, this clause is of opinion that the Minister for Mines, in pursuance of the powers conferred upon him by Section 7 of "The Mining Act Amendment Act, 1920," should cancel all prospecting licenses which are not being efficiently worked, and that in future no prospecting license shall be granted for an area greater than 1,000 square miles."

Game Act, disallowance of regulations.

Report of select committee on the retirement from the Public Service of Mr. Carl Leschen.

Street Betting Bill.

City of Perth Bill.

BILL—INTERPRETATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Bill defeated.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the previous day of the adjourned debate on the second reading.

Question—put and negatived; the Bill defeated.

RESOLUTION—COMMONWEALTH CONSTITUTION.

Message from the Council requesting the concurrence of the Assembly in the following resolution now considered—

"That in the opinion of this House the Premier should communicate with the Commonwealth and State Governments, and urge the summoning of a constitutional convention to consider the amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution," and desires the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly thereto:

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [3.2]: This resolution is really a natural consequence of an action taken in this House in the early part of last session. Although the first suggestion of the federation of the various colonies of Australia and New Zealand was in 1870, the first convention was not held until the 22nd March, 1897, in Adelaide, and the Commonwealth was not really established by proclamation until the 1st January, 1901.

Hon. W. C. Angwin called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. ANGELO: In 1900 the opinion of people in Western Australia was divided as to whether the State should join in Federation.

Mr. Harrison: The goldfields demanded separation.

Mr. ANGELO: There was then a good solid opposition to Federation. The Premier of that day, the late Lord Forrest, was until almost the last moment an opponent of Federation. We understand the reason why he changed that opinion was that the goldfields people, a great many of whom had come from the other side, had sent a petition to the British Government urging that Western Australia should join in Federation, and failing that, that the goldfields should be separated from Western Australia. We are told on good authority it was due to a private message from the British Government to the late Lord Forrest that he changed his opinion. After a good deal of opposition, the State joined in Federation, but New Zealand, constituted very much as we are, as far as distance from the proposed capital was concerned, did not join in. We are almost as far from the seat of capital to-day as is New Zealand. Our Customs and Excise and payments of bounties were transferred to Federal control on the 1st January, 1901. The post office, telegraphs, and telephones, and also defence, were transferred on the 1st March, 1901. Other activities of government were transferred later on. As the years went on, we in Western Australia began to realise that Federation was not the great blessing that many of those who had advocated it endeavoured to make us believe. We began to realise the serious effect it was having upon our financial position as well as in many other directions. Some five or six years ago an agitation arose in this House against our treatment by the Federal Government. I moved in 1918 that steps should be taken to ascertain what effect Federation had had upon this State. The then Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy, promised to give the House an opportunity of debating the question, but that opportunity was never given. About that time the Premier went to Victoria to attend the Premiers' Conference. Those present at the conference brought before it the disadvantages under which Western Australia was suffering. The Prime Minister of Australia was present. We are told, that the representatives of the States did not get much satisfaction from him. The Prime Minister promised that as soon as Federation had been in force for 20 years, namely, in 1921, a convention of the various States would be called to review the Constitution and to frame any amendments they might consider necessary to that Constitution. The resolution of the Council now before this House follows on the action taken in this House on the 7th September, 1921. A motion was then moved here to this effect—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable in view of the contemplated convention, to review the Federal Constitution

that a joint select committee of both Houses of the Western Australian Parliament be appointed to inquire as to the effect the Federal compact has had upon the finances and industries of Western Australia, and to advise as to what amendments of the Constitution are desirable in the interests of the State.

That was carried unanimously, on the 15th September, after being debated on two evenings. It was then sent to the Council and met with their approval, and the joint select committee was appointed. About this time I got into communication with members of Parliament in Tasmania, South Australia and Queensland suggesting that they might take a similar action in their respective Parliaments. I notice from the "Hansards" of those Parliaments that almost similar action to ours was taken in those States. The suggestion was to hold a preliminary conference of delegates from the smaller States to prepare what we considered suitable amendments to put before the convention of all the States of the Commonwealth, to be held later on. The select committee was appointed and, thanks to the present Premier, Mr. Owen, then Under Treasurer, was placed at the disposal of that select committee to act as financial adviser. Mr. Owen for months has spent practically the whole of his time delving into this question. It is only those who have had the privilege of seeing his work, who realise the immense amount of literature and different accounts and proceedings he has had to go through to work up his report for the select committee. Unfortunately, soon after the other small States and ourselves had started to get to work, an announcement was made by the Prime Minister that no convention would be held. It is very significant that this should have followed almost immediately after the announcement appearing in the various papers of the intention of the smaller States to inquire into the effects of Federation. The Prime Minister's suggestion was that the amendments of the Constitution could be considered by the Federal Parliament, the very people of whose treatment we were complaining, and that some amendment of the Constitution could be made as a result of the recommendations of that body. The select committee here was afterwards changed into a Royal Commission, but as a result of the Prime Minister's announcement there was no need to urgently press forward with their labours. We marked time until Mr. Owen had completed his labours, and we are now waiting to see what action is necessary before preparing the class of evidence we require in addition to Mr. Owen's report. If this motion is carried the Royal Commission will take whatever evidence is considered necessary to complete their report. I consider that this document should be looked upon as the brief that should be handed to our delegates who will be appointed to attend the convention and watch the interests of Western Australia. It is better that a case should

be made out in the form of a brief for the delegates, instead of their being obliged to discuss matters over there without first hand or expert knowledge such as would be contained in Mr. Owen's report and other evidence. I have some suggestions to put forward as to why it is desirable to furnish evidence of the position. These are briefly the arguments I used when moving my motion on the 7th September, 1921. I consider—

1. There has been an undesirable encroachment by the Federal authorities upon State rights by the imposition of Federal taxation.

2. The States voluntarily handed to the Commonwealth the best form of revenue, namely the Customs and Excise, and retained the largest non-paying services such as education, justice, medical, health, lunacy, and water supply.

3. Federation has imposed a loss of over £10,000,000 upon this State.

These and the following arguments I used on the last occasion when I spoke on the subject. I am going to refer to Mr. Owen's report later to show that these figures have not been exaggerated.

4. I considered that the extension and development of secondary industries in this State has been made almost impossible.

5. The establishment of the Commonwealth Savings Bank through the medium of the post offices, was an unfair procedure and an invasion of State rights in that the Federal authorities have virtually commandeered the good-will worked up for many years by the State institution.

6. The establishment of the Commonwealth Bank with sole power to issue notes was a forcible creation of a monopoly unnecessary and unjust.

I have read some of the debates which took place during the progress of the Federal Convention and it is clearly set out that it was never contemplated that the Commonwealth Savings Bank would enter into competition with the State Savings Bank. Western Australia, up to the present time, would have saved no less than £351,000 in interest alone if the Commonwealth Savings Bank had not been established in opposition to ours.

7. The principle that where the laws of the Commonwealth and of the State clash, the Federal laws shall prevail, is inconsistent with the idea of the Federation of sovereign States.

8. That whilst the expenditure of the Federal Government was estimated at less than one million pounds per annum before Federation, it amounted to over 50 millions last year.

9. There has been gross extravagance in Federal administration.

10. Western Australia was asked to develop her own northern territory whilst contributing to the maintenance of the Northern Territory.

Investigations which I have made show that our quota towards the development of the Northern Territory already amounts to over £400,000, and I contend that that amount might with greater advantage have been spent in the development of our own North-West.

11. That by passing the Surplus Revenue Act the Federal Government repudiated the Federal contract.

There have been two alterations in the distribution of surplus revenue—customs and excise—to this State. Under the method laid down by the framers of the Constitution, a method which was considered to be just and equitable at the time Federation was entered upon and for five years afterwards, this State received no less than £5 5s. 7d. per head. In the second period of five years, the amount fell to £2 19s. 11d. per head, whereas after the second alteration was made we have been receiving only £1 16s. 8d. per head. To-day Victoria is receiving only 6s. 8d. per head per annum less than she received when Federation was inaugurated, whilst we receive no less than £3 14s. per head less. This shows how unfairly we have been treated as compared with Victoria.

12. The Federal Government have practically ruined the State's base metal industry.

That, of course, was largely applicable during the period of the war.

Mr. Chesson: The embargo has now been lifted.

Mr. ANGELO: These are points which I made nearly two years ago. The unfair treatment we received during that time has never been rectified, and we are still suffering from the absence of business and wealth which we lost during the war.

13. The treatment we have received in connection with transferred properties.

It appears to us that the Commonwealth's idea of compensating us for transferred properties is to still owe us the money. For 10 years they paid no interest. In the next four years they paid 4½ per cent., and in the following three years only 3 per cent., while for the last five years—during which time money is costing this State 6 per cent.—they have paid us 3½ per cent., and they still owe us the money for these transferred properties.

14. The non-payment of 25s. per head for our soldiers while away on active service.

This State, as we all know, sent away a bigger quota than any other State, and we were deprived of the 25s. per head during the absence of those men. That was a most unfair action. The soldiers were fighting not for Western Australia but for Australia and the Empire, and that money should have been paid to the State as though the men were still with us.

Mr. Chesson: Were they consuming dutiable goods while they were away?

Mr. ANGELO: They consumed goods which were manufactured in the Eastern States and for which we paid.

15. The gold steal.
I do not intend to dwell on that at any length because the facts are well known to hon members.

Mr. Teesdale: There was no gold steal.

Mr. ANGELO: I would rather take Mr. James Gardiner's opinion on that matter. That gentleman is very emphatic on it, and I have never seen his statements disputed.

Mr. Marshall: It is rather a crude assertion.

Mr. ANGELO: Anyhow it is known as the gold steal.

Mr. Marshall: And it was the National Government that did it.

Mr. ANGELO: Yes, to our disadvantage. I may briefly state the result of Mr. Owen's investigations. His report reads—

Attention may be called to the following important points and recommendations:—

(1) The gross cost of Federation to Western Australia for the 20 years ended 30th June, 1921 (after allowing for all special payments thereto)—

(a) has in respect of customs and excise amounted to £10,600,000;

(b) has in respect of Commonwealth direct taxes amounted to £5,000,000;

(c) has in the aggregate amounted to £15,600,000.

(2) The gross cost of Federation has been greater, relatively, in Western Australia than in any other State.

(3) The net cost of Federation to Western Australia to 30th June, 1921, after deducting from the gross cost the State's share of war and other services, has amounted to £2,500,000.

But he points out on that question that the extravagant cost of Federal administration, compared with the manner in which we would have been able to administer some of these departments, would have resulted in a difference of this amount in our favour.

(4) The people of Western Australia have been the most heavily taxed in Australia during the 20 years to 30th June, 1921, taking State and Federal taxes together—viz., £113 17s. 7d. per head of the population on 31st December, 1921, as compared with six States, £89 6s. 6d. per head.

(5) While the population of the Commonwealth has during Federation increased by 42 per cent., the Customs and Excise duties have increased by 261 per cent., or from £2 5s. 2d. to £5 15s. 4d. per head.

(6) The heavy Customs tariffs have been very costly to the people of Western Australia.

(7) Surplus revenue of Commonwealth withheld from the States, its serious extent. He devotes a whole paper to that point.

Mr. Wilson: What have the National Federal members been doing?

Mr. Marshall: You should be delivering that speech from this side.

Mr. ANGELO: Mr. Owen goes on—

(8) Encroachment of Commonwealth in direct taxation, evil effects of.

There is also a lengthy paper on that.

(9) The blighting effect of Federation upon factories in Western Australia. Although the population increased by 84 per cent., the number of factories increased by only 23 per cent., and hands employed by 26 per cent.

(10) Evil effects in Western Australia of retarded development in secondary industries.

I would like to read some remarks made by Sir Joseph Cook when Commonwealth Treasurer in his last Budget statement, in September, 1921. He used a series of figures to show that the people of the Commonwealth had not reached the taxable limit seeing that they were taxed at a lower rate per head than the people of New Zealand and the United Kingdom. He said—

Taxation per head: In my last Budget Speech I gave certain figures showing the taxation per head in the Commonwealth, New Zealand and the United Kingdom respectively. The latest which I can now produce are—

	Direct.			Indirect.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
State ..	3	6	1	3	6	1
Commonwealth	3	15	10	5	17	0	9	12	10
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Total States and Common- wealth ..	7	1	11	5	17	0	12	18	11
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New Zealand	11	4	5	7	6	8	18	11	1
United King- dom	16	6	5	7	16	1	24	2	6

I admit that the total for the State and Commonwealth of £12 18s. 11d. is high, but when we compare our position with that of other countries, we find that we stand very favourably indeed even in regard to this matter of taxation.

We, in Western Australia, on those figures are allowed £3 6s. 1d. That is all we get out of a total taxation of £12 18s. 11d., roughly 25 per cent. of the total taxation to carry on most expensive departments of Government, while the Commonwealth takes the other three-fourths. I do not think it is necessary for me to take up the time of the House any further. The mere fact that the House agreed unanimously to my previous motion that some action should be taken to approach the Federal Government, should satisfy hon members that the motion which is really following on what we have already agreed to, should be carried. Personally, I should have liked the motion to go further, and to say that if the Federal Government declined to join in this suggested convention, the Premier of Western Australia should communicate with the Premiers of the other five States and endeavour to bring about a convention amongst the States, leaving out the Federal Government altogether. After all, it is the States

that are the partners in the Commonwealth, and it is for the States to suggest what amendments are necessary to the Constitution. Some action is undoubtedly urgently necessary. I am not in favour of secession and I do not think there is a member in the House who would support it; but we do desire and must have proper Federal treatment. If we could get the treatment that it was thought we would receive by those who framed the Constitution, we would have no cause for complaint, and Western Australia would be a flourishing State. Whilst not favouring secession it is necessary to take prompt action in the direction of insisting that some amendments be made and that we should be treated more in the way a sovereign State should be treated than has been the case in the past. I submit with confidence to the House the resolution which has been sent to us by the Legislative Council, and if it is carried I trust the Government will do that which will be in the best interests of Western Australia.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.30]: I hope the House will carry the Council's resolution. After 22 years of experience the time is ripe for a reconsideration of the Commonwealth Constitution. When Federation was so strongly advocated in this State, its advocates did not see just what the result would be. Could the result have been foreseen, the Constitution would have been very different from what it is. The last speaker said we are a sovereign State. Of course we are. But the Federal authorities are without limitation as to what they can take. They can use every avenue of taxation. On the other hand there is very little which they can do for us. They tax our incomes, our amusements, our lands—anything and everything. They can collect the revenue, but they cannot spend it in a way that would be useful to us. They collect far more than the State collects. From liquor alone they took £606,000 last year, as against the £37,000 taken by the State. They may take, but they may not do much for us. They deliver our letters, provide defence and attend to quarantine, but that is about all. Yet they collect an enormous amount of revenue. It is because of the heavy taxation imposed upon us by the Federal authority that we are not able to collect in taxation sufficient to carry on all the State services which we should like to render. Our rights are understood, although perhaps not as clearly by the British Government as they ought to be.

Mr. Marshall: The comparison is that of the sparrow and the hawk: as soon as the sparrow rises, the hawk grabs him.

The PREMIER: We have to discharge many responsibilities touching the daily life of the people. If a water supply be required, if a road or a railway or a harbour or a new school be wanted, the people come to the State Government. We perform all the ordinary functions of Government, looking after

the people's health and educating the people's children. All those responsibilities are with the State. Yet the avenues of taxation are exhausted by the Federal Government. Certainly it is time the Federal Constitution were reviewed. Under that Constitution, of course, nothing can be quite even as between the States. It is not to be expected that the States should benefit equally and equally suffer under Federation; because the various States are in various stages of development. Before Federation we had our own Customs. The money collected from the people of the State under the State tariff went back to the people who contributed it, whereas under Federation the revenue through Customs is disbursed to the advantage of the whole of the people of Australia. Nor is that all. The Federal authorities can set up any tariff they please, and they have set up a tariff to suit the manufacturing States. Obviously what suits a manufacturing State like Victoria, does not suit a State like Western Australia. We have to buy Eastern States' goods at the prices fixed by the Eastern States. The idea of a high tariff is to foster manufactures; but the smaller States far distant from the centre of population cannot be expected to do their own manufacturing, and so the older States do the work for us.

Mr. Marshall: We feed the goose, and they take the golden egg.

The PREMIER: They take the goose too. We accept their manufactured goods at their own price and the price is largely influenced by the tariff. Only the other day we had to call tenders for a certain order. One tender from an Eastern State's firm was for £3,000, while another from a British firm was £50 less, although allowing for just under £1,000 to be paid in duty. We accepted the English tender, and so £1,000 went into the coffers of the Federal Treasury instead of into the pockets of private people.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In Fremantle we do better, we keep all the money in Australia.

The PREMIER: I do not intend to pay for goods manufactured in Australia more than we are justified in paying. When the Australian contract price without duty is 33 per cent. more than the English price, I do not see why we should discriminate against our own flesh and blood in the Old Land.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It has to be made up in another way, so what difference is there?

The PREMIER: There is a very serious difference. Grave difficulties are set up by a high protective tariff. But that is not the whole point. If we do submit to a high tariff for the benefit of the Eastern States, we ought to get a quid pro quo. All that we get now is 25s. per capita per annum, and some special consideration which is disappearing at the rate of £10,000 per annum. Again, under the Federal Constitution we have in the House of Representatives five members out of 75.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And in the metropolitan area we are to get only 15 members out of 50.

The PREMIER: I do not know that the hon. member is in order in referring to the redistribution of seats.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know that the Premier is in order in laying so much stress upon the Federal tariff.

The PREMIER: But the whole purpose of the motion is to elicit an expression of opinion as to whether we should submit to those high duties, or whether we should shy the tea into the harbour, or whether we should endeavour to induce the Federal authorities to give the State a little more consideration.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Let us go on strike and take charge of it all ourselves.

The PREMIER: I do not approve of the hon. member going on strike at all. We are at a serious disadvantage in the development of our State, because our development has to be done by machinery which, in consequence of the high protective tariff, costs a great deal more than it ought to. To-day we are importing very largely from the Eastern States, very greatly to our own disadvantage. Last year we imported from the Eastern States £405,000 worth of agricultural machinery which, had we control of our own Customs tariff, would have been manufactured in this State. Most certainly the time has come when the Federal Constitution should be reviewed by a convention. The effect of that Constitution on the various States might well come up for consideration. I do not wish to cut the painter, but I say we should improve the Federal Constitution and make it fairer and more equitable to the various States. We are a great, undeveloped country with all the work ahead of us. Victoria is in a very different position. She had an opportunity to develop while the Customs tariff was in her own hands. That opportunity was not vouchsafed to us. We are languishing under a tariff which we had no voice in framing. The time has come when we might well appoint a convention, not with a view to destroying the Federal Constitution, but with a view to amending it. It was never intended that there should be nothing which the Federal Government cannot take, while there should be very little which they can do. We now know that the Federal Constitution does not mean what we thought it meant.

Mr. Pickering: It was sentiment that counted when the Constitution was accepted.

The PREMIER: We were brought under the Constitution by sentiment, but we are now living under the written word. The Constitution does not mean what we thought it meant. Under it our disadvantages are very much greater than we expected they would be. Nothing that anybody foresaw before Federation has happened. What it was expected would not happen has happened. If we had known that Federation would have the effect it has had, would supporters of Federation have gone on advocating it? Not one of them. But they did not foresee what could happen under the Constitution.

Mr. Marshall: Is not war expenditure causing the Federal Government to make many innovations they otherwise would not have made?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member will take from the revenue collected the total cost of the war, which of course must be borne, he will find that tens of millions of money are being spent by the Federal Government. Yet it was thought that £700,000 a year would be the total cost of Federation.

Mr. Marshall: The increased expenditure applies to the State, too.

The PREMIER: But quite apart from the cost of the war, the Federal Government have taken on all sorts of activities which have cost great sums of money. The mandated territories, the Northern Territory and a thousand and one other things have been taken on by the Federal Government.

Mr. Chesson: No one could calculate the cost of the war on account of diminishing production.

The PREMIER: Quite so. The cost of the war must be paid for year by year. No one objects to that, but we object to money being spent by the Federal Government when that money could be so much better spent in developing the States. We object because we are an undeveloped State, which is being penalised in every possible way. Our trade goes from us; our commodities are put up in price against us. We are compelled to take the products at the price put upon them by the eastern merchants. We suffer in a thousand ways. It may be for the good of Australia, but it is certainly not for the good of Western Australia.

Mr. Marshall: It is as well that those State Implement Works were in existence during the war.

The PREMIER: I do not think they had any material effect on the position. I wish they were not in existence to-day. We are entitled to meet, and the Premiers in conference decided that we should meet, to discuss this question and agree upon some reasonable amendments of the Constitution to make the position fairer for such States as Queensland and Western Australia. Why should not the rest of Australia seek to have our country developed? Every man we bring into this State is a customer for the great centres of Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide. To-day there is a glut of fruit in Western Australia, due to the fact that the manufacturing population supplying our goods are located in Melbourne and Sydney instead of in Perth and Fremantle. This loss is due to the fact that the control of our commodities is in the hands of the distributing centres in the East. We are a consuming population; they are a distributing population; we are in their hands and we shall be in their hands for many years to come. The position should be varied considerably. The future of this State as a part of the Commonwealth demands that it should receive consideration at the hands of the other States. They should guarantee

us sympathetic treatment. Those of us who have been engaged in the actual work of developing this country know it cannot be developed under the high costs existing to-day, and many of those high costs are due to Federation. We are living under great difficulties which ought not to obtain, and if we are to pay for these disadvantages and suffer them too, we should be compensated by some fairer arrangement between the States. I support the amendment moved by the member for Gasecoyne, who has been giving close attention to this matter for a long time. For 12 months the Royal Commission have delved into the question, and have produced this report, which every member should read from cover to cover. I commend the document to the member for Murchison. If he will read it during the recess, he will appreciate just where we stand. Nothing but good could come of a convention. Some years ago we were threatened with a reduction in the per capita payment, a reduction of half a crown a year until the amount was reduced to 10s. We managed to stave that off. A convention could deal with that question. It would be monstrously unfair if we were deprived of the per capita payment. It is bad enough to contribute on an uneven basis to the cost of the Federal Government. Instead of giving the States an even payment from the Federal collections, the Commonwealth Government should take from each State an even amount per head of population towards the cost of Federation. This was the practice in the early days of Federation and was a much fairer system. We contribute far more than the other States. We contribute directly; we contribute indirectly through the merchants in Eastern Australia, from whom we buy our goods.

Mr. SPEAKER: Those are arguments which would be advanced at the convention.

The PREMIER: That is what I am endeavouring to show. If we had no argument for the convention put up on the facts, we would have no argument at all. We were promised a convention, but it was not called. The Federal Parliament must pass a Bill before a convention can be held. We want to come together and get the Federal Parliament to call a convention and, if possible, frame amendments to the Constitution which will bring about much fairer treatment of the small States of the Commonwealth.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [3.53]: I admit that my views regarding the Federal Government and the States are becoming altered. I impress upon members that when a convention is held, it will probably be a convention comprised of delegates who do not represent the people. The Constitution was so framed as to give the people full control.

The Premier: By their votes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The votes of all electors are of equal value, and thus the whole question in regard to the alteration

of the Constitution depends entirely on the manhood and womanhood of Australia, but when a convention is being called, the votes for constituting the convention will not be of the same value.

Mr. Angelo: Could not the various Parliaments elect the delegates?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is the point. The representatives in the various Parliaments are not elected on votes of equal value, though an alteration of the Federal Constitution would depend on votes of equal value. To secure an alteration of the Federal Constitution there must be a majority of not only the electors, but of the States in favour of it. This provision was probably made for the protection of the smaller States. Therefore, every person has equal power to make known his views with regard to any alteration of the Constitution. I would like to point out to my friends who are so anxious that the States should retain their sovereign rights, that it is necessary at all times to insist upon fair and just representation of the people in the State Parliament. I cannot pursue that subject further, but I emphasise it to show the risk the States are running in keeping from the people that power which they enjoy under the Federal Constitution. We often hear quoted statements which were made at the last convention, as if such statements had a bearing on the Constitution itself. No matter if some representative at the convention said the State Savings Bank was not to be interfered with or that the subsidy paid to the various States should not be interfered with, etc., the law says otherwise, and this has been proved in the High Court. In my opinion some of the decisions of the Court are judge-made law. According to decisions of the High Court, the Federal Parliament have the power under the Constitution that some people thought they should have.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The Minister for Works: And some people never intended they should have.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would not say that. Members of the convention were responsible for drawing up the Constitution, and when they set it down in black and white, it became a binding instrument, and it remains for the court to interpret it.

The Minister for Works: Most of those who attended the convention are dead.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That does not make any difference to the Constitution which is still alive and by which we must abide. No doubt Western Australia has suffered more through the Federal Constitution than has any other State. Western Australia was never an industrial State. At the inauguration of Federation it was dependent largely on the Customs duties collected, not only on manufactures, but also on primary products imported from the Eastern States. That was entirely wiped out by the advent of Federation.

The Minister for Works: We had more manufactures before Federation than we have now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That does not appear to be so according to the returns, except as regards boot factories. However, Western Australia suffers because we are so far distant from the seat of government. Owing to that cause we do not get all the consideration we should receive. Western Australia, in my opinion, has suffered more from the fact of her Federal representatives making the Eastern States their home than from anything else arising out of Federation. I stated that on the platform during the Federal election campaign. Our representatives have not kept in touch with the people politically, and thus have not been able to express the views of their constituents in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. Davies: How can that be avoided?

Mr. Angelo: Mr. Gregory avoided it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. The only difference in the case of Mr. Gregory is that if he gets a few feet of wire put up on poles anywhere, he records it in the Press. Many of us here have had to leave our homes for considerable periods year after year, periods much longer than would apply in the case of a Federal member. Before we had the Transcontinental Railway a Federal member could visit this State at any time he thought fit on public business, and do it at no cost. In addition, he was granted a free trip to the East for his wife and family once a year. Then where was the necessity for his being separated from his wife and family for any length of time? We have suffered through our representatives not keeping in touch with the Western Australian people. Now that we have some new members, I hope the position will alter. Of course, excuses can be made. Some of our Federal members have been Ministers. But my answer is that Lord Forrest, even when he was a Minister, never missed spending some time towards Christmas in Western Australia. There are other Federal Ministers who have not spent a total of nine months in Western Australia during their 20 years' membership of the Commonwealth Parliament. Why could not they have done like Lord Forrest? It is also true that we have suffered through Federal administration. Take quarantine. Up to late years, Western Australia was administering quarantine affairs here for the sum of £150 per annum, paid towards the salary of the Principal Medical Officer of Health. He was the Chief Quarantine Officer. The Federal Government thought it necessary to make a change, and they brought about a change, and to-day their quarantine office contains five or six officials doing the work for which this State was paid £150 a year. Then there is the Government Analyst. The Government of this State were doing the work of the Customs Department in this connection for £400 a year. We supplied a laboratory and other plant for the work. A change was considered necessary by the Federal Government and a change was made,

with corresponding results. Then, as regards shipping, Western Australia had in its service an elderly gentleman who had been there for so many years that he was kept on doing practically nothing. When he eventually retired, a boy was put in to do his work. The Federal Government took over the control of shipping, and they now have built up an office costing a considerable amount of money. Two or three officers are doing the work of the boy. These may be regarded as small matters, but they show a tendency towards increased cost of administration under Federation. If a convention were held, undoubtedly one of the principal matters to be taken into consideration would be whether it is advisable for the Commonwealth to establish new departments which duplicate State departments already existing. It has been stated here frequently that we should amalgamate our Electoral Office with the Federal Electoral Office. As regards the Taxation Department the agitation was so strong that the Government acceded to the wishes of the majority of members—much to my regret. It was stated that the amalgamation would effect a saving of £20,000 a year. I am not saying that the State has not saved £20,000 a year, but let me ask did the amalgamation save the people, as taxpayers, £20,000 a year?

Hon. M. E. Troy: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: As regards duplication of offices, let us bear in mind that it is not the State which encroaches on the Commonwealth, but the Commonwealth which encroaches on the State. If the Federal Government did not come in, there would be no duplication, and the work could be done much more cheaply under local control.

The Minister for Works: And much more satisfactorily.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not going to say that. As regards a change in the Constitution, the people alone can decide such a question. We are told that Western Australia has suffered a loss of about 10 millions sterling by reason of Federation. According to a statement prepared by the Under-Treasurer there has been a considerable loss in pounds, shillings, and pence.

Mr. Angelo: One amount stated is gross, and the other amount net.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A good deal of the loss is only presumptive, on the strength of what would have occurred if this State had not federated. The amount actually lost to this State by reason of Federation, according to the balance sheet I have seen, would, if capitalised, return about £125,000 a year. But there are charges to be debited against that £125,000. No allowance was made for our share of the cost of the Federal Parliament. That matter and similar matters, if brought together, would probably all but wipe out the £125,000 a year. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether the State has or has not lost anything by Federation. It is true we have not been able to develop our industries very much. That brings me to the State Implement Works. The Premier said that this State was sending about £400,000 a year outside of its

borders for agricultural implements. Yet we find the Premier, and some of those associated with him, desirous of sending another £60,000 a year out of the State for the same purpose by closing down the Implement Works. They know very well that no private firm would start Implement Works in Western Australia. I have information to that effect from an importer. The reason is that the Eastern States manufacturers of implements would dump here, and so bankrupt the local manufacturer. There is no protection against dumping as between States, such as there is against dumping from the outside world.

Mr. Teesdale: You cannot blame the Federal Government in regard to that machinery question.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not doing so. However, we do not get fair play as regards administration. Yesterday I asked the Premier whether he had received a reply to communications he had sent to the Federal Government regarding the export of corned beef from Western Australia. The Premier's answer was in the negative. His last wire, I see by the file, was sent on the 17th October last. To-day is the 1st February. Is it right that the Commonwealth Government should subject the Premier of a State to so much delay? And that is only one instance.

The Minister for Works: There are other instances.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. This one has just come under my notice.

Mr. Teesdale: Is that from Premier to Premier?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: From Premier to Prime Minister, and there is no reply up to date. A firm of butchers in Fremantle bought a quantity of meat from the Wyndham Meat Works for export when the "Kangaroo" was proceeding to Java and the East Indies for the purpose of trying to work up a trade with Western Australia. The samples were sent to Java, and they gave satisfaction, as appears from the following extract from a letter from Batavia, dated the 10th August, 1922:—

Your meat. Nice chunks of meat, rather hard and with practically very little fat. For the retail trade here, we think that in selling your meat the loss through having to throw away unnecessary pieces of fat, etc., is at a minimum. Considering that the meat has been three months from time of packing, we think packing in kerosene tins is the best. If, for instance, the condition of meat packed in these tins is the same as the present samples, and if your kegs are practically the same as those from Sydney, well, we personally prefer tin packing. People here want meat like your samples; that is, meat with little fat; but some want the Sydney sort of meat—that is, with much fat. Sydney meat—a "cottony" sort of meat, looks better than your meat as regards colour and the fat is something nice. When fresh the Sydney meat is nice indeed, but the disadvantage is that Sydney

meat in kegs—even although they are airtight—is liable to get bad after a very short time.

Accompanying this letter was an order. I am not sure whether it was for a ton or two tons, but the meat was to be sent to Java.

Mr. Teesdale: Was it put down in brine?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, the meat was thawed, salted down and put in brine. This firm wrote to the examining officer attached to the Commonwealth Customs at Fremantle as follows:—

We desire to give notice that it is our intention to put up, ready for export, one ton of corned beef, the said beef being portion of hard frozen hindquarter beef passed for export at the Wyndham Meat Works, and purchased by us from the W.A. Government. We will, when ready to ship, send in Form 2 duly completed.

Here is the reply they got from Mr. Robinson, the Collector of Customs for this State—

With reference to your letter of 23rd August and in confirmation of my telephonic communication this day relative to the preparation of corned beef from frozen beef which was passed for export at the Wyndham Meat Works, I have to inform you that the matter was referred to the Comptroller-General of Customs, Melbourne, who has decided that the exportation of canned or salt beef prepared from frozen beef cannot be allowed.

Mr. Angelo: They would not allow it, although they had permitted one or two shipments previously!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is so. The firm then brought the matter before the Acting Premier and communicated with Mr. Prowse, M.H.R., and also with the representatives of the firm in the Eastern States, in an endeavour to persuade the Federal Government to allow Western Australia to have a share in the Java meat trade. The officers of the Federal department have always been of the opinion that this meat, when thawed, showed evidences of burst tissue, but the officers of our Health Department say that that is not so. When the Minister for Mines went to Melbourne last time, I asked him, seeing that no reply had been received by the Premier from the Prime Minister for over a month, if he would see the Commonwealth authorities and try to get for Western Australia fair play regarding the meat trade. Unfortunately the elections were in progress at the time and the Minister for Mines could not get in touch with the Federal Minister, who was out of Melbourne. For the information of hon. members I will give them the opinion of our health officers on this matter. Their views are embodied in a telegram which was sent to the Prime Minister as follows:—

Re Commonwealth prohibition of export of corned beef made from frozen meat, strongly urge reconsideration in view fact

that both macroscopic and microscopic examinations made by Health Department, show product to be excellent in quality and appearance and no rupture of tissue visible under microscope. Further, in view satisfaction consignees with previous consignment, Commonwealth action appears most unreasonable and objection only valid on sentimental grounds to detriment commercial interests this State.

This meat has been thoroughly examined under the microscope and what the Commonwealth people say is to be found in it, is not discoverable under such an examination. I can give the Premier further information about this matter. A gentleman, who is a veterinary officer, got to work. His name is R. P. Allen. I do not know who is pulling the strings but he sent a letter to the Comptroller-General regarding Baker Bros.' corned beef for Java. He said—

This meat has already been cooked by boiling for three hours before it is handed to the Federal analyst. It was originally slaughtered at Wyndham, W.A., about the middle of 1920 and had thus been in cold storage for two years. Such meat after defrosting is greatly inferior to freshly killed meat but, comparatively, improves after being preserved by salt and saltpetre. The highest scientific authorities in the world have proved ages ago that the amount of burst tissue in atmospherically defrosted meat is always considerable, and the inference contained in the Premier's (W.A.) telegram of 17/10/22, that there had been no burst tissue in the defrosted meat, suggests that there had been no "weeping" whilst thawing; this, of course, is absurd. The Federal analyst's examination shows that the meat contains 4.8 per cent. sodium chloride (salt) and 0.27 per cent. potassium nitrate, both of which percentages are considerably in excess of the quantities proposed to be allowed in the new regulation, viz., sodium chloride 3 per cent. and potassium nitrate 0.27 per cent. In view of the analyst's opinion as to flavour, it is evident that his examination of the meat as to salt and saltpetre took place prior to the additional cooking, and in this respect it is suggested that Inspector Myles of this branch, now in Fremantle, take sealed samples, say, 30 lbs., of the defrosted meat and hand same over to Messrs. Baker Bros. for curing. When cured Mr. Myles would arrange to have the meats cooked privately, afterwards handing in samples to the Collector for analytical purposes. Should the condition of the cooked meats prove to be satisfactory as to texture, flavour, etc., and the salt and saltpetre content not to be greater than 3 per cent. and 0.2 per cent. respectively, the question of permitting export of the corned meats in question could be reconsidered.

This was carried out early in December and, although two months have passed, nothing has been done.

Mr. Teesdale: Who is that Allen? Is he the horse doctor?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, he is the chief veterinary officer. His views are directly opposed to those of the State health officers, who made a thorough examination of the meat. Both the Premier and I have eaten this meat.

Mr. Marshall: You don't look any the worse for it!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Certainly not. Tons of the meat have been distributed throughout the State and what has been eaten with relish by white people, is apparently not good enough for black people!

The Premier: It is splendid meat.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is as tender as chicken. Yet the Federal Government adopt such an attitude as I have described. Although this meat is properly tinned and cured, its export is debarred. It makes one ask, why? Does it interfere with the profits derived from the trade, which is in the hands of the Sydney people and others? If that is so, it shows we are suffering from the unfair administration of Federal Government departments, under the terms of the Constitution. We want fair play to prevail in Western Australia, just the same as elsewhere. Recently the Government sent Mr. Golding to Java to make inquiries regarding the meat trade there. Mr. Golding was approached by a number of people who had sampled our meat and wanted to know if they could get more. I have letters which have been sent from people to Mr. Golding asking to be supplied with our meat. The Federal Government have indicated that they do not intend to give Western Australian meat that fair and just consideration that they extend to traders from the Eastern States. This is merely a sample of the administration of officers of Federal departments so far as this State is concerned.

Mr. Teesdale: A very fine case, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know how any Government department can take the opinion of a veterinary surgeon in preference to that of the Principal Medical Officer and the health officers of Western Australia, who examined the meat macroscopically and under the microscope. Before I worried the Premier about this matter, I saw the chief health officer and later the Principal Medical Officer. I told them that I did not wish to take up the time of the Premier if there was anything wrong with the meat. I asked them to thoroughly examine it and ascertain what was the position, before I asked the Premier to communicate with the Prime Minister. They did so and I have given the House the result of the investigation.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Pickering: In this case, the Federal officers attempted to block the export of our meat.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no question of any "attempt"; the trade has been blocked. I took the Premier to see the

ment at Fremantle. It looked beautiful. They had some which had been boiled and we ate it. It was splendid meat. If we got some of this trade, it would develop into a big concern. Had we the chance we would collar the trade with Java but the Federal Government says that Western Australia is not to have it.

Mr. Teesdale: They did the same thing with a small venture at Cossack.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There may be scores of such instances.

The Premier: Can you buy that salt meat in Perth?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, they have sold large quantities.

The Premier: It is the best corned meat I ever tasted.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: As to the duplication of officers and other matters to which the Premier has referred, these questions also should receive attention. There is the annual subsidy which Western Australia cannot afford to lose, although the other States might be in a position to do so. As the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) rightly pointed out, we are contributing more per head to the revenue of the Commonwealth than any other State. If the Commonwealth contributed to Western Australia 50s. per head of the population, we would only then be on the same basis as Victoria. I do not know that we would even equal Victoria's position then. A convention cannot do any harm.

Mr. Pickering: Do you think it would do any good?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It might have a tendency to do good, but in any case it would give an opportunity for representatives of this State to discuss matters with representatives of Eastern Australia. I feel confident from what has taken place during the last few years that it would be far better if some arrangement could be come to with the Federal Government that would stop the duplication of officers as between the State and the Commonwealth. If that were done, it would save a large sum of money. I support the motion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [4.29]: As one of those who took part in the discussions when the question of Federation was before us 20 odd years ago, I feel that what has passed since then has not given effect to what was prophesied in those days. This is not the place, nor the time, to draw a comparison between what we were told would be carried out and what has been given effect to. I support the motion for this reason: We have passed through one of the biggest trials a young nation has ever had to face, namely the great war. The affairs both of the State and Commonwealth have been, as it were, cast into the melting pot. It becomes necessary for both the State and Commonwealth to consider measures that are required to put their house in order and get back to normal conditions. I, therefore, am

sure it is right we should have a convention of this kind, merely to get the other States together and review the conditions as they are to-day, and see how they accord with the liberties which this young nation has a right to deserve and expect.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—JARNADUP-DENMARK RAILWAY.

Council's Message—Request for Conference.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it disagreed with the amendment made by the Assembly to the Council's amendment No. 2 and insisted upon its own amendment.

In Committee.

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

The PREMIER: I move—

That a conference be requested on the amendment insisted upon by the Legislative Council.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This is the only method we can adopt. The Legislative Council is not willing by insisting upon this amendment to place the State in the same position as each member of the Council would wish to place himself. It is the most ridiculous request I have ever heard of. No man would like to be placed in the position of being compelled to accept a tender whether it was fair or not. I do not see how anyone could agree to the request of the Council, and it is not possible for us to give way.

The PREMIER: The reason given by another place for its amendment is that our amendment is calculated to perpetuate the system of constructing public works by day labour. Years ago we constructed all our works by public tender, but because of the cost we began to construct them by day labour and saved a great deal to the country. Sometimes the contract system is better than the day labour system. If we agreed to the amendment it would mean that a contractor could name his own price for a contract. We cannot ask this House to place the country in that position.

Mr. Heron: It would place the country in the hands of the contractors.

The PREMIER: If work can be done more cheaply departmentally than by contract, it should be done departmentally.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Council said they were afraid another Government might be here soon.

The PREMIER: Their fears are not well founded and their judgment is again wrong.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Upper House is tying down the Government as to the manner in which public works should be constructed, insisting that they shall construct this particular railway by contract and in no other

way. The Government should not accept the dictation of the Council.

Mr. Teesdale: We are not going to.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I do not propose to agree to any compromise which means dictation to the Government along these lines. In the past the day labour system has been a serviceable and profitable one to the State. The Canadian Government, it has been shown, was robbed of £75,000,000 owing to the method of constructing public works by contract. That sort of thing could happen in Australia under a similar system. We cannot accept anything that will bind down the Government in this way.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Assuming that the Government call for tenders for a line and received only one tender, which in the opinion of the officers of the department is altogether too high, would the Government have to turn it down and then do nothing; or accept it and take the responsibility of being brought to book by Parliament, probably by the very men who are endeavouring to place the Government in this position? The Government should carry out the wishes of Parliament and take the responsibility of their decisions. If the Government call tenders for a line they must use their judgment and take the responsibility. If they feel they are justified in the interests of the State in accepting a tender they should do so. If the Government are not prepared to take the responsibility of their actions and deal with these things as they come along, they have no right to retain the reins of government, and Parliament and the country would quite fittingly condemn them.

Question put and passed.

Appointment of Managers.

On motion by the Premier the managers appointed to represent the Assembly at the conference were:—Hon. W. J. George, Hon. W. C. Angwin, and the mover.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILLS (5)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

1, Land Tax and Income Tax Act (1922) Amendment.

2, Roads Closure.

3, General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment.

4, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

5, Perpetual Executors, Trustees, and Agency Company (W.A.) Ltd (Private).

Without amendment.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Minister for Works, resolved—That so much of the Standing

Orders be suspended as is necessary to admit of the introduction of this Bill without notice.

All Stages.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [4.52] in moving the second reading said: Under Section 214 Subsection 1 of the Road Districts Act it is provided that the valuation of land held for pastoral purposes, shall be equal to twenty times the annual rent payable to the Crown for the purposes of arriving at the road rate. Since the passing of that Act the pastoral leases have been re-appraised, with the result that the rents, which have been taken as a factor on which to decide what the rate shall be, have been very much increased. The outcome is that when the minimum rate of one penny in the pound which the Road Districts Act provides for, is levied, these districts have a very much larger sum of money than they require to do all the necessary work in their districts. Had the rents remained as they were, then the penny minimum would have produced exactly the sum required. But in many instances the rents have been raised three times, and where previously a penny would be received, to-day they are getting 3d., and they do not need more than a penny. Having this in view it is proposed to give to the responsible authorities in the districts named the right to a minimum of a half-penny in the pound. They will still be entitled to go to the maximum, should it be needed, but if they do not require more money than what one-half-penny in the pound will produce, they will be right in declaring that sum. The Bill is not introduced with the idea of relieving the fat man of any of his burdens. It is simply presented with the idea of permitting the raising of just what money is needed. These bodies know what is required, and they know the work that should be done, and they do not want to gather in more cash than will do that which is necessary to make the conditions in connection with their roads just what they should be. I commend the Bill to the judgment of the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [4.56]: Has this measure been submitted to the road boards concerned? On a matter of this kind we should have an expression of opinion from the local authorities, and we should know whether they are in favour of it or not. Of course the proposal is optional, and the boards may charge up to the maximum, but it is not right that a Bill of this description should be brought in at the end of the session and no information on this point given to us. The Bill should have been distributed amongst the local authorities and their opinions obtained.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.58]: It is not fair that a Bill of this character should be sprung on the House in the closing hours of the session. The Bill provides that the rate may be reduced at the discretion of the board.

The Minister for Works: That is the protection.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I admit that, but what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Why should the holder of a pastoral lease have this privilege, and the holder of an adjoining property not have it?

Mr. Angelo: Because his rents have not been put up.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The rents have been put up. As the land increases in value so are the rates increased in proportion. The pastoral leases have been given to the pastoralists for another 30 years. That was a concession given by this House at the request of the pastoralists on the understanding that they would pay additional rents fixed by the Government. It has been held by many that that concession should never have been given because the Government should have taken the opportunity to re-assess the leases and to break them up. In many instances the areas held by one person are too large. When the Bill was submitted there was a good deal of lobbying carried on in the House.

Mr. Underwood: No.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, they lobbied me and they lobbied the hon. member as well, because his was a remarkable change of front. The pastoralists were in the galleries on that night and they said "We want to know where we stand; we want permanency; our improvements are held up; give us these leases for 30 years and we will pay the extra rents asked by the Government." Now that the rents have been increased, and the road board rates increased proportionately, they ask for this concession. If they are entitled to the concession, so are other members of the community entitled to a concession. I think the board increased the rates too highly in some places, but still the people concerned have a court of appeal. The Mullewa Road Board embraces a great deal of pastoral and agricultural country. The pastoralists have had concessions, but the holders of agricultural land have not had any. But coming back to the Bill, has there been any demand for it? There are three or four road boards in my electorate, and if they are satisfied with the Bill I shall be satisfied. Mr. Noble saw me and asked for my support. I told him that the pastoralists were well represented on the road board districts in my electorate, and that if the road boards considered the proposal fair and equitable, I would support it.

The Minister for Works: I understand that has been done.

Hon. M. F. TROY: No. I do object to these proposals being brought forward in the last hours of the session. The Minister should defer the measure until such time as all the boards concerned have been consulted.

Then if they regard the proposal as fair and equitable I will not oppose it. Have the road boards offered any opinion?

The Minister for Works: Frankly I have had no opinions from them. Put a safeguard in the Bill.

Hon. M. F. TROY: What safeguard? Why should there be a reduction of the rates in respect of pastoral leases?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You can strike that out.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, that would be all right. I have no objection to a reduction of rates, provided it be made apply all round.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [5.6]: When the Road Districts Act was passed, the rating of the pastoralists was framed on the then existing rents. Owing to the amendment of the Land Act, and the consequent re-appraisal of pastoral rents, the rates went up three-fold, in some instances five-fold, with the result that the local authorities in pastoral areas now have much more revenue than they require. That sort of thing was not foreseen. The three road boards in my electorate, namely, Gascoyne-Minilya, Upper Gascoyne, and Shark Bay, all have to deal with pastoral properties. Without the Bill those road boards will be collecting three times as much as they require. Is it not ridiculous? The Bill merely asks for a reduction of the minimum rating if the board so desire. Road boards other than those dealing with pastoral areas need not reduce their rates. For boards who do not wish to do so, there will be no necessity to come down to the proposed half-penny minimum.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (South Fremantle) [5.9]: There is an anomaly in the Bill, and if the member for Mt. Magnet will move to strike out "in respect of pastoral leases" I will support him. The Bill gives road boards only partial discretion. They can strike a rate as low as one half-penny, but it must be in respect of pastoral leases only. If a board has other lands in its area it must strike the higher rate on all lands other than pastoral. So, clearly, full discretion is not given to the board.

Mr. Underwood: But it is.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The reduction must be only in respect of pastoral leases. If we are to give a local authority discretionary power, let it be full discretionary power.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [5.11]: The hon. member has scarcely got the right idea of the Bill. The rating of pastoral leases is based on the rental paid to the State, whereas in respect of freehold property the rating is based on a value fixed by valuers, which is an entirely different proposition. All that is asked for under the Bill is that it shall be permissible for a road board to reduce the minimum rating on pastoral leases from one penny to one half-penny. As the member for Gascoyne has pointed out, before we had the amendment to the Land Act a penny rate

just about met the requirements of the local authority, but since the rental has been doubled or trebled—in some instances it has been multiplied by five—the rating, being based on the rental, has become unnecessarily high. We are not asking anything beyond permission for local authorities to get down to a minimum which will give them not more revenue than they require. If a road board decided to strike a lower rate and did not collect sufficient money to maintain the roads, the users of the roads would have to put up with it. It is nothing to the city man, the agriculturist or the mining man—

Hon. M. F. Troy: Isn't it?

Mr. Chesson: That is a ridiculous statement. Good roads mean as much to the mining man, to the pastoralist, or any other section.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If there are sufficient mining members on a board to make roads to mines and they refrain from doing it, should the pastoralists be compelled; outside of their desires and representation on the board, to make roads for mining areas?

Mr. Chesson: Good roads to the towns suit the squatters as well as the mines, because they provide access to markets for the stock.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Where it is necessary to impose a higher rate, the board have the power to impose it. All we ask is that they be not compelled to impose one penny in the pound on the rent. The Act provides that the value of a pastoral lease shall be calculated according to the rent paid, and the rents have been put up, and rightly so. But since the rents have been put up, we should not compel the boards to collect an increased amount of rates. I represent a district having three road boards, and the great bulk of the rates collected come from the pastoralists. Surely they should be entitled to say what they shall pay for the construction of their roads.

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.21]: I regret that the Bill should have been introduced at such a late stage of the session. I represent an electorate where the pastoral, mining and other industries are carried on, and to be compelled to consider a Bill of this kind, without having a proper opportunity to peruse it, places a member in a very awkward position. Having hurriedly considered the probable effect of the measure, I am inclined to support it, but I realise that it will be possible for the measure to be used detrimentally through intrigue creeping in.

Mr. Underwood: There is not much of that.

Mr. MARSHALL: The possibilities are always there.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is nothing in the Bill dealing with the appointment of boards.

Mr. MARSHALL: I feel somewhat dubious as to what might happen under the Bill. The appraisements of various pastoral leases have been increased 50 per cent. or more.

Mr. Angelo: Five times.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am speaking of what I know. The minimum was a penny, and this Bill will give the board discretion to reduce the rate to a halfpenny.

The Minister for Works: The minimum will be a halfpenny and the maximum three-pence, instead of a minimum of a penny and a maximum of three-pence.

Mr. MARSHALL: I agree with that principle.

Mr. Chesson: I know of no instance where the maximum has been imposed.

Mr. MARSHALL: When the appraisements were increased, it was never intended that the rates should be increased.

Mr. Angelo: That aspect was never thought of.

Mr. MARSHALL: Quite so and these people should receive relief.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [5.27]: I regret that it was not possible to introduce the Bill earlier. It has not been kept back with an idea of rushing it through. At first it was thought impossible to introduce the measure this session, but circumstances have arisen and made it possible to bring it down. The reason for stipulating a minimum in the Act was that road boards should strike a reasonable rate in all instances, and unless they did so, they should receive no consideration from the Government if they came along for special grants. Suppose a board struck a rate of a halfpenny in the pound, and afterwards told the Government their funds were so short that they must have a special grant to carry out some urgent work, I would tell them to put their house in order by raising the funds necessary to do the work. I think members could amend the Bill to provide that, where the minimum of a halfpenny is adopted, the usual subsidy shall be withheld. The road boards have a right to strike a rate sufficient to meet the reasonable requirements of the district.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government already have power to deal with the subsidy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid the Minister will be up against a stonewall if he suggests that amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The discretion as to the striking of the rate rests entirely with the board, and unless the board were satisfied that the halfpenny rate would suffice, they would not strike it. The country is sufficiently protected and the Bill might well be passed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 233: ;

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

That in Subclause 1 the words "in respect of pastoral leases" be struck out. The clause proposes to give discretionary power to boards to rate at one halfpenny instead of one penny, where the former rate would be regarded as sufficient. Of course, boards must get in a certain amount of revenue in order to obtain a subsidy. There should not, however, be special treatment for the pastoralists.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I hope the Minister will accept the amendment, the effect of which will be to apply the same principle all round. It has been said that if pastoralists like to use bad roads, that is their own lookout; but in many pastoral areas there are mining towns, and the same roads are used by the pastoralist, the miner, the prospector, and the business man. The member for Gascoyne urged that some road boards have more revenue than they require. That is not so according to my experience. The Mullewa Road Board, for instance, have not enough revenue to provide for the needs of the people in the towns. If the amendment is carried, the reduction of the rate to one halfpenny in the pound will apply all round.

The Colonial Secretary: The rate would be varied only in a prescribed area. In all other cases the rating would be uniform.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Does the Minister for Works agree to the amendment?

Mr. ANGELO: This amendment apparently only affects paragraph (a) of Subsection 2 of Section 233. Does the Minister think it will affect other lands?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Subsection 2 of Section 233 states that all rates shall be uniform throughout a district except insofar as a board may, by special order, and with the Minister's consent, fix the rate for any townsite or for any special area defined for that purpose by proclamation, or for any mining lease, at a higher figure. I am inclined to regard the amendment of the member for North-East Fremantle as equitable. The reduction, if made, should, in equity, apply throughout the district. The people who have approached me on this matter do not wish to evade their responsibilities. They merely say—"If a halfpenny in the pound will do all the work required in our district, why should we be compelled to pay a penny in the pound?" If there are special reasons for differentiation of rates, the Minister has power to grant permission to make such differentiation.

Mr. TEESDALE: I support the amendment of the member for North-East Fremantle, being quite satisfied with the explanations which have been given.

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

Clause 3. Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—JARNADUP-DENMARK RAILWAY.

Conference with Council.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Assembly's request for a conference, had appointed Messrs. Colebatch, Lovekin, and Miles as managers, and fixed 7 p.m. as the time, and the President's room as the place, for the conference.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST REGULATION, 113.

To Disallow.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.45]: I move—

That regulations of the Fremantle Harbour Trust amending regulation 113, and placed on the Table of the House on the 21st November, 1922, be disallowed.

The alteration of this regulation at the commencement of operations at the harbour this year caused a lot of discussion in shipping circles. A reduction has been made in the amount of the handling charges to the ship, but an increase in regard to the ship owners. For receiving, delivering and stacking, the Trust has reduced the charges per bag by a farthing, increasing from 2¼d. to 2.275d., while for slinging bags with elevators or from railway wagons when the ship is loading from trucks the charge has been decreased from 1d. to .750d., by another farthing. The Trust, however, made a reduction in the handling charges on shore to the extent of a farthing per bag. I do not know how the Trust can possibly make a reduction in connection with the handling charges. It means that in the past they have either been charging too much or they are charging too little now. If I am not mistaken, a request was made 12 months ago when the wheat board was in control, for a reduction in the charges. The Harbour Trust commissioners could not see their way clear to make the alteration then. As soon as the handling of wheat was removed from the control of the State Wheat Board, the Trust found that could vary the charges and the regulations have been altered as I have indicated. The Trust went beyond their legal power at the time I gave notice of motion. It meant that if a ship used its own gear the Trust had to be paid so much per bag. Since that impost was levied, the Trust found that they had not the legal power, with the result that the regulation was recognised as being ultra vires. An amending regulation has been placed on the Table to-day rectifying the position.

The Colonial Secretary: It is not admitted that the regulation was ultra vires.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In any case, the commissioners have altered it. There is another matter affecting shipping charges. Instead of paying for the use of the gantries at so much per hour, the Trust have now altered the form of payment and users now have to pay so much per bag. There is no advantage to the ship that loads quickly. If the old system, which has worked satisfactorily ever since the gantries have been in use, prevailed, all the charges necessary for the Trust would be covered. The effect of this is that if a ship has a loading capacity of 400 bags per hour while another has a loading capacity of only 300 bags per hour, it means that the former ship will have to pay more for the use of the gantry.

The Premier: But there are other advantages.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But there are none so far as the ship is concerned. This has a tendency to keep ships away from the port of Fremantle.

The Premier: Not at all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am glad to hear the Premier say that. Is he aware that most of the ships which have come to lift wheat at Fremantle this year are foreign ships?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes, and you are giving them the advantage of this expensive machinery.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not doing anything of the kind. I saw a letter from a large shipping company in England the other day. Their attention had been drawn to the extra charge levied by the Trust. The reply of the firm was that for the future their ships would pass Fremantle by.

The Premier: I can tell you who the letter was written to.

Mr. Teesdale: That does not matter, if the statement is true.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If these charges are to be altered, they should be borne by the shipper and not by the ship.

The Premier: Who gets the advantage? The farmer?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: For the time being, the farmer may get an advantage from any ship that is chartered. The effect, however, will be felt in the future, for it will mean that the extra charges will be provided for in the charter party. If the extra charge works out at 6d., we will have to pay 1s. extra under new charters.

Mr. Teesdale: And that will penalise the port.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It penalises everything all through. It may be beneficial to the farmer for the moment, but the additional charges will have to be borne later on. Instead of levying extreme charges on the ship, we should encourage shipping. I am not accustomed to advocating the interests of the shipping companies, because I know what has been done in the past. I do not wish anything to be done, however, that will tend to injure the port of Fremantle. I have

seen letters which show that these increased prices will have a tendency in that direction. At Fremantle there are the ordinary wharfage charges, an improvement rate and a surtax. Last year the surtax brought in £30,000. Now, additional charges are to be levied on the ships. I will show how that affects a ship carrying approximately 80,000 bags of wheat. Under the old rate that ship would pay £90 4s. for the use of the gantries; under the new rate the ship will pay £244 4s. 7d. In respect of ships using their own gear, under the new rates they pay £9 4s. 8d. Prior to the new regulation, they would pay nothing at all when they used their own gear. The total cost to the ship under the old rates was £90 4s., whereas the total under the new rates is £253 9s. 3d. The increased cost to the ship will be £163 5s. 3d., and the decreased cost to the shipper £121 4s. The difference of £42 1s. 3d. goes to the Harbour Trust.

Mr. Teesdale: That is a boomerang.

The Colonial Secretary: We have expensive machinery to maintain.

Mr. Teesdale: But this will handicap the port.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The wheat season starts in December and the regulations were put through on the 22nd November. The charters would have been arranged long before that.

The Colonial Secretary: Do not overlook the fact that a bounty is paid for quick despatch.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Harbour Trust is collaring that now.

The Colonial Secretary: That has been cut off.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The position now is that future charters will bear charges which will cover the extra £120, unless, of course, as during the present season, we continue to get ships from Norway, Sweden, or Japan in order to lift our wheat. They have come this year and they are bound to come again.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is it appreciated that the greater proportion of the wheat ships which come to Fremantle this year have been foreign vessels?

Mr. Teesdale: Unfortunately, that is the position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The rates of pay on board are such that even at the higher rates the ships can afford to pay. A very interesting article appeared in the "Geraldton Express" of the 6th December. It was an extract from an Eastern shipping exchange and dealt with the shipment of wheat this year in Australia. It has been said that the charges at Fremantle are no higher than at other ports. Let the Government put the proper equipment in the other ports and reduce these charges.

The Colonial Secretary: The State cannot afford to place that equipment everywhere.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then there is no excuse for levying such charges as those I refer to.

The Colonial Secretary: They should pay for the use of the plant.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the charges paid the Trust last year, and the same conditions prevailed as prevail to-day, why institute any change? There have been no increases in wages and no reduction, but there is a reduction in the cost of handling. I looked through the balance sheet of the harbour trust to ascertain what the trust were expending, and whether they were handling wheat at a high cost. Unfortunately, all the wages and the cost of handling are lumped together and the items cannot be dissected. If the trust were charging too much last year for handling the wheat, they were justified in reducing the charge. If it is costing £20 to handle wheat on the wharf, why should they charge a person £15 for handling his wheat and charge £5 to someone else?

The Premier: They have not done that under the altered regulations, have they?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The last regulations have made very little difference. Some of them, however, have been repealed, such as this one—

Where a ship loads by means of slings hoisted on board by her own gear and power, a charge will be made against the ship owner or stevedore of .375d. per bag so loaded to defray a proportion of the cost of handling to ships slings and slinging. That has been altered. The trust now say that a person who does not use their cranes cannot pay. According to the legal interpretation the harbour trust had no power to charge for the use of gear that was not being used. They repealed that which they had no power to enforce.

The Colonial Secretary: That is a moot point.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then there is the other regulation, namely—

Where a ship loads by means of slings hoisted on board by means of a crane, the property of the Commissioners, the conditions governing the hiring of cranes, enacted by the Commissioners from time to time, shall apply and the charges when loading wheat to be paid by the ship owner or stevedore shall be paid at the rate of .701d. per bag so loaded, working between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, these charges to include the cost of driver and power.

That too has been repealed, and they have placed the cranes under the old conditions of so much per hour. Why do they not put the gantries in the same position? If it is right that cranes should be used at so much per hour, it is equally right that gantries shall be used in the same way.

The Colonial Secretary: It depends how quickly the ship could take delivery. It is fairer that the proposition should be on the basis of the number of bags delivered.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A ship that cannot take a large quantity of bags per hour is against the interest of the harbour trust,

but it is gain for that body if a ship can take a large quantity per hour. A general charge would not affect the position if it were at so much per hour. For the last 12 or 15 years the gantries have been charged for as so much per hour. I think it was 10s. for the use of elevators, and conveyors previously, but now when ships are built for quick loading it costs £1.

The Colonial Secretary: There is all that equipment there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: These charges have been detrimental to the port. I have it from a reliable authority that there is very little coaling going on to-day in Fremantle owing to the charges. I was told by a member of this Assembly to-day that the captain of a ship telegraphed to know what the harbour trust charges were for loading oil, and that if the charges were not too high she would come here. When the captain learned what the charges were it was decided that she should go on to Colombo on account of the cost here. This shows that the charges are detrimental to the port. They deprive the harbour trust of a certain amount of revenue, and make a difference to trade generally. Supplies which would be served to the ships when in port are not sold to them. I am not an expert in this matter.

Mr. A. Thomson: You are putting up a good case.

The Minister for Mines: On what ground does the member for Katanning claim to be an expert?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When I saw these charges I spoke to the Premier about them. There has been no alteration in wages or conditions and yet these charges have been reduced. It appeared to me that the trust must have been charging too much 12 months ago if they can now afford to reduce the charge by a farthing a bag.

The Colonial Secretary: Previously the harbour trust had the advantage of the bounty or quick despatch.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I also take this view, that whilst it was possible that there would be a saving with regard to the first two or three boats to whom an amount had been transferred, the charge would be bound to come back again in the charters that were made subsequently and there would be no saving to the wheat growers. Under the conditions prevailing I thought that no alteration should have been made to the charges. It also tends to show that the Government, or the Minister for Agriculture who was in charge of the wheat scheme, charged too much for last year's handling of the wheat. I do not think the amount is more than £3,000. I trust that all the regulations will have further consideration. The gantries should be placed on the hour basis. Wheat should be handled as cheaply as possible, and there should be no transfer of the cost of work done in one instance to any other part where the cost is not met. For instance, it costs £20 to do work on the wharf. The wharf should

pay the £20 rather than that it should pay £15 and the ship £5. The work should be allotted in a proper manner. There has been proof that an alteration should be effected, because some of the regulations that were laid on the Table of the House have been repealed since I gave notice of this motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. S. Sampson—Swan) [6.10]: I submit that the regulations are equitable and in the interests of the port, the ship and the grower. They were brought forward to some extent to equalise the charges made in other ports. In Fremantle a very heavy cost has been incurred by the State in the provision of expensive mechanical appliances for loading wheat expeditiously. Previously the charges for placing wheat on the gantries and so on was on the basis of so much per hour. The rate is now .375d. per bag. A charge has been made to the shipper and through him to the grower. In addition a charge was made to the ship for operating gantries, elevators, conveyors, etc. When the full facts are put forward I think it will be agreed that the regulation should not be disallowed. Because of the establishment of this expensive machinery, the shipowners enjoy the advantage of cheap loading. Conditions exist at Fremantle which do not prevail in most ports. Fremantle is the leading port in Western Australia, but these conditions should not be to the detriment of any other port, nor should they be to the special advantage of the ship who makes no concessions to the grower of the wheat. The State has provided the machinery. Whether wheat is shipped to Norway, Sweden, Germany, Japan or any other country the position remains the same. There is no advantage in respect of the rate of charter given by the ship to Fremantle, except so far as Fremantle offers an advantage from the geographical point of view. No advantage is gained because of the splendid machinery installed there. Up till recently, I understand, the position was that a sum by way of bounty was given to the harbour trust, because of the quick despatch insured for ships through this up-to-date machinery. Instead of a boat being obliged to stay in port for five or seven days, it is able to leave in three or four days. The bounty money received was considerable.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What did they get?
(Debate continued at a later stage.)

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 9 p.m.

BILL—JARNADUP-DENMARK RAILWAY.

Conference Managers' Report.

The PREMIER: I regret to have to report to the House that the managers of the Assembly met the managers of the Council but failed to arrive at an agreement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then no further action can be taken unless you wish to move that the Bill be laid aside.

The PREMIER: I do not propose to take any further action.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: As one of the managers from this House, I may be in order in saying a few words. There would have been a possibility of coming to an agreement though only by placing the Government in a position which would have made them look ridiculous in the eyes of the people of Australia. That being the case, we felt it would be far better that the Legislative Council should take the responsibility on their own shoulders. There is no doubt about it that, no matter on which side of the House we may be sitting, we must uphold the position of the Government of the day. The Legislative Council managers took up the wrong line of action. The Government went as far as they possibly could and when the representatives of another place declared that they would not take the Premier's word, I think they went a little too far. Even members of the Opposition have never at any time refused to take the word of the Premier. In the existing circumstances I regret what has happened, but there was no other honourable course to follow if we desired to uphold the prestige of this Chamber and see that the honour of the Government was upheld.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'Loughlen: May we speak on the subject?

Mr. SPEAKER: I regret there is nothing before the Chair.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is a pity we cannot record our opinion of another place.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST REGULATION 113.

To disallow.

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The shipowners have had the advantage of the machinery and cheap loading. This cheap loading was brought about by the provision of labour-saving appliances, and on this account vessels have been able to leave the port in a shorter time than formerly was the case. A corresponding benefit thus accrued through the shipper to the grower. There is no reduction in freight as compared with ports not so equipped as Fremantle, and that of course is a material point. Stevedoring at Bunbury costs 2s. 9d. to 2s. 10d. per ton as against 2s. 1d. per ton at Fremantle. Thus a considerable advantage is shown in favour of Fremantle. At Bunbury the shipper pays 5d. per ton less than at Fremantle, notwithstanding the costly labour-saving machinery which is installed at Fremantle. The despatch money, to which reference has been made as having been hitherto granted, has been reduced to such a low rate as to cut out the chance of an adequate return being made from this

sources to the Trust. Hence the regulations which were placed on the Table of the House early in November last, the regulations imposing a charge of .375d. to the shipowner. The time that is saved in loading is still an advantage to the shipowner. We may reasonably ask why the shipowners, representatives of all countries, should be given the advantage of the elevators, gantries, etc., without a reasonable charge being made for their use? The regulations referred to, and to which exception has been taken by the hon. member, have, so far as the main points are concerned, been amended and I will place the two amendments on the Table of the House. These amendments have the effect of excising the regulations referring to the loading by crane and also the loading by ship's gear. In respect of the other regulations a definite service is performed by the Harbour Trust, and consequently they should remain. The chief objections to the regulations have been removed, and so I hope the hon. member will now withdraw his motion, for there is no justification for its further discussion. The inference that the Fremantle Harbour Trust has seized upon another avenue of taxation is totally without foundation, for no additional revenue is expected. Certainly there is a great deal to be said in favour of bringing about uniformity among the various ports of Australia. The charges for handling wheat at Fremantle are as low as, or even lower than, those at any other port in Australia. The machinery at Fremantle has been installed by the State, and there is no obligation on the State to give those services to ship owners without reasonable charge being made.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [9.19]: I hope these regulations will not be disallowed. The amended regulation which was laid on the Table seems to be for the purpose of bringing about a more equitable allocation of the charges, as between the shipper and the ship owner. Frequently the ship owners are foreigners, notwithstanding which they receive the benefit of the up-to-date appliances at Fremantle for which no charge is made.

Mr. Underwood: What?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A charge is made.

Mr. LATHAM: It is the exporters, the growers, who pay all the costs. Very heavy capital expenditure has been incurred in installing these up-to-date appliances at Fremantle. Of course their use is charged for, but the ship owner does not make the payments. Unless these regulations are allowed, it will be the shippers, in other words the growers, who will have to pay. The charges here are exactly the same as in the Eastern States.

The Colonial Secretary: No, they are lower here.

Mr. LATHAM: A slight alteration has been made this year, but usually they are about the same. Yet because of the up-to-date appliances, boats are frequently loaded

more quickly at Fremantle than at any other port. I cannot understand why, although these amendments have been made, the ship owners are to have the benefit of the wharf cranes free of charge.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is a charge of 10s. per hour.

Mr. LATHAM: But it is charged to the grower, not to the ship owner. I hope the ship owners, who frequently are foreigners, will be called upon to pay for the use of the cranes and other appliances provided at Fremantle. If boats are a day or two longer in Fremantle, it means extra cost on the ship owner, so it is not asking too much of him that he should contribute towards the cost and maintenance of the machinery and appliances which afford him quicker despatch.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle—in reply) [9.24]: Let me tell the Colonial Secretary that there was received by the Harbour Trust last year £7,302 for crane hire, and for gantry hire £3,248. The member for York said the shipper, not the shipowner, had to pay. Of course the grower has to pay for the lot. I will admit there has been a preponderance of foreign ships coming in for wheat this season. That is because the foreign ships, paying lower wages, and being under smaller expense than the British ships, are able to cut in and take the wheat away. I do not believe it is the policy of the farmers of the State to wipe out all British ships because cheap foreign ships can be secured.

Mr. Latham: No one suggested that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But I am expressing the hope that it is not so. The increase per ton also affects the British ships, for it increases their charges.

Mr. Pickering: That cuts both ways.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, I have seen a letter from a British steamship firm which took away wheat last year. In that letter it was stated that the best thing to do was to cut out Fremantle altogether.

The Colonial Secretary: They will not get the same facilities elsewhere.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If facilities are provided in Fremantle to cheapen the handling of cargo, there is no excuse for charging a higher rate in order to bring about uniformity with other ports which have not the same facilities. A better way would be to provide the same facilities at those other ports.

The Colonial Secretary: It is not practicable.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no justification for increasing the charges because of the machinery on the wharf. The argument has always been that the installation of machinery served to cheapen the handling. Unless that is applied, it is of no use putting in costly machinery.

The Colonial Secretary: But why should the whole advantage of the machinery be given to the ship owner?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the handling charges cost £20 on the wharf, it is not fair

that we should charge the wharf £15 and charge the shipper £5. The Minister referred to the bounty. I know that last year when ships were held up for want of wheat, and lumpers were put off, I interviewed the manager of the wheat scheme, who told me he was sending out inspectors to ascertain whether the trucks were held up; because, he said, the quicker despatch he got the less he had to pay, for the bounty went to him, not to the Harbour Trust.

The Colonial Secretary: The bounty is practically cut out now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Trust's charges are regulated by Executive Council, so the bounty goes to the shipper, not to the Trust. Consequently the argument does not apply.

Mr. Latham: This does not alter the charges.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, I am replying, not to the hon. member, but to the Minister, who said the Harbour Trust did not get the bounty now. I was under the impression that the bounty for quick discharge went to the wheat scheme last year.

The Minister for Mines: The wheat scheme put it over the railways last year, for they expected us to keep the ships going in order that they might get the bounty.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is what I understood from the manager of the wheat scheme.

The Minister for Mines: Why did he not keep the shed full?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Colonial Secretary has given the exact position, namely that the increased charge is put on because facilities are not provided at other ports. The charges at Fremantle should be just sufficient to meet the cost of the work performed.

The Colonial Secretary: Are not you satisfied with those two decisions?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister made an alteration by repealing two of the regulations tabled on the 21st November last.

The Colonial Secretary: I am assured those are the only two points in dispute.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then the Minister has been wrongly assured. The Trust were making a charge for gantries although the cranes were never used. Some ships call for small parcels of wheat. One of them took 400 tons which had to be distributed over four holds, and in the circumstances, it would not have paid to fix the Trust machinery for such a small quantity. Consequently, the ship used its own gear. Under the regulation of November last, it was provided that irrespective of whether the Trust machinery was used, the ship had to pay 375d. per bag. It has since been found that that charge was illegal. Consequently, that regulation was repealed. That is one of the alterations to which the Minister refers. The other alteration was in regard to the wharf crane. The Trust were charging for the use of the crane at 701d. per bag, whereas the charge used to be so much per hour. Now they have reverted to the hourly charge. These are the only two alterations which

have been made, but they show that the Trust realised that a change was necessary. The Trust demand that elevators and conveyors be paid for at so much per bag instead of at the hourly rate. I explained that in moving the motion. The Minister says it is fair. It might be; I do not say it is not, but I do say that it is causing considerable dissatisfaction. The fact that a majority of the ships taking away our wheat are foreign and not British ships, while our own steamers belonging to the Commonwealth are tied up, shows there is something wrong.

Mr. Latham: Surely you are not blaming the regulations for that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The regulations have assisted. One overseas company written to pointed out that the charge would mean an additional 6d. per ton and they had to put on not 6d., but 1s.

The Colonial Secretary: No port in all Australia makes lower charges, and many charge higher rates.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no port in Australia which has machinery such as we have for loading ships.

The Colonial Secretary: Why give all these advantages?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We are charging for them, with the result that the Trust last year made a profit of £78,000 after paying all expenses.

Mr. Money: By taking trade which should have been done elsewhere.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I believe that the more ports we have, the better it is for the State. The hon. member will have my support to get similar facilities at Bunbury.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are discussing not ports, but regulations.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Last year the Government would make no change, because they said they could not see their way clear. Why is the change made this year? There has been no alteration in the conditions. Conditions are exactly the same and so are wages. Twelve months ago under the State Wheat Scheme an alteration was refused. Why is it made now?

Mr. Latham: They are shifting it to-day from the shipper to the ship.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That makes very little difference as regards the grower. The only difference would be in respect of those ships chartered before the regulation was made. Instead of British ships taking away our wheat as was the case last year. German ships and Swedish ships and, in fact, ships of all nationalities except British, are taking our wheat. Only one or two British ships have taken wheat this season and one of the reasons is to be found in these regulations. It was wrong of the Trust to alter in November the regulations governing wheat to be shipped in December, without giving notice prior to the charters having being arranged.

The Colonial Secretary: The decisions were made retrospective.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	16
Noes	...	...	...	18
Majority against	...	...	...	2

ATES

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Herou	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)
Mr. McCallum	

NORS

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Money
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Davies	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Denton	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Durack	Mr. Sampson
Mr. George	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Johnston	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)
Sir James Mitchell	

Question thus negatived.

BILL—MINERS' PHTHISIS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 4: Add a subclause as follows:—“(3) After every medical examination or re-examination of any person under this section, if such person is found not to be suffering from tuberculosis, he shall be supplied with a certificate in the prescribed form which, until revoked, shall entitle him either to continue working or to commence work in mining operations on, in or about any mine.”

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The clause provides for an examination in scheduled districts of men working in scheduled mines, but no provision was made for a person not suffering from tuberculosis to have evidence of the fact in the event of his applying for work elsewhere. Under the Mines Regulation Act any person known to be suffering from tuberculosis is prohibited from being employed in a mine. Without the amendment, a man might be called upon, after leaving a mine where he had been examined, to undergo another examination and produce evidence that he was not suffering from tuberculosis.

Mr. Chesson: This will be free of cost?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, there is no provision for any charge.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 8, Subclause (2): After the word “may” in the second line of the proviso insert “within fourteen days after service of the notice.”

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

It merely specifies the period within which a man must make his appeal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is fourteen days sufficient?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, because if a man has reason to disagree, he should act at once. He would be immediately placed on a fund and would be receiving compensation. After lodging his appeal, some time might elapse before the board could be called together and a decision arrived at.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In Kalgoorlie or Boulder 14 days might be sufficient; but in outback districts it might take a man some days to get to a medical officer to be examined, and in such circumstances 14 days might be too short.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The procedure to be adopted would be to bring men in outer districts into a centre for examination. A man at Menzies in need of examination would be brought to Kalgoorlie, probably at State expense. The laboratory examination proposed is such as to establish promptly and with certainty the presence or absence of the germ. A man who is not satisfied that he is affected with the germ can lodge an appeal, and a re-examination can then be made under the supervision of his own medical practitioner. If any difficulty arises in the outback districts, we shall certainly make a regulation providing for extension of time.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: I fail to see any reason for the Council's amendment. A man who had been examined and told that he was suffering from tuberculosis would very rarely appeal.

The Minister for Mines: But we must make provision for appeal.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: An appeal, made even six or eight weeks later, which would result in taking the man off the fund, would be in the interests of the State. If the amendment is accepted, it will become part of the measure; and no regulation can override an Act of Parliament.

Mr. CHESSON: I, too, fail to see the need for the Council's amendment. This measure will apply only in prescribed areas. A man adjudged to be suffering from tuberculosis is not likely to appeal against the medical decision. The laboratory test, with analysis of the sputum and an X-ray examination, would be conclusive. The measure is not likely to apply to outside districts for some time to come.

Mr. McCALLUM: Say a man is brought in from the Sons of Gwalia mine in Leonora to be examined in Kalgoorlie. I understand that the process of arriving at a decision occupies from seven to 10 days.

The Minister for Mines: That method will not be employed when the laboratory has been established.

Mr. McCALLUM: The man would not hang around waiting for the decision, but would go back to work. Then, on receipt of the decision given by the medical men, the miner, if desirous of appealing, would have to give notice in writing to the Minister. For that a period of fourteen days is too short. The period should be a month.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have no objection to the proposed extension, but the difficulty described is not likely to arise. There must be some specified time within which an

appeal can be lodged. The process of examination now operating in South Africa will be adopted here. The examination will then result in your knowing within 15 minutes what is your condition; in 15 minutes you will be able to see the plate.

Mr. Wilson: Make the period 28 days.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If it should be found in any case that 14 days are not sufficient to enable an appeal to be lodged, the man will not be penalised because of that circumstance. I give an absolute guarantee on the point. Of course a regulation cannot override an Act of Parliament, but in the event of hardship arising one can forego one's rights under an Act. The Government have frequently done that. The object of the Council's amendment is to ensure that action shall be taken so soon as the person concerned knows that action is necessary. I ask the Committee to accept the Council's amendment, in order that the Bill may not go back to another place and thus be jeopardised.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3.—Clause 8, Subclause 4, add the following proviso:—"The decision of the board upon any question of fact shall be final, and shall not be subject to appeal to or review by any court of law";

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This amendment does not affect the rights of the man as a citizen, and the question of irregularity does not come in. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 4.—Clause 8, add a new subclause to stand as (7), as follows:—"Whenever a medical officer or practitioner appointed under this Act reports in writing to the Minister that a person named in such report and engaged in mining operations has so developed symptoms of miners' phthisis uncomplicated by tuberculosis, as to indicate that further employment on, in, or about a mine or part of a mine to which this Section applies may be detrimental to his future health, the Minister shall, by notice in the prescribed form, notify such person accordingly";

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

It takes us a step further than the Bill as introduced, but only to the extent of requiring a notification that the time has arrived when the man affected should, for his own good, leave underground work in the mines. I have not been idle in this matter. I have already informed the House that I am making every endeavour to ensure that Government departments having work of a nature held to be suitable for miners in this condition, shall give them preference. I am receiving every possible assistance from the Sewerage Department. Mr. Lawson informed me that he is prepared to give preference of employment to these men in certain classes of work which he recognises as being suitable for them. He will advise me of the number he can take. I hope to be able to place those who are withdrawn from the industry suffering from

tuberculosis and also those who will be withdrawn under the amendment.

Mr. CHESSON: I welcome the amendment and wish it could have gone further to make provision for men suffering from silicosis being assured of employment when they are taken from the mines. Very often men who are notified that they are in such a condition that they should leave their occupation, are unable to do so because they have people dependent on them. If suitable employment could be found for them their lives would be prolonged.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM: The amendment will give the Bill a wider scope. I was pleased to hear the Minister's remarks regarding his endeavours to place men in employment. I recognise there is no obligation upon him under the Bill to do that but if only we can get sympathetic administration, it will mean a great deal to the industry.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 5.—Clause 9, Subclause 5, strike out all words after the word "mean," in line 2, and insert the following:—"such work as the Principal Medical Officer or such deputy as he shall appoint or the Principal Medical Officer of the Wooroloo Sanatorium certifies to be suitable employment for the person to whom it is offered, and being either work on, in, about a mine or part of a mine not declared under Section 8 to be a mine or part of a mine to which such section applies, or elsewhere, or of some other kind";

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The clause as it left this House did not make our meaning clear. The intention is made more apparent in the Council's amendment.

Mr. MUNSIE: I hope the Council's amendment will not be agreed to in the form in which it appears. The portion I take exception to relates to the power given to the Principal Medical Officer to appoint a deputy. Our intention was that suitable work should be prescribed by the Principal Medical Officer, or the principal medical officer of the Wooroloo Sanatorium. We were of the opinion that the latter was the best man in the State to prescribe what was suitable work for these men. If this question is to be decided by a deputy, the medical officers may appoint any man they choose to do this work. The Principal Medical Officer should not be given power to authorise any deputy to act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The wording of the amendment before us is not very different from our own proposal except that we omitted to give power to the Principal Medical Officer to appoint a deputy. The work of the Principal Medical Officer is of such a nature that he may not be available too frequently to carry out this work.

Mr. Corboy: But he should classify certain definite forms of employment which are suitable for these men.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is my intention that the Principal Medical Officer shall confer with Dr. Mitchell of the Wooroloo Sanatorium and decide upon certain classes of work which are suitable for men withdrawn from the

mining industry. I want to assure members that this work is not to be done in any haphazard manner. When we reach finality with the Federal Government regarding the laboratory at Kalgoolie, I shall make arrangements with the Government departments, after consulting with the two principal medical officers, to ascertain the work that will be obtainable and see that when the men are withdrawn from the mines they will be provided with this work. I do not wish to reflect in any way upon our Principal Medical Officer when I suggest that Dr. Mitchell will probably be consulted most in these matters.

Mr. Corboy: He is more in touch with them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. If the Principal Medical Officer and Dr. Mitchell are unable to attend to decide these cases from time to time, surely we should have power to appoint deputies. On more than one occasion already, I have consulted Dr. Mitchell when a man, who has left the industry and has been at Wooroloo, has applied for a pass to go to work in the country. I have asked Dr. Mitchell if the man left of his own free will or was released by Dr. Mitchell. I have asked whether the work was suitable for the particular individual and if Dr. Mitchell agreed, I have issued the pass enabling the man to proceed to his destination. These men deserve the best consideration we can give them and we do not wish this work to be hung up because neither of these two medical men can be available at any particular time.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister has indicated that the deputies will not be appointed except in rare and urgent cases. There is a danger in appointing deputies at all. I base my belief on what has occurred in connection with the placing of disabled soldiers in what is called suitable employment by the Repatriation Department. Some of these deputies have certified that certain employment was suitable for the men, although it was obviously unsuitable. I do not wish that position to arise under the Bill. I do not think there will be such pressure of work in connection with the Bill that the principal medical officers referred to will not be able to do it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Surely it is preferable to have the provision for deputies, should the necessity arise, rather than say that if we find it is necessary to appoint them, we will amend the Bill later on. It may be that hon. members may know of a doctor who is quite capable of doing the work and they may ask me to appoint him a deputy to do it, in the event of the principal medical officers not being available. If this provision is not in the Bill I will not be able to do so. It is not a matter of public servants appointing whom they choose to act as a deputy for I have to be satisfied, as the Minister carrying the responsibility.

Mr. MUNSIE: We shall be giving power to one man to appoint a deputy and not to the other. Both should have the same power, if one must have it. In point of fact, if a deputy is appointed he may do the whole of the work. We already have two good men in the department upon whom we can rely, and we should utilise them for this purpose.

Hon. W. C. ANGLWIN: In the first place the Minister was satisfied that one medical officer could do the work, but afterwards agreed to the

inclusion of the other. I am doubtful about these deputies. When we have an expert such as Dr. Mitchell, we should make use of his services. There is no better man than he in the State to advise those who are suffering from miner's complaint. If a deputy is appointed he is sure to be a junior officer in the department. The amendment should be altered to provide that both senior medical officers should be consulted. Dr. Mitchell has never had a chance of putting his knowledge to full use. He told me once that if he could get these cases in the early stages he could cure about 80 per cent. of them.

The Minister for Mines: I do not want to use any deputy unless it is necessary, but provision should be made for the appointment of one.

Mr. CHESSON: I move an amendment—

That the words, "or such deputy as he shall appoint" be struck out.

I endorse the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle respecting Dr. Mitchell. Against his decision there should be no appeal. I understand that several cases were moved from Wooroloo against his advice and sent to the Old Men's Home. That is quite wrong.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Dr. Mitchell may elect to leave the Sanatorium for some better position in the department. Under this amendment he would then be excluded from dealing with these cases, because of the provision for a deputy being struck out. My intention is to use the best man available at all times. If members strike these words out they must not complain afterwards about the result.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

PAPERS—COLLIE WATER SCHEME.

On motion by Mr. Wilson ordered—That all papers in connection with the Government's water scheme at Collie be laid on the Table of the House.

*Sitting suspended from 10.35 p.m. to
12.40 a.m.*

BILL—PENSIONERS (RATES EXEMPTION.)

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Assembly on the amendment of the Council.

A clerical error.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the Acting Clerk of Parliaments:—

In going through the Pensioners' (Rates Exemption) Bill passed by both Houses, prior to the same being presented to the Governor for the Royal Assent, my attention was called to a clerical error in Clause 2. The word "shall" as printed in line 2 of that clause appears to have been printed

in error for the words "may claim to," which the journals of your House show were the actual words passed by your House. In these circumstances, your House will doubtless deal with this as with other amendments.

It will be necessary for the hon. member in charge of the Bill to move me out of the Chair for the purpose of going into Committee to consider this communication as if it were an ordinary amendment from the Council.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; Capt. Carter in charge of the Bill.

On motion by Capt. Carter, "shall" was struck out in line 2 of Clause 2 and "may claim to" inserted in lieu.

Bill reported with an amendment, the report adopted and a message accordingly forwarded to the Council.

Sitting suspended from 12.45 a.m. to 3.30 a.m.

BILLS (6) RETURNED.

1. Electoral Districts.
 2. Appropriation.
 3. Mining Act Amendment.
 4. Loan.
 5. Claremont and Perth Road Districts Rates.
 6. Road Districts Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

BILL—PENSIONERS (RATES EXEMPTION).

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment, arising out of a clerical error, made by the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT—CLOSE OF SESSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.23 a.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to Thursday, 8th February.

Question put and passed.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.26 a.m.]: Before the House adjourns I wish to say that we are all grateful to you Mr. Speaker, to the Chairman of Committees, and the deputy chairmen for the manner in which the business has been conducted during this long session now about to close. It has been a strenuous session, marked by

long sittings. True we have not had many all night sittings, and while we have had some, I am glad to say that they have been characterised by the utmost good temper. Long sittings are apt to try the patience and temper of those taking part in them. I think we have done our work to the best of our ability and in the interests of the country. I am sorry, however, that so many Bills have not found favour with another place, particularly the Bill to provide for the construction of a railway from Jarnadup to Denmark. This was a very important Bill indeed, being closely related to the Government's immigration proposals in the South-Western portion of the State, as well as in respect of the settlement of our own people on the land. I do not propose to say much more about the matter just now, except that I am very disappointed that the Bill did not become law. It may be necessary for the Government to ask Parliament to meet again, perhaps on Thursday next, to give further consideration to the matter. (Members: Hear, hear!) This will mean the summoning of a special session of Parliament. The question, however, will be dealt with in due course. I have nothing more to say except that we all appreciate the manner in which you, Mr. Speaker, have presided over the deliberations of the Chamber during a trying session, and that we are glad to find your health has been restored. We have missed the Leader of the Opposition during the past fortnight. Unfortunately, he has been laid aside by illness, but we hope that he will soon recover and that he will be with us when we resume. It is not often that Mr. Collier is out of his seat in this Chamber. He is assiduous in his attention to his duty and on that account we miss him more than we otherwise would do.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [3.29]: I am glad to join in the congratulations of the Premier. The times here have been very strenuous for you, Mr. Speaker, and the officers of the House, and particularly the "Hansard" staff. Undoubtedly we have done a great deal of work, though I cannot add, with the best results. That, however, has not been altogether our fault. The Premier has said that it may be necessary to hold a special session. If such a session is held, I hope the Premier will meanwhile give consideration to the question of amending our Constitution in respect of another place. The time has arrived when in the interests of the State we should place the other Chamber in exactly the same position as that held by the Senate under the Federal Constitution. If the legislation of the Government, who are elected by a majority of the people, is thrown aside by another place, the people should be appealed to; but members of another place should then be called upon to face their constituents in the same way as members of this House are. During this session most important planks of the Government's policy have been dealt with elsewhere in a manner which some years ago

would have prompted the members of the Ministry to hand in their resignations to the Governor. That step, however, would not overcome the difficulties facing those who are trying to do what they believe to be most desirable in the interests of the State. It is the members of this House who, in such circumstances, are called upon to ascertain whether they retain the confidence of their electors. In my opinion the members of the Chamber responsible for holding up the business of the Government are the ones who should be compelled to ascertain whether their actions meet with the approval of the electors who sent them to Parliament.

Mr. Lambert: That would make them a little more careful.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not see how objection can be raised to such a proposition. Any member of Parliament, irrespective of which House he is in, who feels sure that he has the confidence of the people should have no fear in regard to facing the electors. Although our efforts this session have not met with complete success, we hope that what we have done will assist the State to a position of greater prosperity. I join with the Premier in offering to you, Mr. Speaker, congratulations on the fact that you are again in the enjoyment of your health. I trust that when we meet again we shall have better luck than we have had during the past few months.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [3.22]: In the absence of the Leader of the Country Party I desire to offer the congratulations of the party to yourself Mr. Speaker on your recovery, and also our best thanks to the Chairman of Committees and the deputy chairmen for the consideration they have shown to members, also to the staff and particularly "Hansard." I also wish to associate myself with the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition regarding the action of another place. It is about time we asked another place to share the responsibility if they wish to assume that control which is the prerogative of the Assembly. I hope we shall be given the opportunity to point out to the Legislative Council that if they wish to continue to dictate to us, they should share that responsibility. I offer my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, and trust that your restoration to good health will be maintained so that you may be able to continue to carry out the duties of your high office with satisfaction to yourself as well as to the country. I trust also that the Leader of the Opposition will be amongst us if we should have to meet again in the near future.

Mr. SPEAKER [3.34]: On behalf of the Chairman of Committees, the deputy chairmen, the officers of the House, the "Hansard" staff, the messengers and all concerned in the work of Parliament, I thank you for your expression of good wishes and for the manner in which they

were received by the House. There can be no two opinions about it that the session has been a strenuous one indeed, and while perhaps it has not been as effective as one would have wished, the blame cannot be laid at the door of this Chamber. We realise the strenuous nature of the work when it has to be carried on under trying atmospherical conditions such as have been experienced during the past week. I wish to thank members for their courtesy and kindness to me during the whole session, and especially for their consideration during the period of my illness. I regret that the Leader of the Opposition has been prevented on account of illness from attending to the sittings during the last few days, and I trust that it will not be long before he will have recovered. As has been remarked, the Leader of the Opposition is one of the most regular attendants at the sittings of this Chamber. I doubt whether there is another member who keeps to his seat as long and as continuously as the hon. gentleman, and I am certain that only ill health would cause his absence from amongst us. I trust before he reads the report of my remarks he will be completely restored to health. I again thank hon. members for their expressions towards myself, the Chairmen of Committees and the staff.

House adjourned at 3.36 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 8th February, 1923.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PETITION—EMPIRE DAY.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I wish to present a petition relating to the origin of Empire Day. It contains 235 signatures. I have been asked by several influential citizens to present this petition. I move—

That the petition be received.