

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: That would amount to £6 10s. a year.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Equal to 2½ whiskies a week.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Perhaps if some motorists drank 2½ whiskies fewer, there would not be so many accidents. I am now in far better health than I was when I owned a motor car, a year ago. Nowadays I walk, and as a result am in much better condition. If a good many people who really cannot afford cars had to do without them, the world would not stop nor would the development of Western Australia be arrested. I do not know, either, that too much of this motor-car business is good for the morals of the community.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is that why you abandoned your car?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Last night, when going home from the House at 10 o'clock, I saw four cars parked without lights on the other side of Harvest-terrace.

Members: Why bring that up?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: There was no one in the front seats of those cars, but I heard giggling from two of the cars as I walked past. I wonder whether the parents of those young people—

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member is going beyond the scope of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Probably I am, Sir; and I shall not pursue that line any further, just as I refrained from pursuing my investigations into those motor-cars. However, I do at this opportunity make an urgent appeal to the Government to give very serious thought to the question of the means that can be adopted to lessen the terrible slaughter of innocent people that is going on at present—not by competent motorists, and not by all the motorists by any manner of means, but by a lot of irresponsible, selfish, arrogant, road hogs who do not for one moment consider anybody except themselves. If the regulations applying to motorists need tightening up, let us tighten them up to the utmost degree; but let us be most careful to see that we do not interfere beyond what is absolutely necessary with the rights and privileges of those persons who cannot afford to drive motor cars, who have been brought into this world without the wherewithal to buy motor cars, but who have a right to walk along the public thoroughfares in safety. It may be said that many of these

suggestions will entail hardships on motorists. Probably that is so, but who has paid for all these wonderful streets and roads?

Members. The motorist.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Is that so? Every year we authorise the expenditure of huge sums of loan money for the making of roads.

Hon. A. Thomson: But you take a lot out of the petrol—7½d. per gallon.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: After a speech like this I will never give you a ride again.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: If the hon. member gets his third-party insurance he will, I feel sure, not omit to give me a ride. On behalf of the North-West I wish to say how grateful we are for the reduction in the fees for trailers. Many of our pastoralists have to use trailers to carry luggage and perishable goods from their stations to the railway line, and the fee imposed under the old Act was altogether excessive. I am glad the Government have put that matter right. Now for the last time, I do hope the regulations the Government intend to make will be laid on the Table of the House, so that members of this Chamber will be able to review them and consider them carefully before the session closes.

On motion by Hon. L. B. Bolton, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—WHEAT, BULK HANDLING.

Mr. PATRICK asked the Premier: 1, On what date did the Royal Commission on

bulk handling present its report? 2, Is he aware that the Chief Secretary stated at Morawa on the 13th September, in reply to a deputation, "that Cabinet had decided on their policy re bulk handling, and that a statement would shortly be made in the Assembly"? 3, Can he inform the House as to when that statement will be made? 4, In view of the Commission's recommendation, will the Government agree to further sites being leased for bulk handling without delay?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 1st August, 1935. 2, No, but any statement made by the Chief Secretary would be correct. 3, The policy of the Government in the matter will be made known to the House as soon as possible. 4, Answered by No. 3.

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES BOARD.

Mr. WATTS asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware of the lack of housing accommodation which exists in a number of the smaller country towns in this State? 2, Has the Workers' Homes Board any funds available for the erection of homes—(a) in the metropolitan area, (b) in country towns such as those mentioned?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, (a) Yes; (b) Yes, provided such smaller country towns are considered satisfactory security.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READINGS.

1, Metropolitan Whole Milk Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture.

2, Western Australian Turf Club (Private) Act Amendment.

Introduced by Mr. Tonkin.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—DIVORCE AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [4.34] in moving the second reading said: The Bill

is designed to remove an anomaly existing in the divorce law of the State. At the present time only the petitioner can apply to have the decree nisi made absolute; the respondent is not permitted to do so. Of course until the decree is made absolute neither party can re-marry. The Bill does not intend in any way to extend or liberalise the principles of divorce; it merely seeks to alter the method of procedure and to end an unsatisfactory state of affairs which leads to many abuses of the divorce law. The parent Act was enacted in 1863, in other words 72 years ago, and with the exceptions of slight amendments providing for additional grounds of divorce, no amendments have been introduced over all that long period. In the divorce Acts of the other States there is already the provision that this Bill seeks to introduce in this State. In New South Wales since 1899 it has been possible for the respondent to make application to have the decree nisi made absolute, and the Bill before the House is moulded on the provisions of the Act of New South Wales. In New Zealand the provision has been in operation for a number of years, whilst in South Australia and Victoria the decree is made absolute as a matter of course after a period of six months, should no application be made from either the petitioner or the respondent. It may be taken for granted that after the petitioner has approached the court and the decree nisi has been granted, the reason for delay or failure to apply to have the decree made absolute is that the petitioner desires to strike some unfair bargain with the respondent for the price of his freedom, or alternatively it is from vindictiveness that the petitioner does not apply to have the decree made absolute. The question members should ask themselves is whether it is right for persons to be kept in a position where they are neither married nor single, with no hope of reconciliation with their former partners, and no right to enter into a respectable relationship with any other persons; or whether this unsatisfactory position should be ended and an opportunity given to those unfortunate people to live normal respectable lives and rear families in lawful wedlock. The court at any time after the decree nisi has been granted is prepared to order that permanent maintenance be

paid to the respondent if a woman, and her rights and the rights of her children are safe-guarded in the Bill. In the interests of individuals and on the grounds of public policy, it is only right that the respondent should have an opportunity to apply for the decree to be made absolute if the petitioner fails to do so. In this State there has been a number of cases in which the petitioner has not moved to have the decree made absolute, and in order that none of those cases should remain in abeyance, it is provided in the Bill that they shall be included. In one instance I have in mind, the petitioner made application and secured the decree nisi, but she has since left the State, there is no hope of a reconciliation, and the respondent now desires to remarry. In such circumstances the House should pass the Bill and give that individual an opportunity to get somebody to look after his children. I believe there is a good deal of public opinion in favour of the Bill. In 1934, although I was not aware of it when applying for leave to introduce the Bill, the National Council of Women at a meeting carried a resolution and sent a recommendation to the Minister asking that an amendment be brought down similar to that contained in the Bill. Also in 1934 a resolution on similar lines was carried by the Labour Women's Organisation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Education, debate adjourned.

MOTION—NATIONAL INSURANCE.

Representations to Commonwealth Government.

Debate resumed from the 25th September on the following motion by Mr. Cross:—

That in the opinion of this House representations should be made to the Commonwealth Government to establish at the earliest possible date national insurance covering unemployment, as the first step towards the establishment of a comprehensive national insurance scheme.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [4.40]: The member for Canning is to be complimented upon his vision in bringing forward this motion. I do not suppose there is a member of the House who will not agree that there should be some means of providing

for those persons thrown out of employment by the mechanising of industry, and as a result of lack of work for those men displaced by machinery, whether it be bulk handling or any other system under which machines are employed. When we realise that the worker is divorced from the means of production, that the machine is in the hands of those who exploit the position irrespective of those thrown on the scrap heap, it is clear that some method will have to be devised in the near future to cope with the position. Large numbers of men throughout the world are without employment, and those men even when they are employed, and even though they were employed in Australia, would receive only the small pittance of £3 10s. 6d. a week on which to maintain themselves and their wives and children. Such a man need be out of work for only one week to be eagerly looking forward to the securing of some means of providing sustenance for himself and his dependants. It is illuminating to consider the small incomes enjoyed or endured by the bulk of the people in this country. From the Commonwealth census returns we find that persons having no income at all consist of 308,747 males, and 83,698 females, or a total of 392,435 people who have no income whatever, according to the census returns. Those earning £52 per annum or less consist of 566,814 males, and 308,680 females, or a total of 875,503 people receiving £52 per annum or less, that is to say, less than £1 per week. Those in receipt of incomes from £52 to £103 per annum consist of 385,055 males, and 188,556 females, or 573,611 persons receiving less than £2 per week. And they are under the heading of "bread-winners"! That is the term applied to them. From £104 to £155 per annum, male and female combined number 375,686. From £156 to £207 per annum, there are 265,649 males and 41,550 females, or a total of 307,199. From £208 to £259 per annum, 222,772 males and 17,508 females, or a total of 240,280 persons. With £260 or over per annum, there are 307,804 males and 23,933 females, or a total of 331,734 people. Since the census was taken it has been reported that where one person is unemployed to-day, there are five employed. So the position has adjusted itself in regard to unemployment since the taking of the census. However, it is highly significant to find the huge total of 787,841 fe-

males and 2,367,780 males living on the amounts specified, which are not the result of hearsay but of a census. It is easily seen why poverty is in our midst. I can understand people being afraid of the so-called bogey of starvation. We should remove that fear, that sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of people at all times. If they were not subject to that fear, this would be a much better world. With that end in view it is essential to make some provision in the form of national insurance to cover the period when people, as the result of forces over which they have no control, are compulsorily idle. Instead of their being obliged to resort to charity, there should be some comprehensive scheme upon a national basis by which these people would receive the wherewithal to live, even though displaced from industry. I for one do not desire to see people mendicants; but it is an essential of civilisation that we should make room, both by means of reduced hours and some such scheme as suggested, for the unfortunate people to whom I have referred, to receive a pittance whether they are working or not, so long as they are willing to take work when it is offering. It goes without saying that the ramifications of the question extend far outside the State. It is a national matter. The mover of the motion realises that it is a national matter, when he suggests that the Federal Government's attention be drawn to the need for a scheme of national insurance. As regards industry, when all is said and done, the workers are those who produce wealth; and who has a better right to enjoy the fruits of industry than have the workers who are the source of those fruits? As a result, industry has a specific duty to perform—to see that those comprised in the army of industry are carried by industry when they compulsorily become a burden. The suggestion in the motion would provide a scheme for removing the spectre that is always confronting the working people. A man works till he is 60 years of age, living an honest, sober, decent life, bringing up his family as a good father should do; and at the end of that time what has he? Has he anything? Even the most frugal man in that position will at the most possess the shelter he and his family live under. If he is subject to the vicissitudes that the ordinary family man encounters—sickness among his children, or his wife in ill-health—he is immediately in-

digent. We have the spectacle of men retiring at 65 years of age and being thrown on the scrap heap after serving for years in continuity of employment under the Government. What have such men at the end of their time? How much more must the vision of old age oppress those who experience lack of continuity of work—men in the building trade, for example, men employed casually for a week or a fortnight at a time? Some measure of the kind suggested in the motion is essential in the interests of the people generally. I felt it incumbent upon me, in view of the initiative of the member for Canning in bringing the subject before the Chamber, to accord him my meed of praise for urging this House to place the matter before the Federal Government, with a view to implementing our desire in the direction indicated. If the motion is carried, my immediate purpose will have been served.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.52]: At the recent conference of the National Party expression was given to a desire for national insurance, and I support the motion as bringing the matter forward. I doubt, however, whether in itself it is sufficient to meet the difficulties that face us. I have here a speech delivered in England by Mr. Ogilvie, the Premier of Tasmania, in the course of which he rather condemns the viewpoint of certain British Ministers in regard to their problems, Britain already having a scheme of national insurance in force. These words were uttered by Mr. Ogilvie—

I have heard Minister after Minister, and, I said on Wednesday, from the point of view of a survey of the existing economic difficulties, nothing could be more admirable, but I heard not one suggestion as to a cure or remedy for those difficulties. It seems to me so far that it is the terrible poverty question that everyone is frightened to attack.

Those words were uttered in a country where national insurance is in force, and the speech is a recent one. Mr. Ogilvie also said—

In Australia we can produce enough for one hundred million people, and side by side we have had 500,000 people unemployed and verging on destitution—starving in a land which can produce everything except oil. We could be almost a self-contained country.

In conclusion Mr. Ogilvie says a rather striking thing which has a bearing on the motion—

May I say that, after all my experience, I agree with your proposals with regard to this electoral campaign.

That is a campaign to abolish poverty, similar to the campaign recently started in Perth. Mr. Ogilvie supports it—

The public are waiting to be led, and they are looking to you to lead them. The only way is by bringing political pressure to bear upon your political representatives in the House of Commons. Something has to be done, and done quickly, otherwise destruction will overtake us.

As I read the speech, it suggests that in view of Mr. Ogilvie's experience in England national insurance by itself, as practised there, is not sufficient. Naturally, it would be a big help for those who are employed part of the time; but it would not overcome the main difficulty. I think the mover of the motion himself said that he would go further with his proposals than the practice now obtaining in England. In any case, nothing but good can come, so far as I see, from urging the Federal Government to take the matter up and obtain all the information possible, because by some means or other we must get out of the present difficulty.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [4.56]: I desire to commend the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) for bringing forward this motion. Insurance of this kind has proved its place in the social structure of nations. The most recent contribution to the subject that I have read is a book called "The Unemployed Man," by "An Impartial American Observer," in which the writer records his experiences in England during 12 months devoted to a study of the British national insurance system as it applies to the unemployed. The man has spent his time amongst unemployed workers and also in factories, and after carefully summarising the position he records his conclusion that the system in Britain has justified itself. I agree with the member for Claremont (Mr. North) that unemployed insurance will not strike at the root of the evil, but I also agree with the member for Canning that it will go some distance in helping to provide a measure of economic security for people who otherwise would feel the distress of times of sickness and unemployment severely.

The Premier: That system of insurance has existed in Germany for over 30 years.

Mr. McDONALD: As the mover said, the system has long been in existence in many Continental countries.

Mr. Thorn: Has it had the desired effect?

The Premier: In part it has.

Mr. McDONALD: It may not have done all that people wished, but all those Continental countries retain their schemes of national insurance. The Royal Commission appointed by the Commonwealth Government in 1925 reported in 1927, as we know, in favour of a scheme of national insurance, but also reported that, as also we know, the scheme must be one made with the co-operation of the States. Although proposals for national insurance are now being considered by the Federal Government, it appears to me that a resolution of this House expressing the public opinion of this State will help to bring the subject into the realm of practical politics. I have for some time thought that our social legislation regarding pensions might go still further than it goes to-day, in the sense that our pensions might be divided into two categories—one a pension system for people who arrive at a certain age and who are in possession of either very small means or no means at all, and the other a contributory pension system under which people could contribute during their working lives and would then have, on a proper actuarial basis, some provision made for them by way of annuity with a much larger concession in regard to property or income which they could enjoy in addition to their pension, than exists in the case of the present Australian old-age pension. I observed just recently that in the proposals made to Congress in the United States President Roosevelt has in view a scheme by which pensions would be not only for what I may call the indigent, but also on an actuarial basis in which a much larger proportion of the population would participate by way of annuity upon reaching a certain age. I consider it well worth while to support the motion.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [5.0]: I support the motion. As the member for Subiaco has said, our problems are becoming more complex because of the fact that machinery has displaced manual labour to a very large extent. It has often been urged in this House that we should reduce working hours. There is not the slightest doubt that that would help the situation. I have often thought it very hard that a worker, when he attains the age of 65 years, should find himself cast on the scrap-heap. In my opinion it is due to

an oversight on the part of all Governments through not making provision for those men when they become too old to work. If this problem had been seriously grappled with years ago, we would to-day have funds in hand to provide for men who are thus compulsorily retired. Several members who are at the present time supporting the Government have referred to the improvement in the unemployment position. The improvement is no doubt very gratifying, but we must bear in mind that the position is likely to become serious again at any time.

The Premier: After the loan money has been spent.

Mr. THORN: Yes. I often reflect upon the fact that whatever you or your Government do to improve the position, we are always liable to get the overflow of unemployed from the Eastern States. It takes them some months to qualify to get here.

The Premier: But they get here.

Mr. THORN: Yes. That is a position we shall always have to meet. This is really a national question and it seems to me that the time is long past when we should make provision for a fund to provide for our unemployed.

The Premier: On a national basis. A State cannot cope with it.

Mr. THORN: I asked the Premier, when he interjected as the member for Claremont was speaking, whether national insurance had been a success in Germany. He said it was a help. There is no doubt it is a help, but it has not proved sufficient to cope with the unemployment problem. At all events, if the Commonwealth Government take this matter up, they will have the advantage of the experience of other countries in coping with the problem.

Mr. North: The present is a very bad time to introduce such a scheme.

Mr. THORN: That is so, but I do not see how we can improve the position unless we inaugurate some such scheme, with adequate provision for the protection of this State; because, as I have said, if other Governments fail to make provision for the unemployed in their States, they are likely to come to our State. I am fully in accord with the views expressed by the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) and also by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) and other speakers. While on this subject, I would mention that several unions in Western Australia have been asking for some pro-

vision in the way of superannuation. The Police Union have not got a superannuation scheme, but they have a fund, and a very good fund it is. When a police officer retires from the force he gets a substantial lump sum which is very helpful to him; yet we find that in the Government railway workshops and other Government departments, the Government servants receive nothing when they retire.

The Premier: We are the only State in Australia that has not a superannuation scheme for its public servants.

Mr. THORN: I have several friends in the police force, and have often discussed this matter with them.

The Premier: The members of the police force are a little better off than the others.

Mr. THORN: Yes. My friends in the police force are real friends, I might say. I think I saw the Speaker smile when I made that remark.

The Premier: The police force has what is known as the Police Benefit Fund.

The Minister for Police: It is just as well to be friendly with the police.

Mr. THORN: Yes. I keep on friendly terms with them, and I have had the opportunity of studying the question. I repeat that I am in favour of a superannuation scheme. There are people who have served the State faithfully and well throughout their lives and who then, as the member for Subiaco said, find themselves without adequate provision for their old age, after having been paid a rate of wages that simply allowed them to live comfortably and to meet expenses in the way of sickness. My own experience on the land has been that whenever I managed to save a little money, it had to go in payment of medical expenses, and so I found myself once again on the breadline. That is the position of a very great number of workers to-day. I give my whole-hearted support to the motion and sincerely hope that good will result from it.

MR. WARNER (Mt. Marshall) [5.8]: I support the motion. I believe every member of this House will support it. We all appreciate, no doubt, that the time is not yet opportune to inaugurate some scheme of national insurance. The proper time to initiate it would be when most of our people are in employment. It has been said very frequently, however, that we have turned the corner we are all looking for, and therefore it might be well to make a start now

When one considers the large sums of money expended to provide for old age and other pensions, national insurance will not be much more costly to the people of Australia after the lapse of 10 or 15 years. The question is a big one, but I believe that in 20 or 30 years, if the scheme is introduced and we are spared to look upon it then, it will be regarded as one of the best measures ever brought forward by a Government in Australia, and we shall be proud of the fact that it was introduced by the Western Australian Parliament.

On motion by Mr. Nulsen, debate adjourned.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th September.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [5.10]: We have just been listening to five speakers, all of whom have supported the motion that was being debated. I have to bring forward arguments, not against that motion, but against the proposed amendment to the Mining Act. I cannot agree to accept the amendment moved by the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall). He is endeavouring to have inserted in the Act something which will in the future absolutely prevent the granting of concessions and the renewal of concessions already granted, irrespective of the circumstances. I was not present when the hon. member made his speech, but I have taken the trouble to read it, and to read it carefully. He is quite correct in saying that he is not introducing anything new, and that he had not said anything on the matter that I had not heard before. He has, however, made several statements, whether intentionally or not I cannot say, which are incorrect. One of the arguments he used in favour of the amendment was that at the time the big agitation was proceeding in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, for a bounty on gold, the delegation that waited upon the Commonwealth Government, and to which an immense amount of publicity was given, never mentioned our Mining Act, nor was any mention made of reservations. All that was wanted was a bonus of £1 per ounce. If that had been granted, they would have been completely satisfied. The hon.

member ended up by saying that they got the bonus of £1 per ounce. As I have said, I have read his speech very carefully, and he repeated on three occasions that they did get £1 an ounce on all gold produced. As a matter of fact, they did not get anything of the kind. We did ask for £1 an ounce on all gold produced, but that proposition was turned down. What we did get was £1 an ounce on the gold produced in excess of the average of the three years 1928, 1929 and 1930. The average for those three years was 377,000 odd ounces. The producers did not get one penny piece for the first 377,000 ounces produced in 1931, when the bounty was in operation. What they did get was £1 an ounce for the first six months on the excess above the previous output. Let me give the figures. I am quoting Western Australian figures, not the total figures for Australia. Up to the 30th June, 1931, the producers were paid £27,887 13s. 5d. on 27,980.67 ounces. That is at the rate of £1 per ounce for the first six months of the year. The Act was then amended and for the succeeding six months of the first year the bounty was reduced to 10s. per ounce. For the second six months the producers were only paid on the increased quantity of ounces produced at the rate of 10s. per ounce; and for that six months they received £46,539 8s., making the total payment for the year £74,520 1s. 5d. The Act was continued for nine months of 1932, after which it was abolished. During the nine months there was produced 284,372 fine ounces, on which 3.269s. per oz. was paid. In the final nine months Western Australia received £86,928, making a total from the bounty for a period of one year and nine months of £161,444. If the statement by the member for Murchison is correct, that the State received £1 per ounce on all gold produced during that year and nine months—the State produced during that period 939,211 ounces—we should have received £939,211, being bounty at the rate of £1 per ounce, whereas we received £161,444, so that we were, on that reckoning, £777,767 to the bad. That makes all the difference in the world. Had we received £1 for every ounce of gold produced, it would have been much better for the industry and for Australia as well, but the fact remains that we did not get it. We received £1 per ounce only for the first six months on the excess production of gold,

and for the remaining year and three months we received 10s. per ounce on the excess production. I thought it just as well to clear up that point. The hon. member said, and I think he believed it, that the reservations granted had been made available illegally under the terms of Section 297, and he expressed the opinion that if any case were taken to the Full Court, the Minister would undoubtedly lose the verdict in the consequent litigation. The hon. member read the first part of the section but left out the latter portion, and it is the latter that I am perfectly satisfied covers the position. I have had the advice not only of the Crown Law authorities but of two eminent King's Counsel who are in private practice, and from each of those sources I was advised that the granting of the reservations was absolutely legal and within the province of the Minister. The hon. member read Section 297 but stopped at the word "reseryation." From the point that the hon. member ceased reading, the section goes on to say—

The Minister may, with the approval of the Governor—

No reservation has been granted in Western Australia by me or by my predecessor in office that was not first submitted to the Executive Council for approval.

—authorise any person to temporarily occupy any such reserve on such terms as he may think fit.

I do not know if the hon. member wants anything more than that.

The Premier: That governs the whole section.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so, and that is all that has been done. I am not the least bit worried about the legal aspect of the reservations.

Mr. Doney: How do you interpret the word "temporarily"?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Act provides that a man may receive an absolute title, which is a lease, that will enable him to hold the tenure for 21 years, if the conditions are complied with.

Mr. Doney: Do you mean "temporarily as a reservation"?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In respect of every reservation granted by me, conditions were embodied in the agreement giving the Minister power to cancel the reservation at any time by giving three months' notice. The conditions go further and provide that if, in the opinion of the Minister, the lessee or concessionaire is not

carrying out the terms of the agreement, the Minister can forthwith cancel the reservation. The position is safeguarded in every direction.

Mr. Doney: What is the longest period for which the reservations have been granted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: None has been granted for more than 12 months.

Mr. Doney: I presume that at the end of that period, the reservations would be re-granted in some instances.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, where the conditions had been complied with. Mostly the renewals are granted for six months at a time, although there have been one or two instances in which the period of renewal has been 12 months. The member for Murchison also suggested that if it were legal for the Minister to grant these reservations, that position would have been availed of in the early days when mining was prosperous in Western Australia. In reply to that, I desire to point out to the hon. member that the records of the Mines Department show that reservations were granted on exactly the same lines as I have granted them during the past three years, and those early reservations were granted in 1904. Such permits were made available to persons to occupy reservations in some of the busiest goldfields centres, so I am not doing anything new. The peak of mining prosperity in Western Australia was 1903, when we reached our greatest output of gold. Nevertheless in 1904 reservations were granted and permits issued for the occupation of the areas. Therefore the hon. member's argument on that score will not hold water.

Mr. Fox: Where were the reserves granted in 1904?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not the plan with me at the moment, but I know four were granted, one of which was in a particularly busy centre; and not the slightest objection was raised to any of them.

Mr. Fox: Objections were raised in 1904 to extended exemptions being granted by the Mines Department.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, I know objection along those lines was taken in the early days, but no objections whatever have been lodged against the granting of the reservations I have referred to.

Then the member for Murchison claimed that I had changed my mind because when I was endeavouring to secure improved conditions for the tributers, I declared that the Oroya Links reservation was a sheep station, as it covered 600 acres under lease on the Golden Mile. He contrasted my statement on that occasion with the fact that I had granted reservations representing many times that area. As to that, I can assure the hon. member that if the same conditions prevailed to-day with regard to the holding of leases and the conditions under which tributing was carried on, I would be as determined in my effort to secure a change as I was then. Any such move would have my support. I would say now, as I said then, that it was scandalous to allow the conditions that obtained then to continue any longer. In those days I endeavoured to secure to the tributers decent conditions under which they could carry on, and not allow the prevailing practice to continue under which men could be allowed to work for six or seven months and immediately they struck values on a lease the company could take over the working of that part of the mine and put the tributers off without a minute's notice. That was done repeatedly. Naturally I was indignant at the time at the attitude of the leaseholders, and I would be just as indignant to-day if the same conditions obtained. Fortunately they cannot obtain now because of the amended legislation in existence. The member for Murchison also said that it was useless for me to argue that the granting of reservations had meant the introduction of capital, and regarded the suggestion as absolutely baseless. In reply to that assertion, I believe the Western Mining Corporation has been the cause of as much opposition on the part of the hon. member to reservations as any other concern. Without fear of contradiction, I claim that had that corporation not secured the reservations, not a penny would have been spent by them in Western Australia. It was only because of the reservations that the firm were induced to embark upon mining operations in Western Australia.

Mr. Doney: What proof have you of what you say?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have this fact that the company had received a letter from the Mitchell Government in

which it was practically agreed that the corporation could secure reservations. No conditions were specified in that communication. Thus before any conditions were imposed or the position was clarified, they had received from the then Premier a letter giving them the right to apply for reservations. The Corporation did not close with that offer until after they had approached me when I became Minister for Mines after the defeat of the Mitchell Government. Mr. W. S. Robinson, who was the head of the organisation, assured me that he would introduce into the State a considerable amount of capital if he could secure this concession for the Western Mining Corporation. He added, "If I cannot get this concession, I am not interested in Western Australian mining." There could be nothing more definite. The corporation secured the concession and have justified the granting of every acre included in the reservation. As a matter of fact, the Western Mining Corporation has spent in Western Australia, exclusive of office expenditure and directors' fees and of money spent in any other country in respect of importations of materials or aeroplanes, no less than £413,062.

Mr. Stubbs: Over what period?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I became Minister for Mines in May, 1933, and the Western Mining Corporation commenced operations towards the end of July of that year. Since then the amount I have mentioned has been actually spent in Western Australia. In passing, I will refer to a statement made by the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) during the debate on the Address-in-reply, when he complained about a reservation granted to the Western Mining Corporation at Norseman, and said that a mining company operating there could not get the ground they required because of the concession. To my mind the mining company concerned has no possible ground for grievance. The company had been working their show for at least 4½ years and the ground respecting which the complaint was lodged had been vacant for 27 years. The Western Mining Corporation sought the reservation because of the expert advice they had received from their geological staff, after an examination of the old Mararoa mine—I do not refer to the mine that is being worked now, but to the old Mararoa mine—to the effect that the Norseman lode

was an unusual one and worked to the depth of the reef instead of along the reef. On that the Western Mining Corporation asked for a closed reservation in the Norseman district around the mine that had been working for four years—north and south of it and on the deeps. I granted the reservation. By the expenditure of money and by boring, they proved that there was a total blank in the reef for a depth of 300 feet. But they were not dismayed; they were prepared to back their geological opinion that the reef would make again, and they spent £132,000 in the first year on boring. When they had got the reef 370 feet below and had proved that it ran continuously for 350 feet, the other company wanted to peg the deeps to get it. The company who complained of not being able to peg the deeps of their own land could have done so up to within two months of lodging their complaint. They took the case to the Warden's Court, and the warden threw it out because the company could not be permitted to peg a lease within a reservation. The Western Mining Corporation took up the whole of that land under lease. When they got a mine I said to them, "It is up to you now to take up a lease under the Mining Act." They have pegged 16 leases under the Act. That is where a good deal of the expenditure has taken place. Their operations have revived the mining industry in Norseman and have revived the town of Norseman. The company have begun the erection of a plant. The Government have agreed, on the development work done by the company and the guarantees they are prepared to put up, to instal a pipe line from the goldfields water scheme to Norseman, and that cannot be done for "two bob." The Government, however, have sufficient faith, from the development work done by the company, that mining operations will be continued there for many years. Not one penny piece of that money would have been spent if the company had not been granted reservations. That is not the only instance. The hon. member complained about the Day Dawn reservation on the Great Fingal. The company have reduced the reservation they had in the first place. An objection was lodged, and the case went to the Warden's Court. The company got the right, and the Minister, in my absence but with my consent, extended the period for six months. The actual expenditure by the

company on the Great Fingal to date has exceeded £80,000.

Mr. Marshall: I know what work they have done and what it has cost them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The record of what they have done is fairly elaborate.

Mr. Patrick: Is that on the Great Fingal mine itself?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. With the exception of probably one-third of the area right at the north end, the area to the north and all to the south was at one period held by the Great Fingal.

Mr. Marshall: The work done by the company was not done in the mine.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, they could not get down the mine.

Mr. Patrick: Was not the reservation a mile away?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, it surrounded the old Fingal mine. I do not know what particular objection can be raised to certain people being granted reservations. The Western Mining Corporation have proved to be one of the best firms in every sense with whom I have ever negotiated. They have come to me with various propositions, many of which I have refused, but at my refusal they have not taken offence. I have granted some requests, and have discovered subsequently that the company should not have been conceded what had been granted. Then I have approached them, and on all occasions they have met me in a businesslike way. They have been an excellent firm to deal with. At the north end of the Great Fingal—the old mine—Mr. Chesson and his partners have a lease—a 12-acre block only. They have held it for a considerable time working it and trying to get capital into it. They have not crushed a great deal of ore, but the deeper they went, the better the values became. They succeeded in getting a Sydney company interested in their 12-acre block, and after negotiating for some time, the company expressed themselves prepared to put capital into the mine for developing it provided they could get another 12-acre block adjoining. Application was made to the Warden's Court. The reservation had been granted on one day, and on the following day the Sydney company

pegged the 12-acre block. The application was refused, because the block was within a closed reservation, which had been granted for six months. A representative of the company whom I know personally came to see me. He is one of the finest battlers on our goldfields. I refer to Mr. Pearsall, the man who pioneered Hill 60. He put in an immense amount of work before he got anything. When eventually he got something, he sold out, but unfortunately he sold before the other people received £21,000 for the claims. All that he gets he puts back into the ground. He represents Chesson and party and he came to see me.

Mr. Marshall: To represent the company?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. The company would not take Chesson's lease unless they could get the additional area. I said to him, "I believe I can get the consent of the Western Mining Corporation, without any trouble, to forego the 12-acre block you want." I got the Government surveyor to make a plan of the 12-acre block, and we discovered that if the company got the lease as pegged, while it would not take in the shaft itself, it would take in the plat in which the machine would have to stand if ever the shaft were used again. In the original workings of the Great Fingal, there was an internal shaft, a haulage shaft and everything else on the 1,300 foot level. I put the position before the parties, and it was agreed that, provided the company withdrew their boundary to give the Western Mining Corporation free access to the internal shaft, the company could have the block. I think that was a very fair deal. The company got the 12 acres they wanted, and the Western Mining Corporation are content to go on with their development. Dozens of similar instances of dealings with the same company could be quoted. I have never dealt with a fairer company. When they have given me their word, there has not been the slightest doubt of their observing it to the letter. The company would never have spent a "bob" in Western Australia but for the granting of the concession in the first place. I admit that the granting of reservations does inconvenience prospectors in many instances, and I am sorry for it. A prospector goes into the bush looking for something, and when he finds a likely place, he naturally does a bit of work on it. If he considers it

to be any good at all, he puts in his pegs. Then, often, when he makes application, he finds that he is on a closed reservation. That is his bad luck. The holder of a reservation is now required to put in a permanent datum peg, and on it describe the area he has as a closed reservation. Everything that can be done to relieve the disabilities of the prospectors is being done.

Mr. Doney: Suppose the holder omitted to put in that peg, what would happen?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have known instances of the regulation cut pegs having been removed from mining leases and of somebody else's pegs having been put in. If the prospector could prove that a peg had not been put there, he would certainly get his prospecting area, although it was on a closed reservation. I cannot go further than that. At the same time, there is not the slightest doubt that the prospectors have been inconvenienced. To listen to some of the remarks of the hon. member, however, one would think that the Government, and I in particular, were opposed to the prospectors. As a matter of fact, there has never been a Government that has done as much to assist the prospectors as we have done. Except in the first few years of the rush to Western Australia, never have there been so many prospectors on the fields as there are at present. To read the hon. member's statement, one would think that we were opposed to the prospectors and were doing nothing for them, whereas we have done everything possible to help them. There are individuals who have reservations. The hon. member mentioned a man who had a reservation and who did not possess two "bobs."

Mr. Marshall: I know two or three.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know more than that. Still, they are few and far between, and none has been granted a reservation for more than six months. During my life on the goldfields, I had the experience of striking something that I thought fairly good but was without two "bobs" to jingle on a tombstone, and I would have been darned glad to be able to protect the area until I could get a man with capital to help me to develop it. I have not forgotten those days, because then I would have

liked to be granted what some of the prospectors are asking me to grant to-day. I am not prepared to turn them down so long as I know they are genuine, and if they come to me with a proposition that they believe they can get capital, and they are respectable and good citizens of this State, I will give them the same consideration as I would give the man with tens of thousands of pounds.

Mr. Doney: Did you not say you would not grant a reservation for more than six months?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have never done so.

Mr. Doney: That is, the individual; but to a company you would grant it for a year.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There have been no reservations granted for a year during the past 18 months. All reservations granted in the last 18 months have been for six months. In three cases I have granted reservations to individuals who were almost broke and they got extensions for six months. In those cases the individuals were instrumental in raising capital and making working concerns of the areas. Under such conditions I think I was justified in doing what I did. The only other person who has had reservations is Claude de Bernales. I admit he got extensions without doing any work at all on some of the reserves. But if ever any attitude adopted towards the mining investor by any Government was justified, the course followed as far as Claude de Bernales was concerned has certainly more than justified itself. His most recent flotation in London took over the last part of the reserves that he held, so that now every reservation that de Bernales holds in Western Australia will certainly have sufficient capital to test it out. I am not going to say for one moment that mines will be made out of all of them. Two or three already have been abandoned.

Mr. Doney: Did you impose the same conditions on him with regard to the reservations?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Exactly the same. He did not ask for any favours or any special conditions; he got what everyone else got. It is just as well to let the House know something about the reservations on which money has been expended by the companies floated in Lon-

don by Claude de Bernales. Here is the list—

	Reservation No.	£
Apex Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	601H 731H, 833H	9,238
Beryl Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	612H	52,543
Day Dawn Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	603H	11,651
Emu Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	577H, 661H	32,652
Gladiator Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	613H	4,785
Jupiter Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	648H	7,932
Leonora Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	578H	10,181
Lochinvar Gold Mines, Ltd.	604	4,468
Mars Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	575H	32,193
Pericles Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	593H	6,099
Phoenix Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	604H	69,153
Riverina Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	617H	28,571
Southern Cross United Mines Ltd.	574H, 730H, 702H	82,948
Wheel of Fortune Gold Mines, Ltd.	602H	15,707
Fitzgerald Brown Coal Coy. ..	598H	1,595
Black Range G.M., Ltd. ..	605H	167
Crescent Gold Mines, Ltd. ..	817H	1,542
		<hr/> £371,425

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What means have you of checking those figures?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The figures have been obtained from the annual returns supplied by the companies themselves.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You have to accept their figures.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course. If I wanted to find out what the Great Boulder paid in wages I would have to accept the figures they supplied. Two-thirds of the total of £371,425 has been paid in wages.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How do you know that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No other company has spent so much in wages as the Western Mining Corporation and Claude de Bernales. When the companies began the expenditure of money they posted to the Mines Department every month details of the expenditure on all the reserves.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They do that purely as an act of courtesy?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I asked for the information and they supplied it. The total of £371,000 does not include the expenditure by companies in the de Bernales group which have taken up leases;

the total represents expenditure on reservations only.

Mr. Doney: Are the Western Mining Corporation and de Bernales identical?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, entirely distinct. There is no connection between them in any shape or form. Not a pound's worth of interest is held by the Western Mining Corporation in any of the companies floated by de Bernales nor has de Bernales any interest in the Western Mining Corporation.

Mr. Doney: What about the Western Machinery Company?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That company is Claude de Bernales.

Mr. Marshall: Has it not been swallowed by the Western Development Company?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. Reverting to the figures which I quoted, I did so to show that in my opinion the granting of the reservations was justified.

Mr. Doney: Do you say definitely that the Western Mining Corporation and the Western Machinery Company have no connection?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member must not put words into my mouth. What I said was that none of the companies with which Claude de Bernales is connected has any interest in the Western Mining Corporation nor in the Western Machinery Company.

Mr. Doney: You admit that there may be some connection between them?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not cross-examine the Minister for Mines.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is no connection whatever between the Western Mining Corporation and the Western Machinery Company.

The Premier: The Western Machinery Company is not a mining company at all.

Mr. Doney: But they do hold reservations.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Williams-Narrogin must keep order.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Western Mining Corporation on the 30th of last month were employing on their reservations no fewer than 168 men, whilst on the Norseman mine there were 68 men engaged and it is expected that shortly that number will be increased to 150. At the Triton mine the same corporation employs 150 men,

a total of 386. The de Bernales companies are employing 293 men, so that we get a total of 679 men employed by those two concerns. I think I have said enough to convince members that it would be dangerous to interfere in the near future with the two companies that have done so much towards the prosperity of Western Australia. I hope the House will not bind the Minister, irrespective of who he may be, but will allow him to exercise discretion under the Act in the determination of what he may consider to be in the best interests of the State. I am perfectly satisfied that the attitude adopted by the Government with regard to obtaining capital for investment in Western Australia was the right one to adopt. The member for Murchison raised the question of the Big Bell reservation and pointed out that an application had been made for it by an individual. My friend was wrong in his statement when he declared that the man was not given the lease he applied for. He did get the lease, but never did a tap of work on it and when he surrendered it, it was included in the reservation. That man was a member of the boring party at the Big Bell. The Government were paying 50 per cent. of the cost of the boring and Mr. Mandelstamm the other 50 per cent. After the diamond drilling had been going on for a while, a lode was struck considerably earlier than was expected, and the individual in question came to the conclusion that the reef, instead of being vertical, started to underlie, and he pegged a claim on the block adjoining in the hope of picking it up. Later, however, it was found that the diamond drill had deflected and had cut the reef much earlier than it otherwise would have done. When he discovered that he had been misled he abandoned the lease and, as I have said, it was included in the reservation. Messrs. Chesson and Hayden took a considerable amount of ore out of the Big Bell and carted it some distance to a battery. It did not pay them, however, and I question whether it would pay anyone to mine and cart the ore to a battery to have it crushed there, because it is so low-grade. I feel confident that the granting of the reservation and the work that has been done on the Big Bell—I am surprised that the hon. member is raising any objection to it now—will mean that eventually there will be a bigger output from that property than is being obtained from Wiluna.

Mr. Patrick: Chesson and Hayden would have sold the Big Bell, but for the war.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I believe that. Mr. Chesson, formerly member for Cue, approached me—he had pegged the Little Bell which adjoins the Big Bell—and asked whether the Government would continue boring on the Little Bell. We did that on a pound for pound basis and as a result of the boring, Chesson and Hayden were able to get outside people interested in that show. It is a huge low-grade proposition. There is a considerable number of men employed at the present time on the Big Bell. The company controlling it are conducting one of the most exhaustive tests ever made on a mine in Western Australia, to determine whether they will invest their capital or not. Already they have sunk two shafts and in one have crosscut the lode at 125 feet. They have driven on it 1,100 feet. The second shaft is down 250 feet and driving has taken place over 250 feet. Just before I left England I met the head of the company interested in the Big Bell.

Mr. Patrick: An American company?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, the head of the American Refining and Smelting Company. They have never previously been interested in Australian gold mining except for a third interest in the Mt. Isa mine in Queensland, and I say that the granting of the reservation to that company has been more than justified if eventually we can get them interested in gold mining in Western Australia. Such a thing would mean ten times more to us than the employment of a number of people scratching around and getting only as much gold as possibly prospectors would be able to raise. There is no limit to the capital those people have at their command, and from conversations I have had with them they do not spare their capital very much. One of the results of that is that there will be no ramps at all in shares, because the public will not be offered so much as a single share. If the company take it on there will be two other subsidiary companies, of their own formation, who will own the lot. It has been proved that a good many flotations have been little else than ramps, and if I had had the means whereby I or the departmental officers could have put forward some scheme to prevent that sort of thing without killing the genuine man who wanted capital, it would have been done long ago. But we have not yet been able to solve that

difficulty. If I could do it, I would soon prevent that sort of thing. However, these people I speak of do not go in for anything of the sort and, if they take on the job, assuredly they will develop it as well as any other mine, not only in Western Australia, but in Australia as a whole. There is another place I want to mention. A good deal of criticism arose in regard to a reservation over an area at Edjudina. I gave the applicant a reservation at Edjudina because he told me he believed he could interest in the show a certain man in London. He went to England, and at the end of six months he cabled me asking for a further extension of six months. I granted it, but at the end of the period he still did not have the money, and so I refused to grant any further extension of the reservation. As soon as the reservation was removed, men took up three leases on that area. But they were abandoned, and during a period of 19 months there was not another soul who would bother to do any prospecting there. But again this man in England asked for a reservation, and again I granted it. He has now succeeded in floating a company with a capital of £250,000 to find out whether that property is good, bad or indifferent. And this on a property which nobody would take up, even though it was left open for a year and seven months! As I say, the reservations granted in this State have been absolutely justified; not all of them perhaps, but the two parties who have had reservations to which objection has been offered are the Western Mining Corporation and Mr. Claude de Bernales, and I say that of the reservations Mr. de Bernales has taken up, the last five will certainly get a fair test.

Mr. Patrick: Including the two mines in South Africa which he threw in?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He did nothing of the sort; he had nothing to do with either of them.

Mr. Patrick: Well, they belonged to his group.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, they did not, or, if so, the negotiations were made by the board of directors. Mr. de Bernales had nothing to do with them. And suppose he had, what has that to do with it? What harm would there be in that?

Mr. Patrick: No harm at all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Commonwealth Mining and Finance Company

was the first million pound development company that he floated. He threw in a mine in the Northern Territory. Very few people know that that belongs to the Commonwealth Mining and Finance Company, but it was on the mine in the Northern Territory that the money was subscribed; and the result of the tests up to date is that it is going to be one of the best of Mr. de Bernales' reservations. He did not get it from me; as a matter of fact he got it from the Commonwealth Government. It is going to be one of his best. So even if there were a mine in South Africa that someone had and believed to be worth developing, what is wrong in putting the money into that mine in South Africa?

Mr. Patrick: Where is his million and a half of money?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of that amount, £750,000 is in the National Bank, Perth.

Mr. Patrick: Less the £250,000 paid to the vendors.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member knows nothing whatever of what he is talking about.

Mr. Patrick: That is in the prospectus I received.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have received many prospectuses. But as a matter of fact there is £750,000 in the bank in Perth, so there is no need to worry about the money. I want to give the same gentleman this credit: men have come to me and said, "de Bernales has done well out of this; look at the money he has made." Well, more power to him, if he has made millions. Is he expected to give his time, his service and his brains for nothing at all? Of course not. Then what is wrong with him, so long as he is producing the goods? In London recently there have been flotations of Western Australian shows out of which the vendors have got three times as much as Mr. de Bernales has got out of any of his reservations, and nothing has been said about it. But, because it is Mr. de Bernales, the cry is, "What has he got out of it?" Why is he in London? Not as a philanthropist. He has been broke, he has seen very difficult times. He got £80,000 out of Wiluna and put every penny of it back into the development of Western Australia. He has made money again, and I say, "Good luck to

him." The working capital of each company he has floated in Western Australia is in the bank out here, and he demands that it shall be kept here, not in London to be used by the London board of directors. On top of that I want to give him this credit: he has made money, but what is he doing with it? I have heard influential business men who ought to have known better complain of Mr. de Bernales purchasing a home in London. They do not relate that he paid £75,000 for a block of land in Perth, and £125,000 for another block of land in Perth. And those business men say nothing about the tenders he called for the building of an arcade in Perth at a cost of approximately £173,000. He has made money and is making money, but all his money is being re-invested in Western Australia, whereas many others have made their pile in Western Australia and taken it off to other countries without leaving a single shilling behind them in this State. Mr. de Bernales has proved to be one of the best Western Australians we ever had. I would be lacking in my duty if I did not say anything of the difficulties he had to face in London in order to arrive at the position he has reached to-day. And then they talk about what he is making out of it! Of course he is making money, and is entitled to make it, but while making money for himself he has been keeping 200 or 300 men employed all the time in this State. Most certainly he has justified any concessions made to him. Yet I do not call it a concession to grant him a reservation, because every one of those granted to him had been abandoned for years, during which time it was open for anybody to take up any or all of them. So not one of them was a concession to Mr. de Bernales. The point is that he had the foresight to make the applications for reservations, he had the brains and the ability to take them over, and he had sufficient capital to give them a reasonable trial and test them out. I hope the Bill will not be passed because it would prevent me or any other Minister for Mines from granting reservations in the future. I do not think the House will take that retrograde step. I will oppose the second reading.

On motion by Hon. N. Keenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.