

Mr. Simons: Spoils to the victors!

Mr. LATHAM: In some portions of the State farmers have to pay a freight of only a farthing a bushel. It is not so bad while wheat is bringing an inflated price, but when normal conditions return, the people so disadvantageously situated will find it impossible to make wheat growing pay. I believe it is intended to construct a line from Dwarda to Narrogin. It would be well if the Minister gave this project his very serious consideration before putting the work in hand.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I want you to back me up in the matter of these railways. We put them through the House.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish the hon. gentleman had gone further and constructed them. I do not profess to know much about finance, but I hope every effort will be made to get the Prime Minister to hand over the amusement tax now collected by the Federal Government, and that, when it is handed over, it will be devoted to the charities department. If the Federal Government will not hand over this money to the State, I hope the State Government will impose an additional tax on amusements. This would have the effect of getting the people up in arms and some pressure might then be brought to bear upon the Federal Government. The people would realise that there was a responsibility to the State as well as to the Federal Treasury.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: That belongs to the city.

Mr. LATHAM: It must not be overlooked that the amusements subject to the tax are usually the only diversions offering to country people when they come to the city. Very little of the charity vote goes to the country districts. The State cannot continue increasing its deficit indefinitely. I suggest that the Premier engage a financial expert to investigate the finances and see whether it is not possible to make the ledger balance. The deficit is a very serious matter. Every man is responsible for a proportion of the deficit. We do not feel it burdensome to-day and perhaps will not feel it for the next five or ten years, but our children must suffer for it. The matter is altogether too serious to be passed over lightly. It demands grave and earnest consideration. Free services will have to be reduced or cut out if the necessity arises. I do not know that the country man gets many free services. He might be willing to pay for the education of his children if the necessity arose and he was assured that by so doing the ledger could be balanced. We have reached the limit of taxation.

Mr. Clydesdale: We are not paying as much as people in other countries.

Mr. LATHAM: If we have to pay more, all I can say is God help this State. I do not know where the Treasurer will be able to raise any more taxation. We have all kinds of taxes now, local taxes, State taxes, Federal taxes. Even the Leader of the Opposition would not suggest any further taxes.

Hon. P. Collier: Why "even" me? I am not a tax maniac.

Mr. LATHAM: No, but the hon. member might be expected to object to the deficit and, if he were an unreasonable man, to suggest the imposition of further taxation. The hon. member, however, is a very reasonable man, and is willing to assist the Government as far as possible to wipe out the deficit. I hope the Premier will give this important matter that serious consideration which members of the House expect him to give it.

On motion by Mr. J. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 15th August, 1922.

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

QUESTION—REPATRIATION, MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES.

Mr. MUNSIE (for Mr. Corboy) asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to introduce during this session a Bill dealing with miners' homestead leases held by returned soldiers? 2, If so, is it proposed to enable such leaseholders to convert to conditional purchase conditions, allowing credit for payments made under leasehold conditions?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No; it is unnecessary. 2, Yes. Credits for payments made under leasehold conditions will be given by a corresponding reduction of the price of the conditional purchase.

QUESTION—GERMAN PAPER MONEY.

Mr. MANN asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that a very large sum of money is being transmitted from this State by speculators to Germany, for the purchase of Ger-

man paper money? 2, Will he consider it necessary to bring the matter under the notice of the Federal authorities for such action as may be deemed necessary?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—PATRIOTIC FUNDS CONSOLIDATION.

Mr. DENTON asked the Premier: 1, Has he considered the advisability, as requested by a question asked by me on 21st December, 1921, of appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the amounts of funds collected by various bodies and organisations during the war for the purpose of assisting soldiers and their dependents within the State, and as to the disposal of surplus funds, if any, held by the various bodies and organisations since Declaration of Peace Day, June, 1919, with the object of consolidating all the funds of the various bodies into one common fund to be under the control of three trustees to be appointed, viz., one from the Returned Soldiers' League, one from the combined bodies or organisations, and one by the Government? 2, If the answer be in the affirmative, will he appoint a Royal Commission without pay at an early date?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, I have considered the question, and if the hon. member will move for a Select Committee, I will provide an early opportunity to discuss the matter.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC REGULATION 22.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have the regulations under the amended Traffic Act and gazetted in March last been laid upon the Table of the House? 2, If not, will he have Regulation 22, dealing with the plates to be exhibited on cars from garages and from the ranks, amended so as to abolish all distinctions and provide for uniformity on all cars when on hire?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: 1, Yes, today. 2, It was understood from the report of the Select Committee (Parliamentary Paper A 4/22) that the taxi owners and garage proprietors wished for the present system to continue. Arrangements were made to confer with both bodies to gather their views, but the representative of the former failed to keep the appointment. A further effort is now being made, of which the hon. member is aware.

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAYS.

Increases to Officers.

Mr. MUNSIE (for Mr. Corboy) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Have any railway officers located at Perth station buildings who were in receipt of salaries of £250 a year and upwards on the 30th June, 1921, received increases during the year ended June, 1922? 2, If so, what are the names of the officers, and what was the date and amount of such increases?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, It is not clear which officers it is intended should be embraced under "Perth station buildings," but practically the whole of the railway salaried staff received an increase as a result of the statutory award of the Classification Board of 18th February last.

Suggestions and Economy Board.

Mr. MUNSIE (for Mr. Corboy) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What are the names of the members of the Suggestions and Economy Board of the Railway Department? 2, What amount has been paid each member as bonus or gratuity during the past two years?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Messrs. F. Maxwell (chairman), W. Bromfield, and E. G. Backshall. 2, A total of £150 to the chairman, and £100 each to the other two members.

QUESTION—FIRE BRIGADE SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. CHESSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What amount was paid for expenses to the two members of the Fire Brigades Board who visited the Eastern States for the purpose of interviewing applicants for the position of superintendent of brigades? 2, Were there no applicants within the State who were qualified for the position?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Colonial Secretary) replied: 1, £199 19s. 8d., including boat and train fares (£110 10s. 4d.). 2, I am advised in the negative.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE FREEZING WORKS.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: Will he give the House an assurance that the Government will not grant further financial assistance to the Fremantle Freezing Works unless the authority of Parliament has been first obtained?

The PREMIER replied: Yes. I shall be glad to have the question of assistance to these necessary works fully discussed by the House.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill No. 1 (£1,763,950).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day—Amendment—No Confidence.

Debate resumed from the 10th August.

Mr. J. THOMSON (Claremont) [4.41]: First of all I wish to congratulate the Premier upon the success of his trip to England. I was in London at the time and I

can say that no man from any of the Australian States ever had a better reception than was accorded to our own Premier. Sir James Mitchell did splendid work for the State; no man could have done better. Of course, he is not an orator like I am, but when it came to conferences, Sir James more than held his own with the greatest intellects of England. When he couples my name with his and gives me credit for having assisted him, I do not think that is altogether right. If it were said that I attended all the banquets, dinners and other functions to which I was invited, to give a sort of Australian aristocratic tone to those gatherings, then I did assist him.

The Minister for Agriculture: It must have imposed a great strain upon you.

Mr. J. THOMSON: It did. I take this credit to myself, however, that I was the first man in Western Australia to recommend that Sir James Mitchell should go Home. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that when you created a precedent in this Chamber by adjourning to allow members to say farewell to the Premier on the eve of his visit to Melbourne, I said that he should go on from Melbourne and take the Leader of the Opposition with him to London. When on board the steamer going to England, I told Sir James that it was a pity he had not brought the Leader of the Opposition with him. I think my remarks on the occasions I refer to, were correct. Regarding the Premier's immigration scheme, I am wholly in favour of it provided it is carried out on right lines. If, however, the Government continue to allow the same class of people who have been coming to Australia for some time past, to enter the State, and if the class of people I saw making application for passages in London are to be permitted to migrate to Western Australia, then, in my opinion, the scheme will be a failure. Those people will only serve to crowd the labour market, and in two years there will be more people leaving the State than coming into it.

Mr. A. Thomson: Don't be a pessimist.

Mr. J. THOMSON: One need only take the July figures published in this morning's "West Australian" to see that I am correct. Coming out on the "Ormonde," I found aboard 91 immigrants, farm labourers, ex-service men, bound for Western Australia. I talked to those men, and in consequence of what I learned, if I were a betting man I would bet £100 that in six months not six of those 99 men will be in the State.

The Premier: I take your bet.

Mr. J. THOMSON: On that ship, in the third class, there were about 1,000 immigrants. Of that number we could have got 160 into this State for nothing. I talked Sir James Mitchell's scheme practically all the way out.

Mr. Underwood: You can talk, too, when you try.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Quite a number of those people wanted to come and settle in Western Australia. I got two groups of 20 men each arranged for the group settlement,

and as soon as we got into touch with Applecross I wirelessed the acting Premier at my own expense, explaining that those men would like to go down to the group settlements. On the following day I got a message from Mr. Colebatch saying that nobody would be allowed to go into a group settlement unless he had 12 months' experience in Western Australia. Those men whom I selected on the boat were men of the right stamp, men who were paying their own passages and, with their families, going to the Eastern States.

Mr. Simons: Of what nationality were they?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Of all nationalities: English, Scotch, and Irish. Amongst the men I selected were three miners from the ironstone mines in the North of England. They were going to Queensland. One of them had a family of five sturdy boys and girls. All three of them told me that if they were satisfied with the land in Western Australia they would get 100 more families from the North of England. I am opposed to assisted immigration. We can get in the Old Country thousands who would pay their passages and come and settle here if we could provide the land for them. If the Premier will agree to get the land ready, I shall be prepared at the end of this session to go to England, Scotland, and Ireland at my own expense and get more people to pay their own passages and come out here than the department can find land for. At present we are bringing out men who will merely swell the labour ranks.

The Premier: Did you say that ex-soldiers were not good men?

Mr. J. THOMSON: I say that those ex-service men, farm labourers, are no good. They have no intellect. We want men of intelligence to come and settle on the land.

Mr. Teesdale: Even if they have not your brains, they may have good strong arms.

Mr. J. THOMSON: If the hon. member had been on the boat he would have seen that they had not good strong arms.

Mr. Mann: Why not give them a chance?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Not at our expense. When in the Old Country, I went down to the shipbuilding yards, where thousands were out of work. Those men are of the class we should be inducing to come out here and settle on the land.

The Premier: They have not the money to pay their own fares.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The men I am talking about can pay their own passages. If we found the land they would gladly come out here. When the land in Manitoba was being opened up, the Canadian Government did not pay the passages of those who were going there.

Mr. A. Thomson: How much did those passages cost?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Only £8.

Mr. A. Thomson: And how much is it to come out here?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is another story.

Mr. J. THOMSON: We want the men who can pay their own passages. Of the 91 men who were on the "Ormonde," I would not have selected three. In six months there will not be six of them in the State.

Mr. Willcock: How can they get out, if they cannot earn money?

Mr. J. THOMSON: They will earn enough to take them over East. I am entirely in sympathy with the Premier's scheme. I want to see the people coming here, but only people of the right sort. We should not be in any hurry to bring out the wrong people. Surely the Premier can wait until he gets the land ready, and then insist upon having the right class of people. Some weeks ago I suggested to him that he should temporarily stop the immigration, and that at the head of the men to be sent Home should be our friend the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You want to get rid of me.

Mr. J. THOMSON: No, I do not. I look upon the hon. member as one of the most intellectual in the House. We require to send Home a man who can judge men. We ought not to send Home the civil servants who are going to—Oh Lord! to me it is beyond imagination. I saw them in London. The Agent General for Victoria used to say to me, "Well there you are Jock, I have had the pick of the immigrants, the men who had the money to spend on making homes for themselves in Australia. Victoria has got all the men with the money, while Western Australia has got the men with no money."

The Minister for Agriculture: Why Victoria?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Because she is represented in London by a man who is pretty wide awake and who has picked the best men offering.

The Premier: He does not pick them at all. He has nothing to do with it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: No, but he gets them, all the same. The men we want are the farmers' sons. Hundreds of farmers' sons from England, Ireland, and Scotland are going out to the Argentine and to the southern States of America. They would all be only too willing to come here.

The Premier: How do you know all this?

Mr. J. THOMSON: I talked to them at Home.

Mr. Angelo: Why didn't you tell the Premier all this when in London?

Mr. J. THOMSON: I did.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Farmers' sons would not come out here to learn farming.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Of the men I selected on the "Ormonde" 40 had been born on farms. But Mr. Colebatch sent the wireless that a man must have 12 months' experience of Western Australia before he could get into a group settlement. Every Orient boat that comes into Fremantle has aboard at least 40 men with their families, paying their own passages, who could be induced to stop in Western Australia.

The Premier: What about your iron works in the North?

Mr. J. THOMSON: Never mind them, they will come.

Mr. Underwood: And it won't be pommies who will work them.

Mr. J. THOMSON: No. Another class of men we should get to come out here are the demobilised soldiers in India. Some of them, I am proud to say, are out here now. There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of civil servants being retrenched in India. They have a little money and want to come out here, but there is no land for them. On the boat by which I returned, there were some people travelling second class. They had money. I brought them straight up to the Lands Department without first going home. I tried to get land for them, but there was no land available.

The Premier: That is not true.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Well, I can prove it.

The Premier: No, you cannot.

Mr. J. THOMSON: What was available was too far from a railway and they would not take it. Any number of farms were advertised in the newspapers for sale, but these people did not want them. They wanted Government land. However, the Government land offering was too far from a railway and they would not take it. They went on to Victoria. They will get land there. So keenly do I feel on the immigration policy of the Government that I have decided to move an amendment to the Address-in-reply, after I have spoken a little about one or two of the Ministers. I shall start with Mr. Colebatch, the Minister for Education in another place. Mr. Colebatch and I have been friends for over 30 years and I hope and trust we shall be friends for the next 30 years. That Mr. Colebatch should have been appointed Minister for the North-West, however, is beyond my comprehension. We had men in this House who knew something about the North-West. All that Mr. Colebatch knew about it was gained on a picnic trip he took at the Government's expense with the Chairman of Committees and one or two others.

Hon. P. Collier: He delivered a very effective lecture upon it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Yes, illustrated with lantern slides. In this House we have the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) and the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale), men who knew something about the North-West and who should be appointed.

Mr. Simons: And the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo).

Mr. J. THOMSON: No, the member for Gascoyne does not know too much about the North-West.

The Minister for Works: He knows something about bananas.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Talking about the member for Gascoyne and bananas, a man who has lived up there all his life told me it was cruelty to send soldiers there to grow bananas. The water is too salt.

Mr. Angelo: You know nothing about it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Government in appointing Mr. Colebatch as Minister for the North-West did not know what they were

doing. Then for Mr. Colebatch to appoint the present Commissioner, well, goodness knows what he was thinking about! Why was not the engineer for the North-West (Mr. Tindale) appointed? I consider Mr. Tindale one of the leading civil servants of the State.

Mr. Tesdale: Hear, hear!

Mr. Angelo: He would not take it.

Mr. Underwood: He applied for it.

Mr. Angelo: He would not take it at the salary offered.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Government in appointing the Minister for the North-West and Commissioner for the North-West have thrown away £15,000, thrown it away, and if a new Ministry come in, I hope—

Mr. A. Thomson: That you will be Minister for Mines!

Mr. J. THOMSON: That the whole of that department will be scrapped. I shall not say much about Mr. Colebatch's administration of the Education Department. I will give only one instance of how things are conducted. I know a township where there are two school teachers, and 66 scholars. Four miles away there is another school with eight scholars. Three of the scholars who attend the latter school are nearer to the larger school, but they go to the smaller school because they are friends of the people living in that district. This school of eight children is costing the Government £300 a year. They have to provide a horse and trap for the school teacher to drive out every day. Surely to Heavens it would be better to provide a trap to bring the other five children into the larger school!

The Minister for Agriculture: Where is it?

Mr. J. THOMSON: I shall tell the Minister. I have the figures and I know the school teacher. I have told Mr. Colebatch about it, but nothing has been done. I could bring instances of many other places but that is all I wish to say about Mr. Colebatch. Now I come to my friend the Minister for Works.

Mr. Willecock: Be careful!

Mr. J. THOMSON: I am going to be very careful. The Minister for Works is one of the most honest and most conscientious men who ever held office in this State, but at the same time I must say he is one of the most pedantic regarding his ideas of himself, his great engineering abilities and what he has done. He is away up in the clouds. Members might recollect the night when the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) got the career of the Minister for Works up to about 100 years. He had served five years in this shop, and had been five years running the Railways, 10 years here and 10 years there, and the member for South Fremantle had got up to about 110 years, when the Minister could stand it no longer and walked out of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: Rushed out.

Mr. J. THOMSON: And he did not return until the hon. member had finished his speech.

The Minister for Mines: I shall be lucky if I can walk out at 110.

Mr. J. THOMSON: That night I had the honour of travelling home with the Minister for Works in a Government car. I saw that he was very much worried and I thought that, if I could put in a word to uplift him a little before he went to bed, I should do it. When we were about halfway to Claremont the Minister said to me, "Jock, I am tired of this; I am tired of Parliament. This is the worst Parliament that ever I have been in. They are advertising for a Commissioner of Railways for South Africa and I have a good mind to apply for it."

The Minister for Works: You have no right to repeat a private confidence, but anyhow it is an absolute lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. THOMSON: I thought I would pay him a compliment, and I still think what I said was a compliment, "If you apply for that position and get it, 99 per cent. of the people in this country will be very pleased indeed." I come now to the Lake Clifton scandal. This is a serious matter, and I intend to speak seriously about it. In the trains, the trams, the streets and the clubs, we hear talk of the Lake Clifton scandal, and when we come to think of it, we must conclude that it is a scandal. When the company applied for the right to build a railway to Lake Clifton, it was decided to go from Waroona. By and bye they found it would be better to go from Pinjarra, and they made the necessary application to run the line from Pinjarra to Lake Clifton. After a lot of negotiation and after a lot of talk, it was resolved that, because the Minister for Works had given a promise to about 20 people at Waroona, the railway should run from there instead of from Pinjarra.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He kept his promise!

Mr. J. THOMSON: Yes. What has the keeping of his promise done?

Mr. O'Loughlen: It made no difference to the lime where the line started.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I have the figures here. I intend to show what the Government have lost on every ton of lime coming from Lake Clifton to the works at Burswood.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How do you justify the fact that the company are not supplying the farmers with lime? Put up a case for the company!

Mr. J. THOMSON: I will show what the Government have lost through the action of the Minister for Works in allowing the railway to be built where we find it. The company agreed to pay 1½d. per ton on lime from Lake Clifton to Burswood.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The company agreed to supply lime to the farmers four years ago, but have not yet done so.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Everything will be in order in that respect in a few months. The Government would have been receiving 1½d. per ton on 1,000 tons of lime every week from Lake Clifton to Burswood, instead of ¾d., and carrying it 14½ miles farther.

The Premier: That is wrong.

Mr. J. THOMSON: It is a fact. I have the figures.

The Minister for Works: You have a lot of figures.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I have seen the agreement. I ask the Minister for Works to lay on the Table of the House the report of Mr. J. T. Short, late Commissioner of Railways.

The Minister for Works: All the papers are on the Table of the House.

Mr. Angelo: This is ancient history.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I want to see that report again. The Government should have been getting 1½d. per ton over 70 miles of line, whereas they are now getting ¾d. over 84½ miles. This is because of the promise of the Minister for Works to about 20 people who were living in Waroona that the line would be built there. Mention has been made of lime to the farmers. When the line from Dwarda to Narrogin is completed, practically the whole of the wheat belt, and most of the southern lands, will be supplied with lime.

The Premier: In the sweet by-and-by.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Not at all.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The line is not started yet.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Waroona would be nearer for the South-West, but the South-West does not require line in the same way as the wheat belt does. According to the Premier the land in the South-West is so rich that the line is not required for it. I will now deal with Herdsman's Lake. The estimated cost of the work there was £25,000. It will take nearer £100,000, and at the rate the Government are going it will cost £125,000. I met a miner the other day, whom I knew on the goldfields, and said, "Where are you working?" He replied, "I am working at George's folly." He explained that he referred to Herdsman's Lake. I ask those members who were elected at the time I was, some 18 months ago, if they are going to ruin their political careers by supporting Ministers who allow money to be thrown away, such as the Minister for Works has done in the case of Waroona and at Herdsman's Lake. If I had the eloquence of the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) I could go on all night telling members what that Minister has done, although he sets himself up as a great engineer.

The Minister for Works: If I did not know more than you I should be a fool.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I thought the Minister might say that, so I left Claremont out for the moment. I should now like members to visit Claremont, and see the waste of money there.

Hon. P. Collier: Apparently the waste is everywhere.

Mr. J. THOMSON: Before I entered Parliament, and when I was mayor of Claremont, I approached the Minister for Works to have the big school at Claremont drained. In the winter children cannot go into the school without getting wet feet. Eventually the Government agreed to construct the necessary drain, the people of Clare-

mont to pay interest and sinking fund on the money. I told the Minister for Works that the council would carry out the drainage, and that we were willing to pay pound for pound. The Minister replied, "I am the man; I am the engineer: you do not know anything about it. Why should you interfere with the Public Works Department?"

The Minister for Works: Who said that?

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Minister said it to me.

The Minister for Works: Oh!

Mr. J. THOMSON: I took the Acting Premier down and told him we would do the work, and pointed out where we intended to sink a shaft. Anyone who knows anything about mining can see how the money has been wasted there. It is only a little job, estimated to cost £3,500, but although that is the Government estimate, it will never be done for that amount.

The Minister for Works: You wait and see. Because you quarrelled with another soldier, you come here with these statements.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I have not quarrelled with another soldier.

The Minister for Works: You quarrelled with Major Lawson; you know you did.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I explained that we would sink a shaft and drive a tunnel, and that the whole of the work could be done by miners for much less than the department could do it. If I had been mayor of Claremont at the time the work was put in hand, the department would never have started it. A great deal of taxation will be added to the burden of the people through the incompetence of the Works Department.

The Minister for Works: You know the Works Department is not doing it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I will now leave that subject.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What about Herdsman's Lake?

The Minister for Mines: I see what I am going to get; he is working up to it.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I now come to the Minister for Mines and Railways.

The Minister for Mines: Have some charity.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Minister for Mines is one of the most able members of this House.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear! Come out and have a drink.

Mr. J. THOMSON: The Premier took him into the Government, causing him to leave his flour mill and fight an election at Albany, because of the enemy's artillery on the other side of the House. If the State can stand a Minister who can throw away half a million pounds, as the Minister for Mines did over the non-sale of the "Kangaroo," I suppose we shall have to put up with it. I am going to my electors of Claremont to tell them that I have done my best to assist the Government to square the ledger. I say to the Premier, "If you like to sink or swim with some of your Ministers, I shall say nothing about it; that is

your look-out." If Ministers continue to throw away money as they are doing, and if the Premier continues to associate himself with incompetent Ministers, he will go out at the next election; he may go out before. I told the Premier that he ought to take the Leader of the Opposition to England with him, and the cable that was sent out afterwards, asking the Leader of the Opposition to go there, shows that I was correct. I told the Premier on board the steamer on the way to London, I told him in London, and I tell him again this afternoon, that if he does not reconstruct his Ministry, and bring into office men who will make an endeavour to square the ledger, it will be the end of him. I have a word or two still to say concerning the Minister for Mines. That gentleman went to Albany to contest an election; he addressed 400 farmers there, and was applauded for his speech; and yet the man who can lose half a million pounds to the State, and do all those things that the Hon. John has done—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not refer to the Minister in that way.

Mr. J. THOMSON: I shall not say anything more against him. There was one little matter which concerned an advertisement for an inspector over prospectors. If the prospectors are what they were in my time, I would like to see an inspector from the Mines Department going up and telling them what to do. The whole of the Public Service wants re-organising. The finances have been squared, with the result that last month's deficit was the highest on record. One cannot go in to see the Premier, or even to see the Premier's private secretary: one must see the clerk to the private secretary first. In order to test the feeling of the House I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the Address-in-reply: "We request Your Excellency to instruct the Agent General not to send out any more immigrants until the people already here who are anxious to settle on the land have secured homesteads, and further until such time as better arrangements have been made for the proper selection of the people who wish to come to Western Australia to settle on the land."

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there any seconder? The amendment lapses for want of a seconder.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [5.34]: It is my intention also, before resuming my seat, to move an amendment to the Address-in-reply.

The Minister for Mines: I hope you have arranged for a seconder.

Hon. T. WALKER: At the very commencement I may indicate the nature of my amendment by reading it. Its wording is, "That the following be added to the Address-in-reply:—'But this Assembly regrets to have to inform Your Excellency that certain of

your advisers have by association and membership of a political organisation declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisation have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government.'"

First I purpose to pass a few comments on His Excellency's Speech, and on the debate so far as it has proceeded. I cannot follow the usual preliminaries to the speeches which have been made since this debate commenced. I cannot indulge in wholesale congratulations to the Premier. I yield to no one in my appreciation of the personality of the Premier. I hold him personally in very high estimation. But it seems to me that some change has come over the spirit of his dream, or else that he has plunged deeper into his dreaming. That singleness of character and of purpose, that modesty of disposition, that earnestness to which every vestige of boasting is abhorrent, these things have departed from him; and in my humble opinion he has more or less lowered the dignity of the high position which he holds by submitting to the extraordinary laudations and the bespattering with praise that have attended him since his return. He knows as well as anyone knows that the scheme which is attributed to him is by no means original; I mean the scheme so far as we understand it, for to this hour the scheme is not adequately explained.

The Premier: You have had it in detail; I am sorry you cannot understand it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I say it has not been published in detail. It is a general carrying out of those methods that we have had ever since immigration was the settled policy of this State. There is nothing beyond that. There is nothing in the scheme as we have it beyond the survey of the lands of the State and the utilisation of the Agricultural Bank and possibly the Industries Assistance Board, cum certain additional officers, to get the people on to the land and to settle them by the ordinary methods of monetary assistance and supervision. There is nothing new in it. There is no scheme in it that marks any specific genius. It is as old as immigration itself. But I want to draw the attention of the Premier, in reminder only, to the fact that it is less a Western Australian scheme—if it can be called a scheme at all—than it is an Imperial scheme. In other words, at this juncture it is incumbent upon Great Britain to get rid of her surplus, unworking population.

The Premier: Great Britain has always done that.

Hon. T. WALKER: There has not been always the same necessity. Let us clearly understand that. We have not always had the great war. We have not always had the disorganisation of industry such as exists in Great Britain and in Europe at the present time. We have not always had the distress that has been prevalent in Great Britain since

the war ceased. We have seldom seen in Great Britain such an industrial catastrophe as there has been since the war ceased. Therefore it was incumbent upon Great Britain to assist and facilitate the removal of her surplus population; that is, population for which she could not find work. It was not that Great Britain then turned her eyes solely upon the Premier of this State, or upon this State.

The Premier: Who said she did?

Hon. T. WALKER: Nobody says she did; but why, then, sing "The Conquering Hero Comes" when the single Premier of this State returns? Why give him all the laudations for this scheme?

The Premier: You congratulated me yourself.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have not congratulated the Premier.

The Premier: Of course you did.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have not congratulated him in this respect, in which there is nothing to congratulate him on, nothing at all. As a matter of fact, the scheme of immigration which has now become familiar to the public is the Imperial scheme to send population from England and Scotland and other portions of the United Kingdom, not to Western Australia alone, or even to Australia alone, but to every part of the British dominions. Britain is assisting immigrants to come out here. It is a scheme of the Empire to relieve the pressure in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Davies: What is wrong with that?

Hon. T. WALKER: There is nothing wrong with it.

Hon. P. Collier: We are not objecting to immigration.

Hon. T. WALKER: If the hon. member will follow me, I am merely expressing surprise that amongst all those concerned, in this organisation for distributing the surplus population of the British Isles, the Premier should be the one selected for the crown, as if he had invented the scheme, planned it, arranged it, and was carrying it out to its utmost—he, and he alone—

Mr. Richardson: He is doing his part, you know.

Hon. T. WALKER: So is the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson), and so is every member of the House.

Mr. Richardson: But not the biggest part.

Hon. T. WALKER: Well, we are not all in the same position, and therefore cannot all carry out the biggest part.

The Premier: You had the chance once.

Hon. T. WALKER: We had, and we carried out the project to the utmost. We did nothing that the Premier can find fault with in that respect.

Hon. P. Collier: The Premier endorsed our policy by taking our leader into his Cabinet.

Hon. T. WALKER: As a matter of fact, if it comes to what the Premier has proposed in the way of subdividing land and improving farms, I may remind the hon. gentleman that he came to me personally and congratulated me in regard to these various points upon which he now prides himself. I expressed all those points to the House before ever the Premier was a Minister of the Crown, when he was the simple member for Northam.

The Premier: That was a very good speech, that North-West speech of yours.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, it was not in connection with my North-West speech, but it was when I spoke of making provision for immigrants and preparing farms before they came, and generally getting ready for them, when I said, "If you do those things and do them properly, you will not require to pay for immigrants; they will come of their own choice."

The Premier: That was a very wise scheme.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, and it was anterior to what is now called the Premier's scheme. The hon. gentleman's scheme is framed on the same factors.

The Premier: I do not object to its being called Walker's scheme.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is also supposed to be Mr. Pickering's scheme.

Hon. T. WALKER: I gave it as an old method, as a method adopted years and years ago, before ever the present Premier came into the House. The scheme represents no man's special prerogative. Everybody has contributed something to the ideas. I only maintain myself in connection with the matter because the Premier himself, when he was a simple member of this House, congratulated me upon that initiation of ideas, so to speak, in the Assembly on that particular subject. But here is the point: Before going Home—if we may call England Home—Western Australia is my home—allegedly to start this scheme and to start Britain getting rid of her surplus population, he had a conference with the Prime Minister and made an arrangement with him. Why? Let the truth be known through the proper channel.

The Premier: I am not in the habit of hiding the truth.

Hon. T. WALKER: When I accuse the hon. member of hiding the truth he can make that interjection, which I regard as personal. I am telling him what are the facts. I am trying to impress these facts upon those hon. members who are listening. Before he went to England a conference took place with the Prime Minister. What was the object of it? It was for the purpose of acting in accordance with the suggestions or with the hints, and more than hints which arrived through the proper channels of communication. Everything was there. It was like the move that was made at the time Federation was entered upon.

The Minister for Agriculture: The move came from here.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. Does the hon. member wish to tell me that if the Premier of this State had never conferred with the Prime Minister—

The Minister for Agriculture: The Prime Minister had no definite scheme of his own.

Hon. T. WALKER: Neither is there any definite scheme now. There is a tremendous lot of haze and doubt about the scheme as it stands. Perhaps it was a discussion as to ways and means, but the real purpose of the thing itself was already alive. The conference itself was an expression of the move beyond it, and the move beyond it was the British move. You cannot tell me that if Sir James Mitchell had not visited William Morris Hughes, Britain would not have sent people to Australia, Canada, and elsewhere to get rid of her surplus population.

The Premier: Many are going now.

Hon. T. WALKER: And would be going now if the Premier had never been born.

The Premier: They have always gone.

Hon. T. WALKER: I will not hold a private conversation with the Premier. As leader of the House he should set a better example. If he had never been born, this scheme or its equivalent would have been inevitable. The close of the war, the cessation of industries and the unemployment rendered it an absolute necessity. Of course ways and means have to be discussed, and for the purpose of discussing ways and means as affecting not Western Australia but the whole of Australia, the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and our Premier had a conference.

The Premier: All the Premiers.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am speaking more of the personal interest this State had in the matter, and the Premier as well. At that conference certain plans were made as to procedure, as to ways and means for carrying out a scheme which was already moving. Then the Premier proceeded to England and all he accomplished was to get Western Australia's share of the money that Great Britain was willing to advance in order to carry out the scheme.

Mr. Teesdale: And that was not too bad.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am pointing out that what he did was inevitable, that whoever might have been Premier would have had to do precisely the same thing. The Minister for Works might have had to do it. Would he then, after taking part in something in which he was nothing more than a floating incident, have allowed a brass band to meet him at the Palace Hotel and precede him to a picture hall where the proprietor was using him to advertise the opening of a new theatre?

The Minister for Works: Don't you think he is too big a man for that? Do you think he wanted that?

Hon. T. WALKER: He did it.

The Minister for Works: He never thought it.

Mr. Teesdale: You cannot judge your host by what you have to eat; you must take what he gives you.

Hon. T. WALKER: Not brass bands. Perhaps want of thought or some other neglect brought about this humiliation of the office of Premier of this great State, everybody going almost into hysterics of praise. I regret to say that I believe you too, Mr. Deputy Speaker, raised your head on that oc-

casion and burst forth into panegyrics that deserved to be made immortal for their extravagance. For what? For doing what the Premier could not help doing.

The Minister for Works: Why blame him?

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not blaming him for doing what he could not help doing; I am blaming him for participating in this wholesale hysteria in our public life, lending himself to it as part and parcel of it. That in itself was a regrettable episode in the Premier's life. You can give him all the credit you like for what he has done, merely getting a loan and assisting Britain in a cheap way to get rid of the population she cannot keep or support, or employ. Give him all the credit for that even now, but why become wildly enthusiastic? What has been actually accomplished? What do we see immediately in front of us? We know that the lands are not ready for the absorption of the population that is already here? There are men who have applied for selections and who cannot get them for months.

Mr. Teesdale: They are going on with the Esperance railway.

Hon. T. WALKER: How are they doing it? They are going on in such a slovenly and dilatory fashion that is enough to break the hearts of the people who are there. They are just now about to improve the pier so that it may support the weight of an engine that must come upon it when the railway is started in earnest. The defects in that pier were known before the Labour Government were in office, and had the Labour Government remained in office those defects would have been removed years ago.

The Premier: You had four and a-half years of office.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is not fair.

The Premier: Four years and nine months.

Hon. T. WALKER: What we did was done expeditiously and we were working expeditiously when the Wilson Government put us out and immediately stopped the work. The work would have been finished long ago if it had not been for the action of the Wilson Government. Before that what delay was there, and to whom was it attributable?

The Premier: To me?

Hon. T. WALKER: In a great measure, yes. The hon. gentleman spoke his mind, which he has had to change since.

The Premier: No.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member must admit that his mind has altered in regard to the character of the soil. He must admit, too, that he opposed the railway measure and afterwards said, "If you make it an agricultural line we will vote for it up to a certain distance from Esperance; we will not take it through to Norseman," and that afterwards from the Treasury bench he said that the line should go through to Norseman. Our first Bill was to carry the line to Norseman. The Minister for Works will remember it. And merely in order that we might get half a loaf rather than no bread at all, did we accept the 60 miles north to make it

an agricultural line. That work was stopped without rhyme or reason as soon as the Labour Government was defeated, and it was stopped too against facts and truth as disclosed by the report of the Royal Commission. That is the country which people are waiting to take up. Applications are being received every day for land down there, but the applicants cannot get on it.

The Minister for Works: Of course they can.

Hon. T. WALKER: The facilities are not there, and I am informed also that the same liberal treatment will not be handed out to the people who take up land there as is given to those who take up land in the wheat areas.

The Minister for Works: Who is your informant?

Hon. T. WALKER: The department that should know the country I am dealing with.

The Premier: I have told you what we are doing there.

Hon. T. WALKER: But what the Premier told me never went so far, and I ask the Premier now to say whether he will assist those people through the Industries Assistance Board just as the settlers in the wheat belt have been assisted?

The Premier: But they are not in distress.

Hon. T. WALKER: What I complain about is the differential treatment, that the people at Esperance cannot hope for the same help as is given to those on the wheat belt and in other parts of the State. There is no Industries Assistance Board for the newcomers at Esperance. There is a great deal of force in what was said by the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson) when he referred to 40 bona fide settlers who were ready to take possession of land to work it for the benefit of themselves and the country, but who were unable to get it. On behalf of those men, he was told that they could not come under any group settlement scheme until they had had 12 months' experience.

The Premier: That is right too.

Hon. T. WALKER: I say it is not right. If this is part of the scheme, let us look at what it means. It means that we intend to devote the population coming forward by every boat to the employment of farmers at comparatively cheap rates for 12 months. For that period, they have to work as the servants of others, to learn what is called farming.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And some of these men are experts!

Hon. T. WALKER: That is so. Despite the fact that some of them are experts, they are debarred for a year before they can get on the land. That is a departure from the Premier's scheme at the outset. Let the Premier remember the efforts he made when Minister for Lands some years ago, on which occasion he started a settlement at Yorkkrakine and at other parts of the State, and the settlers there were civil servants.

Mr. Pickering: How much experience had they?

Hon. T. WALKER: None. They came straight from their desks and from their

daily habits of a clerical character and they were immediately put upon farms. I am pleased to say that many of them have made good, and have greatly improved their positions.

Mr. Teesdale: It would be a good thing to have another Yorkkrakine now.

Hon. T. WALKER: How can we have another Yorkkrakine if we have to put people for 12 months in the service of farmers?

Mr. Teesdale: They would not debar the civil servants. Let us have another Yorkkrakine.

Mr. Harrison: The Fremantle lumpers settled that district.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Some were placed at Burracoppin.

Hon. T. WALKER: I mentioned Yorkkrakine, but there were other districts in the State as well. I know a former civil servant who has a holding near my own at Trayning. That man is now in a comparatively prosperous position. I know of cases elsewhere, but these civil servants had had no farming experience before they were put on the land. Their whole training and tendencies were adverse to making them good, successful farmers. Notwithstanding that, they have gone ahead and accomplished something for themselves and for the State. These newcomers, however, are to be debarred unless, forsooth, they want to be banana growers. In such cases, the men can be sent up at once to Carnarvon. I have been told that they have sent many of these ex-soldiers to Carnarvon.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Angelo: Dreaming again! There is not one such man there.

Hon. T. WALKER: I was told that the hotel bars were full of these settlers—these new banana growers. I am pleased to receive the assurance of the member for Carnarvon on that point.

Mr. Angelo: They are wool-gatherers, like yourself.

Hon. T. WALKER: I thank the hon. member for the compliment. Wool is valuable; bananas go rotten.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On that side, they gather wool they are told to collect.

Hon. T. WALKER: The fact remains that there is no preparation. There is no proper scheme for settling the people on the land. All that is arranged is to bring out as many people as can be selected at the Agent General's office—

The Premier: No, they do not select them there.

Hon. T. WALKER: As many then as can be got through other agencies—

The Premier: No.

Hon. T. WALKER: Or through such agencies as the Commonwealth Government and others can employ.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The men were not told that they could not go on the land when they came here.

Hon. T. WALKER: Let these people know the period of servitude under adverse

and trying conditions they will have to experience for 12 months, before they are permitted to make any home on their own behalf.

Mr. Angelo: In one country, they have to wait three years before they can secure a farm.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In that country they get a lot more immigrants.

Mr. Angelo: In any case, it is three years there as against 12 months here.

Hon. T. WALKER: Just imagine the facts being known in Great Britain! Just imagine the intending immigrant coming here desirous of making a home for himself and his family, only to be told that he must be thrown hither and thither on the winds of fortune for a period of 12 months, and even then, he has to take his chance of getting a holding!

The Premier: He may not be suitable.

Hon. T. WALKER: Who, then, is to be the judge?

The Premier: There is 12 months in which to demonstrate that.

Hon. T. WALKER: At all events, the immigrants will have a period to make themselves suitable, and for 12 months you have cheap service.

Mr. Harrison: That is the question! It is very costly service in some instances.

Hon. T. WALKER: I know it may be so in some instances, but the member for Avon (Mr. Harrison) knows that our own citizens, and sons of our own farmers, experience a difficulty in getting suitable blocks upon which to settle at the present time.

Mr. Harrison: That has nothing to do with the service rendered by these immigrants.

Hon. T. WALKER: It has. If we cannot find farming lands for those who live here, how can we expect to get land for the immigrants? That very fact furnishes to the hon. member proof that the Government cannot get ready for the large influx of immigrants who will come here in the course of the next 12 months, and that these men will have to be apprenticed for 12 months to the existing farmers. At the end of that period, it will be impossible to put these men upon their own homesteads. It is impracticable; it cannot be done. We are providing for all kinds of disappointments for these new-comers and we are making unfair use of them.

The Premier: You do not want immigration at all.

Hon. T. WALKER: I say advisedly that if we get the right class of people from England, we will get farmers or sons of farmers from the rural districts. The Minister can tell us what wages are paid in England. A good farm hand capable of doing all the necessary work on a farm can get £2 a week in England, plus a decent home to live in and the small tract of land, varying from half an acre to an acre in extent, on which he can keep his own cow or pig. Such a man is far better off than a farm hand in Western Australia.

The Premier: You are wrong there.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not.

Mr. A. Thomson: In any case, there is his future, which makes a difference.

Hon. T. WALKER: Men who are farm labourers in England are better off than farm labourers in Western Australia.

Mr. Money: Not to-day.

The Premier: I have just been there, and I say they are not.

Hon. T. WALKER: I was there five years ago, and I say they are.

Mr. Money: At the present time, such men get 30s. a week, and have to keep themselves.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member is speaking about the time when he was a boy.

Mr. Money: I am speaking of conditions to-day.

Hon. T. WALKER: At any rate, I adhere to my contention that a decent farm hand is better off there than a man with his wife in Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: Surely he has to be the judge of that himself.

Hon. T. WALKER: How can he judge for himself unless he has the experience? The Minister would bring such a man away from conditions where he is well off and ask him to go to a country he has not seen!

The Minister for Works: They are nominating men every week.

Hon. T. WALKER: But these people have not seen Western Australia, and have not experienced the conditions here.

Mr. Harrison: Some of these men are ambitious.

Hon. T. WALKER: They may be ambitious to secure their own farms, that is true; but they do not know what they have to go through before they get them.

Mr. A. Thomson: They are told.

Hon. T. WALKER: We could not get them if the real facts were told. Men are brought here to work for 25s. a week and some of them are getting less. The figure I have mentioned has been taken as the general standard. How can a man keep a wife or expect to provide funds for the maintenance of a home, out of such a wage? I say he is better off when he is in England.

The Minister for Works: I am paying a "pommy" 10s. a day on my farm and he has milk, vegetables, and so on.

Hon. P. Collier: You need not advertise the good wages you pay!

Hon. T. WALKER: I say the standard wage to be paid to new-comers is 25s. a week.

The Minister for Works: In Western Australia?

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes.

The Minister for Works: I have never struck one of them, and I do not want to.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister may not, but that is what is proposed for the new-comers. I am, perhaps, exaggerating when I say 25s. a week. Some of them are not expected to get that much. Some are offered as little as 15s. a week and board.

Mr. Harrison: I do not know of any such cases.

Hon. P. Collier: There are lots of things the hon. member does not know.

Hon. T. WALKER: Some of these men get 15s. a week—

The Minister for Mines: And found.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister knows what "finding" means in some of the new settlers' homes. He knows what the sleeping accommodation is; he knows what the sanitary arrangements are. He knows, too, what kind of food some of these settlers have.

Mr. Pickering: They have the same sort of food as the settler.

Hon. T. WALKER: And what sort of food is that?

Mr. Pickering: The best he can get.

Hon. T. WALKER: They do not get much of what is best.

Member: At any rate, they thrive on it.

Hon. T. WALKER: Some of them have "tinned dog."

Mr. Angelo: They are a fine body of men.

Hon. T. WALKER: For some. "tinned dog" is too dear. That is all part of the scheme to get a population here to work for the farmers, and that will be for low wages. That is the scheme!

Mr. Sampson: The scheme is not for lowering wages.

Hon. W. C. Augwin: Monger said so in his speech.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, lower wages and longer hours.

Mr. Angelo: The Queensland Government are moving in the same direction.

Hon. P. Collier: Leave the Queensland Government out of the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: If we were doing as well as the Queensland Government, it would be all right.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. T. WALKER: Before tea I was nearing the conclusion of my review of the immigration scheme. I only desire to add that, judging by what we have seen of the scheme, it will serve to bring in a large population that will not stay in the State. In fact, from the evidence it appears that already those who have landed recently are making their way to the Eastern States. Ultimately, if any large numbers come in, the result must be that the newcomers will be dissatisfied with the conditions of their 12 months' apprenticeship, and will either get out of the State altogether, or will cluster into Perth. The consequence will be acute unemployment, while it might even lead to the displacement of our aged workers, and their substitution by the newcomers, a condition of things that must bring pain and suffering to large numbers of the pioneer citizens of Western Australia. I cannot criticise more—time will furnish its own best criticism of the scheme—but before I leave the matter I wish to be emphatic on the point that neither I nor any other member of the party to which I belong is adverse to population. We, with

all the rest, fully recognise that the comfort of the people must depend on the wealth created in the State in which they live, and that the potential wealth of this State cannot be made usable except by the application of industry not yet within our borders. We must have the multitude, and we must have production within easy reach of all. Therefore I have not offered this criticism to-night in opposition to the settlement of our country, or to its development, but with a due regard to its proper, healthy development, not its forced development, and its development with the greatest degree of justice to the citizens already within our borders, and to those invited here to share the destiny of this great country. For it is a great country, with possibilities undreamt of, even by our optimistic Premier. But I am afraid we are not only liable to "hinderment" or injury by unwise methods of treating the newcomers, but also by the way in which we are tied, chained by the legislation and the constantly growing power of the central Government of the Commonwealth. It is here, too, where I have the right to question, not so much the sincerity as the zeal of our Government. The Government are aware that we are being strangled by the exactions of a power that does not know our local conditions, but which uses us to an enormous degree to bolster up the industries and the wealth of the Eastern States, and to that extent to cripple us. We are being crippled—everybody knows it, however ardent a Federalist he may be—for Federal purposes. I take a back seat to no one in my desire to see the mighty co-operation of every State of this great Federal compact. But I want fair play, and I want autonomy. I want our right, without undue interference, to develop according to our own lives and our own local zeal, and the application of our local funds, to develop all that is worth developing within the borders of this State. We cannot do it whilst all our sources of revenue are monopolised by the central Federal Government, whilst in other words we are working, not for our development, but for the enrichment of a few, not the whole, of those in our sister States. I want to know what is being done by the State Government to stop it. Where is their influence, their patriotism, their desire to make a stand, to fortify the people of the State against the influence and aggression of the eastern wire-pullers?

Mr. Harrison: Why not define how they are aggressing on us?

Hon. T. WALKER: Can the hon. member deny that it is an aggression to take over our means of developing the country, in the shape of the Savings Bank, which they are aiming at? Can he deny that they are taking the monopoly, the supreme power? Can he deny that they are intruding even on our own domestic preserves? We can have no source of taxation left to us free from their aggression upon it. Can he deny that?

Mr. Harrison: I have denied nothing.

Hon. T. WALKER: Then why does the hon. member look so wise and merely inter-

rapt? Does he desire to make of me a school-master to teach him? I suppose he is itching to make me say that they are aggressing upon us by their iniquitous tariff upon every implement which the farmer wants for the development of his land.

Mr. Harrison: I am.

Mr. Pickering: And upon the mining industry also.

Hon. T. WALKER: Of course upon the mining industry, but the hon. member did not want that. They are crippling the mining industry and making it more and more impossible for us to absorb the population. We cannot do it. Not everybody can be farmers, not even all the immigrants coming here at the invitation of the State and the behest of the Mother Country. We cannot absorb them all at once, and so they will require secondary industries. The imposition of Federal taxation and the imposition of the Customs tariff are preventing us from developing our local industries. We shall, therefore, fail in consequence of the apathy of the State Government, who are taking no stand. They say, "It is a Federal matter." But it is their duty to protect the State against this Federal aggression.

Mr. Harrison: How would you do it?

Hon. T. WALKER: Does the hon. member want me to give him a preliminary lecture on political economy? Some members come here with a pretence of showing their wisdom; and they have not the wisdom of an ordinary animal seeking its food in the pigsty. They seek to fill their brains from the utterances of others, instead of putting forward original ideas of their own. What has the hon. member done? What have his party done? What have the Government done?

The Premier: What did your Government do?

Hon. T. WALKER: They fought in every possible way against it, fought the encroachment of the Federal authorities. We resisted them by deputations to the Federal Government; we interviewed in the precincts of the Premier's office the leading Ministers of the Federal Government then in power, and we protested on the floor of the House. Hon. members must know that before I was a Minister, whilst I was a Minister, and since I was a Minister, I have consistently fought against the efforts of the Federal Government to get their hands upon all our sources of wealth, and to strangle our individual efforts. But the present State Government have done nothing, the party of which the hon. member is leader have done nothing. They are quietly sitting there and leaving things to drift. I want to know what is being done by the Government and by the Country Party.

Mr. Harrison: We have never sat behind high protection.

Hon. T. WALKER: I want to know what is being done by that party to protect one of the greatest sources of wealth in this State, the farming industry, the wheat growing industry. What have its members done as against the popular move being made every-

where to put everything on the footing of competition? The farmers know that if there is one thing more than another which has been to their benefit, it has been the marketing of their wheat by the pool, a co-operative movement. This year we have had the co-operation of the farmers backed by the Government, the wheat pool of the Government of this State, managed better than any preceding wheat pool, and which has made it possible for the farmer to get a fair price for his products. Now it is proposed that there shall be no Government backing or recognition of a wheat pool. The farmers are thrown back upon voluntary co-operation, and we know what that means. The Government have decided to abolish the State wheat pool without taking those members into their confidence, and they have not a word to say, not a paper placed upon the Table of the House, no instruction, no comment upon the matter. We are to be at the mercy of private institutions and private competitors for the next wheat pool.

Mr. Harrison: A voluntary pool.

Hon. T. WALKER: We know what a voluntary pool is when it has not the Government behind it, and when the management is placed in the hands of a private institution which has received more than one critical attack in this very Chamber.

Mr. Harrison interjected.

Hon. T. WALKER: I must ask you, Mr. Speaker, to protect me from the garrulous utterances of this bucolic member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member has raised no objection; he has done nothing.

Hon. P. Collier: What could he do about it?

Hon. T. WALKER: He could not do much, but he has not made an effort. Neither have his party nor the Government. They have left the farmers exactly where they were before the war.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They got instructions from Monger and company.

The Premier: We got instructions to do away with the wheat pool last year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Mr. Moran said you could work it cheaper by a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel.

Hon. T. WALKER: What I have specially drawn the attention of the House to to-night by the amendment I intend to move is the fact that day by day we see the grandeur of the Constitution under which we serve the people being undermined. Day by day the greatness, the independence and the value of this honoured institution is attacked, is white-anted, if I may use a modern expression. It is not only what so ably my honoured leader said in his speech on the Address-in-reply that we are delegating to committees every hour of our life, to boards and to Royal Commissions the responsible duties that belong to a Government; it is not only that we are delegating what we have the right to hold in responsibility and trust, but we are permitting members from all sides of the House, and more particularly from one party in this Chamber, to act behind

the backs of responsible Ministers and to influence the administration of this country to their own interests, to their own party interests, and to their own personal interests.

Mr. Pickering: Personal interests?

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, in many instances. I say responsible government is a misnomer in this State. We do not have it. We are confronted with this state of affairs every time there is a coalition Government. A coalition Government is always a Government that is pulled from two sides. It is always hedged in, always limited; never at any time in the world's history has it been more than a make-shift. Yet we hear the cry from one, who may be a Minister for aught I know to-morrow or next week, that we should do away with party, that we should have Ministers from everywhere—the same spirit that would invite the Leader of the Opposition to go to England, as if there were no room for difference of opinion and no right of independent criticism.

Mr. Angelo: In a time of crisis party feeling should be subordinated.

Hon. T. WALKER: What is the crisis? There is no crisis now except in the hon. member's excited brain. This is a time when we have fallen down to bedrock and have to climb up to our ancient wealth and ease in industrial operations. Things have been out of joint by reason of the war, I admit, but they are no longer out of joint. We are down to solid rock and have to climb the hill once more, and we want solid determination and purpose and eyes fixed on the object we have to attain. We cannot barter away our principles for ease of government or convenience of party or non-party place in a Chamber. We must have on the Treasury benches men who have a policy, who do not and cannot say, "My policy is such as the House tells me to take or such as I am advised by the most dominant party in the House; tell me what you want and you shall have it." That is not the government we want in these days of rebuilding and reconstructing the world. We want men who have a knowledge of what they have to do and who will fearlessly, in spite of all criticism and all dissension, be willing to lose every emolument and glory and dignity of office in order to serve the purpose in view. That is what we want at the present time. But are we getting it? Ministers sit still in their places while paragraphs like this appear in our daily newspapers:—

Political influence. Danger to departments. Legislative remedy. The reference in our leading columns yesterday to the necessity of legislation to prevent private members of Parliament from directly approaching departmental officials on matters of their constituents' affairs has excited much comment. From what can be gathered, the nuisance has alarmingly developed of recent years and threatens, unless stopped, to become a grave evil. That it would be unjust to include all, or even a majority of the members in the reproach that they push the interests of their constituents

to the extent of haunting departments, is the opinion in qualified circles. But, undoubtedly, some members, with an assiduity that does not always pause to examine the merits of every case, embarrass the official lives of public servants, particularly in those departments associated with settlement.

We can guess therefore where these busy wasps are intruding and where they come from.

Some years ago a Minister, resolute to cope with the evil even then manifest, issued instructions that members of Parliament should prefer all their requests directly through the Ministerial head.

And if I may pause to comment, that is the proper way to do it. Go to the Minister who is the responsible person, the man who has to account for his administration to Parliament and through Parliament to the people.

On the other hand, under another régime, the requests of members of Parliament were specially filed in red envelopes that they might receive the promptest consideration that regard for the welfare—of the Government—might suggest. A few members—only a few—by their extraordinary activities about departments are said to be worrying officialdom unduly, and tending to create a set of conditions in which the best interests of the State are not likely to be preserved. Perhaps these members will recognise the danger once it is pointed out, but the most effective remedy, it is considered, would be legislation forbidding parliamentarians, on penalty of forfeiting their seats, to approach officials on official subjects.

Mr. Pickering: Who is the author of that?

Hon. T. WALKER: It is the paper that the hon. member swears by, the official organ of the Government that makes of Sir James Mitchell, Saint James Mitchell. It is only an instance, a straw that shows how things are drifting. Ministers are not doing their work. They are not taking the responsibility that their office demands. They are allowing officialdom to run this country, and it is running the country. The heads of departments and their subordinates are making all the mischief such as there is in this State. Take the line of least resistance on the part of the Government. Let the underlings do it. And the underlings do it to the injury of the community. The consequence is that pin-pricks are being administered everywhere to the public. In the railways, a department that should be managed in accordance with rules that consider the public of the State, the constant annoyance to citizens by all kinds of frivolous pin pricks is astounding. How the public bear it so long I cannot understand. Everywhere else the underling is king. Even the Leader of the Opposition has no right to have a squint at an immigrant lass or man in the Immigration Department. An underling forbids him, and his Minister backs him up in that insolence, that usurpation of authority that is manifest in all the departments of the State at the present time.

Where are Ministers fulfilling their duty? Where is that sense of responsibility? To show how little one is responsible, we have only again to make very brief allusion to the incidents recited to-night by the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson). In the Lake Clifton affair nobody was responsible; somebody had forgotten. The promise given to Parliament was nothing. Parliament is being wiped out. The thing was done deliberately in defiance of all principles and pledges. It was done in opposition to the votes of this Parliament. Parliament had voted that no railway should be constructed except in a certain order. This railway was gained by a side issue. The Government built it but pretended it was a private line—a violation of principle and, if I may say it, a violation of political honour. The Parliament was ignored. Where is our constitutional government in such circumstances? Of a similar kind was the Como incident. The Premier waxed a little warm when twitted with the matter in this Chamber, and some interruptions were made as if it were a mere matter of defending the spending of £40,000 odd on the construction of the Como tramway. The gravamen of the offence was not that. The gravamen of the offence was that this Parliament had been solemnly assured by its Ministers from their places that this line should not be built without Parliament having been first consulted. That was the offence. The paltry £40,000 was no more important than a snap of the fingers. It might be a good thing to have this tramline serving the comfort of the citizens of Perth, but it should not have been built in violation of the pledge given to Parliament. There is nothing more sacred than a pledge given to Parliament. By violating such a pledge, we lose all continuity of Parliamentary service, we break up every tradition. We become a mob not a Parliament, when we cannot trust the word of Ministers. And when they violated their pledges solemnly delivered to this House, what was the excuse? The excuse was that the acting Premier, because he is a member of another place, did not know of or had forgotten this promise. Where were his underlings that they did not remind him? Where was the record? What kind of Government is it that is so careless as to undertake a job of the kind without first seeing what had been promised and what had been undertaken? Where is our responsible government? It does not exist. Apparently the farmers and settlers or the producers' party have as much responsibility as this Government, if not more. The responsibility is shifting. It is not with the Premier. It is not with our King. It is found in the top garret of that exploiting institution known as the Farmers and Settlers' Association. That is where government is found.

Mr. Pickering: I thought it was a co-operative company.

Mr. Simons: They get co-operative salaries for running it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have shown in every way that we are whittling down the rights of this Parliament. We are developing into a rabble, instead of that honourable institution up to which the public should be able to look with respect. We have delegations everywhere to committees and sub-committees. Even with the settlement scheme we are delegating to the New Settlers' League, which is the Ugly Men's Association, the real functions and duties which should be undertaken by the Government. This is a body of people paid by an extraneous Government. It forms no part of this Government, but is subsidised by the Commonwealth to do the work. It is entirely irresponsible. We are not responsible for it. It cannot be brought here and dealt with whether it does the work ill or well, or indifferently. You, Sir, have no say over it. It is an independent body. The Government, who glory so much in their scheme, have really created these people rulers; the settlers of the country are performing the functions of Government. I appreciate the work and the sacrifice of some, if not most, of the members of that institution. I applaud them for their efforts. They are showing the Government that which the Government should do. But to what condition have we come when we subordinate the great functions of responsible Government to irresponsible institutions? Where is the old honour attaching to Government? How can we impeach or question, or bring to task, or place the blame upon the proper people under circumstances such as these? This is only another phase of the delegation of responsibility. We had a spectacle the other night which all the more makes telling everything I say. If people have ears to hear and the mind to understand they cannot fail to appreciate the application of what I am saying. In these modern times the great danger to the people's liberty is located in the license to and not the liberty of the Press. It has been one of the glories of many centuries of fighting in England, that of winning the right to free speech and free publication. The free publication of modern times, however, is considered to be the right to fabricate, to invent falsehoods, and to deliver a half-truth in order to mislead the general public and to support the fetishes of Government by fallacious arguments. On Wednesday, the 9th August, the "West Australian" published a leading article on the meeting of the Farmers and Settlers' Association. I will not read the whole of that leader, although every line of it is pregnant with meaning. This was just before the now notorious speech of King Monger, prior to the address he delivered which was to mesmerise and coerce the delegates attending the annual conference. The writer of that article does the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) the honour of quoting him, for he says that the words of that hon. gentleman are worth repeating. I commence with this quotation, because I know before I have done there will be interjections asking what I have done and

what our party have done. I am quite willing to share in the expression of the hon. member as quoted here. The leader writer repeats his words as follows:—

The prestige of Parliament is to some extent lowered by the constant desire of various parties to prove that other parties are under the domination of outside juntas . . . the sooner the people of Western Australia realise that their Parliamentarians are free agents—

I should say, "should be free agents"—(except on certain questions constituting prominent planks in the platform) and in respect of promises made on the hustings, the better for all concerned.

Mr. Harrison: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. WALKER: I quite agree. This cry of doing away with parties is rubbish.

Mr. Pickering: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. WALKER: We can no more have all people thinking alike or holding similar principles than we can have all the people born with hair of the same color. They differ and they have a right to differ, for progress consists of eternal differences. Similarity and uniformity constitute a dead letter.

Mr. Pickering: Stagnation.

Hon. T. WALKER: Stagnation does not express my meaning, because stagnation is a kind of activity. There is every day a change in a pool that is stinking, because it becomes more stinking, if I may use a vulgarism.

The Premier: Is that Parliamentary?

Hon. T. WALKER: It certainly is Parliamentary. The paper goes on—

For a Parliamentary party to be controlled by an outside "junta" is for government to be debased to acting as the tool of cliques responsible to none but themselves.

That is a sound principle. If the paper had kept to that I could not accuse it of itself undermining Parliamentary rights and duties.

Mr. Pickering: Does it?

Hon. T. WALKER: It does not stop at that. It goes on to say—

Such a condition of our political life would be degrading to the Government that held office under it, and to the "representatives of the people," so forgetful of their self respect and so disloyal to the principles of representative Government that they allowed themselves to be the instruments of a "junta." It would, too, be pernicious in its effect upon the misguided men behind the scenes whose political capacity would exhibit itself in wire-pulling and intrigue. These reflections are suggested by the extraordinary proposals to be submitted to conference by the executive of the Primary Producers' Association, proposals which in effect would make the members of the executive the absolute controllers of the Parliamentary members of the party.

The executive there means the executive of the association.

And would give them authority to make and unmake Governments, or Ministers, so

far as the Country Party might be in a position to do so.

This was printed before Mr. Monger's speech was delivered, or before the motion was put. Clearly it states the effect of the motion. The motion would clearly degrade Government and Parliamentary life to the utmost; in effect it would render government impossible.

The Minister for Agriculture: It sounds like the One Big Union.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister ought to know better than to say that. It has no relationship whatever with it.

Hon. T. WALKER: If the Minister wishes to side track me on to any other issue I am ready to follow him, or answer him here or outside, or on any platform in the land.

The Premier: Outside will do.

Hon. T. WALKER: The paper continues—

If the Country Party is to continue as an effective and desirable force in State politics it may be hoped that these proposals will be unhesitatingly rejected.

Hon. P. Collier: Which they were not.

Hon. T. WALKER: The leader continues—

The Ministry headed by Sir James Mitchell is responsible to him, as he is to Parliament.

The Premier: Yes, that is so.

Hon. T. WALKER: "And the country."

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is how the Press puts it.

Mr. Harrison: It is not a bad way of putting it.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, it is not.

Hon. P. Collier: The wise old owl!

Hon. T. WALKER: I thank the hon. member for his remark. Let us hope that he will continue to improve along these lines. Again the paper says—

But it would be wrong to electors in country constituencies for conference delegates to consent to the handing over to a body that has no place in our Constitution, and no political responsibility, the decision on affairs of government which the representatives of the people are continuously empowered to make in the performance of political duties which they are sworn to discharge.

That also is sound. Just once more—

But the resolutions to be submitted by the Primary Producers' executive to conference would have the Parliamentary members entirely responsible to gentlemen doubtless worthy enough in their places, but their places are not of a kind in which they have been confirmed by the electors of the various Country Party constituencies expressing themselves in a constitutional manner.

That was before the Primary Producers' conference met. It was a warning to them; it was a threat to them; it told them that if they carried the resolutions drafted by the executive and placed upon the agenda paper by them, they would be degrading the country, ruining responsible government, and degrading

themselves. But the conference did not carry those resolutions. What happened at that conference I shall deal with later.

The Minister for Works: Would you like a speech or two made there to help you along?

Hon. T. WALKER: I have no doubt such speeches would be helpful, but even with the paucity of material that I have been able to obtain from the public point of view, I have enough of matter to support my amendment. The report in the "West Australian" of Thursday last is headed, "Primary Producers' Political Conference—A Fiery Session—Executive Control Issue—Win for the Country Party." Those are the headlines of the journal that preaches so solemnly to all of us about our duties, as if the Press had no duties. To begin with, this report was challenged afterwards, as I shall show, by the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association. It reports what allegedly took place, and it says—

The only motion discussed was that emanating from the executive, "That Clause 51 as at present appearing be deleted, and the following inserted in lieu thereof: 'In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason—"

I draw attention to those words, as I shall have to comment upon them.

the council may at the request of the Parliamentary party, or its own discretion—

Again I want to draw attention to the words. convene a political conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference shall bind the political party."

I notice the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) smiles. That is what Monger proposed.

Hon. P. Collier: It is what he got, too.

Hon. T. WALKER: Now there came what was supposed to be the resolution carried. I wish hon. members to attend particularly to the re-wording of the same thing. It is neither more nor less than a re-wording of the very same thing.

Then, it is understood, the President, Mr. A. J. Monger, proposed an amendment to the motion, leaving it substantially as under:

I do admit that by the use of the word "substantially" the paper expresses some doubt as to the accuracy of the wording. But that word "substantially" is the only word raising any question at all as to the correctness of the report.

"In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform—

That used to be in the old rule.

or for any other reason—

Let hon. members note the scope: for any other reason, it does not matter what.

the council may, at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion—

So the power is with the council, or executive.

convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference, based on equal voting power—

That is, every man present having the same voting power, I presume.

Mr. Davies: Do you mean both sections?

Hon. T. WALKER: Then there would be only two votes.

Mr. Davies: The chairman could decide.

Hon. T. WALKER: The chairman is a member of one of the parties. The equal voting power means the equal voting strength of each one present.

Mr. Sampson: Then it would not be equal. The number of each side would have to be the same.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. I put it this way, that the number on the executive exceeds the number of Parliamentarians.

Mr. Pickering: But in this case they are to be equal.

Hon. T. WALKER: The point is that this conference is to be held and that the decision of the conference shall be reported as a recommendation to the next conference. Nothing else. Based upon that, a glowing leader was published by the "West Australian" on the victory for the Country Party and the vindication of responsible government. But in fact, that was not the resolution passed. In the very next day's issue the "West Australian" says—

Yesterday the general secretary, Mr. W. Sutcliffe, declared that the resolution had been published in a garbled form.

The version I have just read is garbled, inexact.

He stated that the precise terms were as under:—"In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference, based on equal voting power, shall be recorded as the decision of the association."

The decision of the association. It binds all. It is the association that is bound. Every one is bound. Every Parliamentarian belonging to the party is bound by that decision of conference. There can be nothing stronger.

The Minister for Agriculture: A member is bound only by the platform he is elected on, just the same as you are.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member is speaking of that which he knows nothing about.

The Minister for Agriculture: All right.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not all right. It is all wrong. The Minister might well reserve his interjections for that class of people which he is accustomed to bamboozle with such ignorance.

All decisions so recorded shall be reported to the next conference of delegates."

On that very day the conference dealt with other matters. Clause 51 as it stood originally I might myself have confirmed. Whenever there is a doubt as to how the platform is to be interpreted, it is well that there should be a conference, a discussion in which the wisest amongst the party can determine what is actually meant. That is legitimate. But this party does not deal with the planks of the platform and with the principles announced when members sought election, planks and principles with which the electors had a chance to become acquainted. It does not deal with the platform; it deals with "any other question." If Parliamentary members in the old times were in doubt as to how they should read a thing, they could take counsel with the executive: they could make a request for a conference, and only at their request would the conference be called. But now, independently of that, and whether members are rightly or wrongly or anyhow interpreting the platform, the council can call this conference at its own discretion, at its discretion purely. And there is no resistance to such a conference on the part of the Parliamentary party. So long as members belong to that party, they must obey; and there can be submitted to the conference not only matters affecting the platform—and every organisation has a platform—but also all questions, any question, anything that the council may determine upon. And there are other cognate clauses. For instance, Clause 51a, following upon that which I have just read and indicated as having been altered, was also submitted for amendment. The amendment was—

That clause 51a as at present be deleted, and the following be inserted in lieu thereof:—

I wish hon. members to pay attention to this, because it is carrying out the same thing and emphasising it.

"That the Country Party in both Houses shall endeavour to secure the adoption of the policy as expressed in the political platform, and on such measures shall vote solid.

I agree to that.

In regard to other matters the parties shall endeavour to have initiated, and shall solidly support, measures in accordance with the general policy of the association—

That may be all right. But now comes something more—

and as may be decided at a conference held in accordance with Clause 51."

Now we see how members of Parliament are required to vote, not only solidly on matters affecting their platform, and not only solidly in support of the aims and objects of the association, but also as may be decided in respect of any question brought up at a conference held in accordance with Clause 51. Is not all that is announced by the leading article in the "West Australian," which I read, repeated here? Is it not all indicated?

Is it not all clear? Then the report continued—

The next matter affected the Country Party's participation in the present Government. The executive pressed the following motion:—

That the second sentence of Clause 53, reading as follows, be deleted, namely—

That the whole party may coalesce with any other party, and that in the event of such coalition members of the party may take portfolios.

And that the following words be added in lieu thereof:—

That in the event of it being considered desirable for the party to enter into a working arrangement or coalition with any other party, the whole matter shall be in the hands of a joint committee consisting of the Executive Council and the Country Party.

The whole matter was not to be in the hands of Parliament, or of Parliamentarians belonging to that institution, but in the hands of the joint committee, consisting of the executive council of the Primary Producers' Association and the Country Party as is provided for in Clause 51.

Mr. Pickering: You have not even got that option.

Hon. T. WALKER: What do you mean?

Mr. Pickering: You cannot coalesce with anyone?

Hon. T. WALKER: I can coalesce with any party. When any of the parties sitting opposite like to adopt principles that are progressive, principles that make for the good of the whole community instead of their own individual pockets; when they can legislate for the nation instead of a class, then, and not till then, may I join them at any time. This, however, is the position into which the Country Party have got themselves. But observe, Mr. Speaker, that when the leading article regarding this garbled utterance came out, it was made to appear that there was no binding effect upon the Parliamentary party, that they were perfectly free and that the Parliamentarians had had a great win. It says among other things, after speaking about the clause which was designed to put the Parliamentary group completely under the thumb of the executive—

It savours of the rankest ingratitude that this executive should tamely withdraw its "junta" motion, and substitute an amendment which, on constitutional grounds, is irreproachable.

I have read the grounds. Will any hon. member, belonging to the Country party or not, say that the resolutions passed at the primary producers' conference were "irreproachable on constitutional grounds"? Is there one who will say it? They cannot honestly say any such thing. Yet the Press deliberately tries to delude the public that "all is well in the State of Denmark," that everything that could be wished was done by this august body, and that, as a matter of

fact, constitutionalism was placed on a solid footing there. It says:—

As the executive considerably outnumbers—It speaks pointedly and should be a warning.—the Parliamentary party, the joke, to use an Americanism, would be on the Parliamentarians, if the motion were to be carried—

It was carried and the joke is on them—

And the Parliamentarians were to accept it. Also the joke would be on the unfortunate country whose politics would be the plaything of a coterie delivering its commands from Wellington-street. But the motion was not carried. An amendment submitted by Mr. Monger was adopted. It reads substantially as follows:—That Clause 51, as at present appearing, be deleted and the following be inserted in lieu thereof:—In the event of any doubt arising as to the interpretation of the party platform, or for any other reason, the council may, at the request of the Parliamentary party, or at its own discretion, convene a conference comprising the members of the council and the Parliamentary party, and the decision of such conference, based on equal voting power, shall be recorded as a recommendation to next conference.

That is not correct.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, something is left out.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is not the quotation as submitted by Mr. Sutcliffe. Again a misquotation! This is how the public are deluded. They are receiving falsehoods. For these statements are falsehoods, by implication. We are supposed to have a free Press. Time was when a Government would stop the mis-statement of news to the public. Regarding the correction, the Press has been silent. I defy the leader writers on the "West Australian" staff to deny that the motion carried was subversive of responsible government. That motion was not amended but if anything it was "worsened."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I was surprised that the Premier did not resign when it was carried.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is regrettable that independent journals, that have no need from the standpoint of wealth to cater for any section of the public, should adopt such an attitude. I marvel that such a Press should be guilty of these practices of petty partisan tricks, unworthy of men of honour. There were times in the British Parliament at all events when "the slightest stain," to quote the language of Burke, "would fall like a wound," and dishonour withered like poison. This can be done with open impunity in these days and the public swallow it! Are these the days of a free Press or of a licentious Press? In effect, this is a lie; the motion was not defeated. It was put in a form less noticeable to the people.

The Minister for Works: Camouflage.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the right word, but even then clumsily. A statement of the facts was made known to the editor of

the "West Australian" but he has never made any comment since. The leading article speaks of "victory for representative government." If it be a "victory for representative government" that meetings can be called by an executive, the Parliamentary party has to attend these meetings, and the decisions arrived at have to be obeyed by the Parliamentary party—if that be a vindication and victory for representative government, where do we stand? I have no desire to speak of the Press as an institution. I have had the proud honour of being associated with journalism in this State and elsewhere. It is a noble calling, but to prostitute it in the interests of any section of the community for any kind of aggrandisement, whether of feeling or some more material substance, is a lamentable thing. I claim that certain sections of the Press are absolutely in the pillory in this matter. They are responsible. In private life, we shun and despise the man who lies. Such a man takes his place outside the door of the family circle. The Press, however, can do this and disseminate these half-lies all through the community, and apparently be applauded for it, because some people are rendered immune in consequence of what the Minister for Works has called "camouflage." The "Sunday Times" has had an honourable history, but where, from that honourable start, it will end, I cannot say. In last Sunday's issue that journal dealt with the matter in this way:—

Monger went too far in copying the Labour Party—

He has not copied the Labour Party except in essential materials relating to organisation, showing that the Labour Party has something to teach others. The "Sunday Times" proceeded—

If he had originally proposed that when a difference of opinion or interpretation arose, it should be referred to a conference of representatives of district councils, the Parliamentary Country Party, and the executive, a procedure finally adopted by delegates—much of the objection would have vanished—

The editor knows that that is a falsehood. He knows that is a lie; I do not know any other expression that I can use that will be forcible enough.

The Minister for Works: What paper is that you are quoting from?

Hon. T. WALKER: From the "Sunday Times," a paper that circulates widely in the country, a paper that has had honourable associations.

Hon. P. Collier: The biggest paper in the British Empire!

Hon. T. WALKER: It has had able and learned journalists connected with it, but it is serving party issues and it can descend to this sort of thing. That is a falsehood; no other word adequately designates the position. The conference carried no such resolution. Yet the subscribers are led to believe in the back country areas and in the far-distant

miners' camp, that such was the case! How can one overtake reports of this description? It is up to the Government to protect the people against the publication of reports of this description. The day was when such things would not be permitted; now they are tolerated and applauded. The "Sunday Times" says, in conclusion,—

But to place the power in the hands of a Terrace junta—well, that would be fatal to responsible government.

The power is placed in the hands of the junta referred to and, to accept the conclusion of the "Sunday Times" itself, that is the end of responsible government. To show that it is the end of responsible government, let me show the House what they are doing. In Saturday's issue we read this—

Primary producers and the Government. The general secretary of the Primary Producers' Association, Mr. W. Sutcliffe, said yesterday that the following motion had been carried at the previous day's private sitting: "That this conference entrust to the executive—"

Already the motion was carried on Thursday, and others adding to its force on Friday; and on Friday this, too, was carried, and this was supplied to the paper—

"That this conference entrust to the executive to call a conference in terms of amended Clause 51—"

Which enables the executive at any time to call the meeting. In accordance with the resolution, still red-hot, they have already called a conference—

"for the purpose of examining the present working arrangement between the Country Party and the Government, and for devising means whereby the policy and platform of our association shall be more adequately given effect to."

This executive calls the people that are under your charge, Sir, to an irresponsible meeting, where they are submerged in numbers, to determine how they shall act towards this Government, and what working arrangement, what bribing, what influence, they can bring to bear upon the Premier and his colleagues to give them their way.

The Minister for Works: Why say bribing?

Hon. T. WALKER: Because a promise of support is a bribe. If you are to have the support of this party in return for concessions to the party, it is a bribe.

Mr. Simons: Who originated bribes in Queensland?

Mr. Sampson: That is another story.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not necessary that a bribe should be in hard cash or paper money; it is quite sufficient to promise to support in office, to keep them where they are, if they will only do certain things for the party.

The Premier: They kept you in office for eight months.

Hon. P. Collier: Never for a day! It is an unfair statement for the Premier to make.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Premier is, unjust.

Hon. P. Collier: They never kept us in office an hour.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We never sold ourselves, anyhow.

Hon. T. WALKER: I challenge any man to show where our party ever received a concession or listened to a dictation from any other party. It was never done. We pursued a direct policy, a policy that was always attacked from beginning to end by the hon. member. We never swerved from it, nor did any outside influence ever have the temerity to bring us to book, as these men can be brought to book. Now I will tell you how again the Press misleads us. I am sorry the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) has left his seat, for in the report of the proceedings he is specially mentioned. He is shown to have been the defender of constitutional government at that meeting. Here is the report—

Mr. Angelo is said to have delivered one of the most telling speeches of the sitting—

Hon. P. Collier: A well written one.

Hon. T. WALKER: The report proceeds—leaving no doubt that he would leave the party if the executive attempted to come between him and his electors.

Hon. P. Collier: I wonder who wrote that speech for him?

Hon. T. WALKER: There was no doubt that Mr. Angelo would leave the party if the executive came between him and his electors. But they have already done it. Where does he stand now? Has he left the party? I have seen the tip that he would sit cheek by jowl with the Minister for Works. I am told that in every issue the "Daily News" tips him as one of the coming magnates of the Treasury benches, and that large numbers of copies of that paper have been religiously posted by every mail to Carnarvon. I am glad the hon. member has returned to the Chamber. He has seen this report, and he knows what it says. It gives him the credit for having been the chief constitutional defender at the meeting.

Mr. O'Loughlin: It does not say that his speech was written.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, but he must have read it admirably, because it has been inscribed in indelible ink as a fact that he was going to stand by constitutional government. "As for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Mr. Angelo: You must have been there.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am told the hon. member finished up with those words, and left no doubt that he would leave the party if the executive attempted to come between him and his electors.

Mr. Angelo: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. WALKER: Well, the executive has called a meeting without consulting his electors.

Mr. Angelo: Let them try to come between me and my electors.

Hon. T. WALKER: They have called a meeting, and the members of that party

have to go down to it. Let the party disobey this summons from the junta, and where will they be?

The Premier: You can leave that to them.

Hon. T. WALKER: I propose to give them a quid pro quo in pudding in place of Mr. Monger.

The Minister for Works: That will be a bribe.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is nothing more than a bribe. But does the hon. member mean to tell us that his electors alone have his confidence, that he is serving his electors, and that the party is nothing to him? Let us see—

Mr. E. H. Angelo, M.L.A.—

It sounds like the Angelus, and the hon. member's placid, genial face reminds me of the sweetness of its tones. This report continues—

Mr. E. H. Angelo, M.L.A., announced—
At the conference, not to his electors—that the Closer Settlement Bill would be somewhat on the lines of the first one. The precise contents of the measure were unknown. On behalf of the Country Party he promised that the Bill would be submitted—

To whom—to his electors, to Parliament? No,

to the executive as soon as members obtained a draft.

Hon. P. Collier: Applause!

The Premier: The House gets a draft.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, the House does not get a draft.

Mr. Denton: They get an overdraft.

Hon. T. WALKER: Listen to the conclusion of the report—

Delegates could safely trust a joint conference of the executive and the party to see that nothing was done inimical to their interests.

The executive! Where are the hon. member's electors? The phenomenon has occurred in the history of this State of draft measures being drawn outside for the approval of the Government.

Mr. Angelo: No, that is wrong. What was meant was, when we got a copy.

Hon. P. Collier: But you need not have pledged yourself to supply a copy, for copies are available to all as soon as the Bill comes down.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is then placed at the disposal of every member of the community. It is not then a privilege. But the word used here, and it has not been corrected in the Press, is "draft." I have known instances of copies being supplied for discussion outside before this House had been honoured with a sight of the measure.

Mr. Angelo: I do not know where you get these drafts.

Hon. T. WALKER: There was no justification for a promise of that kind. What did it mean? If it meant they were to have no advantage over the ordinary citizen, where was the need for it? And there are the words "Delegates could safely trust a joint conference of the executive and the

party to see that nothing was done inimical to their interests." Those words immediately succeed the promise to supply the executive with a draft.

Mr. Angelo: Not a draft. We get copies here.

Hon. T. WALKER: But was there anything in promising them that they should have a copy when everybody else should have a copy? Was that any reason for asking them to trust the joint conference? You, Mr. Speaker, as the guardian of the liberties of the House know that this House must be honoured before the public with the confidence of the Government. That is one of its most sacred privileges. Even a select committee's report cannot be published before it has been presented to this Chamber without committing a breach of privilege. No one can show a draft Bill to an irregular non-responsible body before this House has received it. Ministers must be responsible for the measure; not outside parties. If outside bodies are to do it, then I say again that Parliament and parliamentary Government are deceased.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We might as well go home.

Mr. Angelo: Nothing like that will be done.

Hon. T. WALKER: Then what did the hon. member mean? If the promise was of value, it meant something outside the ordinary course, because there is no value in making a promise about an ordinary thing. What is everybody's property is nothing. They might well have said, "Thank you for nothing." But he specially appeals to them for their trust and promises to supply them with a draft. Let hon. members soften it as they might, the plain facts are there. They insist on regulating the affairs of this Parliament by a joint conference of an irresponsible executive and members of the Country Party. There can be no two ways of looking at that question. It is a deliberate breach of their obligation and of their oath when they came into this Parliament and undertook faithfully to discharge their duties. The hon. member said he would leave the party before he would be guilty of this constitutional breach. But he has been guilty and there are members of the Government equally guilty in that respect. I wish to goodness members would have some sense of the importance of the positions they hold. Let them consider the history that lies behind them. These Chambers have ever resented outside control and interference. I repeat that on matters of party, members have a platform. That is a matter of which their constituents are aware and they vote for members on that knowledge. But outside of that, in the direction of guiding the affairs of the country, making working arrangements with the Government, deciding what shall be done through the Government to support their party—these are matters outside their electors. It is an interference with the rights and liberties and functions and duties of this Chamber, and it is upon that score I resent it. These men

are usurping to themselves more than the functions of royalty. In the history of Parliamentary Government, Kings of England have been told that in the matter of freedom of speech and debate and on matters of public welfare, we are to be free from interference. Before we ever commence on the Address-in-reply, the Premier introduces a Bill. What for? It is a time honoured custom saying to Royalty, to His Majesty himself, "You cannot interfere with the rights and liberties of this Chamber. You cannot bring your powerful potent influence to bear on our deliberations. We are independent." And to show our independence, before we grant His Majesty one single penny of supply, we initiate legislation according to our own free will. That is the object of this custom. That privilege is to denote, and as we say in introducing the Bill, to assert every session our right to deliberate untrammelled by any outside source. Yet these people call members from their duties to attend an executive meeting.

Mr. Simons: In a warehouse.

Hon. T. WALKER: It does not matter where it is, though better there than in a hotel. And to deliberate on what? To decide how they are to vote, whether they will support the Government, even to make or unmake the Government. There is a meeting now called for that purpose. I doubt not since you, Mr. Speaker, have occupied that dignified position, you have made yourself acquainted with your honoured predecessors in office. You know that on one occasion the King sent word to Mr. Speaker, Sir John Pinch, that he was not to put a certain resolution, and the Speaker received the message. The King ordered the House to adjourn and the Speaker determined to leave the Chair. You, Sir, know the history. In spite of the King they held him in the Chair until the resolution was put. Kings must not dictate to this Chamber. That is not an isolated instance. There are others in the history of that great dignity which you so ably fill. I allude to Speaker Lenthall. When the armed force had been brought by Charles I. to compel the surrender of certain members because they had vindicated the liberty of the Chamber, as he approached and stood, as it might be, on those steps and said, "Mr. Speaker, I shall have to use your Chair," he looked around to see if he could find Pym and Hampden and certain other members who had offended him by their outspoken utterances on behalf of the cause of liberty and the rights of that Chamber. He saw them not and asked the Speaker to point them out. What was the Speaker's utterance to the King?—"Sir, I have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear nor tongue to speak but such as the House directs me." And the King, despite his armed men, had to leave disappointed. These are only examples in our history, the expression of our freedom from all direction and the focussing and centreing of full unimpeachable responsibility upon the Ministers in whom is vested office and the

right of administration and legislation for the community. Now we forget those lessons. This Parliament, though it be made of choice timber, might as well be a barn. We have no consciousness of that responsibility to Sovereign and to people that our laws and customs have engrafted upon us. But we tamely submit. Ministers will tamely submit to have their policy dictated by an outside body that can call a meeting whenever it likes.

The Minister for Works: No fear; it cannot do that.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes it can. I know the Minister for Works would not for an hour submit to that.

The Minister for Works: Neither would my chief.

Hon. T. WALKER: I believe it is possible his chief would not submit to it, but he sits cheek by jowl with those who do. If he himself would not tolerate that intrusion upon his rights and duties, he is a colleague of those who do. There are members of that party sitting on the Government seats, and they have to advise His Excellency. Now we know that His Excellency is the representative of the Sovereign, but in order that he may make no mistakes, certain instructions are given to him by letters patent. Among other things we find the following:—

In the execution of the powers and authorities vested in him, the Governor shall be guided by the advice of the Executive Council—

That is his Ministers, not the primary producer's council—

But if in any case he shall see sufficient cause to dissent from the opinion of the said Council, he may act in the exercise of his said powers and authorities in opposition to the opinion of the Council, reporting the matter to us without delay, with the reason for his so acting. In any such case it shall be competent to any member of the said Council to require that there be recorded upon the Minutes of the Council the grounds of any advice or opinion that he may give upon the question.

That is the authority given to the Governor. He is to take the advice of his advisers. That advice is supposed to be given under no compulsion, under no mandate from without. It is supposed to be freely offered and the full responsibility of it taken. It is a personal responsibility. But how can we have that if Ministers are to behave according to the behests of an outside executive? They cannot do it. The advice is tainted, it is polluted by outside sources. It is not free; it is not responsible. No man can take the responsibility if he is under compulsion. Yet that is the state to which we are reducing the Government. It is an absolute abnegation of all the cherished privileges, rights and duties, honours and dignities of this Chamber. Yet nothing is said about it. Matters go on. Now I ask Ministers whether they are going to attend that meeting convened by the executive to decide on the working arrange-

ment with the Government. Are they going to attend that meeting?

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for Mines will make an hour's speech.

Hon. T. WALKER: Is the Minister for Mines going to attend it? Is the Minister for Agriculture going to attend? They raise no voice whatsoever against it. I say it is a degradation of our public life. No wonder that we are mocked at every street corner. No wonder that the Press may scout and snout at us. No wonder they can lie concerning us and the public generally. We have no protection. This institution, which should be the guardian of our liberty, which should be the judicial height and corner stone of all that the public treasure and hold dear in their pursuit of happiness in this world, the general public regard as worthless, and take every opportunity they can to insult us, to classify us as loafers, to designate us as wasters. This is because we have abandoned those high principles that have made England great, and have made kings and peoples great. It is because we have abandoned what our fathers have bled for, what our nation has struggled for through every species of cloud and oppression. We have forgotten all that. It is time we re-called ourselves to our duty. Have the Government within them that fine sense that will resent this intrusion upon responsible Government, or will it supinely sit indifferent to these sniggers and these stealthy attacks upon—

Mr. Teesdale: Why indict a Ministry because of what the member for Gascoyne said?

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not for what the hon. member said. Apparently the member for Roebourne has been asleep. I am referring to the resolution carried by the general body, and the resolution convening the meeting to again consider it. What the hon. member said at that meeting is of little account. He is only one individual. It is that executive, with powers given to it under Clause 51 and Clauses 51a and 53, which give power under Clause 51 to convene a meeting. That meeting is to decide the working arrangements with the Government.

Mr. Teesdale: So far as they are concerned.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And it will tie you if you support it.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is what was carried by resolution. I ask if the hon. member supports it. Does he stand by it or repudiate it?

Mr. Teesdale: There have to be two parties to that.

Hon. T. WALKER: If he is a member of the association he must abide by it. He must either desert the Government or—

Mr. Teesdale: I am not a member of it.

Hon. T. WALKER: As the hon. member is not a member of that association and has not heard all of my speech he does not understand what he is talking about. Do the Government intend to take up a stand in this matter? Are our rights, the rights of this House, to be protected. Are we to have responsible Government or a cowardly sur-

render to the executive of an irresponsible association? Let us know which we are to have. In order that I may see how members stand and that the public may judge for themselves, I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion on the Address-in-reply:—"But this Assembly regrets to have to inform Your Excellency that certain of your advisers have by association with and membership of a political organisation declared themselves obedient and subservient to this extraneous political body, and by their acquiescence in the resolutions carried by the said organisation, have made it impossible for them to independently advise Your Excellency, thereby subverting and endangering responsible and constitutional government."

Mr. CHESSEON (Cue): I second the amendment.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [9.20]: I accept the motion as one of no-confidence in the Government and move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.21 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 16th August, 1922.

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

QUESTION—OIL PROSPECTING, AUSTRALIAN PETROLEUM CO.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Mines: 1, How many separate areas of Crown lands are held under license to prospect for mineral oil by the Australian Petroleum Company or by persons representing that company? 2, What is the total area embraced by such licenses? 3, When were