

go on with this work. I know it is more from a cement point of view than from a lime point of view, but as the Government want to see lime supplied to the agriculturists at the cheapest possible rate and at the earliest possible moment, I think members can leave the matter with the Government.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington—in reply) [5.3]: The discussion has been more favourable than I expected.

The Minister for Works: There are other people who want to manufacture cement.

Mr. GEORGE: The Minister for Works was not here when I made my first remarks or he would not have made his present interjection. I asked the Government to investigate the matter, and use their discretion. I do not know the parties interested; I simply know Mr. Newnham, but I do not know Mr. Johnson.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The matter ought to be gone on with at once.

Mr. GEORGE: If the member for Forrest had had my experience in matters of this kind, and if he wished to escape from attacks as to interested motives, he would have as little to do with private promoters as possible. After listening to the speech of the Minister for Lands and taking his speech to really mean an undertaking that the Government would go into the matter at once, and that they recognise that the sense of the House is favourable to the proposition, and that they will have a definite proposition, with the idea that it will be square and suitable for Western Australia, and that this proposition will be placed before Parliament before any action is taken, I am satisfied, and I am sure my constituents will be.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does this mean 12 month's delay?

Mr. GEORGE: It may mean a little delay; but I do not think it unreasonable when the Government have got to the point that they can grip the matter, and it is only a few months before Parliament will meet again.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I would like to see something done now.

Mr. GEORGE: So would I, but I do not think it would be right to force this matter, seeing that the session cannot last more than a few days now. I should be sorry to force the Government to jump into a proposition of this sort, and in six or eight months' time come to the House incensed with the idea that they had not gone properly into the matter. I am prepared to give them all the time which is reasonable to investigate it. Accepting the speech of the Minister for Lands as an indication that he will recommend the matter to the Government, and believing the sense of the House is with me, I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

House adjourned at 5.7 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 24th November, 1915.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. CORNELL leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. W. Kirwan on the ground of urgent private business.

On motion by Hon. R. G. ARDAGH, leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Hon. R. D. McKenzie on the ground that he has proceeded to England to give his services in the defence of the Empire.

BILL—SALE OF LIQUOR REGULATION (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.8]: I have no intention of thrashing this matter out at any great length. I think the House is fully aware of my views on the subject. It will be within the recollection of members that when the Bill which preceded this one was before the House I expressed the fear that if the suggestion which Mr. Colebatch had thrown out—that we should insert in another Bill the 9 to 9 clause—were carried, it might lead to a game of battledore and shuttlecock between the two Houses. I think I may claim that I was a fairly good prophet. That game was played but I was wrong in one particular. I had an idea that possibly the game was going to be vantage all, but it did not prove to be so. At the first service the other side claimed that we overstepped the service line, and the result was that the Bill was banded about with various messages, until it was finally disposed of yesterday, and we are no further advanced. I hope on the present occasion this House is not going to be led down a similar blind alley and I trust members will not attempt to put into this Bill the 9 to 9 clause. The 9 to 9 idea was a very good one in September but at this late hour, when we imagine the session may come to an end almost any day, I feel perfectly sure that if a clause for the 9 to 9 proposal is inserted in the Bill, it will only mean that the Bill will be wrecked entirely. Personally, I believe that the 9 to 9 is a very fair compromise, but the time for that has passed by and we are faced with the question that we must accept the principle of the referendum and the Bill somewhat in its present shape, that is as we have it before us now, or we will get no Bill at all.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why has the time for the 9 to 9 proposal passed by?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Because we know that a motion was moved in another place and it was negatived without even a division. There has been a considerable

amount of praise lavished on another place because of their attitude on this question. I think that praise is entirely undeserved. So far as I can see, the attitude taken up by another place is very much like that of a combatant who, when challenged to fight, turns round and says, "Hold me or I will hit him." I do not believe that they intended to do anything further in temperance legislation than this House is resolved to do, but there is undoubtedly a considerable demand for the earlier closing of public-houses during the war, and in justice to that demand, and in justice to what everyone of us must recognise to be a proper thing, we should allow this Bill to go through.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It will be law when the war is over.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I am going to deal with that point in a minute, but I would like to ask the Colonial Secretary if he can give the House any information as to the intentions of the Premier in regard to the date on which the referendum is to be taken.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: In May next.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I ask that question because the Colonial Secretary has told us that the Legislative Council elections will take place next May and in another place we have had it from the Attorney General that it is probable that the referendum will be taken at that time. I mentioned that fact at a celebrated meeting of which hon. members have heard a great deal but at which unfortunately not many were present—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There would have been a row if there had been.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: When I mentioned at that meeting that the referendum would probably take place in May the Premier contradicted me and said that was not so, and I was put to the painful necessity of looking up the reports in the newspapers, and since then the reports in *Hansard*, and I found that what I said was perfectly correct. Therefore, I want to know from the Colonial Secretary if the Premier has made up his mind as to the approximate date on which the referendum is to be held.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It cannot be held in harvesting time.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The one blot on this measure as it comes to us is the fact that the referendum is not to be taken until so late a date as May, and if the measure gets into Committee I intend to move an amendment that the referendum shall be taken during January at a date to be named by the Government.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.13]: Although this is a difficult question I have a clear idea in my own mind as to what should be done. I will not say that this House has climbed down, but I will say that it has been compelled to beat a retreat owing to false tactics and false strategy in connection with this continuance Bill. It is quite possible that members of the public have not been able to understand all the different steps which have been taken but every member here clearly knows what has occurred, and that is that instead of passing a continuance Bill, as we have done, we tried to tack on to the continuance Bill a great many amendments which, of course, are being dealt with in the referendum Bill. I do not often indulge in personal references in connection with public matters, but I may be permitted to make two. The first is with regard to my colleague Dr. Saw. He stands in quite a remarkable position so far as this matter is concerned because he has come here elected for a very short period. He goes back next May to face the electors. That is to say he has come amongst us most recently and he is going back to the electors sooner than any other member in the House. Therefore, for both reasons he may be considered to be in the closest touch with the electors who have sent him here, and furthermore he has been sent here by a number of electors, a great deal larger, and I think nearly double that in any other province represented in this Chamber. We have heard his admirable speech and he has told us that he, at any rate, is going to accept the referendum. I can only say I entirely agree with him. The other refer-

ence is to my friend Mr. Colebatch. I regret I was out of the Chamber when he criticised my utterances on the continuance Bill, in which I emphasised the importance of accepting the referendum. My hon. friend incidentally observed that I seemed to have some constitutional difficulty, whether physical, or mental, or moral I forget, in taking responsibility. It is always interesting to see ourselves as others see us, but I confess this is about the last criticism I should have laid myself open to. So far from refusing to take responsibilities in public matters, I even take the responsibility of occasionally differing from him. How can he taunt me with refusing to take responsibility in these matters?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It happens he did not do it.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I was not addressing my remarks to the hon. member who interjected, but through the President to the hon. Mr. Colebatch.

The PRESIDENT: It is very wrong of the hon. member to interrupt.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Whether the criticism is just or whether my remarks are called for or uncalled for, these personal matters do not concern hon. members or the public very much. On the public question of this referendum as against Parliamentary sanction, let me appeal to my hon. friend and ask why these frequent taunts and criticisms about the public? Surely the public understand this question. Who will dare to say that the public do not understand the liquor referendum, and who will dare to say that the public are not interested in these questions? As they are the creators of the hon. member and myself, as well as of hon. members in another place, why should not the masters and creators of members of Parliament be permitted to give their opinion on this question which they understand as clearly as any hon. member here, and in which they are vitally interested? The details of the measure we can discuss in Committee, but we all know that as far as Parliament is concerned, and as far as the public are concerned, it is the crux

of the matter. Is Parliament going to decide this question or are the people themselves going to decide it, and if there is a conflict of opinion between two bodies, which we were told were co-ordinate, are we going to be led into the blind alley we were led into over the continuance Bill and beat a hasty and somewhat undignified retreat? These are the questions I would like hon. members to consider. I do not know that it is advisable to go into the details at this stage. I have one or two amendments to suggest in Committee, but on the second reading of the Bill and at this late stage of the session, I take it we are all agreed the crux of the matter is whether this matter shall be decided by Parliament or by a referendum to the people. What claims have hon. members here to dictate to the public as to the hours when they shall close their hotels? Someone spoke about the audacity of elected persons.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Insolence.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That is a better word, though, perhaps, not quite Parliamentary. I will leave the word "insolence" for use outside this House. What claim have hon. members here, some of them representing 500 or 600 electors, to decide this question? Yet those hon. members presume to dictate to the general public on a question which the public clearly understand, if they understand any question at all, and in which they are vitally interested. My hon. colleague, who comes very recently from one of the largest constituencies, has urged this Chamber to accept the referendum. It will be very interesting to see the division, and I am very glad to assist my colleague in the line of action he has taken up. I look forward with some interest and anxiety to what the other representative of the Metropolitan-Suburban province will say on this matter. If it so happens that that hon. member also is on the side of Dr. Saw and myself—

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That will settle it.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It may not settle it here, but I certainly think it will settle it in another place and amongst

the general public. It passes comprehension to understand how, even with the audacity of elected persons, a member representing 500 persons or a couple of thousand persons, or let us say 5,000 persons, and sent here to deal generally with public affairs, should presume to dictate to the public as to what hour they shall close their hotels. I would make one last appeal to my hon. friend. Why does not he let himself take the position to which his character and abilities and industry entitle him, and that is the leader of a large section of the Liberal party? How can he expect to take a position to which, as I say, his character and abilities and industry entitle him, if he is going to treat the public like this? This is a democratic country and in the Federal Parliament, even more democratic than in the State Parliament, and how can the hon. member hope to succeed to turn out those persons now on the Treasury bench unless he has the public behind him? These are the questions I am asking myself and I sincerely trust the Council will not be led into the blind alley into which it was led over the continuance Bill, but that the public will be permitted to decide the question in which they are primarily interested and which they thoroughly understand.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [3.24]: As with the making of books, so too, I think it may be said to the amendment of liquor laws, there is no end. It frequently happens that we get one amendment of the liquor laws during a session, but during this session we have been, shall I say, more fortunate than usual, in that we have had three opportunities to consider this most important question, a question which, as the hon. gentleman who has just sat down said, is surrounded with difficulties. It is surrounded with difficulties because of an artificial atmosphere which has gradually been built, if one build an atmosphere, around the subject, an artificial atmosphere within which are found those persons who are known to a certain section of the community as the trade—it is

a funny thing that this trade is spoken of as if the trade were a nefarious thing to engage in, and in the engagement of which would be found only criminals of the deepest dye—but no doubt those people engaged in the trade have built around themselves fortifications and, shall I say entanglements, of a description which very often defy the efforts of those outside to dislodge them. I allude to the fact that with the consideration of the liquor trade must always be associated the consideration of the interests of the travelling public, and the consideration of the interests of those persons who, not living in homes of their own, wish to live in hotels—the question of residential hotels as against merely drink-selling hotels. This has always made the subject more difficult to deal with. On the other hand, we have a body of persons animated, I understand, though it is sometimes hard to believe it, by only the most noble of motives, who wish to decrease what they look upon as the greatest evil to which mankind is subject, the tendency to drink too much, and with whom I am thoroughly at one in the object at which they aim, but about whom I often wonder whether they ever think what an immense amount of harm they do their case by the methods they adopt to bring it before the public, and, so to speak ram it down the throats of the public. I do not propose to deal at length or categorically with any of those very worthy ladies and gentlemen who have been addressing themselves to this subject for some little time past. I prefer to deal with the combination as a whole, and let me say it would be well if that combination known as the West Australian Alliance were to learn one or two things—if they were to learn among other things that it is useless and futile for them to hope to influence the opinion of any man, whose opinion is worth having, by threats and intimidation. So far as I am concerned, threats and intimidation have been very freely used.

Hon. J. Cornell: They are beyond recall.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: And to those who have used them, I take this opportunity of publicly stating that, if I am to go out of Parliament, I could go out in no more worthy fashion than upholding what I look upon as the best traditions of Parliament, and I could go out in no worthier cause than refusing to allow Parliament to be dominated by outside control. That is the position I take up, and it is the position I would like those ladies and gentlemen who are so keenly interested in my welfare during the next few months, to learn it is my intention to take up. I have no desire to make this a personal question, so I will leave out that aspect of it. There is another matter I would like those good ladies and gentlemen to remember and it is that my opinion—though they might put my opinion down as nothing—and in the opinion of those who have studied this matter in an unbiassed and an unprejudiced manner, the best treatment for the public who are suffering from the consumption of too much liquor is not legislation, but the building up and creation of a public opinion which will gradually carry more and more weight as the years go on, a public opinion which will teach members of the community to believe that it is a disgraceful and despicable thing to take drink to such an extent as to interfere with the business of any man or woman. Let me say that public opinion, after all, is in my view—and I think hon. members will agree with me—the most powerful factor we have in this modern life of ours. Public opinion to-day has many more avenues of publication, so to speak, than it had in years gone by, and I am glad to say that it has very much more influence on the conduct of each member of the community. Those of us who care to throw our minds back a little will recognise that the drink habit is becoming more and more discredited as the years go by. Hon. members will, I think, agree with me when I say that even 20 or 25 years ago it was thought to be a much less disgraceful thing than to-day to appear to be suffering from the effects

of liquor. So as time goes on, this evil—and undoubtedly it is an evil and a menace to the community—will tend to cure itself. I venture to say that those efforts on the part of honest-meaning but, in my opinion, misguided individuals who wish to cure everything by legislation, are more calculated to retard the march of public opinion by antagonising that opinion towards the cause they wish to befriend. Those are my ideas in this connection. With regard to the making of people sober by Act of Parliament, the history of the licensing law of the British Empire will show that such a course, after all, is not very hopeful. If we study even the first licensing law ever introduced in England, over 400 years ago now—I think the date was 1495—we find that it was a law which was passed for the purpose of taking sureties from the keepers of ale houses that those who assembled on their premises should be of good behaviour. There was nothing about inculcating sobriety into the minds of the mediaeval gentlemen who wished to go upon the loose. Nothing of that sort at all. It was merely the keeping and the restoration of the public order. From that time up to the present, legislation has been directed towards the end that those places where drink is sold shall not be a danger and a menace to the personal comfort of the community in which they exist. Again, I am led to the conclusion that ill-considered restrictions have often exactly the opposite effect to that which they were intended to bring about; and I fear that in this connection a very great deal of blame for those scenes, more or less disgraceful, which have occurred in all the capital cities of Australia—I refer to the drinking habit amongst some of our soldiers: unfortunately this is too true—are due to the fact that, as the result of the agitation of extremists, what has been known as the dry canteen has been established throughout military camps in Australia. I venture to say that if those extremists took a moderate view of this question, they would recognise that many of our soldiers are used to having a certain

amount of liquor in their daily lives, and that if the soldiers had the opportunity of obtaining liquor in the camps where they are for the time being under control, then the periods of license which sometimes occur when they are away from that control would not occur. I venture to say that this is a direction in which our friends have to some extent erred. It is my intention—and I speak with a good deal of diffidence as a representative of a numerically small and perhaps unworthy section of the community, compared with that great Metropolitan - Suburban Province of which during this session we have heard a good deal—to vote for the second reading of the Bill, and I am glad that on the second reading of this measure my unworthy vote will be cast with that of those gentlemen who represent the Metropolitan-Suburban Province. I am glad, further, to say, with that disregard of vote values characterising the party to which they belong, that my unworthy vote will count just as much as theirs. I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill because of its underlying principle, because of the subject-matter of the Bill—the shortening of the hours during which hotels may keep open. As to the means by which the shortening of the hours is to be arrived at, that of course is a battlefield for the two opposing sections of the House. Personally I do not consider that the principle which is laid down in this Bill is one that the House should adopt. Personally I think that in Western Australia, as in Victoria, and as in New South Wales, Parliament should take that responsibility which the electors have conferred upon it. As a matter of fact it appears to me that those ladies and gentlemen to whom I have alluded as taking the greatest possible outward interest in this matter, seem to desire at the present juncture a referendum a good deal more than they desire reduction of hours. The referendum seems to be to them some new toy with which they are to play. I am glad to find, however, that my contention as to the inutility of a referendum for this purpose is backed up by the

opinion of a gentleman in whose political faith and in whose political ideas the referendum plays a very important part—I allude to Mr. Cornell. When we find Mr. Cornell holding that in this connection a referendum is not justified, I am inclined to think that my opinion is doubly strengthened inasmuch as it is supported by one who I know attaches the greatest possible value to this legislation. We know that Mr. Cornell as part of his political faith would put forward the referendum wherever it can possibly be fitted in, and in my opinion also where it cannot be fitted in. When we find a gentleman of that sort, whose pet scheme is a referendum, who is an authority on referendums, saying that this Bill is no proper place for a referendum, then I consider we have the strongest possible backing for our opinion against the referendum in this connection. In my view Parliament, as I have already said, should take that responsibility with which the electors endowed us when they sent us here. I do not believe a member of Parliament is sent here as a delegate to run back to his electors to find out what he is to do on any particular subject. I think that when a member of Parliament is elected for a certain term of years, he is sent into Parliament to use his discretion during that term of years. With regard to this being a subject that the people should decide upon, I do not see that it is a subject which the people should decide upon any more than a hundred and one subjects which come before us daily for decision during the course of our legislative duties. Why this subject should be singled out passes my comprehension. Unfortunately, this is a matter on which I have nothing to say as regards voting power, because it will be settled in Committee; but personally I would be very pleased indeed to see embodied in this Bill that provision which these worthy ladies and gentlemen asked for when they first started out on this mission and which has assumed in their eyes such tremendous importance—that we should give them

either eight to eight or nine to nine, or some provision of that sort for the trading hours of hotels. If, however, this House in its wisdom does not strike out the clauses with regard to the referendum, but insists upon keeping the referendum in the Bill, then I say the method which has been proposed of taking that referendum, and the method which is proposed of voting on it, are faulty in the extreme. I am glad to say that here again I am able to agree with Mr. Cornell. I observe that he has on the Notice Paper an amendment which has the effect of putting the various hours set down for the consideration of the electors as if they were candidates at an election, and that under Mr. Cornell's amendment the same procedure is to be adopted with regard to voting for hours as would be adopted in regard to voting for persons; that electors should express their preference, and that the referendums should be carried out under precisely the same conditions as elections for this House or for the Legislative Assembly are carried out. I think that is a most admirable provision, and if this House does not decide—as I hope it will decide—to fix the hours itself, I should favour those hours which we have already fixed in another Bill, namely, nine to nine. If this House does not decide to do that, then I should be very pleased indeed to see effect given to the course recommended by Mr. Cornell. We have to remember that this Bill comes before us as a war emergency measure. If it comes before us as a war emergency measure, how extremely ridiculous is the proposition which has been enunciated by the leader of the House, and enunciated by the Premier, and enunciated by the father of the Bill, the Attorney General, that the referendum on this question should take place in May next—in May next, when all of us fervently hope, and hope with some little foundation of probability, that this unhappy war may be at an end. It is undoubtedly a fact that we, in common with other nations and States, must give something to this war, must signify in some way our willingness to render our people more fit and more able

to cope with the unhappy conditions by which they are surrounded. Every country has done something—some have done a great deal. I was reading the other day an account in a remarkable book which has lately been published called *Russia and the World* by Stephen Graham, of that great action which was taken in Russia, one of the greatest social actions which, I suppose, has been taken in all time—first, the restriction by the Czar of the use of vodka, and secondly, and greater still, the practically voluntary giving up by the Russian people of all sorts of other intoxicating liquor. Practically at a stroke of the pen, Russia became teetotal. That reminds me that we all owe to the times in which we live, some action of the sort. The same author uses in that work a phrase which has struck me as being very applicable to all our lives. It was this—

This war is as a great wind blowing through our lives, so that those things that can be shaken down may be shaken down, and those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

I hope that this House, in its wisdom, undeterred and uninfluenced to any great extent by the turmoil which is occurring outside will give to this question, as it does to most questions with which it has to deal, that calm deliberation which generally characterises this Chamber; and I personally hope that another place will be able to realise that, at all events in emergencies, one of the first duties of Parliament—not of the Legislative Council alone, but of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly combined—is to act with decision, to take responsibility and to act promptly. If this spirit infuses us, then I have no doubt whatever but that this Bill will go down to another place, and I hope it will be accepted there, with definite hours fixed in it. I trust this House will be courageous enough to take that responsibility which, strangely enough, in this connection the Government do not seem anxious to take. It is a most strange and unaccustomed thing to find the present Government shirking responsibility. If it were a matter of finance, we would find them rushing in without giving a

second thought to it. But let us hope that if the Government on their part are not willing to take the responsibility, this House will show them the way to do it, and will act up to the best traditions of Parliament by deciding to do what, after all, our electors sent us here to do, namely, to regulate the trading hours of licensed premises in Western Australia. I think if that is done, then, even if our action does not meet with the approval of a somewhat limited, though noisy, section of the community, it will meet with the approval of those thinking men and women who, after all, are the great power which has to be recognised in elections and in the conduct of the State generally. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [3.45]: I do not desire to take up the time of the House unduly. I have already spoken at some length on the measure that was ruled out of order but the Bill now before us in some particulars is distinct from the Bill which was ruled out of order. The intention of the Government in the lapsed Bill was that if it was agreed to by the Legislature a referendum would be submitted to the electors of Western Australia on the Commonwealth rolls on the 11th of next month. I said then, and I say now, that if circumstances warrant the curtailment of the sale of liquor Parliament is the tribunal to give it effect during the time of war. I also said and I still adhere to my opinion that I will be prepared to vote for the fixing of hours in the Bill if those hours were 8 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night and I am still prepared to vote in the direction by fixing the hours so that we would not only fix them as temporary legislation, but practically fixing them as permanent legislation. Since I made my previous remarks I have not altered my opinion as to the excessive drinking as the result of the war and the ultimate effect it will have on its termination. There is much less liquor consumed now than before the outbreak of the war, and I do not think the closing of all the hotels in Western Australia will have any bearing whatsoever on the final outcome of this

gigantic struggle. Before I go further I desire to join with hon. members in regard to their remarks about the temperance body with an intemperate leader I reserve the right in this House—and I am beginning to think it is a prerogative of mine—to dress hon. members down and bring them to book. I am going to take that part and I think hon. members are worthy of it. Exception was taken at the public meeting which was held as to the House adjourning this measure. I join with members in saying that if any delay was occasioned that hon. members in this House are not wholly responsible. I say the Legislature are responsible—I mean both branches are equally responsible for the delay. I voted for the adjournment of the measure until the following day and my reason was that it was a measure that vitally affected interests probably of more importance to the State than the temperance people. Another reason why I voted for the adjournment was to allow our intemperate friends to blow off a little hot air, and they followed the example set by this Chamber and have gone on the “lazy strike” to use their own words and have adjourned to some future date. I join with Mr. Kingsmill in saying that abuse is not going, in any way, to educate the community on the evils of the liquor traffic. I venture to say that those who arranged the public meeting do not express the public opinion of Western Australia. If trades unionists chose, to-morrow, they could in a few hours’ notice convene just as large a meeting and just as enthusiastic a meeting and a much more intelligent meeting of workers engaged in the liquor trade as a counter-blast. There are many trades unionists engaged in the liquor trade to-day and I say from a temperate point of view they compare more than favourable with any section of the community although they are engaged from day to day in the liquor trade. They are prepared to leave the solution to the Legislature without undue pressure. If noise and invective were the voice of public opinion I say that the public meeting was symbolic of all public opinion in Western

Australia. Before any set of individuals set out to analyse or criticise another individual or individuals or any institution they should first of all put to themselves the old maxim, “Charity begins at home” and examine themselves. No man or woman can point the finger of scorn or suspicion towards any other individual unless he or she is free from suspicion. The very first speaker at the meeting, the Rev. Mr. Wheatley—I do not know if he is a reverend now, at any rate I have no reverence for him—was anything but congratulatory or complimentary, but as a public man I refuse to steer my course by Mr. Wheatley’s compass. I have a recollection that the hon. gentleman was a clergyman. He followed that spiritual course and relinquished it and became a licensed victualler and so far as both callings are concerned he has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. I leave Mr. Wheatley at that, and turn to another prominent member, a person who poses as one of the philanthropic reformers of the State. The remarks I am about to make regarding this gentleman I am prepared to withdraw publicly if he can substantiate what I am about to say publicly. I refer to Mr. Albany Bell. It was said by Mr. Jenkins last evening that this reform temperance body are ardent advocates of the Labour party, that their journal *The Reformer*, which is the only paper I consign to the waste-paper basket without opening, is more caustic towards the Liberals and all other shades of opinion opposed to their views than the official organ of the Labour party the *Worker*. Whatever may be said about the *Worker* as to its views, at least it must be admitted that it is fair, but the same cannot be said of this other organ. I know there are some who support the Labour party because they think they will get the temperance reform vote. I do not want these shandy-gaffs, I want whole hoggers. I want members to support the platform and to support it for all that is good in that Labour platform and that being so I want supporters of our body to carry out the traditions of our party. I have been informed, and I think it is correct. I will withdraw it

publicly if I am proved incorrect, that one of the conditions of employment with Mr. Albany Bell is that one must not be a trades unionist. If Mr. Albany Bell can contradict that I will withdraw my statement publicly. I leave it at that until he does contradict it. Trades unionists have done more than all the temperance reformers for bettering the conditions of the working people as a whole. It has been said that the party with which I am associated give nothing else but preference to unionists. I ask Mr. Albany Bell to refute the remarks I have said to-day that he only gives preference to non-unionists. I also desire to state that in the work or business with which Mr. Albany Bell is connected that he does not pay in some instances the full rate of wages set out by the Arbitration Court award. It is a well known fact that employers who do not employ unionists can dodge the Arbitration Court award. It has been said that this gentleman provides his waitresses with uniforms, but they are required to pay for them. If anyone in the community can set himself up as a reformer then his own house should be above suspicion and he should give the best possible treatment to his employees.

The PRESIDENT: I should like the hon. member to come to the Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am just coming to the Bill. Much has been said of the great amount of good that is being brought about in Russia—and the same will follow here if this Bill is passed—by the prohibition of the sale of liquor by the Russian Government. I have heard many supporters of this measure say that many millions sterling have been saved by the workers in Russia through the action of the Russian Government. I would like to inform those members that total prohibition does not exist in Russia to-day and not one of those who use the argument as an argument for the reform has brought forward any reliable statistics or information that the state of affairs that they say exist in Russia now does exist. And I invite those supporters, either in this House or in the public Press, to give

reliable data for the statements they have made. I have for many years past subscribed to several socialistic papers which have international columns, and which are out to see whether actions of Governments or other reforms have benefited the world. I cannot in those papers find any mention of the good brought about by the autocratic Russian Government. Lovers of political and social economy had better be careful what they say has been brought about in Russia. History goes to prove that those freedoms, of which we hear so much, are not conceded to the great masses of the people. The Bill is to be submitted to the people in May next, at the Council elections. If the Bill is a war measure, it should be submitted at the earliest opportunity, that is, if it is to go to a referendum. The mere fact of leaving it till May will only delay the matter without affecting any, or more than very little, economy. The vote will be taken on a roll totally different from that on which the elections will be fought, and there will, therefore, of necessity be an increase in the number of presiding officials. Another factor to be taken into consideration if the referendum is to be taken in May, is that of the uncontested seats. The South Province will not be contested. I can hardly conjure up anyone foolish enough to oppose Mr. Dodd. The North Province will not be contested, for I can hardly imagine anyone taking on Sir Edward Wittenoom, and I venture to say that in the Metropolitan seat the Labour party will fight shy of opposing Mr. Kingsmill. If there is to be an election in the Metropolitan province, it will probably be as the result of the temperance section opposing Mr. Kingsmill. I doubt if there will be any opposition to Mr. McLarty's return in the South-West.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: What about the Metropolitan-Suburban?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Oh you will get a contest. I am speaking from certain knowledge of the political movement. Although there will be no elections in those provinces I have named, it will be

necessary to provide all the machinery for the recording of the vote on the referendum. I cannot see the utility of delay, or that any economy will be effected thereby, while I can see a good deal of confusion owing to the two rolls being used. Many will record their votes for the province candidates while not bothering to vote on the referendum question. There is also to be taken into consideration the fact that if this question is put at the Council elections, those elections will be fought on the liquor question. For my part I would like to see them fought on a larger and more stable question than that. It will be seen that I have on the Notice Paper an amendment which I propose to move, that is, if the hours of 8 to 10 are not inserted in the Bill. Briefly, my proposed amendment is that the same method of election shall prevail on the referendum as prevails in the election of Parliamentary representatives. I have already said that I am totally and irrevocably opposed to any departure from our elective system, beyond having recourse to the preferential vote. As *Hansard* will show, I have said, and it has not been refuted, that on the system outlined in the Bill it is quite possible for any hour for which the least number of electors have recorded a vote can in the method of transfer adopted be declared the selected hour. Assuming on the same example that every elector would record a preferential vote in the same sequence as the Bill proposes to effect a transfer, 11 o'clock would win, and there would be no alteration in the hours. No one has refuted that. I ask the leader of the House, when he replies, to refute the statement I made in regard to the method of election, the method in the Bill verses the provisions in the Electoral Act. I think the Legislature should not take to itself the prerogative which is the sole right of an elector, who can exercise his vote and transfer his vote as he thinks fit, in accordance with his own light. The method is an easy one. My proposal is, six hours on the ballot paper, and all the elector is asked to do is mark

those hours in the sequence of his preference.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: And he is used to it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes. The method proposed for counting has nothing whatever to do with the elector. The method of counting is the same as that provided in the Electoral Act of 1907. I desire to ask the leader of the House whether, in the drafting of the Bill, any questions were put to the Chief Electoral Officer in regard to the methods of voting and counting, and if so what were his recommendations? In all questions of voting, whether on a referendum or a Parliamentary election, no departure from our existing system should be adopted unless ratified and confirmed by the Chief Electoral Officer. I again repeat that if a referendum is to be taken, it should be taken immediately. To delay it till May is to deny that this is a piece of war legislation.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East)
[4.10] The hon. member who has just resumed his seat pointed out that the Bill now before the House is different in certain important features from the Bill recently laid aside. To my mind these differences are of sufficient importance to justify something more than the perfunctory remarks made by the leader of the House in introducing the Bill. When the first Bill was presented to us we were told that the referendum was to be taken at the same time as the proposed Federal referendums, and three strong reasons were given why that favourable opportunity should be availed of for this purpose. Dr. Saw has said that whatever reason there might have been for not adopting the first Bill, there is no reason for not adopting the referendum now. I think, if the hon. member will consider the matter for a moment, he will come to an exactly opposite conclusion, and say that whatever reasons there were for sending this question to the people under the old Bill, those reasons have now entirely disappeared, and that the argument against taking that course is infinitely

stronger than before. The reasons given why we should pass the referendum Bill when originally presented to us were, first that the referendum would be taken practically without cost; £500 was taken to be the cost of taking the vote, because it would be taken at the time of the Federal referendums. The Federal rolls were to be used and the Federal Government, I understand, had agreed to allow their polling booths to be utilised, and that their officers should conduct the poll. So £500 was to be the cost. That was the first argument in favour of passing the Bill. The second was that a large attendance at the polls was assured, because the Federal Parliament in its wisdom had made voting on its own referendum proposals compulsory. The third argument used in favour of the Bill was that the vote would be taken at once. Those were the three strong arguments why we should send this question to the people. The movement by the temperance party when the war broke out was not for a local option Bill or a referendum on the question of closing at six o'clock; it was for the closing from 8 to 8, and it was because this Federal referendum presented a favourable opportunity of taking a cheap poll quickly, with a big vote, that we were urged to pass the referendum Bill, which has now been laid aside. Everyone of those special inducements held out to us for the passing of that Bill has now disappeared. First of all, regarding the matter of cost, it was going to cost £500. What is it going to cost now? I agree with Mr. Cornell that the difference in cost will be trifling, whether the referendum be taken in conjunction with the Legislative Council elections or taken by itself, for the simple reason that separate rolls will have to be used, and to avoid confusion I think separate officers will have to be appointed. Without going into details, as the hon. member did, in regard to those particular members who are going to be free from opposition at the next election—I am not in so favourable a position to speak in respect to that—it is the invariable experi-

ence that about half the Council seats are uncontested. It is a high compliment to the House and to those members thus returned, and we must, I think, assume elections in six months' time. I think that prevailing conditions at the present time, particularly in regard to the war, are such that there is certainly likely to be no more contests than usually take place at the Legislative Council elections. Therefore we must assume that the cost of the referendum will be about the same, whether it is held now or at the Council elections in six months' time. I think we are entitled to a definite statement on the point and also to a definite statement as to what the cost is likely to be. It was claimed also that compulsory voting would bring to the polls a much larger number of people than any other form of voting. Undoubtedly it would have done so. It is worth while considering for a moment as to what valid excuse the Federal Parliament had for enacting compulsory voting in connection with its referendum. I say without following the matter any further they had a valid excuse. At the triennial Federal elections in 1910 a referendum was taken on two questions, the financial agreement and the taking over of State debts. That was a referendum taken at the time of the Federal general elections. Of 134,000 people on the rolls 83,000 voted, or 62.15 per cent. That was our second experience of this, because there was a small referendum taken some years before as to the date of the Federal elections. This was, however, the first big referendum, and on this occasion 62.15 per cent. of the electors voted. In the following year the Federal Parliament held a referendum throughout the Commonwealth on the much larger question of the extension of the powers of the Commonwealth Parliament. That was made a bitter party fight in each of the States, and the referendum was held at a time when there was no election, with the result that of 138,000 people who were on the rolls only 61,000, or 44.33 per cent., turned up to vote. This was a big party issue in which both the Lib-

eral and Labour parties strained every nerve, but because there was no election on at the time they could only get 44.33 per cent. of the people to the polling booths. In 1913 a referendum was taken on the same issues, at the time of the general elections, and then of 179,000 people on the rolls, 132,000, or 73.50 per cent., voted on these referendum proposals. I say it had been abundantly proved to the Federal Parliament that they could not take a referendum at any other time than at the time of a general election if they wanted to get anything like a representative vote. They had a referendum in 1910 at the time of an election and got a representative vote of over 62 per cent. They had had one at the time when there was an election in 1913, and had got a representative vote of 73.50 per cent. They held one between these two periods when there was no general election, on an issue of the highest importance, the same in fact which drew 73 per cent. of the people to vote in 1913, but on this occasion all the people they could get to the poll was 44 per cent. of the electors. The hon. Mr. Sanderson has asked why this matter should not be referred to the people. I assume that he means the whole of the people. What interest did the people show that they took in this issue at the time when there was a poll in 1910, when there was no Federal election, and when the Federal referendum was taken and local option questions were submitted to the electors of this State? We had two polls together, the local option question as to whether there should be an increase or otherwise of licenses in the different districts of the State, and whether or not the State should own all new licenses issued, and as to whether or not the State should take over control of the whole of the liquor traffic in each of the respective districts. On this occasion no more than 44 per cent. of the people attended to vote on the Federal referendum. Although they were taken for that purpose little more than one-half of the people who actually went to the poll took the trouble to vote on the liquor question. I have the exact

figures here. Of 136,000 people on the roll only 22,000 people voted on the question as to whether or not there should be an increase of licenses in particular districts. Sixteen per cent. of the people on the roll went to the poll on the question of whether or not new licenses should be held by the State. The figures I am giving are not figures for or against. They are the total polled for and against, and only 16 per cent. took the trouble to vote, either for or against these licenses. Thirty per cent. of the people voted on the question of the State controlling all new licenses and the same proportion, namely, 30 per cent., voted on the question of the State management throughout the districts. What is the use of talking about sending this matter to the people by referendum at a time when there is no general election, when that expedient has already been tried and when we have at most got only 30 per cent. of the people to vote on the question? It has been said by certain advocates of temperance reform that they want a referendum because they want the volume of public opinion behind any laws connected with the liquor traffic. Are we going to get this without a general election? I maintain that we shall not do so. We will only get a small minority to vote, and we will find it more difficult to enforce the decisions of that minority vote than we should find in enforcing a reasonable decision arrived at by the Parliament of this State. I am grateful to the hon. Mr. Sanderson for the highly complimentary criticism which he indulged in in regard to myself. I may say, however, that I have not the least desire to turn anyone out of anything. So far as pleasing the public is concerned, I should deem myself not only not worthy to represent anyone, but unworthy to sit in this Chamber if I allowed my own personal convictions to be influenced by public clamour.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Hear, hear!

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I intend on this question, as on all other questions I have had to deal with, to do what I believe to be right. If by so doing I offend the majority of the people that is

my misfortune, and it is a misfortune the consequence of which I am thoroughly prepared to take. We now come to the time of the taking of the poll. If the Government intend to take the poll in January next they must say so, and must say so now and say so definitely, and must tell us what it is going to cost and must get the sanction of Parliament before they spend the money. It is no use saying to the temperance people, "if we get the Bill through we may take a referendum in January," and then will go to Parliament and say, "If this is passed, we will have a referendum at the Legislative Council elections in May." The Minister in another place said that, "If the Bill is passed we will take a referendum at the Legislative Council elections." The Minister in charge of this House also says, "If the Bill is passed the Government will take a referendum at the Legislative Council elections." A resolution was submitted to the public meeting held in Perth on Thursday last expressly stating that what they sought was a referendum to be taken on the occasion of the Legislative Council elections in May next. So far as the time is concerned, the only issue before this House now is as to whether or not the referendum shall be taken in May next. Personally, I regret that I could not see my way clear to support the motion of the hon. Mr. Jenkins, namely, that certain petitioners should be heard at the Bar of the House. I, with other hon. members, would have been only too glad if we could have seen our way to hearing these petitioners. I should have liked to have heard them, for possibly one of them might have attempted to advance some argument in favour of deciding war emergency legislation by a referendum of the people in six months' time. That proposal is so utterly stupid, so utterly futile, that I cannot imagine any one seriously advancing it. I should have liked to have heard the petitioners in order to ascertain whether any one of them would have had the hardihood to put forward the suggestion that legislation, which is designed specially to deal with the circumstances

arising out of war, should be not submitted to the people for their consideration until so late a time as May next. That is the only issue before us at the present time, as to whether the referendum is to be taken then, and that is the point of view from which I propose to discuss the Bill. I now want to look at the Bill in the interests of my constituents. After the war broke out, for the first few weeks, possibly for a month or two, there was excessive drinking in the country, and probably also in the towns. I speak more in regard to the country districts because I live in the country districts and am very familiar with them. We know that hard times were falling upon people then, and that those who were in employment on the farms were being paid off. The excitement of the war did lead to a certain amount of excessive drinking late at night and early in the morning and, indeed, all the time. I have said from my place in this House that it was a pity that the Government did not use the powers they already possessed, or secure other powers, in order to try to put a stop to this. It was not long before the people's money was spent, with the result that for months past, so far from there being excessive drinking in the country districts, there has been scarcely any drinking at all. I doubt if there are many public houses in the country districts which are paying their way at the present time owing to this condition of affairs. What is the position to-day? We are just about to harvest a 20-million bushel crop of wheat, far the biggest harvest that Western Australia has ever put out. The farmers are in the unfortunate position that they do not know when they are to get their money. They will have to pay all the expenses of the harvesting of the crop and the wages bill will be the biggest on record, not only for them, but for other people as well. Do temperance reformers mean business? Are they going to try to save some of these wages, or are they only concerned about their fetish, namely, that there shall be a referendum submitted to the people of this State? Are they going

to wait until the whole of the harvest wages have been spent, and then next May, when there will be no more money for the next six months, take this referendum to decide as to when hotels are to be opened or closed? So far as my constituents are concerned, I would not have the slightest hesitation in facing them to-morrow on this issue. I am sure the people there, who are interested in temperance reform, will support the attitude I have taken up. I say Parliament should take upon its own shoulders the responsibilities that the people have given it. We are considered to be the representatives of the people on these questions. I say the right thing to do is to restrict the hours of trading, and do so at once in order to get the greatest possible good for the community. For that reason I intend, when the Bill is in Committee, to propose amendments similar to those which I submitted in connection with a similar piece of legislation previously submitted to this House. I would like to point out to Dr. Saw that he advocated the hours of opening and closing of hotels of from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. He has since admitted that he is in favour of 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Practically they are one and the same thing. I do not see much difference in them myself. The Bill which he now proposes to give his support to may bring about any one of half a dozen results, but cannot bring about the 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. opening and closing, or the 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. opening and closing. It cannot, in fact, alter the opening hours of hotels, that is as it stands at the present time. I am one who has had a good opportunity of closely studying this question. I have been living in the country for a number of years and have been engaged as a journalist for the whole of my life, and have frequently sat on the police court benches and dealt with these cases, and as a result of my experience I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that one can do as much good by curtailing the hours in the morning as one can do by curtailing the hours at night. This applies particularly to the worker in the country. If he has an opportunity of getting drink at 6 o'clock or 7 o'clock or

7.30 in the morning, when he has the cravings excited by over indulgence on the previous night, he will stick at very little to get the drink and when he does get it, it is good-bye to work for the day. If we could prevent him, however, from getting any drink until after 9 o'clock at a time when he would have had his breakfast, furthermore at a time when the hour of commencing work has arrived, well then we should in many cases get over the difficulty. Such men do not, I think, deliberately set out to continue a drinking bout. If they could be checked in the morning and be induced to have their breakfast, and thus bring the work hour along a great many would go to their work. I am not going to be influenced by fanatics who do not care two straws about temperance reform so long as they get local option. I say without fear of contradiction that the curtailment of the hours of selling liquor in the morning will do just as much good, if not more, than the curtailment of the hours for the sale of liquor at night. I do not intend to say much about the proposal in the Bill to divide the State into districts. I may say, however, that I have been informed, not by one or two, but by half a dozen members of another place, they entirely approve of the idea that Parliament should fix the hours of trading. This is not in any sense a party question and the Government has not introduced it as a party measure. Members of this Chamber do not desire to in any way jeopardise the Bill, nor do I think that those who are favourable to temperance reform need fear there is a danger we shall lose the Bill by carrying this amendment. If we make this amendment we shall get what we want. After the remarks which have been made by the hon. Mr. Jenkins, hon. Dr. Saw, the hon. Mr. Cornell, and one or two others, I do not think it is necessary for me to say much in regard to those who have attacked this Chamber at public meetings. But we have heard statements by people from whom one might expect something different, who appear to take it for granted that whatever action is taken by the Legislative Assembly is necessarily right, and

whatever the Legislative Council do is wrong. We still maintain we were in the right, and it is not proved that we were wrong, simply because a speaker from another place says so. I would point out that on another question we discovered a mistake; and it was well that we discovered the flaw in something which had been done by the Legislative Assembly, a flaw so serious that the Minister in charge of the Bill in another place did not attempt to defend his action, but gave way at once. I wish to say emphatically that no one, however enthusiastic, is justified in putting out of office the elementary virtues of truth and justice. There were speakers at the public meeting from whom truth and justice might have been expected so far as the criticism of this Chamber is concerned, but in their remarks there was neither truth nor justice. Had we passed the first referendum Bill presented to us, what would have been the position? A new Bill would have had to be put through because the old Bill could not have been carried out after the Federal Government decided to abandon the referendum. Many provisions of that Bill would not have been workable in the absence of a referendum. Under the Bill it would have been impossible to take the proposed referendum except at the time the Federal referendum was taken, and because this House took certain action the objection has been raised that we were trying to block temperance reform. Had we passed the Bill at once, we would have had to go through the whole business again. We have been told what has been done in England, in France, and in Russia. But in England, or France or Russia would they propose that six months hence, or six days hence, a referendum should be taken? What would have been the result in the industrial centres of England where the ammunition workers are engaged if an issue such as this had been submitted? The authorities did not dream of doing that; the Government itself took the responsibility and the common sense of the community backed them up, as it would back up the Government

here if they also took the proper responsibility. I should like also to point out that the Federal Government first proposed a referendum on certain questions, and now they propose to go behind the backs of the people and to ask the Parliaments of the States to decide the issue. I do not know how those who are supporting the latest proposal can reconcile their action. In the one case it was said "In order to avoid a referendum we will ask the State Parliaments to decide the issue." It is now proposed on the liquor question to abrogate the powers of Parliament and to hold a referendum, war time or no war time, six months hence. If we look back for a moment what do we find? It was declared by the official temperance party that the eight to eight was not a temperance party movement, that it was a public movement, and by that means they got a number of people to come in who would not otherwise have been found in the same paddock with the extremists. And by virtue of that great body of public opinion behind them, they now propose to use it for what purpose? Not for the purpose of temperance reform, not the eight to eight movement, to which they refuse their sanction at the present time, but to advance the party fetish of local option. I say it is not a fair deal. I want to refer for a moment to the *Reformer*. In future I think I shall adopt the course followed by Mr. Cornell, and put the paper in the waste paper basket. Hitherto I have read it. I find this statement in a leading article of the issue of this paper for November, 1915—

The Council members placed on the Government the responsibility of fixing the hours.

The man who edits this paper knows what he writes about; he comes here frequently for the purpose; he devotes the whole of his time to the consideration of these matters, and I say that when he wrote that paragraph he wrote what he knew to be a deliberate lie, and he wrote it for the purpose of misleading people, and of trying to get the people to condemn this Chamber. The Legislative Council never sought to fix on the Government the res-

possibility of fixing hours. This Chamber sought to relieve the Government of that responsibility, and asked Parliament to do it. The writer wrote this in the hope of unfairly prejudicing the public mind. I shall not deal with the remarks of Mr. Cornell, but I do say that the Rev. Wheatley had no right to sneer at the Legislative Council. When he sneers at this body, he sneers at our constituents, and I believe that when he did so he felt that he was not on firm ground. There comes a time in the life of every man when his sincerity is put to the test, and that test usually takes the form of placing his professed principles against his personal interest. This gentleman has been submitted to that test, and he knows that nobody in Western Australia is likely to credit him with any great sincerity in his attitude towards the liquor trade. I support the second reading of this Bill, and shall endeavour to persuade members of this Chamber, when in Committee, to fix the hours of trading from nine to nine.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.40]: I feel there is very little left for me to say after the admirable speech we have listened to from Mr. Colebatch. At the same time, I feel that a question such as the one we have now under review is one upon which every member should feel bound to express his opinions. It is quite possible one's silence on a question of this kind may be misconstrued by people outside into an admission of cowardice. As the member who first introduced the question of nine to nine in this Chamber a little over a year ago, I feel quite proud when I realise the progress the question has made upon the minds of members. When I first mentioned the matter in connection with the War Emergency Bill, it was lost on the voices. I think I had about three supporters in the House on that occasion; to-day I think I am safe in saying that I have got a majority of members in this House. When that Bill was brought before us, I stated that it was a Bill of the jelly-fish type, that the Government were afraid of their own shadow and were introducing a measure which they had not

the courage to bring into proper operation. I am satisfied now the words I uttered on that occasion were true; as time went on it has been proved that the Government were afraid of the measure they had brought down. I intend to support the suggestion of Mr. Colebatch. When this Bill is in Committee I shall support the proposal for the nine to nine movement, and I sincerely hope it will be carried. I am prepared to take my share of responsibility in regard to that matter and go before the electors whom I represent when the time comes, to account for my actions on this matter. It is the height of folly to endeavour to put a Bill through this session, the object of which would be to take a referendum of the people in May next, at a cost of between £3,500 and £5,000 on a measure which will last for a little over six months. Hon. members will see that the Bill will expire on the 31st December, 1916, if the proposals be carried at the referendum. In the circumstances it is absurd to give it any consideration whatever. We have just as much right to say what we consider shall be the licensing hours in time of war as we have to deal with any other measure which comes before us for consideration from time to time. With reference to the public meeting held in the city of Perth last week, several hon. members have given expression to their opinions, and I can say only ditto, ditto, ditto, to those expressions of opinion. I have no hesitation or mental reservation in saying that the views expressed at that meeting were not in accordance with facts, and as Mr. Jenkins pointed out last night, anything in the way of reform in the liquor trade which has been put on the statute-book of this State during the past few years has emanated from this Chamber. There are people who are supposed to be monuments as regards the morals of others in this State, people who set themselves up as examples of the public morals. They are not above making misstatements which are calculated to mis-guide others for whom they presume to have such a deep spiritual regard. I felt it was my duty to express myself on this

question and I shall have pleasure in doing what I can to insist upon the hours being fixed in the Bill and voting against all the referendum clauses.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West) [4.47]: I desire to support the second reading of the Bill, but it is my intention when the Bill is in Committee to support the fixing of the hours by the Parliament of this State. I do so for the following reasons:—If this measure is required in war time, as I contend it is, I think the action should be prompt and decisive. Why should we postpone the taking of a referendum for six months? By that time the war may be over, or at any rate we sincerely hope it will be approaching the end. If we are going to wait for the Legislative Council elections which are to take place in May, some considerable time may then elapse before the decision of the people is acted upon. If the measure is required at all it is required now. So far as drunkenness goes, my experience as a country member is that there is very little of it. People have very little money to spend on drink in these times and I can bear out what Mr. Colebatch has said with regard to hotels not paying. I know that numbers of them are not making half as much as they are expending every week and it is just a question of how long they can possibly hold out. In my opinion half the hotelkeepers will be in a state of bankruptcy before another 12 months expire. If it is necessary to curtail the hours during which liquor shall be sold I shall have no objection to offer. Anything that will reduce drunkenness should be resorted to with the least possible delay. I do not think hotelkeepers will be averse to the hours being fixed from 9 to 9. I have very little faith in referendums; people do not take much interest in them and as has already been pointed out only a small percentage record their votes. My opinion is that the responsibility may well be taken by hon. members who represent the people and those hon. members should act according to their judgment.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [4.52]: I feel somewhat diffident on rising to

speak on the second reading of this important measure, more especially as it has been so ably dealt with by other hon. members. I contend that the Government and the legislature should have taken earlier steps to deal with this question because there is a great amount of liquor consumed, more particularly in the bigger towns of the State owing to the presence of the military. Whilst it is a good thing to see the public taking a deep interest in this question, I think the leaders of the movements have not been consistent in their attitude. It is not many months since there was what was called a citizens' movement asking for the hours to be fixed at from 8 to 8. Now we have the same leaders asking for a referendum. Why the change? Personally I am sorry Dr. Saw has taken up the attitude he has done because when he first entered this House he was strongly in favour of the 8 to 8 hours. The hon. member realised that the citizens were behind him and I hope before the Bill has gone through Committee he will change his views and join with other hon. members who desire to definitely fix the hours. I think I am quite as able to gauge public opinion on this question as the leaders of this movement, and I am firmly convinced what is asked and what is expected of the legislature of the State is that decisive action shall be taken and the hours fixed during which liquor shall be sold. I think it is imperative that something should be done because we cannot fail to notice that in the City men have been taking more than is good for them. Have we not seen soldiers in a state of intoxication and pickets being sent after them. I think in fixing the hours a great deal of trouble and inconvenience will be prevented. If we can do away with the pernicious system of shouting—and it certainly has become pernicious—we shall be mounting another step on the ladder of reform. I belong to a party which has local option on its platform but notwithstanding that fact I am fully prepared to take the responsibility with other members of fixing the definite hours in this Bill. To my mind, it would be wrong to take a refer-

endum at this juncture for many reasons, some of which have been pointed out by hon. members. The first is that I believe a great majority of members of this House realise that something should be done immediately, and I have no misgivings in regard to altering the Bill in that direction and sending it to the other Chamber for its concurrence. Another reason is that we should act on the score of expense. A referendum will cost the country a considerable sum of money and we cannot spare it at this time of the history of the State, and the next reason is that I object to the time it would take before we could bring about an alteration. We have been agitating against the Federal Government taking a referendum on the question of the constitution. Therefore, why should we not in this matter take the full responsibility? There have been those who have endeavoured to cast some blame on this House for delay, but I think the Chamber has been desirous of bringing into force a measure that would have an immediate and beneficial effect.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central) [4.57]: I intend to support the fixing of the hours from 9 to 9, and also to support the anti-shouting clause which is to be moved by Mr. Holmes. There is one matter that I think ought to be referred to and it is the statement made by Mr. Holmes when speaking on the Bill as to the amount of money spent in Western Australia in intoxicating liquor. In the *Daily News* there was a full report of Mr. Holmes's speech. That gentleman we find used these words—

When we find a community of 300,000 men, women, and children spending for last year just upon $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions in liquor we begin to realise the magnitude of the evil. And that $2\frac{3}{4}$ millions is arrived at, not after adding the publican's profit, but simply by taking the figures of Custom and excise.

There is no doubt the hon. member meant the customs and excise plus the wholesale cost. Statements of that kind are made and published by extreme social reformers. In my opinion those gentlemen are the greatest enemies of liquor reform on

account of the views which they hold, and which no sensible person can possibly support. I would not have been astonished if the hon. member had said that his remarks were on the authority of either some gentleman or some newspaper issued under the patronage of an extreme section of the community. I have gone to the trouble of getting from the Customs and Excise department the amount of duty and excise collected in Western Australia on intoxicating liquor during the year ended 30th June, 1915, and the following is the result: Customs duties:—beer, bottle, £21,514; beer, bulk, £499; wines, sparkling, £2,662; still (bottle), £997; still (bulk), £1,803; still (over 25 per cent. p.s.), £23; still (over 50 per cent. p.s.), £14; spirits, brandy, bottled, £12,107; brandy, bulk, £2,112; gin, British, £15,585; gin, Holland, £9,003; schnapps, £8,696; rum, bottled, £642; rum, bulk, £9,619; whisky, bottled, £24,609; whisky, bulk, £118,400; spirits, n.e.i., £3,615. Excise duties:—beer, £100,607; spirits, £12,606; wines, nil; total, £345,113. Customs duties on beer and wines totalled £27,512, and on spirits £204,388. Everyone knows that the chief factor in the value of spirits, as in the case of tobacco, is the duty. Duty on spirits is 17s. a gallon, and previously it was 14s. Of the £204,388 half of it was collected when the duty was 14s., and the other half when the duty was 17s, so that we might take the average at 15s. 6d. Anyone acquainted with the wholesale spirit business will admit I am fair in estimating that the value of the spirit would be about 31s. per gallon. Therefore the value of alcoholic liquors at the wholesale stores would be, roughly, £508,000. Twenty years ago I had something to do with the financing of a brewery in the Eastern States. The duty on beer at present is 6d. a gallon, while, during the first half of the year under review, it was 3d., so that the average would be $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. Thus the total value of the beer on which £100,000 duty was paid would be about £500,000. Consequently, instead of there being £2,750,000 worth of liquor bought by the hotel-

keepers of Western Australia, there could not have been more than £1,000,000 worth. If we concede it to have been £1,250,000 worth, the difference between that and the £2,750,000 quoted would be sufficient to pay off the Government's deficit. No doubt Mr. Holmes gave his figures in good faith, but I protest against such statements being made because the figures were altogether unreliable. There is no necessity to exaggerate the drink traffic in Western Australia by stating that we are spending £9 per head of the population, whereas the amount is about £3 per head. It is a calumny on the people of Western Australia to do so. This is a subject on which one could talk till doomsday. I remember when a boy that drunkenness was not regarded as a disgrace. In my grandfather's and father's time it was regarded rather as a merit if a man could drink the rest of his companions under the table. Now, however, the fact of a man getting intoxicated is no recommendation. Public opinion has changed. We cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament, but we can minimise the opportunities for drinking, and public opinion in time will make it impossible for anyone to become intoxicated without being looked down upon. At one time all the beer consumed in England was brewed in the home. There would be strong objection against reverting to that practice to-day. I could make enough spirit in an ordinary kettle in two or three hours to inebriate a fair number of the members of this House. It was the custom in Scotland to distil spirit in this way. There were stills all over the place until a great army of customs officers were appointed to put a stop to them. In view of the terrible war in which the Empire is engaged, it is our duty to do all we can to improve the economic condition of the people, and it can be done in this way better than in any other way I can imagine. Whatever is to be done should be done at once. It is the duty of every member of Parliament to take the responsibility for his actions in this matter. As one of the ten members who must face

the electors in May next, I am prepared to take the responsibility of voting for fixing the hours and for including the anti-shouting clause, and I shall be prepared to defend my actions before my constituents. I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.10]: In introducing the measure I made what might be characterised as a misrepresentation. I had not previously been supplied with information, and the first time I saw the Bill was when it was handed to me by the Clerk of the House. I saw by the Press that there had been great agitation in the metropolitan area and surrounding districts, and that numerous resolutions had been passed impressing on the Government the need for a referendum when the Council elections were being held in May next, and I came to the conclusion that provision had been made in the Bill to give effect to the wishes of what appeared to be the great majority of the people.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They never asked for it in May next.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I read reports of resolutions published in the *West Australian* asking for a referendum in May. However, I made a mistake in stating that the referendum would be taken at the time of the Council elections. After examining the Bill, I could see that it was to be taken on a date to be fixed by proclamation. Therefore, the Government might at any time take the referendum. If it is the desire of the House that the referendum should be taken at an early date, I suggest that a proviso be inserted making it mandatory that the referendum be taken within two or three months of the passing of the measure. The cost of taking the referendum, apart from the Council elections, would be between £5,000 and £6,000, and the cost of taking it at the time of the Council elections would be between £2,000 and £3,000; that is the estimate of the Chief Electoral Officer. Mr. Cornell asked whether the Chief Electoral Officer had prepared the schedule to the Bill. I

am not in a position to supply the information, but Mr. Stenberg has been closely in touch with the measure, and has been making preparations for its administration. He had seen me on several occasions regarding the matter, and if there had been any objection to the mode of voting proposed in the Bill, I would have heard something about it. The Government intend to stand by the Bill. That, however, does not mean that the measure is not a non-party one. It is a non-party measure, and if this House decides to make the hours from nine to nine I have little doubt some members of the Labour party in another place will support those hours. The question is absolutely non-party, but the Government are standing by the Bill. The measure is in accordance with the policy they have laid down; but, at the same time, they are quite prepared to accept without demur the opinion of Parliament. The Bill will not be lightly laid aside by reason of any amendment unless the Speaker in another place rules it out of order—and of course we have no control over the Speaker. I hope that any amendments made will be such as will prove impregnable.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Within the Title.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I was going to suggest to the Committee that we should vote against this clause, which will be necessary only if we decide to refer the question to a popular vote. The new clause which I intend to move reads as follows—

Section 97 of the Licensing Act, 1911, is amended by striking out the words "six" in line 6 thereof and inserting the word "nine," and by striking out the word "eleven" in line 7 thereof and inserting the word "nine." The result of carrying the new clause

will simply be that the licensing law of the State will stand as it is to-day, with the exception that the opening hour of hotels, instead of being six in the morning, would be nine, and that the closing hour, instead of being eleven in the evening, would be nine. To my mind that is the simplest way of getting over the difficulty, and if that course is adopted—I speak subject to the correction of Mr. Jenkins—we do not want this definition of "licensed premises," because we have it in the principal Act. It looks to me as though the Title of this Bill had been deliberately framed to throw obstacles in the way of temperance reform. For instance, the prohibition of shouting would be entirely out of order under this Title.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I have an amendment to the Title.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: If any hon. member has a better course to advocate I shall be prepared to give way, but I suggest we vote down this clause, which is framed with a view to the taking of a referendum.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I regret very much to learn from Mr. Colebatch that the Title of the Bill represents a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to prevent the insertion of a provision against shouting. If Mr. Colebatch will consider the Title and the subject matter of the Bill, however, he will find that the Title has been framed so as to make it in perfect conformity with the subject matter, for the purpose of rendering the Bill impregnable against objection.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I fear the Minister is proving too much. If the Title is so elastic, I am afraid it is no good. The fact is that the Title does not cover the Bill. There is a pious saving clause at the end to provide that this Bill shall not at all affect the Licensing Act, and yet the Bill provides that the Governor may alter the hours fixed by the Licensing Act. I assume that we cannot get to Mr. Colebatch's new clause until we have dealt with all the clauses of the Bill. Therefore I think the better course would be to postpone all those clauses

which would be excluded if Mr. Colebatch's proposal is carried. Perhaps the Chairman could suggest a better course.

The CHAIRMAN: If I may make a suggestion to the Committee, it is that the debate on the question of whether the hours shall be regulated by a referendum or by an Act of Parliament be taken on the omission or retention of Clause 2.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: If the new clause I intend to move will involve an alteration of the Title—Mr. Jenkins has indicated this, and I accept his view—it would be an alteration that could not be objected to, because it would fall entirely within the description of the Bill. In my opinion, however, the Title has been so framed as to prevent us from introducing the anti-shouting clause of Mr. Holmes. I am entirely in accord with that amendment, and with the arguments by which Mr. Holmes has supported it; but the trouble is that the Title has been framed in such a way that Mr. Holmes's clause would be foreign to it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: May I be permitted to refer to the Title, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: Not unless the hon. member is going to refer to it in connection with the question whether a referendum shall be taken under this Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Solicitor General, I understand, drafted this Bill.

Hon. J. P. Cullen: On instructions.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I raised the point as to whether my amendment would be fatal to the Title.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member had better discuss his amendment when we come to it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the Solicitor General is of opinion that after the word "club" we should introduce—

The CHAIRMAN: We will take one thing at a time.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: The effect of Mr. Colebatch's new clause will be to alter words in the relevant section of the Licensing Act, and therefore, if that amendment is carried, we must alter the Title of the Bill. Subject to your ruling, Mr. Chairman, I think the Committee has power, after carrying Mr. Colebatch's

new clause, to amend the Title of the Bill correspondingly. That being so, those in favour of the nine to nine hours will support Mr. Colebatch's new clause, knowing that they are not, in my opinion at any rate, doing anything to endanger the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Standing Order 193, which governs this question, reads as follows:—

Any amendment may be made to any part of the Bill provided the same be relevant to the subject matter of the Bill, and be otherwise in conformity with the Rules and Orders of the Council.

Standing Order 198 further provides:—

If any amendment has been made in the Bill not coming within the original Title, such Title shall be amended and a question put, "That this be the Title of the Bill," and the amendment thereof shall be specially reported to the Council.

In my opinion, taking into consideration the object for which Clause 2 is now being debated, the amendment on the Notice Paper is strictly within the subject matter of the Bill, and is relevant to it; and I am further of the opinion that if the amendment is carried the Title of the Bill must be altered.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I understand from you, Sir, that the striking-out of Clause 2 will mean that a referendum will not be taken. That certainly clears the ground, and on the division we shall find out exactly where we stand. I am strongly in favour of the referendum; but, if I am defeated on that, I then want to discuss, on terms of equality and without prejudice, the question of Parliament settling the hours eight to eight, nine to nine, or ten to ten.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman will have an opportunity of discussing that matter when Mr. Colebatch moves his new clause.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I take it the division is to decide finally the question of the referendum.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I would like your ruling as to whether the subject-matter of the Bill is not the referendum to the

people, and consequently the limitation of hours from nine to nine is relevant to the subject-matter in accordance with Standing Order 193.

The CHAIRMAN: The subject-matter of the Bill is set forth in the Title, which is to regulate the closing time for the sale or supply of liquor on licensed premises and in State hotels, refreshment rooms, restaurant cars, vessels for which packet licenses are held, and registered clubs during war time. The regulation of the sale and the hours are the subject-matter of the Bill. The method by which that is to be effected is a detail of the Bill.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	14
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	8
				—

AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller.)
Hon. H. Millington	

NOES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. A. G. Jenkins
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. G. M. Sewell
Hon. J. Duffell	(Teller.)
Hon. V. Hamersley	

Clause thus negatived.

Clauses 3 to 12—negatived.

Clause 13—Licensed premises not to be open after the closing hour:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I move an amendment—

That after "1911," in line 10, the words "but this section shall not prohibit the sale or consumption of liquor to or by any lodger or inmate if the liquor is not drunk at the public bar of the licensed premises" be inserted.

If people who live in hotels and members of clubs, which in many respects are private houses, are to be prohibited from obtaining liquor, then there is an end to the matter. But it is absurd that persons living in residential hotels or members

who live at clubs and regard these places as their homes, after whatsoever hour is fixed, are not to be permitted to have a glass of beer or whatever they want. Will it be illegal for a boarder who is a permanent lodger to have a bottle of beer or a bottle of whisky in his room.

Hon. J. Duffell: Yes.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is a ridiculous position to arise.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I am in accord with the argument of the hon. member, but I do not see the necessity for the amendment. We have decided to alter the hours of trading, and the proposal is to amend the Licensing Act by substituting nine to nine for six to eleven. Therefore, the existing provisions of the Licensing Act as to boarders in hotels will still apply.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Clause 13 says, "at any time after the closing time fixed by proclamation under the preceding section." As the preceding section has been struck out, I fail to see how the amendment can be inserted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 14—negatived.

Clause 15—Apportionment of rent and premium:

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I have an amendment which has been drafted by the Solicitor General after consultation, and members can be prepared to accept the amendment as an improvement on the clause of the Bill. Under the clause the chairman of the licensing bench of the district would have to settle this matter. By the amendment I propose to insert, two arbitrators will decide the apportionment of rent and premium. However, as I find I require a few minutes in which to perfect the proposed amendment, I move—

That further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion passed; the clause postponed until after the consideration of proposed new clauses.

Clause 16—Regulations.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Is there any reason for the clause, seeing that the Bill

will be part and parcel of the Licensing Act?

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 17 and 18—agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I move—

That the following be added as a new clause:—"Section 97 of the Licensing Act of 1911 is amended by striking out the word "six" in line 6 and inserting "nine" in lieu thereof; and by striking out the word "eleven" in line 7 and inserting "nine" in lieu thereof.

New clause passed.

New clause—Treating prohibited:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move—

That the following be added as a new clause:—"1, No person shall, either by himself or by his servant or agent, sell or supply liquor to any person on licensed premises, for consumption on the premises, unless the liquor is ordered and paid for by the person to whom it is supplied, and by whom it is consumed, or intended to be consumed. Penalty: Five pounds. 2, No person shall order or pay for, or lend or advance money to pay for, any liquor consumed or to be consumed by any other person on licensed premises. Penalty: Five pounds. 3, No person shall consume on licensed premises any liquor, if any other person has ordered or paid or agreed to pay for such liquor, or has lent or advanced money to pay for such liquor. Penalty: Five pounds. Provided that this section shall not apply if the liquor is sold or supplied for consumption with a meal supplied at the same time, and is consumed with such meal in a room ordinarily used as a dining room in which there is no public bar, and the person who pays for such meal also pays for the liquor."

The one objection raised to the anti-shouting clause when the earlier Bill was before the Committee was that it would prevent friends who were having a meal together indulging in a glass of liquor with that meal. In this proposed new clause provision is made to get over that difficulty. The Committee is fully cognisant of the idea underlying the proposed new clause, and therefore it is un-

necessary for me to take up time in explaining it.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I understand you have ruled, Mr. Chairman, that the subject matter of the Bill is the regulation of the closing hours of hotels during war time. In order to obviate any difficulty in another place I submit—although I have every sympathy with the proposed amendment—that this anti-shouting provision is not relevant to the subject matter of the Bill in accordance with Standing Order 193.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that to put the matter beyond doubt the hon. member postpone the proposed new clause until the Title of the Bill has been amended in conformity with amendments already made. After the Title has been amended the hon. member's proposed new clause will undoubtedly be in order. It will be necessary in the meantime that the hon. member temporarily withdraw his proposed new clause.

New clause by leave withdrawn.

Postponed Clause 15—Apportionment of Rent and Premium:

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I move an amendment—

That all the words down to "final," in line 19, be struck out with a view of inserting the following:—"If at the commencement of this Act any licensed premises are held under lease the lessee shall be allowed by the lessor a proportionate reduction of the rent of the premises, in the same ratio to the full rent as the reduction in hours bears to the time during which the premises might have been lawfully open for the sale of liquor except for this Act and a like proportionate return of a part of the premium (if any) paid by the lessee to the lessor, apportioned to the period during which this Act is in force: Provided that if any lessee or lessor considers himself unduly penalised by the incidence of this section he may require the question of adjustment of rent or rent and premium to be submitted to arbitration under the provisions of the Arbitration Act, 1895, and by an award to be made thereunder the rent or rent and premium to be

payable by the lessee or sub-lessee during and in respect of such period shall be at such reduced rate as in the circumstances of the case may be deemed reasonable, and the award shall be binding upon the parties and final."

Amendment passed.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I move a further amendment—

That in the interpretation of the word "lessee" after the word "sub-lessee" the words "and also a mortgagee of a lease or sublease" be added.

Amendment passed.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I move a further amendment—

That in the interpretation of "lessor" after the word "lessor" the following be added:—"and also a mortgagee of the lessor or of the land comprised in the lease."

Amendment passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Title:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That all the words after "to" in line 1 be struck out, and the words "amend the Licensing Act, 1911" inserted in lieu."

Hon. J. CORNELL: I should like to know how clubs would come in under this Bill if the title is amended.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They are licensed under the Act.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Club licenses are altogether different from publicans' general licenses; it ought to be made clear. I think it is the intention of the House that clubs should come under this Bill.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: If any hon. member wishes to move any clause dealing with clubs, he can do so under a Bill to amend the Licensing Act, 1911.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: This amendment to the Title puts us in the position of the Irishman. We have the old gun and a new lock, stock, and barrel.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I desire to report progress for the reason that unless other amendments are framed and this amendment is carried to alter the Title, restaurant cars on the railways will not be

affected and packet licenses will not be affected. It will require a number of amendments then to bring into operation an Act to embody something which we are fighting for under this particular Bill. If this Chamber refuses to report progress, what action do members propose to take in many of the instances that will be affected under this Bill, which if amended will not be embodied at all?

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I think we must allow the Title to remain as it is, inserting the words "to amend the Licensing Act, 1911." I also think that the definition of licensed premises should remain in the Bill because clubs do not hold licenses but certificates. Under the definition of licenses premises in the 1911 Act, clubs are not included, consequently if we do not allow the Title to remain as it is and do not allow the definition of licensed premises and licensees to remain we will find ourselves in the position that we will have no law affecting the closing of State hotels, refreshment rooms, restaurant cars, packet licenses, or anything of the kind. I think that on recommittal we should insert in the Bill a definition of licensed premises and licensees as set out in the Act.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I will withdraw my amendment in favour of that suggested by Mr. Jenkins.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would like to see progress reported, because it appears to me that things are in a muddle.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: Not at all.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think that the words "licensed premises" should come out.

Amendment put and passed.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

The CHAIRMAN (Hon. W. Kingsmill): I beg to report that the Committee have considered the Bill and agreed to the same with amendments. In accordance with Standing Order 198, I also have to report that the Title of the Bill has been altered.

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. G. JENKINS, Bill recommitted for the consideration of two new clauses and to consider further amendment to the Title.

Sitting suspended from 6.12 to 7.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: A new clause has been moved by the Hon. J. J. Holmes to stand as Clause 15. Hon. members will find the new clause on the Notice Paper.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I rise to a point of order and I am extremely sorry for the necessity for doing so. The subject dealt with in the proposed new clause is one upon which I have not only spoken and voted in this House, but on which I have moved a resolution elsewhere. Therefore, it may be said to have my most cordial support as a member of this House. On the other hand, I am extremely anxious that this Bill shall not be loaded with matter foreign to it. We have seen the fate which awaited another Bill—

The CHAIRMAN: What is the hon. member's point of order?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: That the amendment is not in accordance with Standing Order 193 inasmuch as it is not relevant to the subject matter of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that the amendment is not relevant to the subject matter of the Bill and therefore cannot be received.

New clause:

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I move—

That the following be added as a new clause:—"In this Act, unless the context otherwise indicates—'Licensed premises' means premises in respect of which a license under the Licensing Act, 1911, has been granted and is in force, and includes State hotels, refreshment rooms, and restaurant cars, a vessel for which a packet license is held, and registered clubs. 'Licensee' means any person holding or entitled to exercise a license under the Licensing Act, 1911, or granted by the Commissioner of Railways authorising the sale of liquor in any railway refresh-

ment room or restaurant car, and the secretary of any registered club holding a certificate under the Licensing Act, 1911. 'Liquor' means intoxicating liquor within the meaning of the Licensing Act, 1911."

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: If the new clause be passed in the form now presented, it may be taken to apply only to licensed premises, so regarded in this particular Bill. It is all right so far as Clause 15 of this Bill is concerned, but it would not apply to 'licensed premises' as used in Section 97 of the principal Act. I move an amendment to the proposed new clause—

That the words "in this Act unless the context otherwise indicates" be struck out and the words "for the purposes of this Act the words 'licensed premises' in Section 97 of the Licensing Act, 1911," be inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed.

New clause as amended agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—SUPPLEMENTARY LOAN, £1,300,000.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on the first schedule, wherein an amendment had been moved by Mr. Colebatch to strike out from item 33 the figures "£200,000" with a view to inserting in lieu thereof the figures "£5,000."

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I am not going back on any of the strong things I said last night about striking out this item, but I think the real object of the Committee can be gained without so radical a remedy, namely, by striking out the amount that has not yet been paid. That would be an indication to the Government that the Committee will not tolerate any continuance of the action behind this

item, and whilst the object of the Committee would thus be attained, there would be no hampering of the Government, for it is not intended, I understand, to spend any more money under this item until the business conditions after the close of the war justify further action. In the ordinary course other Loan Bills will be submitted before that time arrives, and so the Government will have ample opportunity for bringing down any necessary authorisation. It will be said the Committee's object can be gained if, after carrying the first part of Mr. Colebatch's proposed amendment, that is by striking out the item £200,000, we insert £140,000; but I think it would be better if Mr. Colebatch would agree to reduce the item by £60,000, thus leaving £140,000 already paid away.

The Colonial Secretary: And £5,000 more will be needed in connection with the shipping away of wheat.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I think the proper way would be to move the reduction of the item by the amount which it is proposed to reduce it.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment as I see it, should actually place in definite words or figures the object of the amendment, which is the reduction of the item. But before that reduction can be effected the original amount must be struck out.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I am sorry I cannot accept the suggestion. If the Committee desires to stultify itself I cannot prevent it, but I will not be a party to it. Something similar to what has happened on this occasion took place in 1912 when this Chamber accepted the responsibility of amending the Address-in-Reply on this same question, namely, the purchase by the Government without authorisation of steamships. The amendment was—

That all the words after "Sovereign" be struck out with a view of inserting "and to protest against expenditure incurred by Your Excellency's Ministers without an Act of Appropriation, such procedure being derogatory to the principles of Parliament and subversive of the Constitution.

Is it to be suggested that we could carry an extreme resolution of that kind on one day and two or three years afterwards, when the same thing comes up again, make no attempt to stop it? Hon. members are welcome to disregard everything I have said in respect to this matter—although I am prepared to stick to it—and to take instead the statement made by the Colonial Secretary. And what do we find? That the Government, without the authority of Parliament, resolved to embark upon an entirely new State enterprise of oversea trade, and for that purpose purchased a steamer at war time prices which, according to the Colonial Secretary, are from two to three times the ordinary cost of building a vessel. Hon. members have referred to this question of taking responsibility. We have all to take our share of responsibility, and the question we have to ask ourselves is, are we prepared to wink at the action of the Government in flouting the Constitution and inaugurating a new State enterprise and spending £140,000 without the vote of Parliament? That is the constitutional aspect of the case. Then, on the point of policy, are we to endorse the action of the Government and thereby close our mouths against any further protest. And then, from the point of view of business, are we to endorse the action of the Government in buying in war time a vessel which they could then procure only at from two to three times its cost in times of peace? If hon. members are prepared to do those things, namely, to allow the Government to break the Constitution, endorse their action in starting a new enterprise, and say that they are justified in buying a steamer at war time prices, any member who likes to take that burden of responsibility is welcome to do it. This matter will come up again. Year after year we shall hear from the public as much about the purchase of the "Kangaroo" as we hear to-day about the purchase of the trams, and I want to have a clear conscience on it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Committee acted wisely yesterday in deciding to give further consideration to the amend-

ment moved by Mr. Colebatch, and I hope that after that further consideration wiser counsels will prevail. Personally I refuse to accept the responsibility of interfering with the administration of the Government. This is a matter of administration rather than of policy. The Committee will be acting unwisely if it interferes with a matter of administration, refusing to give Ministers money to carry on the State Steamship Service already in existence. True, the State Steamship Service has been established without Parliamentary authority, and this branch of Parliament has times out of number protested against this. I have been a staunch advocate of the State Steamship Service for the North-West portion of the State, but I have always protested against the manner in which the service was introduced. That is a matter which Ministers will have to report upon to their constituencies, and receive the verdict of the public as to their wisdom in defying Parliament. I am not prepared to take the control of the State Steamship Service out of the hands of the present administration. The expert adviser of the Government had more to do with the purchase of the steamer than the Government themselves. The whole thing seems to have emanated from him. Why was he so anxious to buy a steamer at this particular juncture? At the time when he proposed to procure a boat the State Steamship Service was engaged in carrying tens of thousands of tons of merchandise to Wyndham in connection with the erection of the freezing works there, which were to have been completed in March next. The manager of the State Steamship Service knew that the most profitable business the service was carrying on was in connection with the carriage of live stock, and that, immediately the works were completed, he would lose his best custom, and his best boat, the "Kwinana." He then took steps to procure a boat, and started out with the intention of having one built. The Government were told by the authorities at Home, however, that there was no hope

of getting a boat built until a year after the war was over. Seeing that it was impossible to get a steamer built, the first opportunity which presented itself of acquiring one was apparently the occasion on which this boat—the "Kangaroo"—was offered to the Government and subsequently purchased by them. True, the completion of the freezing works at Wyndham has been postponed to an indefinite period, but that is not a matter for the expert adviser of the State Steamship Service. The only thing for him to do was to say "I have a ship intended for use in March, 1916, but the works will not be ready by then. I shall have her profitably employed until such time as the works are ready." I hope to show the Committee that the boat can be profitably employed to such an extent that in two or three years the profit can be set up against the capital cost, and the capital cost can be reduced to the normal value of the ship in peace times.

Hon. F. Connor: You are hoping, then, that the war will not be finished yet?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The hon. member has no right to suggest anything of the kind. If the war is finished to-morrow there will be a lot of straightening out to be done, and even then the shipping world will be busily engaged during the next two or three years. What more useful employment can a steamer be engaged in pending the completion of these works than in carrying our own products to the world's markets at a time when freight is practically unobtainable? I hope that wise counsels will prevail, and that so far as this service is concerned it will be allowed to proceed to a profitable result. If the item is passed hon. members will live to see these ships carrying cargoes of frozen meat and fertilisers from Wyndham to the southern ports, where both meat and fertiliser are always required. Having done one trip to the south what is more desirable than that she should then go north and take wool in at the various ports, and finish up with a full load of meat at Wyndham, and take the whole to the world's markets? I would like to ask members rep-

resenting agricultural interests in this Chamber what they would say if the Government built railways and did not provide the necessary rolling stock for the carrying of the produce to the markets. They would immediately blame the administration of the Railway Department because there were no trucks available and no facilities for providing transport. Yet these very same members knew that the works were to be completed in March, 1916, and that, failing this, the works are now being pushed on, and yet they refuse to grant this ship to the Government for the purpose of carrying the produce. If they refuse to do this then the meat works might just as well be shut down altogether. They blame the State Steamship Service because the management had the foresight to see that if the works were completed there must be a boat in which to carry the products of these works. Mr. Connor suggested that the service was of no advantage to the State. In my opinion he is out of touch with his constituents.

Hon. F. Connor: You will find that, when you go up there against me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member should confine himself to the amendment on this item.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I think I am entitled to discuss this question as a matter of the country endorsing the policy. I was the last member in the North Province to be returned to this Chamber, and I have been the only one elected since the establishment of the State Steamship Service, and I was elected pledged to support that service. The handsome majority which I received was due to my advocacy of this service. Scores of men in the North told me that they supported me because they would be glad to be relieved of the steamship octopus which had been hampering their efforts for the last quarter of a century. I suggested on the second reading that the item might be reduced to £45,000, but, after what has transpired, and after the explanation of the Colonial Secretary, I think I am perfectly justified in asking the Committee to let the item remain as printed. The Colonial Secretary has explained

that in order to carry on the coastal trade we must have a steamer of a certain description, and a steamer that can carry frozen meat in the lower hold, live stock between decks, and passengers above. I hope the item will not be amended, because we have the direct assurance of the Premier and that of the Colonial Secretary that no additional boat will be either purchased or built without Parliament being consulted. It may be that we will reach the stage when Parliament will be consulted. If I know anything about the development of the North-West I think it will be necessary to consult Parliament at an early date with the object of asking it to agree to the purchase of a new steamer. If the Government have the sanction of Parliament to do this, and £50,000 authority in addition with which to pay a deposit upon a steamer, they may be able to close on one pending the provision of sufficient money to complete the purchase later on. I ask hon. members to watch the development of the North-West. Any shipping company is formed with the object of making profits. We have only to keep our eyes open today to see that the boats in Australian waters are drifting into foreign waters because there is more profitable work for them there. The settlers in the North-West should not be neglected. I feel sure that the Committee will be called upon to come to the assistance of the Government in providing another ship in the near future. There is the "N2" at present carrying mails along the North-West coast. She is only held on sufferance, and may be taken away at any time. If she is taken away what is going to happen to the North-West? What boat is going to carry our mails and provide for traffic along the coast? I am convinced that the State must go to the assistance of the neglected North by giving it steamer facilities. If the House strikes out the item, the other House will refuse to accept our amendment. The Bill will be returned to us and we shall have to eat our words. The trouble has been that the State steamships have not proved payable, and it has been the op-

inion of the people that that was because the steamers were not suitable, but the time has come when there is an excellent opportunity of making a handsome profit and hon. members want to prevent that.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Do you think this ship will bring in a handsome profit?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: This ship will show a clear profit of between £40,000 and £50,000 per annum for the next two or three years, and I suggest that the Colonial Secretary should give an undertaking to the House and he can do it if he studies the figures, that for the next three years the Government can take £25,000 off the capital cost of the steamer and have a handsome profit besides. This vessel, I understand, is the last word in freight carrying vessels, and we must remember that freights are continually advancing. I hope that the House, having entered a protest, will not agree to the amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member has put the case clearly and forcibly. This is not so much an extension of the State Steamship Service as the provision of a necessary equipment for the carrying on of the freezing works at Wyndham. For years, I have listened to members clamouring for these freezing works. When it was decided to establish the freezing works, a Loan Bill was introduced and in it provision was made for the raising of £200,000 for these works. That Bill received the plaudits of hon. members, and it went through almost without discussion, and at once the Government set about to carry out the construction of the works. A contract was let which ended suddenly and the Government stepped into the breach and proceeded with the erection of the works. Then we found it was necessary that provision should be made for bringing down the meat. We were in a quandary until the offer of this steamer was made to us. We decided to accept it without referring the matter to Parliament because in the first place, there was a prohibition against the publication of the fact of sale and in the second place, the matter of the purchase could

not be left open, so we secured the vessel. The Government have been doing everything possible in the direction of hastening the completion of the freezing works. At the present time the water supply is almost completed. We have 120 men employed in connection with the works. There are 13½ miles of pipes laid and the water should be in Wyndham by the end of December. Some of the minor works are in course of construction. We have actually paid out in cash £61,000 and the expenditure is daily increasing. The material will be arriving and it will have to be paid for, and we are in the position that nearly all the material has been paid for, and all that will be necessary for us to find in the shape of money for construction will not represent a very big item. We have also made provision in the present Loan Bill for £50,000 for abattoirs, refrigerating works, etc. We have to do all these things. If the works had not been necessary, hon. members should not have advocated them. Now that we have started the works and having sunk over £60,000 in them and committed ourselves to another £40,000, efforts are being made to prevent us completing our designs. The "Kangaroo" will be put on in order to bring down chilled meat from Wyndham to Fremantle but she will not be on that work permanently, only until another steamer which we are asking authority to build is put in her place. This other steamer will be able to bring down 700 carcasses of chilled meat, 300 head of livestock, and there will be accommodation for 100 first-class passengers and 60 second-class passengers. The Premier has given an assurance in the Legislative Assembly and I have given a similar assurance here, that before any action is taken in the direction of making a contract for the purchase of another ship we will approach Parliament and get their sanction. Hon. members can rely upon my word being kept. I do not think I have ever made a promise that I have broken. We were communicated with by the Imperial authorities to make provision for the supply of meat for the British army. That had a great effect in

stirring the Government into action. We knew that it would be impossible to raise money in England, but when this proposition was submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by Sir Newton Moore, he at once granted his approval and wished us success. What alternative have hon. members who are opposed to this item to offer? What do they propose that we shall do. The works are being erected in the interests of two parties, the producers in the north-west and the consumers in the south. What use would it be for the Government to erect works unless they made the provision to bring down the meat? If the Bill is amended so as to deprive us of the means of of bringing down the meat, what alternative will hon. members propose? Are we to proceed with the erection of these works, and involve the country in further expenditure, or are we to face the present loss, abandon the works, and leave it to another Government to devise some method of operating works without the help of State steamers? Perhaps arrangements could be made with the shipping companies, those public benefactors who have increased freights between Australia and London so greatly that the producers will be penalised enormously. Will hon. members throw the producers of the Kimberley district into the jaws of the shipping combine? That is the position. The proper course would have been to approach Parliament, but it was impossible to do so. In the Loan Bill passed in March last, £200,000 was included for the provision and equipment of the Wyndham meat works, and hon. members must recognise that steamers are an essential portion of the equipment of the works. There is no possibility of the money being required until Parliament meets again, but it would be equivalent to censure of the Government if the item were struck out. If members think it advisable to reduce the item by £55,000, and will be prepared to consider the matter later, even to the extent of attending a special meeting of Parliament, I shall offer no objection. One hundred and twenty men are employed at Wyndham, and if we receive

encouragement we shall increase the number and guarantee to have the works in operation by April, 1917. But if for our action, taken in the best interests of the country, we are censured by the House, probably the works might be delayed. If the item is reduced beyond the amount stated, we could not undertake to spend another shilling in continuing the erection of the works, and I say that without making a threat. The Diesel ship is booked for nine months to earn £72,000, and on a basis of a probable cost of £40,000 a year—that is about the cost of the "Kwinana" and the cost of this boat should be less—there will be a profit on the nine months of £42,000, less depreciation and interest for that period.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am unable to vote, as I have promised to pair with Mr. Jenkins, but I am unwilling to permit my name to appear without giving my reasons. I support the proposal of Mr. Cullen to pass the amount of £145,000 and leave the balance over. Mr. Colebatch argued that this procedure on the part of the Government has been unconstitutional, and that the venture will prove unprofitable. I agree that the Government's action has been irregular, but would not it be unconstitutional on the part of members to take the management of the affairs of the country out of the hands of the Government?

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Would you hesitate to do that if it were for the country's good?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The only people who can turn out the Government are the electors. Mr. Holmes said this would prove a profitable venture, and Mr. Colebatch said it would be unprofitable.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: We shall know in two or three years' time who is right.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If the boat is likely to prove profitable, I should be more opposed to it than if it is going to be unprofitable. If the Government obtained a handsome profit from the vessel, the great bulk of the people would advocate the purchase of more ships in order

to make money in that way. That is the danger. As Mr. Connor pointed out last night, this policy prevents private enterprise from coming to the country.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Holmes spoke of the Country party members as being opposed to the State Steamship Service. Because we are opposed to the purchase of the "Kangaroo," it does not follow that we are opposed to the State Steamship Service. It has been shown that the "Kangaroo" is unsuitable for the northern trade. The Colonial Secretary said she could get into the ports in the north if she was carrying 1,000 tons of cargo. That would not be profitable with a boat of 6,000 tons capacity. If the boat were suitable for the northern trade, we might have been expected to overlook her purchase at such a time, but when a steamer is purchased at war-time price, or three times the normal price, and there is no immediate use for it, we should not be expected to support the purchase.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: The Colonial Secretary showed there is need for it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Minister said the meat works could not be finished for 17 months, and this boat has been purchased to carry the meat from those works to the southern ports. On the Minister's own showing there is no need to purchase a boat for another 17 months, and if the works are to be built by day labour, it will be more like 17 years before they are finished. The manager of the State Steamship Service advised the Government that these boats were very good for oversea trade. Are we supporting the purchase of a ship for oversea trade in order to make a few pounds that way? Have the Government reached that level? I would never agree to purchasing ships for the oversea trade. I am not opposed to a steamship service to relieve the North, but I am opposed to the purchase of steamers for oversea trade, more especially one like the "Kangaroo," which is not suitable for our North-West trade.

Hon. A. Sanderson: You are chartering them for your wheat to-day.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I would not agree to the purchase of State steamers for the carriage of wheat. It would have been far better if the Federal Government had not interfered in the matter of the carriage of our wheat. Mr. Sanderson chuckles. We had the offer of two boats, and the charter was held over for a month at 65s. a ton, and the Federal Government are paying 85s. Perhaps that will satisfy the hon. member that the Federal Government made a mistake.

Hon. J. Cornell: Would two boats take all your wheat?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The matter has gone too far now, and we must do the best we can under the Federal arrangement. It has been stated by Mr. Holmes and also by the Colonial Secretary that the manager of the State Steamship Service when recommending the purchase of this Diesel ship had good reason to believe that the Wyndham Freezing Works would be completed by the end of next March. It was, however, at that time very well known that the works could not be finished for two years at the earliest. Mr. Holmes asked, what would hon. members think if railways were supplied and no stations and no rolling stock were supplied? By way of reply, I ask what would Mr. Holmes say if he saw the Government building railway stations and providing rolling stock when no railway was in existence? Their action in buying the Diesel ship is on a par with that. As regards the Colonial Secretary's request for the furnishing of an alternative scheme by opponents of the purchase, I may throw out the hint that in view of the day labour system adopted by the Government, shipping will be a thing of the past by the time the Wyndham Freezing Works are completed and that transport will then be effected entirely by aeroplane. The Colonial Secretary states that there is no chance of the extra £55,000 being expended before Parliament meets again. If that is so, why do the Government want the money voted now instead of next session? One of the greatest objections to the purchase

of the "Kangaroo" is the secrecy maintained after the purchase had been effected. The negotiations should certainly be kept secret, because of the manner in which prices are run up on Governments and especially on the present Government of this State. However, as soon as a purchase or a contract is completed the Government no longer have any right to withhold the information from Parliament and from the public.

The Colonial Secretary: How long was information concerning this purchase held back?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: For weeks and weeks, and members who asked questions in this Chamber were put off by side-tracking answers. The promised profit of £42,000 per annum looks charming. Mr. Holmes is eloquent regarding the profits which this Diesel vessel is going to make for the State. We have had many of these alluring prospects of profits from State trading concerns held out to us before; but, somehow, the concerns seem always to result in deficits. The Colonial Secretary says the cost of running the Diesel ship will be £30,000 per year.

The Colonial Secretary: I said the cost would be £30,000 for nine months.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think anyone knows what will be the cost of running a Diesel ship on this coast. Perhaps the worst feature of the whole business is that in order to make the purchase the Government had to pledge the credit of the State. They pledged the credit of the State in order to purchase a vessel which according to the Colonial Secretary will not be needed for 17 months, and which according to my view will not be needed for three years. The Colonial Secretary has said that one of the objects in making the purchase was to supply meat to the British army. According to the hon. gentleman himself, however, the works cannot be finished for 17 months. How long does he expect the war to last? Surely we shall see the end of it within 17 months. I myself feel that the war will be over before that time. My position is that I have agreed to pair with Mr. Kirwan, but I do not

like to let this matter go to the vote without having expressed my opinion.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: It is my intention to support the amendment, not because I am opposed to the State Steamship Service inaugurated by the Government or because I am in favour of that service. The present is not the time or the opportunity for a discussion of the State steamship project. Speaking here some time ago on another measure, I said that the making of one mistake led to the making of a great many more by those who committed the original error. Three years ago I said on the public platform that this Chamber had committed an indiscretion in passing items on the Estimates for the purchase of State steamers. That indiscretion has led to the present difficulty, as well as to the establishment of many of the State enterprises under which we are suffering to-day. I said three years ago that this Chamber should have struck out the item for State steamers and thereby decided once and for all who was to interpret the policy of the country—the Government or Parliament. The Government, coming into power charged with a mandate from the people, as they claimed, to carry out a certain policy, forgot that Parliament is elected to carry out a policy and that the business of Ministers is to guide Parliament in its deliberations and to place a policy before Parliament. When Ministers arrogate to themselves the power that Parliament should have, then it is the duty of Parliament to enter an emphatic protest by cutting off supplies. The mandate which the Government claimed to have was to establish State steamers for the purpose of cheapening the price of meat in the metropolitan area by bringing the populous portions of the State in close touch with the pastoral areas of the North. They made a mistake at that time by starting the service without the authority of Parliament, and by starting it on lines laid down by themselves without the approval of Parliament. I am not prepared to agree to the continuance of such a policy. As regards the cost of the "Kangaroo" much difference

of opinion appears to exist. Mr. Colebatch read a description of a vessel built approximately simultaneously with the "Kangaroo"—a larger vessel built for about half the cost. From my knowledge of the cost of ships, and from information I have gathered from people interested in shipping matters all their lives, I am satisfied that under normal conditions the "Kangaroo" is not worth more than £60,000. I will admit that she is fitted with a Diesel engine and that she is the last word in cargo ships. As an engineer I will further admit that I believe the Diesel engine is the propulsive power of the future in this connection. Diesel ships are cooler than steamers, and have more accommodation, and require less fuel and cheaper fuel and less labour. Still, the fact remains that in purchasing the ship the Government paid something like 150 per cent. more than her value in normal times. It is claimed that the Government will earn about £35,000 a year in excess of the cost of running her, and that thus the abnormal cost of the ship will be liquidated in two or three years' time. That might be a business proposition for Mr. Holmes, or for a gentleman engaged in industrial pursuits; but the Government have no right to gamble on the future in such a fashion. We all hope this lamentable war will have been brought to a close before three or four years have passed. No Government, therefore, has the right to gamble on such a disastrous contingency as the continuation of the war for that length of time. I am of opinion that the excess cost of the ship over the cost in normal times should be earned by her during the first twelve months. That would mean that she should earn a percentage of profit 80 or 90 per cent. over what she would earn under normal conditions; which, however, is impossible. The Colonial Secretary estimates that the ship might earn £25,000 per annum.

The Colonial Secretary: No; £42,000 in nine months.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: Net earnings, profits over expenses?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes.

Hon J. F. ALLEN: Even that is assuming the Colonial Secretary's estimate of expenditure is correct. When I look at the present running cost of State steamers and find it is something like £7,000 or £8,000 a month, and when I take into consideration that the administrative expenses will be the same in connection with this ship, and further, when I bear in mind that the "Kangaroo" is to engage in a class of trade far beyond anything the State steamers have engaged in up to the present, I am led to the conclusion that the estimate of expenditure placed before the Chamber by the Minister must be erroneous. I have inquired from men of lifelong experience in connection with steamers, not amateurs without previous experience placed in charge of steamers: and I am assured by those experienced men that the revenue which the ship will earn in excess of revenue under ordinary conditions would be handsome if the purchase had been made at normal cost, but that at the price at which the ship has been bought it will take some years to pay off the extra cost and that consequently the vessel will not show the profits the Government anticipate. We have heard of enormous profits to be earned by the Government before, but up to date every Government undertaking has shown a loss rather than a profit. Even where a profit has been shown, there is good reason to believe that standing charges have not been allowed for and that it is thus a profit is shown. In the circumstances, I do not feel justified in supporting the item.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: It is my intention to show my disapproval of the action of the Government in purchasing this steamer by voting for the amendment reducing the item in the first schedule. The Chairman has allowed the question of the freezing works at Wyndham to be associated closely with the steamer now under consideration. That decision was a wise one, because it has allowed members an opportunity of explaining their views very fully to the Committee. During the term of the Wilson Gov-

ernment, freezing works at Wyndham was a burning question and the object then was the bringing down to the southern market of a better quality of meat and also the reduction of the cost of meat. When the present Government came into power they discontinued that proposal and instituted in lieu the much discussed State steamer proposal. From the inception the Government made a huge blunder in the class of steamer selected for that purpose. They went about it, as they have told us, after getting the very best advice from the Agent General and elsewhere. But it now turns out that the "Kangaroo" is being purchased from the same company as they bought the steamer "Western Australia" from.

The Colonial Secretary: That is not a fact.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: The Government have made a blunder in getting a steamer which is not suitable for the class of trade for which she is intended, and it seems they have not benefited as they should have done by the mistakes of the past. Since the Wyndham works were abandoned and the State steamers inaugurated, a foreign company has started chilling works at Port Darwin and made preparations for a considerable time ahead for the supply of cattle. As a result of information imparted to the Colonial Secretary from time to time by this House, that Minister has apparently come to the conclusion that the Government should never have stopped those works, and as a further result of the education the Colonial Secretary has received from members of this House he was instrumental, according to his own statement, in bringing Cabinet to think the same way. Eventually they started freezing works and the State steamers are to be utilised to bring down the frozen products to the Perth markets. They have also decided to launch out in the oversea shipping trade. Instead of consulting Parliament, as I unhesitatingly say they should have done, and placing their proposals before Parliament, they have launched out on the overseas trade. Thus, instead of reducing the price of meat they have launched upon a scheme which, if it is successful, will have the

opposite effect, of keeping the price of meat high, because it is proposed to go in for exporting to other parts of the world. Much has been said about the high freights ruling at the present time. Members of this House have tried to instil into the leader of the House that supply and demand governs prices. Similarly supply and demand governs the question of freights. We know that at the present time numerous vessels have been taken off the various shipping routes of the world with the result that freights are higher to-day than they have ever been in our history. I maintain that the Government in purchasing this steamer at a time when Parliament was sitting have done wrong. There is no excuse for their having made final arrangements without giving information to Parliament, especially when it is remembered that information was sought by numerous questions from time to time. They have mortgaged the credit of the State to secure a steamer which is altogether unsuitable for the trade. I can understand the attitude adopted by Mr. Holmes, who is pledged to support the State steamers, but the time is not very long since when Mr. Holmes played a prominent part in regard to the actions of the Government and the State steamer enterprise generally. This Committee is going to mark its disapproval of the Government's action in buying this steamer without having laid the whole business before the House. I have no hesitation in supporting the amendment for a reduction of item 23 of the first schedule.

Hon. F. CONNOR: It would be idle of me to repeat the arguments I have set up previously in this House on many occasions. I may say that it is my intention to vote against the amendment, and to criticise the arguments which have been put before us that this venture is in the interests of the North-West. I am a representative of the North and have been such for nearly twenty years. We have heard the argument from the leader of the House that the Bill is justified because a certain firm wanted to buy the ship. There is no shipping company in Australia or in England who would not

take an option over the ship. That is all the firm in question asked for and it annoys me, as a man who knows the shipping and cattle business, that I should be asked to swallow irresponsible arguments that a firm would be prepared to buy a vessel merely because they said they would be pleased to have an option. We have also been told it is possible this steamer will pay for herself in three years, even at the abnormal price paid, because of the high rates ruling to-day. Any twopenny half-penny shipping firm backed up with the same unlimited capital, if they were given time to make two or three voyages, could do that. We are told that if the war continues for three years, we may get our money back for that ship. The ship is not suitable for the trade. As we have paid £140,000 we must put up with a bad bargain. Any ordinary shipping firm could do that if it had the opportunity of running the vessel for three years under existing conditions. The "Western Australia" was to have been the salvation of this country. She was to have done all the things Mr. Holmes said she would do, but he has since found out that she could not do anything of the sort. The "Western Australia" was purchased from the very company for which the "Kangaroo" was built. The "Western Australia" having been such a very bad bargain, it would have been only reasonable if the Government had said, "No more boats from that company." Yet this "Kangaroo" was built for that company at a cost of £60,000 and purchased by the Government for £140,000. I am voting for the item. I want some information from the Colonial Secretary in respect to the insurance of the ship. The Colonial Secretary said it was 5 per cent. Did he mean per annum?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes, per annum.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Then the hon. member has made an exceptionally good deal; that is, if he is right, but I do not believe him. I do not think he is correct. The Government have been very good to the North. They have made promises and promises and promises. Billy went up there and we got more promises. The

Colonial Secretary has taken credit for the determination to erect freezing works at Wyndham. In season and out of season I have clamoured for justice for the North. The North has never had that justice, not even under the Wilson Government, which, by the way, was worse than the Labour Government, and that is saying a great deal. I congratulate the Colonial Secretary on the fact that his Government are going to build those freezing works. But why are they going to build them? Because the Commonwealth Government, with more sense and a better knowledge of the position, took charge at Port Darwin and started freezing works there. There would have been no freezing works contemplated for Wyndham but for the fact that the Federal Government got in first at Darwin. The present Minister for Lands in July, 1912, went up to Wyndham to inquire into the position.

The CHAIRMAN: I will ask that hon. members in dealing with the Wyndham freezing works deal with them only insofar as they affect the State Steamship Service.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The Colonial Secretary made his speech on the Wyndham freezing works.

The CHAIRMAN: As it affected the State Steamship Service.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I think he went beyond that. He said it was the policy of the Government to build these works. However, the present Minister for Lands, having taken a State steamer and gone to the far North to discover what was necessary, wrote an exceedingly long report, of which the following is his own summary—

1. There is not available in sufficient quantities the class of cattle to guarantee that when the meat is frozen it can successfully compete on the world's market.
2. That the special local difficulties of erection and obtaining water supplies, plus the expensive cost of operating, would make it impossible to market the frozen beef without suffering financial loss.
3. That the price that could be paid for cattle for freezing or canning purposes would be less than the stock would command for the

island trade. 4. That the operations of the State steamers, with Government controlled abattoirs, will have an effect on the price of meat in the southern market which could not be gained if meat were sent frozen from the Kimberleys. 5. That the successful marketing of frozen or canned beef is difficult, while the marketing of livestock is comparatively easy. 6. That an expensive and difficult enterprise should not be undertaken when there is an alternative available. 7. That the alternative is the fostering of the island trade by making special investigations into its possibilities.

That is the report of the Minister who was deputed to look into the question of the freezing works. That is the position, a God-help-us position. We are told by Mr. Holmes that there is no space available, and no possibility of getting the produce away. I think I know more about it than he does. I have been the pioneer of the Kimberley cattle trade since its first inception, and I say that if we had no Government steamers we could handle the produce better and more cheaply, not only to the advantage of the producer but to the advantage also of the consumer. If I do not know, who does? We did have several lines of boats running on this coast, but they were choked off by the Government steamers. I have previously said that the introduction of the Government steamers into this trade was a curse, and I say it again. My old company had a steamer running there for 20 odd years. The Adelaide Steamship Co. had one and sometimes two, and there were two boats running to Manilla. What is the position to-day? We have one solitary steamer bringing cattle from Wyndham to Fremantle. That is the result of interference by the Government with private enterprise. The Government cannot walk in and do that sort of thing successfully. There is no trouble about getting space to carry all that can be produced in Wyndham. We have three lines of boats quite prepared to insulate for the carrying of chilled meat if it is made worth their while. If we put on this "Kangaroo" to carry chilled meat, she

will overload this market. What could be done with 5,000 or 6,000 tons of meat landed at one time at Fremantle? It could not be given away. The ship is not suitable. As a matter of fact, Messrs. Bethell, Gwyn only wanted the option over the boat. If I was not a member for the Northern Province, and I saw the necessity for taking all the risks and even letting the rest of the country suffer, I would hesitate very much before I would give my vote in favour of the item we are now discussing. The Colonial Secretary criticised very severely the statement by Mr. Colebatch from the American journal which contained certain figures regarding the price of boats. The first time the hon. gentleman spoke in Committee, however, he took that journal to his breast and showed how he was right and Mr. Colebatch was wrong. If we cannot get sufficient cattle to fill the boats, there is no necessity to have the boats. The Wilson Government, I think it was, when the agitation was on for the first time at Wyndham, had it up against them that the Federal Government were supporting Vesty Bros. Here we have our friends in the Federal Parliament making contracts with stations in Western Australia under which these people who send cattle to the State works at Wyndham have to pay these other people 2s. per head bounty. I can prove that absolutely. There is unrest over this matter, and this unrest will continue until certain things have been cleared up. I was told by Mr. Holmes that I was not in touch with my constituents. If ever a man has worked hard for his constituents I am that man. I have had offered to me the position of Speaker, Chairman of Committees, and practically any position I liked in the Ministry, but I have not accepted any office at all, and have done my best for my constituents. I must say I have no time for the dirty insinuations made by my hon. colleague.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: The Colonial Secretary this afternoon introduced another high authority into this question. He tells us that the venture had received the benediction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I would like to know if,

when that matter was placed before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was informed of the opinion of the Premier, that it might be impossible to have the Wyndham works finished in time for the 1917 season. The Colonial Secretary may be in a position to answer that question.

The Colonial Secretary: No, I am not; I could not say.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I think it highly probable he was not told anything of the sort, for if he had been told he might have given a different decision. We have been told that it was impossible for Parliament to be consulted. If we look up the files we find that for two months these negotiations were proceeding. It was on the 24th June that Sir John Biles brought under the notice of Mr. Stevens the fact that this vessel was for sale. It was not until the 1st September that it was finally decided to purchase her during portion of which time Parliament was in session. We were told that the sale had to be kept secret. Ministers seem to think that the people who had the selling of this ship in their hands were determined to do some great favour to the Western Australian Government. There is no member of this House, unless it be the Colonial Secretary, who does not think that this sale was a sale of the vessel to the highest bidder, and that the publication of the fact that the Western Australian Government were in negotiation for her would not have prejudiced the position, so far as the Government were concerned. So long as they saw there was a chance of getting £140,000 from the Government they would have kept the offer open for the purpose, even if Parliament was discussing the question. With regard to Mr. Holmes, he states that the acting manager of the State Steamship Service had to provide a boat in connection with the Wyndham freezing works and that he therefore recommended this purchase. I can hardly think the hon. member has read the file or he would not have made such a statement. The matter did not arise in that way. I think it was in *Bleak House* that

we read of an eccentric gentleman who was walking out with his young lady on one occasion looked up suddenly and said, "Here is a church, let us go in and get married." It was very much in this way that this purchase was effected. Mr. Stevens said suddenly, "There is a ship, let us buy her." I will just read a line or two of a report wherein Sir John Biles said that the ship was available. He said, "I do not recommend it." Mr. Stevens further pointed out how unsuitable this vessel was for the North-West trade. He said—

I agree with Sir John Biles for the reason that the ship we want for the North-West coast is quite a different type to the tramp ship of low speed, and if the tramp ship were purchased and altered to take mails, passengers, and chilled meat, a grave blunder would be made as the resulting vessel would be quite wrong. As advised by Sir John Biles in his cable of 29th June above set out, Mr. Denny then informed me of the position and I rejected the Deisel tramp offered as I knew that to endeavour to adapt her to our special mail and passenger work would only result in a huge blunder, so I informed Mr. Denny that he should so cable to Sir John Biles, which he did on 29th June, as follows.

A cable was then sent, "Stevens rejects Deisel offered." That is the "Kangaroo." He was not looking round for a ship in connection with the Wyndham business at all. He goes on—

On turning over the matter in my mind, however, I decided to inform you that I had heard that a Deisel tramp steamer could be purchased, as with the grave shortage of ocean tonnage now existing and likely to exist for some time after the war is finished, I saw a great prospect of success with such a ship in oversea work, as the service would have a chance of participating in the extraordinary high freights now being earned by oversea shipowners.

Later on in the same report, on page 9, he says—

The ship could, of course, go on at this as long as the abnormal state of affairs in the shipping world exists, and I venture to suggest that this abnormal condition must last for the next three years at least, even if the war should come to an early termination.

The Colonial Secretary: Continue the reading.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: On the last page of the report there is one reference to the Wyndham freezing works. The whole of the report shows that the object of the manager in recommending this purchase is that the State Steamship Service should enter into the oversea shipping trade. He says in regard to this—

The Wyndham freezing works are expected to be in operation by March, 1917, and it is doubtful whether the new North-West steamer will be ready much before that, even if the order be placed at once and the "Lalandia" which could be partly insulated and fitted with a refrigerator in England, and on one of her visits there could be turned on to the Wyndham work at any time in anticipation of the new ship, and after the new ship arrived could operate with the greatest possible success in helping to take the produce of the Wyndham works to oversea markets.

That is absolutely the only reference to Wyndham in the whole of these 11 pages of the report and it occurs at the very tail end of the report.

The Colonial Secretary: Did you read my letter to Cabinet?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I am only referring to what Mr. Holmes said, namely, that this thing had emanated from Mr. Stevens with a view to supplying the requirements of the Wyndham freezing works. Mr. Stevens's desire was to open up a new branch of activity in the State Steamship Service and to indulge in an oversea shipping trade. *Fair Play* in commenting on the enormous addition which had taken place in the price of shipping refers to the case in which a number of high class vessels

of an average age of seven years had gone up very much in price. It mentions that these vessels have changed hands at about £12 per ton deadweight. We have bought the "Kangaroo" at £21 per ton deadweight. It is for members of this Committee to take on themselves the responsibility of deciding what they are going to do. Are they going to endorse the action of the Government in violating the Constitution while Parliament was in session, of buying this boat, and of embarking on an entirely new trading enterprise? Are they going to endorse this, and by that means prevent themselves from again taking exception to that action of the Government in entering into this new enterprise of oversea trade, or are they going to take the view of Mr. Holmes that this steamer which cost £140,000 is going to be a payable proposition?

The Colonial Secretary: What is the alternative?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: The alternative is this. When the Government can say that the Wyndham freezing works are completed, if they ever do say so under their present day labour system, or if they come within something like a reasonable distance of completion, let them proceed to make their charters in the same way as other people have to do. It is not essential that the people who have freezing works should have ships as well. It is not essential that because we grow wheat in Western Australia we should have ships to take it abroad.

The Colonial Secretary: Is that your policy?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Wait until the freezing works are within reasonable distance of completion, and then charter ships.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The real question is, the action having taken place, will this House condone it or bring about what will amount almost to a revolution in politics at this juncture. That is the question. I am entirely with Mr. Colbatch in the case he has made against the Government, but only differ from him in the censure that will meet the case and

suit the times. The Government must be censured, but it will be sufficient censure to cut down the vote by £55,000, condoning the action to this extent, that the money which has been paid shall be honoured. The debate in this House is the severest possible censure on the Government, and will so be understood by the people of the State. I shall vote to strike out the £200,000, and then I shall propose that the gap be filled by the insertion of £145,000, the amount already spent.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I propose to support the amendment for the deletion of the item on the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that the amount of £55,000 will not be required, and that the Government will not purchase any class of ship without Parliamentary sanction, and that, should it be necessary to have this sanction, Parliament will be called together to deal with it. I am not going to accept the responsibility of voting against a liability which has already been incurred.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Mr. Colebatch asked what would the farmers say if the Government built railways without rolling stock. My impression is that the farmers would say a good deal, and the Government who attempted to do that would hear sufficient about it, and they would have to give place to someone else. The vessel in question will be of little service to the majority of the ports on the North-West coast because I am given to understand it will not be possible for it to enter many of those ports on account of her draught. I am going to vote against the item, but I do not intend to support the proposal that the amount of £145,000 should be substituted. I shall vote against the insertion of that amount with the idea of retaining in the schedule the amount of £55,000. I understand the Government require £55,000 with which to put in hand the work of building a vessel to take the place of the "Western Australia." I am therefore inclined to support the proposal to vote £55,000. A smaller ves-

sel would have been of greater service to cater for the North-West.

Hon. E. McLARTY: I am satisfied the "Kangaroo" has cost double what it was worth to build, but the Government have entered into a contract and will have to pay for the boat. I have always opposed the idea of the Government entering into any of these enterprises. It will be gratifying if the "Kangaroo" returns a profit of £50,000 per annum and it will be the first time I have known any Government to make such a huge success of a State enterprise. If a boat like the "Kangaroo" were filled with frozen meat at Wyndham, it could not be disposed of in this market at 1½d. per lb. and, instead of helping the squatters as the Government propose to do, their action would have the effect of closing down all the stations in the North-West. If the "Kangaroo" got one full load, there would not be available for a considerable time many cattle which would be fit for freezing. I have always supported the construction of freezing works at Wyndham on the score of humanity. I have seen so much of the cruelty to animals that I prefer anything to bringing the cattle down alive. Day labour will be the ruin of Western Australia and indeed of Australia, and if there are 120 men engaged on day labour, the works are not likely to be completed for the next two or three years, and when they are the cost will be so great that, added to the high price paid for the "Kangaroo" the country will be involved in very heavy loss. The Government should not rush into big enterprises of this sort and spend huge sums of money without the authority of Parliament. However, the boat having been purchased, I shall vote for the sum of £145,000 to enable the Government to meet their obligations. Not a single reason has been advanced as to why the £50,000 should be voted, and the Government will not suffer if the vote is reduced by that amount. Many people have benefited considerably by the State Steamship Service. Personally I have not benefited by it. I believe in private enterprise and, if the Govern-

ment had not put on these boats, private companies would have catered for the trade.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the Committee consider it advisable to reduce the vote by £55,000 I shall have no objection. Even if we had authority, we would not raise the money now and there would be no likelihood of our raising it until Parliament meets again. If we gave an order for the second ship, it could not be completed till at least 12 months after the end of the war. Only a few months ago it seemed that the war was about to end but that prospect has passed away. I will accept a reduction in the item to £145,000.

Amendment (to strike out £200,000) put and passed.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I wish to move that £145,000 be inserted in lieu.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any other amendment?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Yes, I have an amendment to insert "£5,000."

The CHAIRMAN: Our Standing Orders do not deal with this matter, but it is Parliamentary practice to first take the amendment for the greater reduction, May at page 583 is fairly explicit on the point—

When two or more amendments upon the same grant are, at the same time, tendered to the committee, the chairman puts first the amendment which proposes the largest reduction, and then, if that be not accepted, the lesser amendments.

I shall first take the proposition of Mr. Colebatch.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That "£5,000" be inserted.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	13
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	7
				—

Ayes.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. H. P. Colebatch
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. J. Duffell
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. W. Patrick
	(Teller).

Noes.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. G. M. Sewell
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. J. F. Cullen
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That "£55,000" be inserted.

I understand from speeches which have been made that the Government require a vessel to take the place of the "Western Australia." We have been told that the Government have bought that vessel. Many of us have been in a dilemma as to whether the "Kangaroo" is to take the place of the "Western Australia." The Minister assures us that that is not so. Other speakers have assured us that it is impossible for the "Kangaroo" to replace the "Western Australia" on the coast because the "Kangaroo," in view of the tides, cannot get into all the North-Western ports. We have to recognise that the Government are under an obligation to carry various mails; and I feel it is necessary that the Government, having been encouraged in the policy of a State steamship service to be operated within State boundaries, should be enabled to purchase a steamer for that service. However, the policy of oversea shipping has never been endorsed by this Chamber, and therefore I do not consider we are breaking faith with the Government in reducing the amount of the item to £55,000, when we have the assurance of the Minister that the Government can resell the "Kangaroo" for the sum they have undertaken to pay for her, that the vessel is bringing a large cargo to the State, the freight on which will pay handsomely, and that the Government are in a position to give the "Kangaroo" a cargo of wheat to take away from here at a rate of freight which will show a handsome profit. Therefore there is a good

opportunity to return the boat to where she came from, to be resold after earning in the meantime those high freights. Thus the Government will get out of the transaction with the least possible loss. In connection with the Wyndham Freezing Works, the services of a boat will not be required for the next two years, during which period, I take it, if we allow the sum of £55,000, the Government will be able to build or purchase a vessel more suited to the trade than the "Kangaroo" is, particularly having regard to the great danger to large vessels from the extraordinary tides on the north-west coast. We have endorsed the State steamship service.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No; we have not.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We have voted money for the purchase of the "Kwinana" and the "Western Australia," and the Government have entered into contracts for various services to the North-West. To carry out those contracts, the Government must have boats. The oil steamer purchase, however, represents quite a new policy of open competition with the merchant services in other parts of the world. In that, the Government have no hope of proving successful. The risk is too great for this State to undertake. Therefore, I hope hon. members will agree to an amount of £55,000.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This is a most extraordinary amendment. If carried, it is simply a direction to the Government to order another ship as soon as possible. We have bought the Diesel ship, and if the Loan Bill is not passed we will have to pay for the ship out of revenue, and on top of that we shall have this amendment of Mr. Hamersley's, if carried here and agreed to in another place, as a direct instruction to order a new ship as soon as possible. In the event of Mr. Hamersley's amendment being carried, I certainly shall withdraw my promise that no action will be taken until Parliament has been approached. Most assuredly I never expected that Mr. Hamersley would be one of the first to contest the necessity for a thoroughly up-

to-date passenger ship for the North-West service.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I adhere to my original idea of voting £5,000. Ship-owners at present are not buying either steamers or Diesel ships. Shipping companies with head-quarters in Australia are not inclined to invest in further steamers at the present time, notwithstanding that numbers of their vessels have been taken for Imperial purposes. The best thing the Government can do is to accept the offer of Bethell, Gwyn & Co. mentioned by the Colonial Secretary.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Hon. members know the delicate position one sometimes gets into over affairs of this nature. I have now to think of Mr. Jenkins, who is not here. I gave him a pair, and I hope members of the Committee will assist me, so that Mr. Jenkins' interests may be protected. I hope I may claim a small indulgence.

The CHAIRMAN: This is in the nature of a personal explanation.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am in favour of letting this £145,000 go through, and Mr. Jenkins is opposed to it. I frankly admit I do not understand this amendment of £55,000. However, I have to face Mr. Jenkins to-morrow, and therefore I hope I shall have the assistance of hon. members. I should like to see this extraordinary amendment withdrawn. I am certainly not in favour of it, and I do not know what Mr. Jenkins would do with it.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The amendment is, perhaps, absolutely unique in this Chamber. I can quite understand an hon. member moving an amendment for the purpose of bringing into operation some service or creating some system, but this amendment amounts to an instruction to the Government to proceed with the extension of the service which they have in operation and to repudiate their liability for the vessel they have purchased. I cannot reconcile the two propositions. I feel that the Committee, without much discussion, might reject this amendment.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: In case this amendment goes to a division, I wish

to say that if Mr. Hamersley, without explanation, had moved the insertion of £10,000 or £20,000, I should have voted for his amendment. My idea is simply to vote for the insertion of the lowest possible amount, so as to compel the Government to accept Bethell, Gwyn & Co.'s offer. I do not want my support of Mr. Hamersley's amendment to be taken by the Government as a direction to buy another ship.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I move an amendment—

That "£145,000" be inserted.

Amendment passed, the schedule as amended agreed to.

Schedules 2, 3—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and a Message accordingly forwarded to the Assembly requesting them to make the amendment, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a Message from the Assembly.

STATE OF BUSINESS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [10.32]: I should like to state that there is a possibility of our closing down to-morrow. The Land Bill will be down at about 20 minutes past three and also the Bill dealing with the questions which were to have been submitted to the electors had there been a referendum.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Shall we be able to deal with that to-morrow at one sitting?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We could, if necessary, sit on Friday, and if the House required further time, could even adjourn until Tuesday. I am merely mentioning the possibility of our closing down to-morrow. The Assembly has finished its business and I was under the impression that this House would deal with the remaining Bills urgently.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 24th November, 1915.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Honorary Minister: Papers re special treatment awarded to George Hughes, prisoner, at Kalgoorlie (asked for by Hon. Frank Wilson).

BILL—COMMONWEALTH POWERS (WAR).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [3.4]: Listening to the introduction of the Bill by the Attorney General yesterday, I could not help being impressed by the belief that he was very half-hearted in the task he had undertaken. It seemed to me right through his remarks that it was almost a distasteful task. Rightly or wrongly he conveyed to me the impression that the Government did not care very much what happened to the Bill so long as they introduced it to Parliament, that they did their duty by that introduction, and there it ended so far as they were concerned. I wish to impress upon the Chamber that this is one of the most important questions we have been called upon to consider for a long time past, certainly during the present session. It is a matter that ought to be dealt with absolutely on non-party grounds. Every member, if he so desires, might well voice his opinion for or against, without any party bias, not only the introduction of legislation of this description into our Parliament, but also the merits of the proposals contained therein. I want, if