

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th June, 1931.

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

QUESTION—TRAFFIC, EXAMINATION OF DRIVERS.

Mr. RAPHAEL asked the Minister for Police: 1, Is it the policy of the Government to make taxi and bus drivers undergo a medical examination by the Government doctor? 2, Do the Government insist upon more than the initial examination? 3, Why do the Government insist on their doctor when the driver's doctor would be cheaper? 4, If the doctor is paid by the Government, does he charge the driver the full fee? 5, Are the Government aware that the average earnings of some of these men is £2 8s. per week?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE replied: 1, Yes, in accordance with Section 14, Sub-section 4, of the Traffic Act, when it appears to the licensing authority that such examination is necessary in the interests of the public. 2, Yes, if circumstances warrant the same. 3, So as to have a standard examination and for other obvious reasons. 4, The fee usually charged is 10s. 6d. 5, No.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, GRIFFIN COAL.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the bonus paid per ton by the Railway Department for the coal supplied from the Griffin mine? 2, Is it the intention of the Government to put into effect the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Collic coal in regard to the Griffin mine? 3, Do the Government intend to permit the Commissioner for Railways to

take such action as he may deem necessary in the interests of the department?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Nil. The price paid is in accordance with the ruling practice. 2, This matter is under consideration. 3, Answered by No. 2.

QUESTION—WHEAT BONUS.

Mr. PIESSE asked the Premier: 1, Was any definite conclusion arrived at by the Loan Council regarding the payment of a wheat bonus for 1930-31 season? 2, If so, when will such payment be available? 3, If not, what relief is proposed by the Federal Government to assist the farmer over the present period of low prices for primary products?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Federal Government has authority to raise the loan necessary to pay the bonus. 2, It is a Federal matter, but at present it is not possible to raise the amount. 3, The Federal Treasurer is doing all that is possible to raise a loan to assist farmers.

QUESTION—GOLD-MINING RESERVATIONS.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What is the total number of gold-mining reservations within the State? 2, Where are the districts situated? 3, By whom are the reservations held. 4, When do these concessions expire?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: No., District, Occupier, Date of Expiration.

325H—East Coolgardie; J. Mohr; 30/11/31.
501H—N. Coolgardie; H. Mandelstam;
30/6/31.

514H—Cue; H. Mandelstam; 30/6/31.

545H—Coolgardie (Tindals); H. Mandelstam; 30/6/31.

558H—Pilbara; K. C. Lysons; 31/5/31.

564H—N.E. Coolgardie; Mateo G.M. Co.; 30/6/31.

569H—Wiluna; C. A. deBernales; 30/6/31.

574H—Yilgarn; Western Machinery Co., Ltd.; 30/6/31.

575H—Murchison (Gabanintha); Western Machinery Co., Ltd.; 30/6/31.

577H—Lawlers; Westralian Mining and Industrial Development, Ltd.; 30/6/31.

- 578H—Mt. Malcolm; H. Urquhart; 30/6/31.
 593H—Mt. Monger; C. A. deBernaes; 30/6/31.
 598H—Pilbara (Nullagine); R. G. Prior; 30/6/31.
 601H—Pilbara (Salgash); Western Machinery Co., Ltd.; 31/10/31.
 602H—Lennonville; Coogan Chrysotile Asbestos Co.; 31/7/31.
 603H—Cue; H. Urquhart; 31/7/31.
 604H—Coolgardie—Bayley's; C. A. deBernaes; 31/7/31.
 605H—Sandstone; Westralian Mining and Industrial Development, Ltd.; 31/7/31.
 606H—Mt. Margaret (Beria); H. E. Vail; 30/6/31.
 612H—Kundip; C. A. deBernaes; 30/9/31.
 613H—Mt. Margaret (Augusta); Western Machinery Co., Ltd.; 31/10/31.
 614H—Broad Arrow; Western Machinery Co., Ltd.; 30/9/31.
 617H—N. Coolgardie (Riverina); A. J. Mellor; 30/6/31.
 618H—Yilgarn; A. V. Leggo; 31/10/31.
 623H—Bulong; J. H. Johnson; 31/7/31.
 628H—N. Coolgardie (Eucalyptus); H. Lilley; not yet granted.
 629H—Coolgardie—Red Hill; Lake Lefroy Gold Pty. Syn.; not yet granted.
 Total number 27.

QUESTION—WHITE CITY GARAGE.

Hon. M. F. TROY asked the Premier: 1, Which departmental authority controls the White City garage? 2, Has the garage been leased? 3, Were tenders called for the lease? 4, Who is the lessee? 5, What is the weekly rental charged, also what are the terms and conditions of the lease?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The State Gardens Board. 2, No. 3, Yes. 4 and 5, The garage has been let at a weekly rental of £5 per week to Mr. McDonald, Crawford Road, Inglewood.

QUESTION—LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AUDITING.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has consideration been given to the request for the appointment of ad-

ditional auditors in order that the books and accounts of local authorities can be audited at least once a year? 2, Will the Government amend the Road Districts Act to give effect to the scheme proposed by the department to the various boards of the State?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes, if possible this session.

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION,

Third Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mt. Marshall) [4.38]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	13

Majority for 6

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Parker
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Brown	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Davy	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wells
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. North
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Troy
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Millington	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Munie	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Panton	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Marshall
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Kennally
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Collier
Mr. J. M. Smith	Mr. Withers
Mr. J. L. Mann	Mr. Coverley
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Sampson	Mr. Corboy

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FIREARMS AND GUNS.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—STATE MANUFACTURES DESCRIPTION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4.42]: There is nothing particularly contentious about the Bill so far as I can see. It represents merely an attempt to bolster up Western Australian products and so far as it makes for the greater consumption of our home products, and provides a wider market, the measure must have the support of the House. The Bill provides that the Minister, by means of regulations, may prescribe forms of stamps or marks indicating that the goods were produced or manufactured in Western Australia, and further signs or marks, which may be used in conjunction with the other marks, to indicate that the goods conform to a prescribed grade or standard of quality. That precaution will be useful to a person who desires to buy locally produced goods, and the fact that the quality will be indicated must prove of advantage. If the legislation serves to create a demand for our goods, and they can be provided of a high standard quality, this move should serve a useful purpose. The stamping of goods will be purely voluntary and there will be no compulsion exercised. If a person desires to put forward his goods for sale as Western Australian produce, he can take advantage of the legislation. If he does not desire to do so, he need not. I do not know that that phase has much value attached to it. If it has, so much the better. The consumption of Western Australian goods and the expansion of our home trade in local products depends largely upon the preference of the consumer. If he desires to secure Western Australian goods, he can buy them at any time. If Western Australians are imbued with the spirit of patriotism, they will lend ready support to the objective sought to be achieved by the Bill. I know that the Minister is very keen to boost Western Australian goods and I hope that the recent propaganda will have good results. The fact remains that if our goods are the best on the market, they will command preference from consumers over other goods on the market. The popularity of our goods depends upon their quality, and if people mark their goods as being of a certain standard and they are not up to

that standard, I hope the Minister will avail himself of the powers under this measure to deal with such people. There is a tendency to set up articles as being of a certain standard and sell something of an entirely different quality, but it is impossible to check that sort of thing unless there is power to penalise offenders. I hope the measure will not be made the means of increasing the cost of administration. That is the danger I see in it. The measure will be administered by the Chief Inspector of Factories, and if it is largely availed of by producers and manufacturers, it may mean a heavy increase in the cost of administration. The Bill proposes to confer upon inspectors considerable power. They may go in and demand and inspect books and make a hundred and one inquiries. If the time of the inspectors is to be occupied in work of this kind we shall require many more inspectors. Then what will happen in the fullness of time is that the staff of the department will be increased. There is always a risk of getting as the head of the department a gentleman desirous of magnifying his own position. In his report he will represent the vastness of the work being done, and will be able to insist upon getting a larger staff, thus exalting his own position and getting the Public Service Commissioner to agree to its carrying a higher salary. That sort of thing has occurred in the past. I can mention a case in point. An official was always representing to me the necessity for appointing additional inspectors and emphasising the importance of his own work. He also magnified the importance of his own department in reports submitted to the House. When I made inquiries I found that much of the work was being duplicated. I was shown dozens of files, and it was represented to me that the revenue received by the department almost covered the cost of inspection. That revenue, however, was really an impost on industry. The inspection of sewing machines driven by electricity was represented as being of the greatest possible importance. Probably there were 1,000 such inspections a year, and 20 of them could have been made in a day. That department was a very expensive one, and there has grown up within it a most unfair system which is a great impost on the people. The object of it was to glorify the importance of the head of the department. That is the danger I see in this measure, and we cannot

afford to increase the cost of administration. Reference is often made to the difference between the price the producer gets for his commodity and the price the consumer has to pay for it. The producer gets very little, and yet by the time the commodity reaches the consumer, there is a considerable increase. All inspections have the effect of loading the consumer with heavier costs. Inquiries are being made into the difficulties besetting the producers of this country. In the city the baker is asked why he cannot supply bread more cheaply when wheat is so cheap. His reply is, "Look at the rent and interest I have to pay and the load of costs I have to carry." We know that interest costs and rents have increased. Legislation of this kind sounds very nice, but it often has the effect of merely creating mischief. Having had some experience of what inspectors do, I, when Minister, adopted the most undignified course of going out and making inquiries for myself. The inspector who accompanied me told me nothing; I knew that he had been sent to mislead me. Many people had complained of the way in which industry was being burdened by inspection, and I found how utterly ridiculous the whole business was. Consequently I regard this measure as dangerous unless it be properly controlled. I wish it success and I hope it will have the effect of boosting Western Australian industries. I hope it will mean that people will be able to buy commodities grown and manufactured within the State, that there will be an expansion of trade, and that people will give preference to local commodities, but I hope there will be no accompanying increases of inspectorial staffs or costs. Such increases are not likely to be suggested at present but, when times improve, there will be a temptation for somebody to say, "Here is my chance; I shall get more inspectors, typists and clerks, and then the importance of my position will enable me to demand increased salary." That is the only objection I have to the Bill. I hope the Minister will see that, during his term of office, the community is not further burdened by imposts arising out of such legislation.

MR. MILLINGTON (Mt. Hawthorn) [4.53]: I have pleasure in supporting the Bill, regarding it as I do as a small part of a general plan that is acceptable to me. The Bill will have the effect of making it

possible to identify Western Australian products and manufactures. If it stopped at that, the measure would not be of much use. I hope the people will not think that, having identified Western Australian goods by special stamp, they have fulfilled their duty and done something towards encouraging industry. I think people are too much disposed to rely upon catch words and phrases. They seem to be satisfied by merely saying, "We support Western Australian goods; we believe this State should be self-contained," and leave it at that. It is surprising how easily many people relieve themselves of their responsibilities. They seem to think that their support of local industries is optional, and that if it suits them to buy other than Western Australian goods, they are quite entitled to do so. When speaking to some people a little while ago on this subject, one man took exception to the idea of giving preference to local goods. He said he would buy where he chose. He appeared to think that the matter of preference to local goods did not affect him. A week later, owing to the decline of trade generally, he was on the list of men rationed one week in ten, so he was affected. He seemed to think that he was in a permanent job and was all right, but the job was not as permanent as he thought. It seems to me that everybody in the State in some way is vitally interested in the manner in which our industries are conducted and supported. There appears to be a disposition by people to assume that, despite the civilisation of which we boast, this State is fitted to be only a primary producing State. It is to be a sheep-walk, and a country of agriculture, horticulture and dairying. If that is the height of our ambition, we shall, instead of taking our place amongst the other States of the Commonwealth, always be a backward State. Our population will not increase as we are entitled to expect it to increase. Although we speak of Western Australia as being in the infancy of development, we should not be satisfied to be as we were 50 years ago. We should take it upon ourselves to ensure that this State is at least the equal of the Eastern States, and that, by using the natural facilities offered, it is developed not only in respect of primary production but also secondary industries. It should be our ambition to supply to the utmost the needs of our own people. In this State we have a standard of living which we hope to make better than that of

any other country. If we depend upon other people by saying that we cannot manufacture our requirements and supply our own needs, we no longer determine our standard of living but leave it to someone else to decide for us. If we are going to work out our salvation, we shall have to discover how to do this work successfully for ourselves. The Bill will certainly help those producers and manufacturers who are endeavouring to popularise Western Australian raised and made goods. I know of no people more worthy of encouragement. We must overcome the prejudice against goods of local origin. The prejudice should be in favour of them. In times past people were disposed to view local products as the second best. While that view prevails we are not going to make much headway. If our own people take the view that imported goods from the Eastern States or overseas are better than our own, naturally our industries that should flourish will languish. I am satisfied that the Minister who has introduced this Bill is enthusiastic in respect to the whole scheme, and this part of it. It will certainly enable those who do sincerely desire to support Western Australian goods, and in plain language to increase the extent of our industries, to do so. The remainder of the measure merely provides the machinery for putting into operation the stamping of goods, and imposing penalties for those who infringe the provisions of the Act. I presume the Minister has given consideration to the constitutional aspect, and that we shall have power to enforce the law.

The Minister for Industries: Quite so.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Although it may be opposed to the Constitution, the fact remains that the penalties would be imposed upon those who fraudulently represented goods to have been made in Western Australia, when they were actually manufactured outside the State. There should be no difficulty in enforcing the measure. I notice too, that the stamping of goods will not be compulsory. If this Bill is to have the effect we desire, it will mean that, in addition to placing this law upon the statute-book, there will be need for extensive propaganda with a view to making this a general practice. There should be some striking design for the stamp, so that everywhere we shall see it displayed, and have it recognised as a fashion, that these goods should be prominently shown, and stamped in such a manner as to arouse the attention of buyers. I be-

lieve this will complete the scheme already in operation. There is, however, need to intensify the campaign that is being carried on. In times past people could please themselves. If we are to extend and do more than hold our own, we should look upon it as a vital matter to support our own industries. I do not know what other measure the Minister proposes to bring down, but certainly there should be a campaign throughout the State, not a spasmodic one but a continuous one, with a view to seeing that the general principle of using Western Australian products and manufactured goods is popularised. I do not know whether, under this measure, the question of the manner in which our industries should be conducted can be discussed. We are not going to solve the problem by merely saying we are going to identify local goods, as such. It means we will have to manufacture goods that are worthy of identification.

The Attorney General: Otherwise the stamping might act in the opposite way.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes. I hope special attention will be given to those industries that we desire to develop. There should be an inventory of all the goods that are brought into Western Australia. Expert committees and those interested in the various trades and callings should examine the lists, and we would then discover whether those goods could be successfully produced and manufactured in this State. If that is so, we would then want to know why we were continually employing people in the Eastern States and in other parts of the world to do work we were able to do ourselves. We have to get down to that. People ought to be impressed with the idea that there is no other way in which our industries can be revived, and our people employed. I have an idea that in good times we got into a careless and lackadaisical style when it did not matter to us what we bought. People were disposed to buy where they chose and to ignore local interests. It will have to be impressed upon them that that time has gone by. It is easy to determine that no one cares so much about Western Australia and its industries as we do. The question of the purchase of outside goods will have to be taken up not only by the traders, but by the public. When that question is controlled, the principle embodied in the Bill will enable effect to be given to it. That is as far as it goes. The

question of the conduct of our industries is a matter of great importance. Attention should be continually called to the condition of our industries and the reason why we have not advanced as a manufacturing State, to the same extent as we have advanced as a State of primary production. We did not arrive at this measure of success as a primary-producing State in any other way than as a result of employing new and better methods in our primary industries, in respect to stock-raising, agriculture, horticulture, and dairying. Having reached the stage when we are justly proud of our primary industries, we should want to know why our people cannot be equally successful with regard to manufactured goods. It is idle to say that Western Australia is suited only for the production of primary products. I cannot see why we should be labelled as a backward people, incapable of manufacturing those requirements that are necessary for our social existence. I do not admit that we are a backward or a second-rate people, or are incapable of developing the other industries just as we have developed our primary ones.

The Premier: There are many industries which could be successfully established, as we have the raw materials, requisite for them.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Other countries have been successful in their manufacturing methods by reason of their advanced organisation and rationalisation. Every nation seeks to be self-contained. If those countries apply the same methods to primary production we may be unable to compete with them in our primary production. I see no reason why they cannot be as successful in respect to primary industries as we are. If that were so it would mean that the industries on which we rely would be subject to serious competition. I know of no other way to ensure advancement than to make the attempt to do the job ourselves. Why should we not take our primary products, and, instead of exporting them overseas to superior people, manufacture them into the state, the most valuable state, when we can make use of them for our own needs? If there is one feature of our industries that could be emphasised, it is that. Instead of its being generally understood that Western Australia is suited only for primary produc-

tion, we should alter our doctrine to fall into line with the 20th century, instead of being prepared to step back to the last century. We should adopt the slogan that in view of all the facilities we possess in respect to diversity of climate, soil and rainfall and general suitability of conditions, we are going to develop everything we have to the utmost extent and make this country self-contained. There has been a disposition to assume that Western Australian products are only second-best. When I arrived in Western Australia, local flour was on the market together with South Australian flour. The Western Australian flour was undoubtedly inferior to the imported article. At that time we had not the variety of wheats suitable to the manufacture of the best quality of flour, and the mills were not as up to date as those in the other States. Local flour sold at between 6d. and 1s. per 50 lbs. less than the Eastern States flour. We were not satisfied with that, and by the application of modern methods, we have been able to produce a flour that is equal to, if not superior to, any that could be imported. Just as we have advanced in our methods of primary production, right round, we must now turn our attention to advancing in our manufacturing industries. This is just as important a matter to the primary producer as it is to the city dweller and to those already engaged in secondary industries. We have to popularise the use of Western Australian products. It is not long since it was the usual thing to assume and advertise that Western Australian butter was inferior to that manufactured in the Eastern States. We have lived down that prejudice, not merely by declaiming and advertising the fact, but owing to Western Australian butter having improved in quality out of all knowledge. It is, therefore, not a question of advertising but of proficiency and efficiency. Independent of the marking of goods as Western Australian, what ought to be done is to see that these goods are worthy to be branded as Western Australian.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Mr. MILLINGTON: There is a disposition to assume that industry is not a question of public interest, but has to be conducted entirely by those private interests that are controlling it. Members will recall that the Albany Woollen Mills were

established here some years ago. For some time there was a good deal of boosting of the cloth produced there. Although I see the member for Albany here, and although he wonders, as we all wonder, why it is that the cloth manufactured in Western Australia is not more generally used, I feel bound to say that I do not think this is due to its not having been sufficiently advertised, but rather to the fact that the Albany Woollen Mills are up against woollen mills in the Eastern States and other parts of the world. The Albany machinery was put in years ago, and the mills are in competition with the most up-to-date plant in existence. I believe that since its installation the Albany machinery has not been altered, whereas other plants are being continually re-modelled and revised.

The Premier: That is the trouble.

Mr. MILLINGTON: When in Albany I discussed this matter with the manager in the presence of the member for Albany for a couple of hours. Like many other people, I endeavoured to patronise the local product; but it must be admitted that up to the present the Albany mills have not produced the quality of cloth that is available from other sources of supply. I do not pose as an expert, but I do know that the Albany cloth, where it has been used, generally does not give satisfaction. One may boost as much as one likes, but until the quality of the product is brought to a higher standard, advertising will not make people buy the cloth. I am aware that the methods by which the sales of the Albany cloth are conducted could be considerably improved upon; but even if that difficulty were overcome, the machinery at Albany, according to the advice I have, will not produce the best quality of cloth; and of course in Western Australia the best quality is demanded. At the time of which I am speaking, it was not the price that was the difficulty. One could get cloth for a suit for from £2 2s. to £2 10s., and at that time tailors were charging £5 to £5 10s. to make up the material. Such a suit would not have been expensive, and any man willing to patronise Western Australian products would have been prepared to give an extra £1 for the cloth. Even then, the cost would not be greater than that of a suit of imported cloth. But the quality was not there. Some of the tailors with whom I discussed the matter explained to me that

the Albany cloth was not woven closely enough. I heard a member of this House say that he had a suit of Albany cloth, and that it picked up everything but winners. The difficulty is that the Albany mills are competing against manufacturers who are continually bringing their plant up to date, and who do provide the quality required. One can understand that in those circumstances more than patriotism is needed to get Western Australian cloth used to the extent that it should be. Something more than the label "Albany woollen cloth" is needed. Since the Government are interested, since many people and associations are also interested, since we are all interested to enable Western Australia to manufacture the cloth that its citizens require, this becomes a public matter, and proper inquiries should be made. Those who possess technical knowledge should go into the whole question, to see whether Albany cannot produce cloth that will meet with the approval of the average Western Australian user. I merely use the Albany cloth as an instance. I have an idea that a similar state of things obtains in some of our other secondary industries. Our aim should be not only to identify our products, but to put into effect the second proposal of the measure and establish grades. Then we should see that Western Australian products are of such grades as would attract purchasers and make the industries permanent. It is not sufficient to sell an article once. The grade must be such as will commend itself to people, so that they will make a habit of using Western Australian products. Then there will be permanency in our secondary industries. I look upon the preference that is preached as something in the nature of the influence that tariffs were supposed to exercise on Australian industries. Tariffs were supposed to help young industries along until they were in a position to compete with outside sources of supply. All we can expect from identifying our products is that people will give them a trial. Having reached that stage, we must produce the quality that will enable our people to use them permanently. Then Western Australia will be able to support a population worthy of its size and its possibilities, and then the primary producer will have in Western Australia the best of markets—the local market. We shall then have the benefit of

increased prosperity and of the wider market represented by people using local products. So it seems to me that if, in addition to patriotism, we can inspire our secondary industries with greater efficiency, those two things together will certainly make for progress. Up to date, I fear, we have been remiss in both directions. Instead of a prejudice in favour, there is a prejudice against the local product. That must be overcome. Further, we should determine to be as self-sustaining as are the Eastern States, where conditions are similar to those here. Instead of making up our minds to do that, we have in the past dropped our arms and assumed that we cannot do as well as the Eastern States can. It was said, "The Eastern States have a start of us," and so forth. To some extent that is true, but the handicap can be overcome if genuine and general preference is given to our products until the manufactures are established. The matter is vital to the people of Western Australia, and I think we should be patriotic enough to adopt that course. I admit that I have diverged from the mere question of identification and of establishing grades for Western Australian products. However, I do not know of any question which deserves to be more widely advertised than this question of our industries. It is a matter that is vital to the people of the State. We spend much time on legislation of measurably less importance than this. I trust that the Minister for Industries will endeavour to organise the forces from which expert and technical advice can be obtained. I know the hon. gentleman has already established organisations with that object in view. I hope the policy will be continued. There should be an intensive campaign throughout Western Australia. All organisations should be utilised, and an endeavour made to get them to put their full strength into this movement. If that is done, this measure is welcome as part of a general plan. That general plan, I consider, can be operated and should be operated. The Government, as the leaders of the State for the time being, should not only give the plan their benediction, but should also do the necessary organising work and bring together all the forces that will make for the betterment of the conduct of industry in this State.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.25]: I desire to congratulate the Minister on having brought down this Bill, although it would

unfortunately appear that the Agricultural Products Act passed in 1929 is not proving as effective as was hoped, or is not being utilised as was expected. Everyone who knows the Minister for Industries is aware that he is in earnest and consistent as regards the use of Western Australian products. For instance, he never drinks imported whisky, he always smokes Western Australian tobacco, he wears Albany tweeds and woollens; and those things are indications of that sincerity which is characteristic of him. I was sorry to hear some remarks made by the ex-Minister for Agriculture, because we had hoped that the measure introduced by him, the Agricultural Products Act, would prove far more useful than has been the case. Actually we lack standardisation laws so far as fruit is concerned. Such laws exist in other countries where fruit is of the same relative importance as in Western Australia. Personally I would have been pleased if the Agricultural Products Act had been used to greater effect. As a matter of fact, the Act was passed after much congratulation, and the final result is largely what it was before the measure was introduced.

The Minister for Industries: That measure has been used in the metropolitan markets.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yet there have been complaints as to eggs sold in Perth and elsewhere—pullet eggs being mixed with hen eggs and sold together. The pullet eggs are all right, but they are light. Still, there are regulations on the subject, and I hope they are now being enforced. I repeat, there has been occasion for complaint. The same remarks apply to fruit. Only a few days ago we had the opportunity of noticing some fruit which had been purchased by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale). Undoubtedly the condition of that fruit indicated that we should have standardisation laws, or that a regulation should be framed under the Agricultural Products Act to prevent such bad fruit being sold. While I am pleased at the introduction of this Bill, I wish to warn the Minister as to the policing of it. Scrutiny and watchfulness will be needed. It will be a great pity if the opportunity for the marketing and sale of Western Australian products is given without quality being insisted upon rigorously.

The Minister for Industries: That will largely be a matter to be attended to by the manufacturers themselves.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is quite possible that, unless great care is taken, Western Australian products may be injured as the result of the passing of this measure. The fact that in certain cases products are to be stamped will, I hope, mean that quality will be insisted upon. Anyone found improperly using the marks provided by the Bill should be dealt with severely. I hope that the penalty included in the measure will be exacted, and that there will be no disregard of the matter of quality. The Bill gives certain powers to the Chief Inspector of Factories. I propose in Committee to put up an amendment including inspectors under the Plant Diseases Act, 1914. No doubt the Minister for Industries will agree with me as to the desirableness of such an amendment, since the Bill covers both primary and secondary industries. With the Minister, I am anxious to encourage Western Australian products. Members of the House can set an example. Many of them do religiously use Western Australian products, but others again disregard the importance of example. If we want Western Australia to advance, we must act up to the sentiments we voice. I will support the Bill, and I am pleased it has been brought down. My one fear is that it will not be zealously guarded, and so an injury may possibly be done.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Industries in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Inspectors:

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That after "1920" in line 3 the words "and inspectors under the Plant Diseases Act, 1914" be inserted.

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

Clause 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Powers of Inspectors:

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to stand as paragraph (g):—"(g) An inspector acting

under the provisions of this Act shall if and when called upon produce satisfactory evidence of his appointment as such."

There should be such a provision in this Act, as in other Acts.

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

Clauses 12 to 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Regulations:

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Will the Minister tell us what reason there is for the charging of fees?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES: Power is here taken to prescribe fees merely because it may be found necessary to do so. At present I am not aware of any reason for the charging of fees.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister might just as well have brought down a Bill empowering him by regulation to do anything he wishes. Here we have eight heads, under each of which regulations may be framed.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

PAPERS—PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERSHIP, APPOINTMENT.

Debate resumed from the 27th May, on the following motion by Mr. Panton:—

That all papers relating to the applications for appointment as Public Service Commissioner be laid upon the Table of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. G. Latham—York) [5.38]: It is admitted that the appointment of Public Service Commissioner is an important one, and so, of course, it may cause some concern to members as to who the appointee should be. The hon. member, in moving the motion, said it was not out of mere curiosity that he was asking for the papers, neither was it with any desire to start upon a heresy hunt. I would not for a moment suggest that he would do anything of the sort. What he informed the House he desired to do, was to decide for himself whether the best applicant had been appointed to the position. It has been the custom for the Government to make such appointments, and of course the Government are answerable to the House. I do not know that ever before has the appointment of a Public Service Commis-

sioner been questioned by the House. However, I am not quarrelling with the hon. member over that, for he is perfectly within his rights in questioning the appointment. It is admitted that there was quite a number of applicants for the position. I think the point that is interesting the member for Leederville is whether a fair deal was given to the returned-soldier applicants, and whether the Government's policy of preference to soldiers was carried out in the making of the appointment. But I warn returned-soldier members of the House that there is nothing in the motion dealing with returned soldiers. It is purely an inquisitorial motion—nothing else, just for the purpose of getting hold of the papers with a view to seeing who applied for the position, and whether the best of the applicants was appointed. Again, it is a question for determination whether the hon. member is better qualified to pass judgment than are the Government. Before I finish I will satisfy even the hon. member that the appointment made was the right one, and that no good purpose would be served by giving to the public the names of the applicants. In reply to a question by the hon. member, I informed him that the qualifications that were considered necessary were, the fullest knowledge of the Public Service and of the financial position of the State, together with administrative ability. I might now add temperament—the man who temperamentally was most capable of carrying out the duties of the office. Let me recapitulate the qualifications of the new Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. Pantou: Why not tell us the qualifications of all the applicants?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member may know more about the others than I do. However, I will recount Mr. Simpson's qualifications. He has been 34 years in the service of the State; he has filled every position in the accounting branch, from junior clerk to Under Treasurer, so he ought to know everything about the finances of the State and their control. He has served in the Public Works Department, the Railway Department, the Stores Department, the Lands Department, the Chief Secretary's Department, the Treasurer's Department, and the Agricultural Bank. I do not think there is any other officer in the State who has had so wide an experience of the Public Service.

Mr. Marshall: With all those qualifications he should make a good Under Treasurer.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I shall deal with that. During that period he reorganised and managed the Industries Assistance Board in 1915; he was business manager of hospitals and other institutions, and he was a member of the Disabilities Royal Commission, a very important job which he carried out when my colleague, the Chief Secretary, presented the case for Western Australia. Mr. Simpson was appointed by the then Government because of his qualifications. He has represented the State at many Loan Council meetings and he has served on the Workers' Homes Board, the Fremantle Harbour Trust, the Metropolitan Market Trust and the Tender Board. In his position as Under-Treasurer, he had access to every branch of the service. I dare say the Treasurer will regret that Mr. Simpson's services will not be immediately available to him, but although he has taken over the Public Service Commissionership, his services will still be available to the Treasurer at any time he likes to call for them. That is a very important matter. He is housed in the same building. It would not be peculiar to this State if a Public Service Commissioner attended a Loan Council meeting. It has been done by Public Service Commissioners of other States when their expert advice was required by Ministers attending the Loan Council.

Hon. A. McCallum: He will be out of touch with the operations of the Treasury.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He will not be as closely in touch with Treasury operations as before, but he will not be out of touch with them. For quite a long time during the period of reorganising Australian finance, Mr. Simpson's services will be availed of. I am quite sure of that. During that period he will be available to assist the Under-Treasurer, whoever may be appointed to that position, and will have charge of the Public Service, which is very important from the financial standpoint.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You are not going to lower the status of the Under-Treasurer's job, are you?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not inferring that.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You say he will always be available.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He will be available for consultation, which is a very wise arrangement. It does not matter

how great an authority a man might be on finance, consultation with others is always useful.

Mr. Angelo: Would it not be better to defer his taking over the Public Service Commissionership for six months?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He took over the new position yesterday, so it is too late to suggest that. I have dealt with Mr. Simpson's qualifications and mentioned the loss he will be to the Treasury. That loss, however, will be minimised by the fact that he may be called in at any time for consultation. This is not merely a question of appointing the head of a department; it is a matter of selecting a man who knows how to control the finances of the State. If ever it was essential that a man being appointed to a responsible position should have a knowledge of finance, so that in spending the people's money full value could be obtained for it, that time is now. I believe that Mr. Simpson, with his wide knowledge, will be able to go from department to department and determine almost at a glance whether that principle is being adhered to. I think I have satisfied the House that the best appointment has been made from that standpoint. I am not going to say that there were not other applicants who possessed very good qualifications. Not only men in the service but many men engaged in business outside applied for the position, but I candidly say that, of those who applied, none possessed the high qualifications and the knowledge of the service that Mr. Simpson possessed. In these days we cannot afford to take any man on chance. The appointment is for seven years. We could not run the risk of putting into the position a man who required to be educated for it. The State cannot afford to take any risks of that kind.

Hon. A. McCallum: You had a man who had acted in the position and had assisted with the reclassification.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Who was that?

Hon. A. McCallum: Mr. Munt.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know whether Mr. Munt was an applicant.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You do know.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member evidently knows. Even if he was an applicant, his qualifications did not surpass those of Mr. Simpson and did not compare with them.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Oh, oh!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Munt has not had Treasury experience and that is a very important consideration.

Hon. A. McCallum: Mr. Simpson has not had experience in the Public Service Commissioner's office and Mr. Munt has.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but Mr. Simpson has a thorough knowledge of the service generally. The positions he has held have enabled him to gain a wider and better knowledge than a man who for a time had been in the Public Service Commissioner's office.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why make comparisons?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We selected a man who will not have reached the retiring age when his seven years' appointment terminates, whereas I think Mr. Munt would have reached the retiring age of 65 before the seven years had expired. I think he is 62 years of age.

Hon. A. McCallum: Then he carries his age well.

Mr. Pantou: No, he is about 58.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think that fact also might have influenced the Government in appointing Mr. Simpson. Taking the two men, and they are both highly qualified men, I think even the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will agree that, of the two, Mr. Simpson is the better one for the post.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What is the age of the retiring Public Service Commissioner?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Sixty-three. Members are aware that at one time we attempted to fix an age limit.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You referred to the retiring age.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I was referring to the general retiring age for the service, which is 65.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You were referring to the retiring age of the Public Service Commissioner.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the retiring age for the service generally. One of the arguments advanced by correspondents to the Press was that it would have been unfair to appoint the other man because he would have passed the recognised retiring age before his term expired.

Mr. Raphael: You made special provision in legislation for judges. Why not in this instance?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not talking about judges. There is no retiring age for a judge.

Mr. Raphael: There is for a magistrate.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That does not enter into this question. Mr. Simpson will not have reached the age of 65 when his seven years' term expires, and that is a good point in his favour. Probably we could not go into the qualifications of every applicant for the position. Of many of those about whom the hon. member is more concerned, we did not have the same knowledge as we had of Mr. Simpson. As I have already pointed out, this is not a time to take risks, and we could not take a risk in making a seven years' appointment. Only a few nights ago members stressed how wrong it would be to give a man a seven years' appointment when there was a risk of his making a mistake in the first year.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You mean to say there is only one man within the State qualified to occupy that position?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I said nothing of the sort; what I said was that we had selected the man with the highest qualifications. That was the opinion of the Government, and surely the Government are entitled to act on their opinion. The Government may have made some mistakes, but I assure the House that we did not make a mistake in appointing Mr. Simpson. The member for Leederville has selected a very bad case if he wishes to challenge the Government on the policy of preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. Panton: In every appointment made up to date, we have not had a good case, according to you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is a bad one, anyhow. The Public Service Commissioner is in a position to save the State a lot of money, and because of this and Mr. Simpson's knowledge of finance, we could not afford to take any risks in making the appointment.

Mr. Raphael: Could you afford to take a risk with such an appointment at any time?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Sometimes a risk might be taken. The member for Leederville said it was difficult to under-

stand why Mr. Simpson had been appointed. After what I have said, there should be no question of difficulty. The Government do stand for preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. Raphael: When it suits them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member ought not to say too much about that. I myself am a returned soldier, and I know that the returned soldiers do not desire to be mendicants to the Government or to anyone else. Neither do they ask for a monopoly, so far as I know. The Government do not stand for a monopoly, not even in favour of returned soldiers, but all things being equal, preference is given to returned soldiers so far as possible. At present we are experiencing conditions that make it very difficult to carry out a policy of that kind in every detail. I do not think there is a returned soldier in this House who would say that we should not give preference to a married man with a wife and family over a returned soldier who was single. Yet that would not be carrying out the policy in its entirety. In matters of this kind we must exercise a grain of common sense. I am sure the returned soldiers do not desire a monopoly, and it would be impossible to grant it even if they desired it. The State could not afford to do it. The Returned Soldiers' League are making a noise at the moment because a certain very worthy gentleman was not appointed to the position, a gentleman who is not in the service.

Mr. Panton: That is not correct. They are not making a noise about that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say definitely that they approached me about it. At the present time we cannot afford to bring into the service men whom we can do without. If we brought a man into the service, we should have to get rid of somebody else, and that would not be fair.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: The aim should be to get the best man for the position.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I quite agree, and I say definitely that we have got him. If the hon. member and his colleagues had been in office, I think they would have done precisely what we have done, and they would have been warranted in doing it.

Mr. Panton: I have my doubts.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not. The Labour Government showed wisdom in the appointments they made, and

I have no doubt they would have selected the same gentleman for the position. If the hon. member has based his motion solely on the question of preference to returned soldiers, he should have chosen a better case.

Mr. Panton: As you have been saying, that is a matter of opinion.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course it is. There are many other instances that the hon. member might have mentioned in the House.

Mr. Panton: I have heard of quite a lot in the last 12 months.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member had to choose between preference to unionists and preference to returned soldiers, I do not know what he would do.

Mr. Panton: I would do as my party do—give preference to unionists.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Fortunately, we are not bound in that way.

Mr. Panton: But you quote all over the place preference to returned soldiers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And we attempt to carry out that policy so far as is possible.

Mr. Panton: You have not gone very far.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Existing conditions do not permit of its being carried out in its entirety. I have illustrated that by saying that if there were a married man who was not a returned soldier and a single man who was a returned soldier seeking a position, I think the hon. member would suggest giving preference to the married man. The Government do not desire to lay the papers on the Table of the House. There were 35 applicants. Many of them would never have applied for the position if they had thought their applications would be made public. It would be grossly unfair to do this. Men outside the service may have been associated with business houses. They may not have advised their principals that they were applying for the position. If their names were made public, it would be unfair to them. If their employers know that they were applicants, they might think they were dissatisfied with their positions and were anxious to get out of that employment as quickly as they could, and were not thinking of the business in which they were engaged, but were desirous of better-

ing themselves. Furthermore, they might not get the advancement their principals had in mind for them if it was known that they were anxious to leave their employment. If the name of everyone who applies for some high position in the service is made public, the choice of the Government will be very limited in the future. We must remember that aspect of the situation. When we invite applications for a high position, we want the most highly qualified men available to apply for it. They do apply with the full knowledge that their applications will not be made public. When only one man can be selected, there must be dissatisfied people amongst the others whose applications are rejected. I hope the hon. member will bear that in mind when seeking to have the papers laid upon the Table. I know that some of these gentlemen would not have applied for the position if they thought that the information would be given to the public. It is most unusual to make these things public, and the hon. member knows it. Many people apply for a position because they have faith in those who are receiving the applications. They know their names will not be divulged. If a man is appointed, the public can know all about it, but a person does not want it bandied about that he has been unsuccessful because his qualifications have not been as good as those of the person appointed.

Mr. Panton: The dogs are barking the 35 names. The man in the street knows them all.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know who they are. I am a member of the Cabinet which made the appointment, but I could not tell the House the names of more than six of those who applied for the position.

Mr. Panton: Everyone knows them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The man in the street is often wrong. I do not think the hon. member goes to the man in the street when he wants information. He generally desires to get it from some reliable source, and that is why he has moved the motion in the House.

Mr. Corboy: We will find out whether the man in the street is right when we get the papers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member wants the papers, then, because he desires to be inquisitive about the matter.

Mr. Corboy: You know that is not true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say that is so. The hon. member wants to be able to ascertain whether the man in the street is right or not.

Mr. Corboy: You know that is not the reason why the papers have been asked for.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know that the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton) had not that idea in mind when he originally moved for the papers, but behind his speech was something that did not appear in his motion. He wanted to find out whether we were carrying out our policy of preference to returned soldiers. If I were a returned soldier on the floor of this House, I would not vote for the motion because it does not convey what is desired.

Mr. Panton: I have not asked anyone to vote for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know there have been some meetings about it.

Mr. Panton: I was invited to a meeting.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So was I, but I refused to go. Circular letters were sent out to the country districts. There are certain things which a Minister of the Crown may not do.

Mr. Panton: You mean, attend a meeting?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are not going to be carpeted by members of the executive of the R.S.L.

Mr. Panton: No one was put on the carpet.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They seem to have paid a lot of attention to the matter, much more attention than is usually paid to other positions which have been filled by other than returned soldiers.

The Minister for Railways: You did not kick up a row when the present Commissioner of Railways was appointed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why did not the hon. member raise the question when the acting Chief Justice was appointed? There is a returned soldier on the judiciary.

Mr. Corboy: As a matter of fact, he should have been the one appointed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why did not the hon. member bring up that case?

Mr. Corboy: No appointment has yet been made.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: An acting Chief Justice has been appointed.

Mr. Corboy: But not a permanent Chief Justice.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The House would have complained if the junior member of the Bench had been appointed when there is a senior member who is doing good service.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You should stick to the point that the best man is the man for the job. You are wandering all over the place.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Why did not the hon. member select some other instance? He has made out a very bad case for his motion? I have looked through his speech. It seems to me that the only reason why he is asking for these papers is to find out whether we were carrying out our policy of preference to returned soldiers. He emphasised that in more than one case. There is nothing wrong in that, but it would have been better if he had declared that in respect of this appointment such preference had not been shown. In his speech he indicated that preference to returned soldiers was the matter he was considering. There are other positions he might have quoted, wherein he could have made out a better case.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Tell us what they are.

Mr. Corboy: Give us a chance.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not going to tell the hon. member. Let him ask the man in the street.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The motion before the Chair deals with the appointment of the Public Service Commissioner.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In another part of his speech the hon. member said that the more important position was that of Under Treasurer.

Mr. Corboy: Do you not think it is?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are both important positions. I believe that of the two the post of Public Service Commissioner is the more important. The Assistant Under Treasurer will be able to do his job just as well as his predecessor, but the combination of a knowledge of the Treasury with a knowledge of the service, makes the new Public Service Commissioner an ideal man for the position. I cannot help emphasising the fact that the right man has been appointed as Public Service Commissioner.

Mr. Panton: That is a matter for argument.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I believe that if all things had been equal, prob-

ably a returned soldier might have been appointed. The training of some of the others and their lack of knowledge of the service influenced the Government against them by comparison with the selected candidate. No good purpose can be served by publishing the names of all the candidates for the post. It would be wrong and inadvisable to do so.

Mr. Corboy: Surely they are not ashamed of their applications?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the hon. member used to work in his younger days, he must have applied for other positions without telling his employer that he was doing so.

Hon. A. McCallum: Why dig up the dirty past?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not blame the hon member for applying for other positions. Every man has a right to give rein to his ambitions.

Mr. Corboy: If he does apply he should not be ashamed of having done so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But he may not want his employer to find out by other means that he has done so. If the employer knows, he may tell his subordinate he had better get out, and may not give him the opportunity to improve his position.

Mr. Corboy: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I often tried to improve my position.

Mr. Corboy: You seldom succeeded.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The employer would make up his mind at the first opportunity to get rid of the man, and would not give him the promotion that might have been coming to him. No doubt the 34 unsuccessful applicants will be disappointed. At the same time, when they applied, they knew that their names were being put into the hands of people who were to be trusted to keep them confidential. It would not have mattered whom we had appointed. If another man had been chosen, any hon. member could have asked for the papers because one of the number of applicants had a grievance. Ministers must be trusted in these matters. They have been given executive power and are answerable to the House. If they do wrong, the House has power to censure them.

Mr. Corboy: The House must have knowledge of the facts before doing so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The only knowledge the hon. member can get from the papers is as to the names of the appli-

cants. It would then be a question of his opinion against that of the Government.

Mr. Corboy: But there are other papers besides.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are no other papers.

Mr. Corboy: What about the references?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If there were any references, they would all have been returned to the applicants.

Mr. Corboy: But they would be recorded.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, they would not.

Mr. Corboy: Most certainly they would.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If original references were sent along, they would certainly have been returned to the sender.

Mr. Corboy: But copies would have been kept on the file.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There would be no justification for keeping copies.

Mr. Corboy: I say you do keep copies.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say we do not.

Mr. Corboy: There is a copy of the testimonials on every personal file in the department.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Corboy: There is.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are not in the department. There are merely the applications. Fancy keeping a list of all these things!

Mr. Corboy: You do keep them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say we do not. There are no papers except the names of those who applied for the position.

Mr. Corboy: You say you have the 35 names and nothing else.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course. The papers were all returned.

Mr. Corboy: And no copies were made?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Surely the applicants would have set out their qualifications for the position, and their letters would all be on the file.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, that is all. The practice followed was for a person to say he was applying for the position of Public Service Commissioner, and that attached to his application were his testimonials or copies of them.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Oh!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Members have something to learn in that respect.

In many cases they were merely the bald applications.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: What are you talking about?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The applicant, the mover of this motion may have in mind, probably applied in that way.

Mr. Panton: You do not know whom I have in mind.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say there is one man the hon. member may have in mind, who may have sent along just such a bald application.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Then he would not have deserved to get the job.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Many of these men are well known, but others I have never heard of. Members may be sure that the fullest investigation would always be made by the Government in a case of this sort. If they are going to insist upon the papers being laid upon the Table of the House, the choice of any Government hereafter will be exceedingly limited. People outside or inside the service are not going to make application for positions if they know all the information is to be broadcast.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: That does not apply to those in the service. That could not do any of them any harm.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very often it does.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Not if they are in the service.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Men holding high positions in the service do not want their subordinates to know they were applicants for some position, but were not considered qualified for it. It all depends on the point of view that is taken. It was possible only to choose one out of all of these 35 applicants.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government are charged with far greater responsibilities than the appointment of a Public Service Commissioner. That is merely a minor piece of work in the matter of administration. The House certainly has the right to question the Government's action in making the appointment, but I think the mover of the motion chose something poor indeed when he challenged this appointment to the Public Service Commissionership. If the idea behind the motion

was preference to returned soldiers, it would have been far better to put up a substantive motion dealing with that aspect. The present motion does not deal with it. I was much struck with the interjection of the mover to the effect that he would do exactly the same as his party and give preference to unionists over returned soldiers. If that is the case, we can discard that phase entirely from the hon. member's viewpoint in moving for the papers. In conclusion I wish to say that the right man has been appointed. His qualifications, which I have read out to the House, justify his appointment. His temperament fits him for the position. I do not think anyone will question that. His impartiality towards members of the public service is and will remain unchallenged. The Government did the right thing in appointing him, and the tabling of the papers would be unfair to every other applicant. In my opinion, therefore, the motion should be rejected.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [7.33]: The Government claim that the best man was appointed. The member for Leederville, by moving for the papers, has challenged that contention. Assuming that the whole House agrees with the motion for the tabling of the papers, there remains the consideration raised by the Minister for Lands, that some of the applicants might object to that course. I feel sure that if even one applicant objected, no member would support the motion, at all events not without reservation. To test the feeling of the House I therefore move an amendment—

That after the word "That," line 1, the following be inserted:—"Provided that none of the applicants has signified his objection to such a course being taken . . ."

The amendment leaves intact the spirit of the motion in challenging the Government's choice. Should any applicant have raised objection, then the Government are in duty bound, having the confidence of the applicant, to respect it. I am sure that no hon. member will urge that the motion be carried if any applicant has already taken such a course.

MR. WELLS (Canning—on amendment) [7.36]: Adverting to the motion as proposed to be amended, I think it would be most unwise to lay on the Table of the House applications for such a position as

this. However, on the question of preference to returned soldiers—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may not deal with that.

Mr. WELLS: If you will not permit me to voice my opinion on that subject, Sir—

Mr. SPEAKER: You will have an opportunity of doing so when the amendment has been disposed of.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth—on amendment) [7.37] I cannot understand how the amendment puts the question in any better position. It may well be that no applicant has objected, but that does not show that the applicants do not object. Moreover, there is a great possibility that their objections would be ignored if they did make them.

Mr. Corboy: Under our Standing Orders the papers must be tabled immediately if we carry the motion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Precisely!

Mr. Corboy: Then, if the objections are not in, they cannot carry any weight.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With all respect to the member for Claremont (Mr. North), I fail to see that the amendment improves the position.

Mr. Corboy: Not a scrap.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It would be a gross breach of confidence for the Government to disclose the names of those who have applied for the position, and if hon. members think as I do, that when a man applies for a position his application is made in confidence, it must appear to them that the situation will not be made any better by our declaring that this breach of confidence shall be committed unless some applicant has objected. The poor chap may not think that his objection would ever be considered. Again, it may not have occurred to him that the method to prevent his confidence being broken is to write in and object.

Mr. Corboy: If the amendment is carried the debate should be adjourned to give all applicants a chance of objecting.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I agree with the hon. member. The debate should be adjourned, and perhaps we should even notify applicants that if they desire their confidence not to be broken, they should write in objecting. To carry the amendment would only aggravate the position.

Mr. Corboy: It is a matter of principle, anyway. What has the amendment to do with it?

Mr. PANTON (Leederville—on amendment) [7.39]: I take it, Sir, that I shall be speaking on the amendment now?

Mr. SPEAKER: Only on the amendment.

Mr. PANTON: And that I shall have a right to reply later?

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly.

Mr. PANTON: I hope the amendment will not be carried, for the reasons outlined by the Attorney General. The amendment gets us nowhere. If there have been objections lodged, the motion stands as at present. If there have been none lodged up to date we can only adjourn the debate. That would be merely a way of side-stepping the question altogether. Let us have a straight-out decision on the motion. I hope the amendment will be rejected.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	..	15
					—
Majority for	..	..	..	..	4
					—

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Parker
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Brown	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Doney	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Wells
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. North
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Corboy	Mr. Pantan
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Raphael
Mr. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Wan-brough
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. McCallum	Mr. Withers
Mr. Millington	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Munroe	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Mr. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [7.45]: The Minister for Lands told the House that the Government had made many mistakes in the past.

The Minister for Lands: I said nothing of the sort.

Mr. RAPHAEL: You did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The mistakes of the Government have nothing to do with the motion. The hon. member will confine himself to the question before the Chair.

Mr. RAPHAEL: This question was touched upon by the Minister and he indicated that the Government had not done their job as they should have done, and that members were right in bringing other matters than the present one before the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, not under this motion.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have no intention of doing so. Opposition members have come to the conclusion that the time has arrived when the Government should be taken to task for having neglected to fulfil the promises they made to so many men whom they enticed to go to the front on the understanding that they would secure preference on their return to Australia.

Mr. Sampson: The Minister was one of those who went to the front!

Mr. RAPHAEL: He has his job back, and a thundering good one, too.

Mr. Sampson: And he is filling it well.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not say he is not. The Minister is one of those fortunate ones who has got his job back in accordance with the promise made to him when he left these shores. The House has been told that it was necessary for the occupant of the Public Service Commissionership to have a thorough knowledge of the financial position. Even on that basis, there never was a time so opportune as the present for someone to be appointed to the position and trained to its requirements, because never before in the history of the State was the amount available so small as at the present. Members of the present and past Governments, as well as members of Parliament, past and present, promised the soldiers who went to the front that their positions would be available for them when they returned, and the present Government have not stood up to the job of extending preference to returned soldiers. The commissionership, being an office job, could well have been given to a returned soldier.

Mr. Parker: What about the maimed and limbless men?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have supported them equally with the returned soldiers' movement, although perhaps the hon. member has not.

Mr. Parker: Or preference to unionists?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The question at issue has nothing to do with unionists. The Minister for Lands also said that if an-

other man was appointed to this position, someone would have to go from the Public Service. We should not consider that phase for a moment. One man has been retired from the Public Service, and therefore another must take his place.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I say, yes.

Mr. Sampson: Then it is useless arguing any further.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It is no good arguing with the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) because he has no brains to be convinced. If one man has gone out, obviously another man must go in, and therefore we may regard as quite frivolous the Minister's suggestion regarding what would happen if a returned soldier had been put into the position. If the Government are not afraid of their action, I can see no reason for their refusal to table the papers, even with the inclusion of the frivolous amendment by the member for Claremont (Mr. North).

Mr. North: The House did not regard it as frivolous.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The object of the amendment was to cover up the misdeeds of the Government. It will not have that effect because the returned soldiers of the State will not tolerate that sort of thing.

The Attorney General: Trash!

Mr. RAPHAEL: That is what the Attorney General always says. If the Government are not afraid, why do they not make their actions public, satisfy the returned soldiers that the best course has been pursued, and thus settle the matter once and for all? I hope the Government will not maintain a dogmatic attitude, but will agree to the tabling of the papers so that justice may be done to returned soldiers.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [7.50]: It may be assumed that, in view of the amendment that has been agreed to, the Government will not take exception to the motion as it is now framed. If that is so, I do not see that the member for Leederville (Mr. Panton) can raise any objection. I take it that the Government Whip, in moving his amendment, did so with the concurrence of the Government and on their advice. If that was not the position, the usual course of events has not

been pursued. I think we may assume that the Government Whip did act with the concurrence of the Government, and that being so, the papers will be tabled unless any of the applicants stipulated at the time they submitted their applications, that they did not desire their names to be published.

Mr. Doney: That is not what the motion, as amended, means.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It would not be right to canvass the applicants to-day to ascertain whether they raise any objection to their names being published. To adopt such a course would be wrong, and contrary to the directions of the House.

The Minister for Lands: What if the objection were taken at the time the motion was first tabled?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I take it that the objection must have been lodged when the applications were submitted. That is the usual course to adopt. I have done so myself. It is usual to make such a stipulation when lodging an application for another position. Unless that were done the applicant might lose the position he then held. It is possible that some of the applicants did adopt that course, and in that event I take it that the Government will remove their applications from the file and table the others. It would be wrong for the Government to permit applicants to lodge their objections at this stage.

The Premier: Why not at any time?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Because that would violate a decision of this Chamber.

Mr. Doney: What if the objections were indicated subsequent to the time when the motion was first suggested?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The motion means that the objections must have been lodged with the applications.

Mr. Doney: I do not think so.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Only those objections that were lodged at the time the applications were sent in can be considered.

Mr. Doney: But what about those applicants who signify their objection now?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It would be extraordinary if a person were to send in his application and then, subsequent to the appointment being made, lodge an objection to publication at that late stage. If the Government accept the motion with the proviso, the member for Leederville has accomplished all that he desires.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [7.56]: I have been a member of this Chamber for 14 years, and I have never before known of any Government being asked to give the names of applicants for any position. If we agree to the request we will create a precedent that will rebound on all Governments in the future. In addition, I have been in business for many years, and I have not known a single instance of any company, even when asked to do so, divulging the names of any applicants for a position with the firm. To agree to the proposal embodied in the motion would be most dangerous, wrong and reprehensible. Certainly the motion has been modified by the member for Claremont (Mr. North) and it now means that if any of the applicants object, their papers will not be placed on the Table. If none raises any objection, probably no harm will be done. But even so, I intend to vote against the motion as amended as I think the principle is wrong. I hope the Government will not give way and certainly every opportunity should be given to applicants to lodge their objections. The debate should be adjourned in order to enable them to lodge their objections.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [7.58]: I do not think any such opportunity should be given to the applicants to signify their objections. To my mind if the Government were to publish the names of the applicants for the position under discussion they would commit a gross breach of confidence. The member for Leederville, who has fathered the motion, is a returned soldier. He served his country well and faithfully, and still suffers from his honourable war wounds. Thank God I do not, although I am as much a returned soldier as he is and I have been just as much mixed up with returned soldiers. I have been most intimately associated with them and have taken an active part in the work for the past 14 years. I stand as strongly, if not more strongly than the member for Leederville does, by the doctrine of preference to returned soldiers. I will divulge so much of the secrets of Cabinet as to say that in Cabinet I was particularly anxious that a returned soldier should be appointed. There were three returned soldier applicants for the job; two of them

were close personal friends of mine, and the third, although not a close personal friend, yet was well known to me and was a man for whom I have the greatest respect and admiration. My view was not agreed to by the rest of the Cabinet. But although I disagreed with them, I think their grounds for disagreeing with me were sound and proper grounds. There was room for a difference of opinion as to just what the qualifications for this position were. Their grounds, to my mind, although I would not accept them, were grounds which any honourable man anxious to do his duty by the State of Western Australia was entitled to accept as convincing reasons why the gentleman who was appointed should be appointed. Are the Government to relinquish their job? Are they to hand over to the House the duty of making appointments to the Public Service? Is that the idea? Are we, before we appoint an official to one of the highest positions in the State service, to come here, give the House the names of all the applicants, put before the House all the testimonials and invite the House to make a choice? Is that what the House wants? I do not believe it. The appointment of officers to positions of this sort is essentially a job for the Government, and nobody but the Government. I have always imagined, and I have never heard in my experience of life anything to the contrary, that when people are invited to apply for positions, whether it be expressed or not, that applications are treated as strictly confidential. The question I am asking myself is, even if the House orders the Government to lay the papers on the Table of the House, am I, as a member of the Government, to consent to do what I think would be an utterly dishonourable thing? True, the House is paramount, but we are not the slaves of the House; we have our consciences. It is a monstrous proposition that the names of the applicants for the post should be divulged to the world. I cannot understand where the idea comes from.

Mr. Panton: Right here.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Well, then, I do not understand the hon. member—and when I call him an honourable member I mean it—I do not understand the hon. member taking up the attitude he has on this matter. Even if the House should order us to do this, I shall be very much

disinclined to obey the House. Those applicants made their applications in good faith and complete trust that their applications would be treated as confidential, and I do not feel inclined to obey the House even if it carries the motion that we are to place these applications before it. Suggestions have been made that there might be some other applications than those on the file. All I can tell the House is that they are all I have seen, the list of the applicants, every one of whom was well known to the whole of the Cabinet. There is nothing else to show the House. Do members really want this list placed on the Table of the House? What good purpose would it serve? And if the list be laid on the Table, is the House then going to enter into a lengthy debate as to the respective merits of the applicants? No one will suggest that the gentleman appointed is not a skilful public servant of long experience. No one has dared to attack him. There has been no attack of any kind.

Mr. Panton: It would be a very wrong thing to attack him.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Well, what is the argument? When the list is put on the Table, certain names of returned soldiers will be found on it. Does the hon. member then propose to move a vote of censure on the Government because, instead of appointing A, B or C of the returned soldiers, the Government appointed Mr. Simpson?

Mr. Panton: You had better give notice of that question.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: As I have said, of the three returned soldier applicants two are intimate friends of mine and the third I know quite well. I would be utterly amazed if any one of those three would not curse the man who caused them to be dragged into a filthy argument as to the respective merits of themselves and Mr. Simpson. I ask returned soldier members and other members to vote this motion out.

MR. WELLS (Canning) [8.6]: Regarding the laying of the papers on the Table, the moment the motion was moved by the member for Leederville, I expressed my opposition to it. For I do not think any good could be achieved by tabling the papers. It would be an altogether unwise procedure and would be open to abuse during the reign, not only of the present Government, but of all future Governments. I have been a member of the State executive of the Re-

turned Soldiers' League for a number of years, and with my colleagues have fought several Governments over the principle of preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. Panton: Did you ever get a win?

Mr. WELLS: Well, not too many. There have been instances in which preference to returned soldiers could have been given without injustice to anybody, and I am rather sorry the clash should have come in respect of so high a position as the one under discussion to-night. During the past 10 or 12 years there have been many jobs that could reasonably have been given to returned soldiers, to men who were capable of filling the positions just as well as the men appointed. I consider the Government—not only the present Government—should have given returned soldiers the preference where it has been given to civilian applicants who could have gone to the war but did not.

Mr. Thorn: Blackboy Hill, for instance.

Mr. Wells: That is one. Probably Ministers were not altogether to blame for it. But there have been many instances where the Government could well have given preference to returned soldiers, especially having regard to the promises made when those men went away to fight for the honour of Australia. Although times are now very difficult and positions scarce, I sincerely hope the present Government, and any future Government, will give reasonable consideration to applications from returned soldiers. I do not contend that returned soldiers should have a monopoly of all positions offering; but there have been times, and there will be times, when returned soldiers could well be appointed. The returned soldiers' executive of this State are very sore indeed because due consideration has not been given to returned soldiers applying for appointments in the years that have gone.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [8.10]: I regret that such a motion should have been moved, for it does not add to the dignity of Parliament, and I appeal to the member for Leederville to withdraw it. The matter has now been sufficiently ventilated, so it would be more satisfactory if he would now withdraw the motion. I should like to make clear my own position regarding preference to returned soldiers. When I was on the hustings seven years ago I signed a paper declaring that I was willing to give prefer-

ence to returned soldiers, all things being equal. The whole question in respect of the appointment under discussion is whether all things were equal. The Minister for Lands has told us they were not equal, that the qualifications of the appointee were higher than those of other applicants. In my opinion at no other time in the history of the State have we so sorely required the services of the best financial brains.

Mr. Panton: We want them in the Under Treasurer.

Mr. BROWN: The Minister for Lands has told us that Cabinet appointed the best financial brains they could get amongst the 35 applicants. And who was to determine who among the applicants had the highest qualifications? It could only be done by a tribunal, which in this instance was the Cabinet. I do not suppose they could be expected to bring such matters before Parliament, read out the credentials of every applicant, and leave it to Parliament to decide who should be appointed. Ministers of the Crown, representing the majority of the people of the State, are the proper authority for the making of such an appointment. How could we here determine that all things were equal as between the applicants? It appears to me there is a little bit of political propaganda in this. It becomes evident when we find the subject made a party question.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Then why didn't you come over here and prevent it being made a party question?

Mr. BROWN: I am prepared to accept the statement of the Minister for Lands. He was one of the tribunal that decided who should be appointed, and he has told us the qualifications of the applicants were not equal. How, then, am I to believe that they were equal? Am I to disbelieve the Minister for Lands?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No, certainly not. But the amendment is ridiculous and ought to have been voted out.

Mr. BROWN: I have nothing to do with the amendment.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: You supported it.

Mr. BROWN: I was not going to vote against it. I understand the Minister for Lands is a returned soldier, whereas the man who got the appointment is not a returned soldier. Therefore it would have been to the interests of the Minister for Lands, politically and otherwise, to see that a returned soldier got the appointment. But

the Minister had the interests of the country at heart, and was determined to put the best man into the position. I admire the Minister for it. However, I do appeal to the member for Leederville to withdraw this motion. The question has now been thrashed out, and it would add to the dignity of the House if he did withdraw it.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [8.15]: As another returned man, my sympathy is naturally with the motion. Nevertheless I feel that the amendment moved by the member for Claremont was a proper one in the circumstances. Subject to the amendment, I am supporting the motion. Everyone must appreciate the difficulty and delicacy of the position in which the Minister found himself. I understand that by a given undertaking as well as by custom, he is not able to divulge the names of the applicants. I hope it will not be taken for granted—though it seems to be taken for granted by a number of members—that the qualifications of the successful applicant, Mr. Simpson, are being questioned. I have a very high regard for Mr. Simpson; so I think has every member of the House. No one is likely to question his qualifications. The point is that of the four soldier applicants, two were of the highest capabilities. Quite a number would have been well able to fill the vacancy, but we had to get the man with the highest qualifications, and I am not disputing the fact that that man has been found. I attended a meeting of returned soldiers here recently and I put the position to them in this way—"You have to take, when assessing the merits of the applicants, the successful applicant and the returned soldiers. You should forget for the moment that the successful man was not a soldier. You should equally forget that the four returned soldier applicants were returned soldiers. You should then balance their merits fairly and, if it so happened that the qualifications of Mr. Simpson outweighed those of the others, he undoubtedly was the right man and should be chosen. But if by some strange chance one of the returned soldiers and the ultimately successful applicant happened to have equal qualifications, then would come the time to throw the question of preference into the balance and the returned soldier should have the position." After hearing the full explanation of the Minister, I am definitely of opinion—I will not say that the best man was chosen because

I have not had an opportunity to see the qualifications of the others—that an extraordinarily good man was chosen. If amongst the returned soldiers there was one better, he must have been a wonderfully fine man indeed. I should like to make it plain—the point has not been touched on, although I was hoping it would have been—that this agitation has not arisen on account of any desire expressed by any of the returned soldier applicants. I understand that each one of them has expressed a very strong wish that the matter should be dropped entirely, but, contrary to that view, there happens to be quite a big body of outside opinion, mainly returned soldier opinion, in favour of publicly examining the relative merits of all the applicants. As I have indicated, my sympathy, though not my reasoning, is strongly with the motion, and for that and one or two other reasons which members opposite will understand I am not at liberty to refer to, I shall vote for the motion as amended.

MR. PARKER (North-East Fremantle) [8.19]: I shall vote against the tabling of the papers. Two returned soldier applicants have approached me on this matter. One has asked me to let the Government know that he does not desire to be mixed up with this movement in any shape or form, and that he is much annoyed that anything has been suggested regarding the policy of preference to returned soldiers. Another one wrote to me under date the 3rd June, and said—

I strongly object to having my name conjoined with any complaints or criticism. He also said—

Mr. Panton: If you read that letter, you will have to lay it on the Table.

Mr. PARKER: I am not reading it; I am quoting what he said.

Mr. Panton: I am just warning you. I do not want you to fall into any trap.

Mr. Marshall: We have little rules here just as you have in court.

Mr. Wells: Unwritten laws.

Mr. PARKER: Returned soldiers generally, I think, are very much against the policy of preference being discussed in the House, because the great majority realise that the Government have done, and will do, all in their power to carry out the policy of preference. I do not say that all the soldiers consider that the Government

have done everything they might have done at all times, but generally speaking the soldiers are perfectly satisfied, as regards this particular appointment, two have expressed to me the opinion that they are perfectly satisfied. With the other two I have not discussed the matter. I do not know how many more soldier applicants there might have been, but I know of four. I do not think a debate on the preference policy was the object of the motion. The motion was simply to get the papers tabled, and it makes no reference to the question of preference to returned soldiers. I regret exceedingly that that subject has been introduced. I agree with other members who have expressed their opinions that it would be a gross breach of trust to publish the names of people who apply for Government billets. I have known of many instances where perhaps legal appointments have been thrown open. A man might apply for one of them and, if it became known, he would lose many of his clients. When people found that he was thinking seriously of throwing up his private practice, they would go to some one who was more stable and who was always likely to be available.

Mr. Angelo: He might be a member of Parliament.

Mr. PARKER: Yes, and might lose his seat at the next election. The electors might say they were not going to vote for him again because he was looking for another job, and perhaps the electors would be quite right. It would be a gross breach of trust to allow the names to be published. When a person applies for a billet, he applies under a well-known principle that his application will be treated as secret and that what he says in his application will be treated as confidential. The whole matter is confidential. I think it only right to maintain the practice of the past and keep such matters confidential.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [8.23]: Seeing that I do not happen to be a returned soldier, I suppose I ought to apologise for breaking in on this discussion.

Mr. Sleeman: There is nothing in the motion about returned soldiers.

The PREMIER: The discussion has ranged around the question of preference

to returned soldiers, which was introduced by the member for Leederville when he submitted his motion. I intended to remind the House that this motion does not say anything about preference to returned soldiers, but the hon. member introduced it because he wished to discuss the question. He is not very anxious about the papers. He knows there were 31 applicants out of 35 who were not returned soldiers. Some of them were men outside the Public Service, and it would not be right to publish their names to the world. Nothing more than the list of the applicants would be available, except the letters of application. Would it be right, would it be honest, would it be fair to publish the names of all who applied, particularly those outside the service and in other employment? I do not think the House would agree to that being done. Since I have been in the House, a period of 25 years, I cannot recall an instance of the names of applicants for a position having been made public, and I do not think it would be right to say that in future people are to be warned that if they do apply for a Government billet, their names will be made public. Only one man out of the 35 could possibly get the position; the other 34 must be disappointed applicants and they might easily be injured in their present employment if their names were published. For that reason alone, I hope the House will not agree to the papers being tabled. What good purpose could be served by tabling them? The hon. member knows that his party, when in office, made many appointments and had to take the responsibility for making them. As the Executive, it was their duty, and not the duty of Parliament.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I do not know that any one of the appointments caused any great public agitation.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's party were in authority and made what they believed to be the best appointments.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There was only one over which there was a bit of wire-pulling—the position of Engineer-in-Chief—and that was caused by one man only.

The PREMIER: I am not presuming to know all that happened in the making of appointments at that time, but I say that the Government of the day took the responsibility for the appointments they made. They could not be helped by Parliament

in making a selection. Neither can the present Government. We must administer the affairs of the country, and, in making this appointment, we selected the man whom we believed was best fitted for the job. When I say that, I am not saying anything against the other applicants. Everyone knows that the most sacred duty of government is the making of appointments. We faced the duty with a full realisation of the responsibility we owe to the people. It could not be otherwise. If it is desired to discuss the question of preference to returned soldiers, that is an entirely different matter.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They are giving you the opportunity to do it by inviting you to meet them.

The PREMIER: I invite the hon. member to attend.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I have not received an invitation.

The PREMIER: Neither have I.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: According to the Press you are to be invited.

The PREMIER: From time to time I have met the returned soldiers and, if I have to meet them on this question, I shall take along a list of all the appointments made since 1919. We shall then see whether over those years the returned soldiers have received preference.

Mr. Panton: You will find it a big list.

The PREMIER: Yes, a big list of appointments, and a big percentage of them, during my terms of office, the result of preference to returned soldiers. The member for Leederville made no bones in stating that he would give preference to unionists before returned soldiers.

Mr. Panton: I said the party to which I belonged.

The PREMIER: Then I apologise and withdraw, if that is so. The hon. member had better come over to this side of the House.

Mr. Panton: Why did you introduce the question of preference?

The PREMIER: Because the hon. member led me off the track. I must be allowed to answer his remarks. I did not hear his speech, but I have read it in "Hansard," and there is nothing in it except references to preference to soldiers. He does not want the wretched papers at all, and he does not want to know the names of the applicants. He wanted

an opportunity to make a speech on the question of preference to returned soldiers, and he has got in his speech. Last night the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) became the champion for returned soldiers. I cannot answer the hon. member until I get the information from Bunbury and I hope to do this by Tuesday. That will be the time when I can answer any charges he has made against the harbour board. It is not usual, and never has been done, to divulge the names of those who apply for positions of this kind. Hon. members must see that in future when applications are called for any position in the civil service people outside will hesitate to apply for them if they be in employment. That is not desirable. We should have the widest possible field when making senior appointments to the public service. We are not called upon to defend the appointment we have made, because that is not in question. What we are expected to do is to see that those who have applied are treated decently and properly. I ask the House to remember, that when these gentlemen applied, each one hoped to get the job. As only one could get it, the other 34 must be disappointed, and they would not be advantaged, but quite the reverse, if this motion were carried. Indeed, much harm might be done to many of them. I hope the House will vote against the motion.

MR. PANTON (Leederville—in reply) [8.32]: The whole discussion seems to have developed into one dealing with preference to returned soldiers. I have not discussed it with any member of the party on this side of the House. There is no ulterior motive in the matter of political propaganda, such as has been suggested by the member for Pingelly. He and everyone else knows not only in this State but throughout Australia that the Labour Party stand for preference to unionists, and have always done so. We fought a double dissolution of the Federal Parliament in 1914 on that question. On every occasion Labour Governments have put this policy into practice, and those who have supported Labour have at all times endeavoured to see that it is put into operation. I do not wish it to be said that this party stands for preference to returned soldiers: it stands, and always has stood, for preference to unionists. That is the policy and the plank in the platform of the Labour Party. As a member of that party I will vote with my party

whenever that question is brought up in this House. The returned soldiers' executive and everybody connected with the league have been told that times without number. They know where I stand because I have always stood for that.

The Premier: What about this motion of yours?

Mr. Parker: Will these papers show that any of the applicants are members of the Returned Soldiers' League?

Mr. PANTON: One red herring has already been drawn across the trail, and I am not going to be led off the trail by the hon. member's remarks. I hope returned soldiers on the other side of the House will realise what they are voting for on this amended motion. I take this point: That no objection that may have been lodged to the laying of these papers on the Table subsequent to the carrying of that amendment has any right to be taken into consideration. That is only a fair thing. I think the Attorney General agrees that the amendment should only apply to those objections that may have been lodged before it was carried. I do not want anyone to misunderstand my attitude on this matter. I know what the amendment means. Actually it was a very poor way to camouflage the issue. If returned soldier members are not prepared to stand up for their opinions, they are not the men I took them to be.

The Premier: Do you think these applications should be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. PANTON: I would not have moved the motion if I did not think so.

The Premier: You did not know as much as you know now.

Mr. PANTON: I know no more than I did as a result of anything said on the other side of the House. The member for Canning pointed out that returned soldiers had not had many of these good appointments. That has been the argument for a long time. At the last Returned Soldiers' Congress, at which I was a delegate, we were honoured by the Premier's presence. We all sang "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow." He said, in answer to a deputation which waited on him, "I stand to-day where I stood when the circular was issued." He was referring to a circular dated 7th March, 1921, dealing with new appointments to the service. I would quote from this circular as follows:—

New appointments to the service: Returned soldiers to have preference. (Note: The

underlying principle is that an injured man may not get outside employment as readily as a physically sound man, and it is thought that providing there are indications that the injured soldier can attain a reasonable standard of efficiency he should receive the appointment. If it should be found necessary to reduce the staff of any department in the service returned soldiers should be the last to be put off.

The Premier: We stand by that and have carried it out.

Mr. PANTON: Various arguments have been put up to sub-branches of the Returned Soldiers' League and to the executive that departmental heads were to blame. That is the answer we have received time and again. During the last nine months the R.S.L. executive and the Pensions and Unemployment Committee have had cause to complain about the lack of preference to returned soldiers. Ever since the depression came about most of my time has been taken up on this question, more especially in connection with the Railway Department. If I went to the Minister for Railways he would say it was a matter for the Commissioner. If I went to some other Minister he would say it was a matter for the departmental head. This particular case, the appointment of the Public Service Commissioner, is the only instance in which Cabinet alone are responsible.

The Premier: Why did you not produce that circular before so that we could reply to it?

Mr. PANTON: Was there any need for me to produce something that the Premier or his department published? The Minister for Lands repeated everything it contains during his speech to-night. He said the Government stood for preference to returned soldiers.

The Premier: So we do.

The Minister for Lands: But not a monopoly.

Mr. PANTON: I am not talking about monopolies. In all the circumstances I am justified in ascertaining for myself whether the Government are right in this matter or whether I am right.

Mr. Brown: Do you stand for preference to returned soldiers?

Mr. PANTON: The returned soldiers will decide that for themselves.

Mr. Brown: Can you not give a straightforward answer?

Mr. PANTON: I have told the hon. member.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, we do, if they are trade unionists.

Mr. PANTON: At the last elections I did not do what the member for Pingelly did, sign a paper that I was in favour of preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. Brown: All things being equal.

Mr. PANTON: When we have gone into these appointments to ascertain why returned soldiers have not been appointed, we have been told that so and so was not efficient. I could bring papers to prove that during the term of retrenchment in the loco. workshops men, who had been there for 20 years, were found to be inefficient. That is how the Government tackle the question of preference to returned soldiers.

Mr. Marshall: And new arrivals from England were put on.

Mr. PANTON: I am not on a heresy hunt. I do not know any of the applicants for this position very well, and am not concerned with any of them individually. Neither am I concerned about their qualifications until I see them for myself. I moved the motion so that I might form my own opinion on the subject, just as Cabinet has done. How can I do that until I know who all the applicants were and what their qualifications are?

The Minister for Lands: You said the man in the street could tell you.

Mr. PANTON: I said the man in the street knew who they were. A position of this kind that has been talked of by sub-branches of the R.S.L. and by people all over the State cannot be spoken of without people getting to know all about it. The member for North-East Fremantle received two letters from people who were opposed to having their names published. This motion has been on the Notice Paper for two or three weeks and many people have been talking about it. We have had the official head of the R.S.L.—

Mr. Parker: Who is he?

Mr. PANTON: Writing to the Press. I refer to the executive officer (Mr. Benson) who usually speaks for the R.S.L.

Mr. Parker: Usually?

The Attorney General: I should like to know the opinion of the official head regarding this performance.

Mr. PANTON: I understand the official head was an applicant. At the first meeting

of the executive of the R.S.L. the matter came up through correspondence from the sub-branch. He stated that if it was discussed by the executive he would resign from the organisation.

The Attorney General: Precisely.

Mr. PANTON: At the following meeting there was another influx from sub-branches. The general president was told in emphatic terms that it was not a question of his position but of the policy of preference to returned soldiers. He would have to stand down if he was not prepared to listen to the argument.

The Attorney General: If the league had accepted his guidance in the past, they would not have made the mistake they have made now.

Mr. PANTON: It was unfortunate that the president happened to be an applicant. We are not concerned about the individual, but only about the policy of the Government. The Government claim that preference is their policy.

Mr. Wells: The policy of all Governments.

Mr. PANTON: No. I have told the House what the policy of the Labour Government is. We are not ashamed of it, and, what is more, we will put it into operation again when we get the chance.

The Premier: You ought to be ashamed of it.

Mr. PANTON: We are not. Whether the policy is right or wrong, the Labour Government have never hesitated to stand up to it. Our members have not signed documents saying they would stand up to a policy, and then taken shelter behind a camouflage such as has been put up to the House to-night. One of the big arguments used to-night has been as to breach of confidence in having the names of applicants disclosed. If I were egotistical enough to believe myself to be qualified for a high and honourable position such as that of Public Service Commissioner, I would be only too pleased to let the world know of my qualifications. I see nothing to be ashamed of in such a matter. An applicant for the position must either have excellent qualifications, or he must have been highly egotistical to apply. So there is no reason why the papers should not be tabled. I hope the motion will be carried.

The Premier: Would you mind getting back to the motion for just one minute?

Mr. PANTON: That interjection is nice, now that the Government are getting some home truths. After every member opposite has discussed the returned soldier, the Premier wants me to get on to something else. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker) may shake his head.

The Premier: There is a motion, of course.

Mr. PANTON: The motion is being dealt with. Probably the Deputy Premier does not like some of the arguments which have been used by his own side. He asked why we did not kick up a row before this particular appointment was made. The returned soldiers regard this particular appointment as the climax. The discussion has been going on for months. Not for months has there been a meeting of the R.S.L. executive, nor a branch meeting which I have had official occasion to attend, but this question of preference to returned soldiers has been discussed. At every opportunity we are pushed back by the argument that some departmental head has to take the blame. The R.S.L. have come to the conclusion that the Government having definitely decided on this appointment while giving out that preference to returned soldiers is a matter of Government policy, we are entitled to ask whether that policy is or is not being put into operation. If the papers are laid on the Table, I am sure it will not be in any way detrimental to any applicant. If it should prove that the successful applicant's qualifications are so much superior as has been stated, I will guarantee on behalf of the R.S.L. executive that apologies will be tendered through me to the House, if desired. The Deputy Premier uses as one of his leading arguments the qualifications of the successful applicant. That is a wonderful thing to do. Of the other 24 applicants not one word is said by the Deputy Premier, who states the qualifications of only one. He says the successful applicant has been 34 years in the service. If I remember rightly what was published concerning him at the time of his appointment, he is now 48 years of age; so that he must have started in the service when he was 14. He has been a long way round. I do not wish to be dragged into the question of his qualifications beyond saying that if he started at 14, a good deal of his 34 years in the service can-

not have been of very great benefit to the State; that is, unless he was a super boy as well as being the super man he is now represented. I do not wish to say any more about the successful applicant. From the inception I have not dealt with him, or with any other applicant, from a personal point of view. I will not be dragged into that now. The question is purely one of principle, and I ask the House to carry the motion.

The Premier: What about the principle during the six years you were here?

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not enter into this motion.

Mr. PANTON: The Premier makes out he is dense, but he is not dense at all. He is as astute as anybody else. The six years I sat behind the last Government, I supported the Government in their policy. If we are there for six years after the next election, I shall do the same thing. In asking hon. members to support the motion, I say to returned-soldier members opposite, "Do not hide behind the amendment."

The Attorney General: Why did you not discuss the motion with the returned soldiers over here?

Mr. PANTON: Because I have no desire to place the returned soldiers over there in the invidious position of having to agree or disagree with me on this. I bring matters forward either from a personal point of view, when it is my individual baby to carry if no one will vote with me, or from a party point of view, in which case the party will stand behind me. I will not ask any member opposite to commit himself to anything I put up. He may be committed to his Government. The amendment does not apply to anything subsequent to its being moved by the member for Claremont. If the amendment was moved with a knowledge on the part of returned soldiers opposite that an applicant had already objected, I say they have not played the game, but have allowed the amendment to be used as camouflage. If they are half the men I think they are—and I have a great deal of respect for the men with whom I travelled overseas—they will say yes or no to this motion, whether they believe with me or against me.

The Premier: They could not believe with you.

Mr. PANTON: The Premier would not believe anything.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	14
Noes	..	..	..	18
				—
Majority against	..	..		4
				—

AYES.

Mr. Doney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. Millington	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Munsie	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Panton	Mr. Withers
Mr. Raphael	Mr. Corboy

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Parker
Mr. Brown	Mr. Patrick
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Latham	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Wells
Mr. H. W. Mann	Mr. North

(Teller.)

Question thus negatived.

MOTION—MIGRANTS, REPATRIATION.

Debate resumed from the 16th June, on the following motion by Mr. Sleeman:—

That the Government be requested to make arrangements immediately to repatriate all migrants who are unable to obtain work here, hundreds of whom are going hungry and practically naked, and that they use all their influence to get the Federal Parliament to issue the necessary passports, and the Imperial Government to agree to these people being returned Home.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [8.58]: Yesterday we had guns, and to-night we have soldiers; so it looks as if there was war on the horizon. I fully appreciate the many difficulties which will attend the attempt to give effect to the motion of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman). No fewer than three Governments have been more or less responsible for the introduction of a large section of the population of Western Australia. Quite a number of migrants came here prior to the agreement being made between the State Government, the Federal Government, and the Imperial Government. As to those migrants, the State has some jurisdiction apart from the other two Governments named. But as regards migrants who came here under the Group Settlement Scheme and afterwards under the £34,000,000 expenditure agree-

ment, there is a tie which the Federal Government alone can break, subject to the sanction of the Imperial Government. I agree with the member for Fremantle that in the main those of our migrants who came here from the Old Country were induced to come by false pretences. They were induced to come out by elaborate advertisements; glowing pictures were painted; standards of living were described as particularly high; the impression was given that in any portion of Australia the newcomer could practically pick up gold in the streets. We have seen some of the advertisements that were displayed.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There was the one showing the potatoes being put down first, and the machine picking them up.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes; there were pictures of little brooks amid the hills and green pastures, and cattle rolling fat with milk almost running from their udders. They could have gone one better and shown butter being made in the udders. Speaking generally, the inducements that were held out to migrants, encouraging them to go to Australia, represented exaggeration in the extreme. Those people came out, and they have been disillusioned. The very least they could have expected after arrival was that employment would have been found for them. Reasonable wages and conditions were practically guaranteed to them. They were led to believe that in a comparatively few years they would make a fortune. Thus, people have been brought out here by misrepresentation. Now they are here and in deplorable conditions, we must consider what is best to be done with them in the circumstances. I suggest it would be much wiser to repatriate those who desire to return to their Homeland. I agree with those who suggest that, with few exceptions, the migrants' position would be improved if they were able to return to the Motherland, where they would have the advantage of the help that could be rendered by their friends and relations. Here they are isolated; they cannot get the assistance that would be available for them in England, seeing that they are in a country where they know no one. Both the Federal and the State Governments must accept a share of the responsibility for the financial position. The migrants cannot be blamed for the position in which they find them-

selves, and the duty devolves upon the Governments adequately to feed and clothe them. That is not being done to-day. It is useless arguing that unemployment will not remain with us. I suggest it will be present despite all the work that has yet to be done in this great State. With the limited amount of capital that will be available for the developmental work necessary in Western Australia, I predict that from now onwards we may expect the objectionable spectacle of unemployment to persist. The question of unemployment is one that must be taken up seriously by Parliaments in every country throughout the world. With the advent of science and its application to production, simple and expeditious manufacture by machinery must increasingly displace manual labour. It is reasonable to expect that Australia will keep abreast of the times and make advantageous use of inventions of science. The effect will be that a great deal more will be produced than will be necessary, and it is quite possible that a proportion of the machinery installed will remain idle during part of each year, thus still further increasing unemployment. We can look to the older countries in Europe and America—with the possible exception of France—and see how they suffer from unemployment.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: But there are huge numbers of unemployed in France.

Mr. MARSHALL: But only just lately; I suggest that France has suffered least of all. The fact that unemployment is increasing there is merely because the reconstruction work, following the replacement of towns destroyed during the war period, is being completed. When that work is ended, France will suffer equally with other countries. European and American countries, alleged to be civilised, have suffered even more acutely than Australia, because to a great degree their developmental work was completed years ago, whereas ours is not yet completed. In the expansion of our developmental phases, we will have the advantage of machinery and the application of scientific methods generally that were unknown in the corresponding periods on the other side of the world. That means that still more men will be displaced in years to come. I consider it would be economically preferable to repatriate those who have been brought here from the Motherland and for whom the Government cannot provide now. I appreciate the horrible confession we have

to make when we are forced to admit that there is not room in Western Australia for so many people. In season and out of season when I sat behind the Government on the other side of the House, I sounded a warning note regarding the number of migrants who were being admitted to our shores. My warning was unheeded. Money was available and, unfortunately, much of it was spent extravagantly, without the necessary organisation and care. At the same time, much of it was spent wisely. Having money available, it was urged that we could absorb the migrants. Now that there is a shortage of capital, we are confronted with our present position. It is unfortunate that our national debt is always calculated on the per capita basis, and the fact that people are sent out of the country means that the responsibility to pay on the part of those who remain is correspondingly increased. I appreciate that fact, but we must remember that our first duty is to our Western Australian born. I do not refer to the present Government but to the two preceding Governments when I say that, during the last 10 years, the Australian born and Western Australian born boys and girls and adults have found it difficult to secure sufficient work to keep them employed the full 12 months. That position has been growing annually. Having regard to that fact, it would be better to allow the Imperial Government to provide for their own children, and allow us to accord greater justice to Australians. While the migrants are here, we must treat them as well as we do our own people. When I first entered this Chamber 10 years ago, deputations protested against the unemployment that existed then. In the year that followed, the number of persons unemployed increased appreciably. Now, with the restriction of credit, the position has become chaotic. I cannot see any possibility of immediate relief, and therefore I contend it would be wise to assist those who desire to return to the Homeland and so enable them to fulfil their wishes. I want to refute a statement made by the Minister for Lands when he spoke against the motion and argued that it would cost something like £40 per head to repatriate the migrants. Did it cost that much to send soldiers from here to the other side of the world? I can remember the Commonwealth Government bringing back a shipload of stranded Australians from South Africa.

The Minister for Lands: That was long ago when fares were not so high.

Mr. MARSHALL: That is true. It was in 1909 and it cost £7 per head. Even though the cost of living has since doubled—

The Minister for Lands: You would have to add exchange now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want to get those people back to their homes.

The Minister for Lands: Then the easiest way to do it is to get the Federal Government to issue passports for them.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even if they had passports from the Federal Government, would the State Government repatriate those people?

The Minister for Lands: We will then get rid of those who want to go, and they will arrange their own transport.

Mr. MARSHALL: How many of those in this State could arrange their own transport?

The Minister for Lands: A good many of them are doing it now.

Mr. MARSHALL: But there are hundreds of them who want to go.

Mr. Angelo: Why not send them in the "Kangaroo"? She is doing nothing just now.

Mr. MARSHALL: I suggest that a ship be chartered for the purpose.

Mr. Angelo: You have a ship.

Mr. MARSHALL: Even the "Kangaroo" would have to be chartered. Under that system the cost would not exceed £10 per head. I disagree with the Minister for Lands when he says it would cost £40 per head to repatriate those people. The Imperial Government are just as much responsible for the position in which her subjects find themselves in this country as is Australia. Only a year or two ago the Imperial Government agreed to spend 34 millions in this country, and actually sent out representatives to investigate the possibilities of development in this State and the Commonwealth generally. But no sooner did we relieve the Imperial Government of thousands of their unemployed than the Imperial Government cut off the supply of credit. So the Imperial Government cannot argue that they are not mainly responsible for the existing position, while the Federal Government are equally responsible with the State Government. But having regard to the possibilities of the State absorbing all the Western Australian and Australian born, we shall have sufficient

to supply all the labour necessary in this State for many years to come. With the natural increase of population and the application of science and machinery to development, we shall have sufficient to supply us with all the manual labour necessary for many decades to come. Certain Governments and certain individuals like to see unemployment, although perhaps not to the extent that we know it to-day. It is most beneficial to some to have a little unemployment existing, because then they can dictate to the unfortunate individual who has to sell his labour what he shall accept for it. On the other hand, if there be no unemployment, it is the worker who can do the dictating. To-day, we have the ghastly spectacle of men working for 7s. per week sustenance, ill-clothed, ill-fed and not housed at all. In those circumstances the motion warrants the support of this Chamber and immediate action on the part of the Government. Those migrants who want to go back should be sent back, for it will be cheaper to do that than to keep them. Men cannot remain much longer on 7s. a week. They have worn out every rag they possess; they are bootless and it will not be long before some of them will be practically in the nude. That is the position the Government have to face, for there is no prospect of this country being able to absorb those people for years to come. Hundreds of those unemployed to-day will be unemployed this day three years, perhaps later than that. So, as I say, it will be more economical for the Government to allow those who desire to return to the Homeland to return, rather than keep them any longer. Most of those men have the clothes falling off them now.

Hon. H. W. Mann: You are drawing the long bow a bit.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the hon. member will come with me on Saturday night I will show him half a dozen men to whom my description would properly apply.

Mr. H. W. Mann: Will you take me in your motor car?

Mr. MARSHALL: The hon. member knows I have no motor car. My worldly circumstances do not permit it. The hon. member and his class in this Chamber are out to misrepresent the position. It is not possible to walk down Hay-street without finding persons with an English accent whose clothes are practically falling off them. They have not the nice clothes the hon. member wears, nor his comfortable in-

come. He can afford to smile. I support the motion with a full appreciation of the difficulties that will be met with in giving effect to it and the bad effect it will have on the finances of the State. But it will be more economical to put the motion into operation and more just on our part to do it; for hundreds of the migrants were brought out here under false pretences, whilst quite a number of them were not of the right type for work in the bush.

MR. H. W. MANN (Perth) [9.27]: I do not intend to follow the hysterical speech of the hon. member, but I want to deal with the position as I find it. Probably I am more closely in touch with those who are down and out than is the hon. member. During the last 10 years I have been twice president of an association that has met those migrants, and I have presided over a committee looking after their comfort and welfare during that period. So well has that organisation looked after the migrants that some of them have been furnished with as many as seven positions before making good. We found those migrants arriving into new conditions and going out into unsympathetic employment. So they failed in their first attempt, but we kept in touch with them and they were passed from employer to employer up to the seventh position, when many of them made good. It is unfortunate that this depression has come along, and to-day a percentage of the migrants, with a percentage of Australian born, are out of work. The position of the migrants on the average is no worse than that of the average Australian; but the average Australian born into Australian conditions stands up to it a little better. I am associated with organisations that are still looking after those migrants, and I have not found them with their clothes falling off in Hay-street.

Mr. Sleeman: What are you doing with the sewing machines? Making clothes for them.

MR. H. W. MANN: That is what I am coming to. But what right has the member for Murchison to point the finger of scorn at that organisation?

MR. MARSHALL: I pointed the finger of scorn, not at the organisation, but at your statement.

MR. H. W. MANN: On Saturday last a migrant told me he had arrived back from England only two weeks earlier. His complaint was that the Welfare Department

would not give him sustenance because he had only just arrived. He told me he came out five years ago under the auspices of the Salvation Army and was here for four years. Then he returned to England where he remained for a year, but found it impossible to get work. His parents, relatives and friends collected sufficient money to pay his fare back. He said that had as was the position here, it was preferable to that in England. With such evidence before me, I do not feel justified in voting for the expenditure of thousands of pounds to return migrants to England. The Government are doing as much for the migrants as for the Australian-born. The cause of the trouble is not confined to Western Australia. We are passing through difficulties that are being experienced the world over, and every citizen who realises his responsibilities is doing his best to help those in need. I believe everybody is doing his best to assist. I challenge the statement of the hon. member who suggested that migrants were being retained in Australia in order to keep wages down. There are many arbitration awards to control wages and it is not possible to exploit employees engaged under awards. If a man is exploited, it is not long before he finds out the position and he can sue for wages due up to a period of two years.

MR. SLEEMAN: Which award controls farm workers?

MR. H. W. MANN: The New Settlers' League, when controlling the placing of migrants with farmers, stipulated a minimum of 30s. a week and board. The migrants had come out to be educated in farming, and it is doubtful whether they were worth more than 30s. a week at the outset.

MR. SLEEMAN: It is doubtful whether a lot of them got it.

MR. H. W. MANN: When complaints were received, we took steps through our honorary solicitors to sue for arrears.

MR. MARSHALL: A verdict was given against an employer for getting an employee to sign for more than he received.

MR. H. W. MANN: Not a migrant.

MR. MARSHALL: I am referring to the effect of unemployment.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Perth has the floor.

MR. H. W. MANN: There are employers who will exploit employees when they get an opportunity, but there are awards for the protection of the employees, who may

sue to recover any balance of wages due up to a period of two years. I know that employees have signed for money they have not received, but they have afterwards gone to the court and sued for the balance. Though the position here is bad, I do not think any benefit would accrue to the migrants from shipping them back to the Old Country, unless we were assured that better conditions awaited them there. I sympathise with migrants in their distress, but I believe this country will be in a position to absorb them before the Old Country could do so. There are still upwards of 2,000,000 unemployed in Great Britain. What guarantee is there that the migrants would be better off in the Old Country? In face of the testimony of the man who returned so recently, and who said that bad as was the position in Australia, it was better than that in England, I cannot support the motion. I am doing my best to assist those who are unfortunately placed as I believe other members are doing.

On motion by Mr. North, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.36 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 23rd June, 1931.

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QUESTION — WOOROLOO SANATORIUM, HOT WATER SERVICE.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Minister for Country Water Supplies: 1, With regard to the discontinuance of steam boilers in the interests of economy, and the installation of crude oil engines and burners for the hot water service at the Wooroloo Sanatorium in January, 1930, what was the annual cost of the steam service? 2, What has been the annual cost of the crude oil service? 3, What was the total cost of the installation of the crude oil engines and business? 4, When the Government Electrical Engineer recommended the change over, what was his estimate for—(a) the cost to effect the change; (b) the economy to be effected? 5, Is it correct that the Department are again reverting to the use of steam; if so, why?

The MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, The installation of crude oil engines and of oil burners at the Wooroloo Sanatorium were quite separate and distinct actions. The former were placed in commission in December, 1929, and the latter in October, 1930. The cost of the steam service prior to either of these changes was £2,386 per annum. 2, After the installation of two crude oil engines in December, 1929, the boilers, fed with wood fuel, were retained for hot water and low pressure steam. The cost was then at the rate of £1,174 per annum, showing a saving of £1,218 per annum. 3, The cost of installing the crude oil engines was £2,052. 4, Subsequently, in April, 1930, it was recommended that the boilers supplying hot water and low pressure steam could be more economically fired by crude oil burners. The estimated cost of effecting the change was £520, and the estimated economy to be effected was £490 per annum. 5, In practice the crude oil burners have proved unsatisfactory, the estimated economy has not materialised, and recently wood fuel has been reverted to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. J. Holmes (North) on the ground of urgent private business.

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