

There is no necessity to bring such land under this confiscatory measure. Indeed, it is not right that the holders of such land should be interfered with whilst they are carrying out the improvement conditions. There is very little to complain of as regards the enforcement of the improvement conditions. I shall vote against the amendment.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I support the amendment, because I do not see any distinction between freehold land and leasehold land in connection with a Bill of this character. Whatever the conditional purchase holder is entitled to, the freeholder is also entitled to. Mostly the freeholder is a conditional purchase holder who has complied with the conditions of his conditional purchase lease. I, as a conditional purchase holder, am willing to take the risk of this measure; indeed, I would welcome it if the Government purchased my property. There are quite a number of pastoral areas in the South-West district. Some of them are poor land for pastoral purposes, because they have carried heavy timber. For that very reason they are good agricultural land. The rainfall on the gum belts with deep soil makes those belts good agricultural country. At present, if a man takes up an agricultural block on a pastoral lease, he has to pay for the improvements in a lump sum, and not over a term of years. If there is no harm to the freeholder under this Bill, how can there be any harm to the leaseholder under it? I do not deny that the conditional purchase holder on the wheat belt has done more development in 10 years than the old settler in 50 years. But there are conditional purchase holders alongside the railways who are holding land out of use. As regards the man who is holding such land out of use because he is utilising other land some distance away, I say we want that unused land from him.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.59 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th September, 1922.

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

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—STATE TRADING CONCERNS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.35]: Although this is a very small Bill, it is of some importance. At the same time, I shall not detain hon. members very long in moving the second reading. The object of the Bill is to amend the State Trading Concerns Act of 1917 by striking out the proviso to Section 25, which prevents the Government consummating the sale of any State trading concern without the consent of Parliament. Last session I asked the Leader of the House whether it was the intention of the Government to bring forward a Bill of this character. The Minister assured us that it was the intention of the Government to do so. A similar question was put to a Minister in another place, and he too said it was the intention of the Government to introduce such a Bill. The session passed by and no Bill was placed before hon. members. During the course of the Address-in-reply debate this session, I drew the attention of the Leader of the House to the fact that there was no mention of the Bill in the Governor's Speech, and I informed him that if the Government did not intend to introduce such a measure, I would endeavour to do so and so test the sincerity of Ministers on the point. The Minister made no reply to the matter when he was closing the debate on the Address-in-reply. I have kept my promise and I have introduced this small Bill in order to ascertain where we stand regarding the State trading concerns. I will not discuss the merits or demerits of State trading. All I desire to do is to see that the Government have an ordinary business opportunity to negotiate the sale of these concerns. No individual could negotiate a sale or a purchase with his hands tied. No Government can dispose of any State trading concern advantageously to the State if their hands are tied by having to go to Parliament for permission to sell. Following ordinary business conditions, a person will not place the whole of his cards on the table if they are to be submitted subsequently to another body and, perhaps, be turned down to his disadvantage. The Government must have power to consummate a deal. We are supposed to have responsible government and, therefore, Ministers must take the responsibility of their actions. The Government are really pledged to deal with these State trading concerns and all I seek

by the Bill is to give them power to carry out their policy. The memorandum to the Bill sufficiently explains its nature. It simply repeals the proviso to Section 25 which, as I have already indicated, prevents the Government from negotiating the sale of any of these undertakings without first securing the consent of Parliament.

The Minister for Education: It does not prevent the Government negotiating.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I should have used the word "consummation."

The Minister for Education: It prevents us giving possession.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That is so, it prevents you from consummating the sale without the consent of Parliament. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.41]: I have pleasure in supporting the Bill. We all know the difficulties under which the Government have laboured in the past in not carrying out their clearly expressed desire to dispose of these trading concerns. For a considerable time past, Ministers have announced that they wish to get rid of these undertakings. We wish to see them disposed of, but, at the same time, no one would wish to see them sold at a sacrifice which would adversely affect the finances of the State. We must realise that so long as these State trading concerns are in existence, so long are other industries imperilled, and the development of our secondary and other industries is retarded. The simple amendment which is suggested in the Bill will accomplish exactly what members of the Ministry desire, namely, the power to dispose of the trading concerns without reference to Parliament. Anyone in business must realise that if an intending buyer came along, he would not submit his proposal to be discussed in open by Parliament. If I were to seek to sell a business or property, I would not wish to submit the details to be discussed in Parliament or before any other public body. It would be unfair to the buyer because all the details concerning his business would be made public. These negotiations should be carried on in a reasonable and proper way and we can rely upon Ministers to use their best efforts to sell to the best possible advantage. If these trading concerns are disposed of, we shall then be able to encourage other capital to come to Western Australia, so as to develop the resources of the State.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles debate adjourned.

BILL—LIGHT AND AIR ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.45]: I moved the adjournment of the debate in order to consider the effect of this

measure. I understand the Leader of the House intends to move an amendment when the Bill reaches Committee. If this Bill were carried in its present form, there would be nothing to hinder any person, with the concurrence of the Governor-in-Council, from agreeing to some sort of easement which might have a detrimental effect on the architectural view of adjoining buildings in the city. It was thought it would be desirable that there should be an amendment to prevent any easement such as is proposed being granted except within a certain distance from the main frontage of any building, so that the architectural beauties of the frontage at least would be preserved. There was another point: one is accustomed to find difficulties arising from time to time in connection with the prescriptive rights acquired by persons in respect of such things as overhanging eaves or projections. The Act, which this Bill is intended to amend, was passed in 1902, when it was very fully and clearly discussed and very lucidly explained by Mr. Moas. The only thing members at that time were concerned about was the question of light and air. Easements can be acquired for other rights besides light and air. If, for example, I erected a building with one of the walls right on my boundary, I might allow my eaves to overhang my neighbour's land. As the law stands at present, after 20 years I would acquire an absolute right against him in respect of the eaves. I would have an easement on his land, and he could not possibly build right up to his boundary line; he would have to leave my eaves standing. Twenty years ago it was recognised that the principle of these easements being acquired by a man who had paid nothing for them was wrong. No man should get that right. I have taken an opportunity to confer with the Solicitor General, to whom I have submitted certain amendments which I propose to move in Committee. These amendments seek to extend the provisions of the Bill to such easements as overhanging eaves or other projections. A man might erect a verandah on an upper story overhanging his neighbour's land, and in 20 years he would acquire a statutory right to that easement.

The PRESIDENT: What is the statutory distance?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There is no provision with regard to distance, so long as there is nothing on the adjoining block at the time the projection is put up. Such a verandah would deprive the adjoining owner of the right of using the land for which he had paid. That would be unfair. There is no reason why anyone who wishes to get such a privilege should not in an honourable way buy so many feet of his neighbour's land or arrange for the right to erect the projections. I support the second reading of the Bill, and give notice of my intention to put my amendments on the Notice Paper so that members will have an opportunity to consider the effect of them.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [4.50]: If the House agrees to the second reading of the Bill, which I hope it will, I do not propose to take the Committee stage to-day. Therefore the amendments suggested by Mr. Nicholson, as well as the amendment I propose to move, can be placed on the Notice Paper for the consideration of hon. members. I have gone carefully into the matter since the debate in this House last week. The Act of 1901-2 is entitled "An Act to restrict the operation of the law of prescription respecting access and use of light and air to buildings." At the same time a similar Act was passed in England and, I believe, in the other States and in most of the British dominions. New Zealand went further, and not only removed the prescriptive right but also set up barriers against the right being acquired by sale or any other process from the adjoining holder. An excellent illustration of the position is afforded in many parts of Perth. Looking north along Barrack-street from the Commercial Bank there are one or two small shops and a fruit shop, and adjoining the latter is a tall building, the South British Chambers. That building is evidently carried right up to the boundary, but on the second and third floors are windows overlooking the fruit shop. Had the Act not been passed in 1902 and had the position remained as it was, the owner of the tall building would have had a prescriptive right to the access of light and air to those windows indefinitely, and the owner of the adjoining property would have been compelled—had he desired to build large premises—to allow access of light and air to the South British Chambers. What happened in a great many cases, and what led to the passing of the Act in 1902, was that the owner of the adjoining building, in order to take away this prescriptive right when he at the moment was not ready to build, put up a hoarding and took away the light before the 20 years elapsed. The Act was passed to obviate the necessity for that. We are following the New Zealand practice in addition to taking away that prescriptive right by preventing anyone from giving the right of access of light and air for a period longer than 25 years, no matter what part of the property be concerned. That obviously defeats the object in view because in a city of tall and permanent buildings, it is clearly essential that it should be possible for the different parties to obtain access for light and air permanently. Therefore, it should be possible for them to come to a mutual arrangement. I shall place on the Notice Paper an amendment which will make it clear that this permanent easement for light and air which, when this Bill is passed, one party may grant to another only with the consent of the Governor-in-Council, must not interfere with the frontage of the building. It must be kept back a certain distance. I think the amendments suggested by Mr.

Nicholson are necessary; in fact they follow the main purpose of the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MOTION—IMMIGRATION, STATE-WIDE SCHEME.

Debate resumed from the 12th September, on the following motion by Hon. G. W. Miles—

That in the opinion of this House, the Government should, at once, enter into negotiations with the Imperial and Commonwealth authorities in order to arrange joint schemes for development and migration, which shall apply not only to the South-West Division of the State, but also to Eucla, Central, Eastern, North-West, and Kimberley Divisions.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [4.57]: This very important question which has now been brought before the House by Mr. Miles has not received the attention it should have received. I congratulate the hon. member on the way in which he presented his case. I thank him for the great work he has done not only in the State but in the old country on behalf of Western Australia. He must have gone to great personal expense to work in this way for Western Australia and much of his work must have been done under conditions which made him feel he would rather be at home. I do not think it possible for any member to vote against the motion, because it simply states that the Government should at once enter into negotiations with the Imperial and Commonwealth authorities to arrange certain joint schemes. I am sure the motion will receive the approbation of this House and the consideration of the Government. The hon. member has been generous enough to take a broadminded view of the question in placing his motion before the House, one which I feel will secure for it full consideration. The hon. member said he was entirely in favour of the Premier's policy for the development of the South-Western division. Most members of Parliament are, and they wish the Premier well in the carrying out of that important scheme. Knowing as the hon. member does, the great resources of the northern portion of the State as well as the other portions mentioned in his motion, he desires to see them developed on practically similar lines to those laid down by the Premier for the development of the South-Western division. In that he has my most hearty support. But the manner in which he desires to attain his object is somewhat different from the settlement scheme we have under consideration at the present time. The hon. member has been to the old country endeavouring to enlist the interest of people in high places for a certain purpose. That purpose is that, as the Government are not in a position to secure the necessary money or do not propose to secure it at the present

time, he desires that these important portions of Western Australia be developed by private enterprise. The hon. member is opening up a big question and one which will require our greatest consideration. I do not know that I have any objection to the proposal, so long as it is thoroughly safeguarded. If the Government of this State cannot find the necessary money to develop that portion of Western Australia, let those who are prepared to put in their money develop it under conditions which guarantee the safety of the settlers and of the State. In the South-West Division we have the best rainfall and the best conditions for development quickly and safely that can be found in Western Australia.

The Minister for Education: There is just as good rainfall in the Kimberleys.

Hon. J. EWING: What I am struck with in looking at the map I hold in my hand is that the South-West Division of Western Australia is comparatively so small, vast though its potentialities may be. Those who, like myself, are without real knowledge of the importance of the north, wonder what wealth we really have in Western Australia. In connection with the development of the State the Premier has done marvellous work; and I regret one remark made by Mr. Miles, to the effect that Sir James Mitchell might have done more in the Old Country.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: You buttered up the Premier anyhow.

Hon. J. EWING: I spoke as I felt. If it had been possible for the Premier to obtain the sixty millions necessary for the development of the north, I am sure he would have done it. Sir James Mitchell desires not only to develop the South-Western division, but every portion of the State, and every one of its industries.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Colonel Amery said he took it too cheaply.

Hon. J. EWING: I am not going into that question. I am sure the motion will be carried, and I am sure the leader of the House will give it his most earnest support. In the Kimberleys I understand there is a tropical rainfall. The surveyor who examined that territory not long ago made a glowing report, showing that there is great merit in such a proposal as that contained in Mr. Miles's motion. Some members of this House and some members of another place made a trip through that portion of the State, and the Leader of this House spoke in the most glowing terms of the portion which he traversed. I have read the very instructive and interesting pamphlet written by the Minister on the subject of his trip, and I was particularly struck with his reference to a place called Millstream, which he described as "a terrestrial paradise." If there is a heaven on earth, I feel sure, after listening to the Minister's most illuminating and interesting lectures, that it is the North-West. I wish now to ask Mr. Miles one or two questions with a view to elucidating the position and in the hope of being able to help

him. I want to know, first of all, something more about the country he intends to develop, if he gets the necessary conditions. Then I want to know what arrangements are likely to be made with the Government. The hon. member has dealt with only one small portion of this vast territory, namely thirty-two million acres north of Meekatharra. That may be the best portion of the territory—I do not know whether it is or not. The Minister for Education shakes his head. At any rate it is an important portion of the territory. Mr. Miles suggests a policy of 100 stations comprising 200,000 acres each, which would carry 10,000 sheep or 2,000 cattle. In conjunction with that, he said, there would be a settlement of 2,000 people, including of course the families of the men who take up the stations. Now I want to know what each station will cost to put in proper order, including the cost of fencing, sinking wells, and stocking. Will the cost be £1,000, or £2,000, or £5,000?

The Minister for Education: About £15,000.

Hon. J. EWING: That of course means one and a half million for the settlement of that portion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Two millions altogether for that portion.

Hon. J. EWING: That is exactly the point I want to get at. I understand the hon. member desires to obtain the assistance of the State Government, the Federal Government, and the Imperial Government. If they are to guarantee the interest at five per cent. on this amount, which will be about £100,000 per year—

Hon. G. W. Miles: A working capital of half a million is required.

Hon. J. EWING: Is the guarantee to be in respect of the nominal capital, or only the capital actually expended? We should be enabled thoroughly to understand what is expected of the State Government, the Commonwealth Government, and the Imperial Government.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They are asked to guarantee half a million in all.

Hon. J. EWING: That is a proposition which, if it appeals to private enterprise, will I am sure benefit the whole of Western Australia. Most of us look upon this State as requiring development; and if the Government cannot do it, we may, by the scheme which Mr. Miles suggests, open up this portion of the territory immediately. So long as the interests of the State are safeguarded, we can allow other people to do this development work. The hon. member seems to have been very fortunate indeed in his visit to the Old Country, where he met many eminent men, at whose hands he received the greatest consideration and much encouragement. They look upon the matter in the same way as the hon. member does, namely as an Imperial question. That is the only way in which it can be looked upon satisfactorily. It is the desire of the Empire to settle her territories and to populate this por-

tion of Western Australia in order to safeguard the nation. Unless the proposal is looked at in that way, the outcome will not be satisfactory. As has been said, unless we people our lands we cannot expect to hold them. The hon. member referred to the mineral wealth of the North-West, in which connection some concessions, he said, would be required by the company. I shall be very pleased if the hon. member, in replying, will reiterate what he said on that point, as unfortunately I was not in the Chamber during the whole of his speech. It seems to me that the mineral wealth of the North-West has not been prospected at all. If there is any hope of great mineral discoveries there, then I am here to support the proposal. While at this juncture I give my support to the motion, I hope the hon. member will realise that every member of this Council will desire to know exactly what the conditions are going to be for the taking over of the territory, and under what conditions people are going to be settled there. I think I know enough of the hon. member to be able to say that he would not take up a question of this magnitude unless he had practically settled those points, which are certainly arguable. I wish the hon. member the greatest success in his scheme. If that scheme is placed before the House in a concrete form favourable to the State and to the people to be settled in the North, it must prove of great advantage not only to the North-West, but to the whole of Western Australia.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.13]: I am very heartily in accord with the motion moved by Mr. Miles, and I wish that it were competent for me merely to devote a few remarks to supporting the general purpose of his motion. But unfortunately the hon. member himself has made that impossible, because under cover of the motion he has devoted the greater portion of his speech, not to elaborating the design which the motion might be assumed to cover, but to an attack upon the Premier and the Government generally. His speech was really more an attack upon the Government than a proposal for the development of the North-West; and if I devote a few remarks to defending the Premier and the Government, I hope that neither the hon. member nor the House will for that reason think I am the less in accord with the motion proposed. Mr. Miles made reference to the necessity for developing the Esperance lands. I do not know whether he suggests that the present Government, or any Government during the last eight years, could have done anything more than has been done in the matter of developing the Esperance lands. As the hon. member must be aware, it has been entirely impossible to obtain rails for the construction of the Esperance railway until practically the present moment, since the outbreak of war. From the time when it became apparent that rails would be available, the work of construction has been pushed ahead with all expedition; and the railway

will be built as soon as it can be built; and whilst it is being built farms will be established so that produce will be ready for the railway to carry. I do not know what more could have been done. I do not see how the settlement of the Esperance lands could have been undertaken more expeditiously. The other night I gave the House certain figures, which I do not wish to repeat, as to the number of blocks thrown open and the number taken up in the Esperance district. The policy of the Government is to push forward with the development of those farms, so that when the railway reaches them the produce will be ready for the railway to carry.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are the Esperance settlers treated by the Agricultural Bank in the same way as other settlers?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The same advances are given?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. Everything is done to assist those settlers. The people are dissatisfied that the railway has been so long delayed, but anybody who looks with reason on the condition of affairs which has prevailed since the war started, must acknowledge that we could not have completed the railway sooner. Then there is the question of settlement on the goldfields. The hon. member, I take it, referred to settlement of areas already served by railways. The hon. member made particular reference to the Transcontinental railway. Well, the railway is there and the land is there, and I do not know of any obstacle that has been thrown in the way of people wishing to take up that land. The Premier was also attacked by the hon. member because he did not correct some remark by Lord Northcliffe to the effect that Australians spoke contemptuously of the new arrivals from England as "pommies." It seems to be a very slender string on which to hang a charge against the Premier. No doubt the Premier did not attach any importance to it. But to say that the Premier showed a lack of backbone because he did not correct the remark—

Hon. G. W. Miles: He did, too.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: —is a most ridiculous statement to make.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Premier, going there to get immigrants, actually left such a statement unchallenged!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the Premier, in reply, omits to correct some statement made, is that evidence of lack of backbone? What backbone was required to make the explanation which Mr. Miles made at a subsequent function? It certainly needs some hardihood to definitely state that that is the origin of the term, although I think the origin put up by Mr. Miles is very acceptable. Still, there is a great deal of difference of opinion as to the real origin, and it is a fact that by some people the term "pommy" is used as a term of contempt.

Hon. G. W. Miles: By a minority.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member's explanation was an entirely right and proper one, and we are indebted to him for having made it; but I cannot see any grave charge of lack of backbone to be brought against the Premier because he did not make such explanation. The chief charge laid by the hon. member is that the Premier has not agreed to this proposed scheme for development in the North-West, this 32 million acres proposition.

Hon. G. W. Miles: One cannot even get an answer from him.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member knows that the Premier has discussed it with him and Mr. Shallcross over and over again, and that at the present time he is awaiting an answer from the Commonwealth Government in regard to the guaranteeing of interest. This proposal was first put up in the latter part of last year. It was that 32 million acres north of Meekatharra should be handed over to this company free of rent and taxes for the first 10 years. The 32 million acres includes 12 million acres at present held under pastoral lease, and about 20 million acres now unoccupied. The proposal was that the rent on the 12 million acres already taken up should be foregone, and that for a period of 10 years no rent or taxes on any part of the 32 million acres should be payable. It was further proposed that the dividends of the company should be limited to a maximum of 12½ per cent. per annum on the capital, and that a minimum dividend of 5 per cent. per annum should be guaranteed by the State Government. Nothing could be done under this proposal until the Land Act, limiting the area which any person can hold under pastoral lease, should be amended. The promoters of the scheme set out, amongst other things, a plan of the proposed subdivision. The idea was to divide the property into 100 stations of approximately 200,000 acres each. They submitted to the Government a plan of one of those 200,000 acre stations, divided into 16 paddocks. They also set out the capital outlay, the estimated working costs and the revenue, together with a statement showing railway freights to be debited to capital account, and to working expenses each year. It was estimated that the carrying capacity of the land would be one sheep to the 20 acres. That is one of the points which requires very careful consideration. This territory, pastorally speaking, is within fairly reasonable distance of Meekatharra. The reason why of the 32 million acres only 12 million acres have been taken up, is that the country is not by any means the best of our pastoral country. There is a great deal of doubtful country within it, country whereon the rainfall is very poor. I have had many conversations about this proposition with Mr. Canning, the surveyor for the North-West, who says that is the reason why this 20 million acres is still unoccupied, namely, that it is not really an inviting pastoral proposition. We know

that must be the case, because the demand for fairly good pastoral country is very keen indeed. But Mr. Canning says that by sinking wells an average depth of 40 feet a permanent supply of water would be assured.

Hon. G. W. Miles: At a depth of from 6 feet to 50 feet.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Mr. Canning by no means speaks ill of the country, but it is a country neglected because it is less inviting than a good deal of other country. So this company who put forward the proposition cannot be charged with trying to pick out the eyes of the State or to get anything of extraordinary value for themselves. In that respect their proposition cannot be challenged, but it is open to question whether the carrying capacity is up to what the company thinks, or even near enough to it to give a reasonable prospect of success. The area of each station is 20 miles by 16 miles, or 320 square miles. These stations were spoken of by the hon. member as a group settlement. Speaking pastorally, they do constitute group settlement. But when the hon. member speaks of group settlement from the point of view of providing educational facilities, and essential things of that sort, it is altogether different. Even in the agricultural areas, where the average size of a farm may be set down as a square mile, we find great difficulties in providing educational facilities. It is because of that our educational cost is so great in proportion to our population, and in more than half of the total number of our schools the average attendance is less than 20 children. That is catering for a territory where the average farm is a square mile or at most two square miles, whereas here each station is 20 miles by 16 miles in extent! So it is not one of those group settlements which makes it easy to afford the necessary facilities of life. The idea of telephonic communication between the proposed stations is an excellent one, and if it can be carried out in a proposition of that sort, surely it should be easy to connect up every farm in the agricultural areas, to the very great advantage, not only of the farmers, but of the whole State. Each station is to be divided into 16 paddocks of 12,800 acres each, each paddock to contain four waters. There will be required on each station 180 miles of fencing plus 20 miles for homestead paddocks. Then we have the statement of capital outlay. On a 10,000 sheep station, the improvements required are as follows:—200 miles of 5-wire fencing to provide 16 paddocks each of an area of 12,800 acres; 200 miles of fencing at £50 per mile, or £10,000. Since the estimate was sent in the cost of wire has considerably decreased, and the £10,000 provided for that purpose might easily be reduced to £8,000, or even to £7,500. Then there are 25 wells at £250 each, or £6,250. Homestead buildings, yards, etc., £2,500, and the proportionate cost of a central shearing shed and equipment, £500; or a

total of £19,250. From this we deduct portion of cost of such fencing as will serve for two properties, £1,800, and half the cost of some of the wells which would be made to serve adjoining properties, £2,000, bringing the total cost of an established station, without any stock, to £15,450. As I say, the cost of the fencing is probably over-estimated.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If you put sheep there, you will have to provide netting fences.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That may bring up the cost again. I cannot express an opinion on that. My purpose is to place before the House the proposition which the hon. member placed before the Government and then to ask members this question: This proposition was placed before us 12 months ago. In the circumstances, has the hon. member a case against the Government when he accuses us of not having finalised it as yet? I approve entirely of the hon. member's motion, and I commend the enterprise of those gentlemen who put forward this proposition. As far as I can see, it is a proposition which may be made into something workable to the great advantage of the State. I am speaking solely from this point of view: that the hon. member, under cover of his motion, launched a venomous attack on the Premier because the Premier has not yet given approval to the scheme and undertaken what the company asks. I want each member to put the question to himself, asking is it fair to condemn the Premier in that fashion because up to the present he has not definitely and finally accepted the scheme?

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have your own proposals in the South-West, and you won't listen to anything else.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Then it is intended to purchase 2,500 breeding ewes and 75 rams, at a cost of £2,000, making a total for the establishment and equipment of each station of £17,450. That is for each individual settler. Then there is the estimate of the working expenses and revenue for a 10,000 sheep station. No doubt hon. members such as Mr. Holmes, who have had practical experience, will know whether these figures are to be relied upon. Estimates, whether put forward by Government officers or by private persons, do not always pan out exactly as expected. The estimated working costs and revenue of each station are as follows:—Working costs—railway freights, £1,000 annually. It seems a large sum for one station owner to pay. The figures are given here—

Cartage on 49 tons at £7, £343; wages of three men at £4 per week, £665; shearing 10,000 sheep at 9d. each, £375; cost of stores, £317; rent, of 200,000 acres at 10s. per thousand acres, £100; interest on borrowed capital say, £7,000 at 7 per cent., £490; rates and taxes and destruction of dogs £210, total £3,500.

Revenue—200 bales of wool at £15 per bale or 11d. per lb, £3,000; sale of 2,000 sheep at 10s. each, £1,000; surplus £500.

In a subsequent return the figures are varied slightly. It was apparently recognised that if the concern was to cost £17,450, it would not be sufficient to provide merely the interest on £7,000. In another return interest on the balance of capital is provided, and that has the effect of wiping out the surplus and making instead a loss of £650. It is explained, and I think quite rightly, that costs generally in the pastoral industry will have to be reduced if the industry is to prosper. It is assumed that upon a reduction being made in these costs, this will prove to be a financial proposition, paying 7 per cent. interest on borrowed capital, and allowing the person who puts in £10,000 of his own money interest at 7 per cent. There is also a statement showing the amount of railway freight payable in connection with the development of a 10,000 sheep station, and to be debited to capital account.

200 miles of five-wire fencing to Meekatharra, 70 tons at £2 11s. 6d., £205; 25 mills, tanks and troughing to Meekatharra, 40 tons at £8 13s. 7d., £347; building material for homestead, outbuildings, and wool shed, to Meekatharra, 70 tons at £5, £350; passenger fares, £98, total £1,000.

There is also a return setting out the railway freight to be debited annually to working expenses of a 10,000 sheep station after construction is completed. Those who have sheep stations will know whether these figures are accurate or not. I have no doubt they are approximately correct.

200 bales of wool equals 33 tons, Meekatharra to Perth, £7 16s. 10d., £258 15s. 6d.; 2,000 sheep equals 15 bogies, Meekatharra to Perth, £32 10s., £487 10s.; 8 tons stores, Perth to Meekatharra, £11 6s., £90 8s.; 8 tons horse feed, Perth to Meekatharra, £1 14s., £13 12s.; passenger fares and parcels, £149 14s. 6d.; total £1,000. I do not know whether the cheapest way of disposing of bales of wool would be to send them by rail from Meekatharra to Perth. That was the proposition at first put up. It involves the expenditure of a large amount of money in respect to each property, namely, £17,000. What the Government were asked to do was to amend the Land Act so as to permit the company to take up these 32 million acres of land. There was to be an arrangement under which 12 million acres were to be acquired from existing owners. After that had been done the Government were to forego all rents and taxes on the 20 million acres of vacant land, and upon the 12 million acres already acquired, and to guarantee 5 per cent. on the capital invested in the company. The company in turn was to be limited to a dividend of 12½ per cent. Obviously, the dividend would not accrue during the earlier years of operation, but would come later. In fact, it may be taken for granted, without in any way condemning the scheme on that account, that during the first five years the Government would have

to find the 5 per cent. interest. The company could not pay dividends out of profits while they were developing these properties.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are doing the same thing in the South-West.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not put that forward as an objection to the scheme, but I say nevertheless it is a fact. After several discussions had taken place upon the matter, the request that rents and taxes should be foregone on the whole of the 32 million acres was withdrawn. The people concerned agreed that in respect to the properties at present occupied they should continue to pay rent and taxes in the ordinary way, but claimed that for 10 years there should be no rents or taxes on the remaining 20 million acres. That position had only just been reached when the Premier left for England.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It was reached before the Premier went to the Premiers' conference in January.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I know, but he went to England directly afterwards. I ask hon. members to be fair, and to put this question to themselves: Would the Government have been justified during the last session of Parliament in introducing the necessary legislation and giving this company the concession it required and the guarantee of 5 per cent. interest? Would it have been reasonable to put such a proposition forward towards the end of last year and expect the Government to carry it out during the last session of Parliament? It would not have been reasonable. Some amendment to the proposition was necessary before the Government could consider it. It was inequitable to ask that there should be a relief from all rates and taxes on 12 million acres of land from which the Government were then receiving rents and taxes, and this had to be withdrawn before the matter could be considered at all. It was withdrawn. The Premier then went to the Premiers' conference, and directly he returned he went to London, and Mr. Miles went with him. The Premier has only been back two or three months. On his way back Mr. Miles had a conference with the Prime Minister. The proposition now before us, and before the Federal Government, is that the Federal Government shall make the necessary monetary guarantees, and that the State Government should do the other things asked for. Up to the present moment we have not received any word from the Federal Government as to whether they are prepared to make the necessary guarantee. In the circumstances, is it fair to say that the State Government have not given due consideration to the scheme, or to condemn the Premier because there is not already a Bill before the House and an agreement on the lines suggested by Mr. Miles? The scheme is a bold one. I do not think we will develop that portion of Western Australia except by bold schemes. There is a great deal to be said in favour of this one, and I hope it

will be possible for the Federal Government, the State Government and this company to come to terms for the taking in hand of such a proposition. But surely it is not a proposition to be rushed into. The hon. member quoted from some remarks by Col. Amery to the effect that the Imperial Government desired at the outset to take in hand a scheme that presented the least element of risk.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I really believe that is a sound policy for the State to adopt. It cannot be said that an enterprise of this kind presents no element of risk until it has been carefully analysed. It is entirely proper that such an investigation should be made, and I hope some good will come of it. I do think the hon. member has been entirely unreasonable and absolutely unfair in his attack upon the Premier because that hon. gentleman has not already finalised a proposition of this magnitude, involving the State in so much responsibility. It is not only a matter of the 5 per cent. That would not amount to a large sum of money in comparison with the whole scheme. As Col. Amery said of the Premier's scheme, so much depends upon making a success of it. If we lost the 5 per cent., it would be nothing provided the scheme was a success. Before the Government can embark upon it they have to satisfy themselves that it has a thoroughly good prospect of being a success.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We only ask you to satisfy yourselves one way or the other.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That cannot be done in a day. Although the Government are entirely sympathetic, they are by no means without advice from people who have a great deal of knowledge of the pastoral industry, and who say it will not be a success, and who, in fact, entirely condemn the scheme. It is not as though it was something which a large number of experienced pastoralists felt would be a success; a great many of them are more sceptical concerning it than the most hostile critics are of the South-West scheme of the Premier's. That, however, will not deter the Government from giving the matter full and careful consideration.

Hon. J. Ewing: There are always many croakers about.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes. It is wrong to suggest that the Premier is one of them. It is also wrong to suggest that he is unwilling to take any risk that a man who sincerely loves his country and is desirous of developing it would be willing to take. I hope the motion will be carried, and that it will have some good effect. I only ask each individual member to put to himself this question—Is Mr. Miles justified in launching a venomous and malicious attack against the Premier because that hon. gentleman has not already finalised this matter?

Hon. A. Lovekin: Are you going to vote for the no-confidence motion?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is not a no-confidence motion. It is a motion in favour of the development of this country, and as such I support it. It is impossible for me to explain the vindictive and venomous attitude of the hon. member towards the Premier. Has any member of the Government failed to give him every facility to further his scheme? I know I have done all I could to help him. The hon. member himself admits that we have enabled him to place this scheme before the Prime Minister. We have gone out of our way to help him, but, because this big scheme has not been finalised in a moment, he attacks the Government in this way. With these remarks, in the course of which I have felt obliged to depart to a certain extent from the motion as it stands, on account of the attack made upon the Premier by Mr. Miles, I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.44]: I do not profess to speak with any knowledge of this subject. I merely rise to enter a protest. During the course of his speech Mr. Miles read a number of quotations from after dinner or after luncheon speeches. We also were regaled with a considerable amount of what I may term private conversations. I further understand, from an interjection on the part of Mr. Miles, that he proposes in the course of his reply to relate a private conversation which he had with the Premier concerning the ridiculous charge that he (the Premier) did not reply to Lord Northcliffe with reference to the light in which the people of Australia regard the immigrant. I protest against these private conversations being retailed in this Chamber. The principle is entirely wrong, and I hope the hon. member will not again adopt such a course.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.45 p.m.

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

NOTICE OF MOTION—URGENCY.

Mr. SPEAKER: I received yesterday a communication from the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter), who wanted to move the adjournment of the House. While the subject matter of the hon. member's motion was definite in character—it is in reference to the dispute in the newspaper industry—I was of opinion that the matter was before the court and therefore it would not be wise for the House to discuss it. So the question did not come before the House yesterday. The hon. member came to my room as I was coming out just now, and told me he was very anxious to have the matter discussed. This afternoon I tried to learn from Mr. Justice Draper whether the case was actually before the court and therefore sub judice. I could not get Mr. Justice Draper, but his associate referred me to the Clerk of the Arbitration Court, who found Mr. Justice Draper and was instructed by the Judge to give me the history of the case, which is as follows:—

Reference was made on the 28th August, answers filed on the 7th September, and issues settled on the 11th September. The case has not been listed up to date.

Not being a legal man, and being unable to get advice from Mr. Justice Draper as to whether the case is sub judice, and since the member for Leederville is anxious to do something this afternoon, I have decided to place the position before the House and let the House take the responsibility of saying whether the matter shall be dealt with, accepting the risk of its being before the court. If it be the wish of the House, I will read the letter from the hon. member. Is it the wish of the House that the letter be read?

Hon. M. F. TROY: It is extraordinary, Sir, that you should approach the House in the manner you have done and ask for a decision. It is a matter for your own decision. The Speaker does not allow a motion for adjournment unless in his opinion the matter is definite and of urgent public importance. I submit that this is your peculiar province.