

in every way. We are told that Mr. Bruce is to visit Western Australia in a month's time or so. I suggest that a deputation representative of the Government, the Opposition, and the Country Party, together with one or two members of the Upper House, meet Mr. Bruce—

Mr. Panton: Bring him here and make the speeches; that would be the best way.

Mr. ANGELO: And insist on his hearing and realising what our difficulties are.

Mr. Marshall: What about kidnapping him for a while?

Mr. ANGELO: Perhaps if we held him as a hostage for a time we might get something more. I agree that Mr. Bruce has been a most sympathetic Prime Minister so far as Western Australia is concerned. He has been very sympathetic to us, more so than his predecessors, but we want to get him by himself, away from the influence and atmosphere of the Eastern States.

Mr. Panton: That is the trouble.

Mr. Marshall: Woe betide him if we get him!

Mr. ANGELO: Then we could point out to him what our difficulties are, what our responsibilities are, and the huge territory we are asked to develop, not only on our own behalf but for the sake and safety of Australia.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.19 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 19th June, 1928.

	Page
Questions: Mining, boring at Coolgardie	96
Licenses Reduction Board	96
Population of the State	96
Papers: Land Boards, appointment	97
Personal Explanation: Hon. A. Lovekin and Financial Agreement	97
Address-in-Reply, second day, conclusion	97
Adjournment, special	98

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

QUESTION—MINING, BORING AT COOLGARDIE.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: Is it the intention of the Mines Department to cease boring operations at Coolgardie, and to shift the boring plant elsewhere?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Boring operations at Coolgardie will be temporarily suspended because of the urgent need for the drill elsewhere.

QUESTION—LICENSES REDUCTION BOARD, POWERS.

Hon. J. R. BROWN asked the Chief Secretary: Is it a fact—1, That the Licenses Reduction Board, since its appointment, has suppressed over 30 licenses within the districts of Kalgoorlie and Boulder? 2, That the term of office of the board expires on the 31st December next? 3, If so, can the Government take any steps to prevent the board in the meantime suppressing further licenses in these districts, seeing that there is every possibility of a great revival in the mining industry?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, The Licenses Reduction Board, acting under the powers of Part V. of the Licensing Act, 1911 (as amended), has reduced the number of licenses in the districts of Kalgoorlie and Boulder by 46 licenses. 2, Yes. 3, Every determination of the Board arrived at under Part V. of the Licensing Act is, by Section 92, final and conclusive and shall not be questioned in, or reviewed or amended by any court whatsoever. The Government has no power to interfere with the board.

QUESTION—POPULATION OF THE STATE.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Chief Secretary: What was the percentage increase of the population of Western Australia from 1st July, 1927, to 31st May, 1928?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The population figures for the above periods are as follows:—Population on 1st July, 1927, 385,043; population on 31st May, 1928, 398,667; increase to 31st May, 1928, 13,624; percentage increase 3.54.

PAPERS—LAND BOARDS, APPOINTMENT.

On motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland ordered: That all papers dealing with the appointment of the Land Boards at Perth, Geraldton, and elsewhere (if any) be laid on the Table of the House.

The Chief Secretary laid the papers on the Table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. Lovekin and Financial Agreement.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.35]: With the indulgence of the House I desire to make a short personal explanation. In the "West Australian" of the 18th June there appears a paragraph purporting to set out a telegram sent from the Premier to the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister's reply thereto. The Premier, in his telegram, said that statements were being made by opponents of the Financial Agreement that evidence before the Constitution Commission, given by the Commonwealth Statistician, indicating that the agreement would be decidedly unfavourable to Western Australia, had been deliberately suppressed by the Prime Minister's Government, and that this was having a detrimental effect. The telegram went on to say, "It is important that you make a statement to dispel the misunderstanding." To this the Prime Minister replied that the statement in regard to the evidence of Mr. Wickens was totally untrue, and that "the whole of the evidence given before the Constitution Commission was given in public, and was being printed and distributed as rapidly as the mechanical work of printing could be carried out." I believe I am indirectly responsible for the telegram having been sent to the Prime Minister, because I said in the corridor, in the presence of a member of another place, that the evidence had been taken by the Commission, and that the figures which were supplied by Mr. Wickens were not being printed. I did not use the words "being suppressed"; I used the words "not being printed." Before that telegram was sent the member in question knew that I distinguished between "not being printed" and "suppressed." I would not think of accusing the Prime Minister of deliberately suppressing evidence. The statement that I made was founded upon a telegram I received from Senator Pearce on the 17th April. Members

will recollect that Senator Pearce, whilst speaking at a meeting of the Constitutional Association, Sydney, said that the Parliament of New South Wales and other Parliaments, and the public generally, would have the evidence and the report of this Commission, and they could arrive at a decision on the facts. Knowing that the first report of the Commission was published in July last, and that up to this date (that was in April last) no other portion of the evidence had been published, I telegraphed to Senator Pearce and told him it was important that, as our Legislative Council elections were coming on, and we were meeting in June to discuss this agreement, we should, if possible, have this evidence. I telegraphed to him on the 17th April to this effect, "Is it not a fact that evidence is not being printed? Is it not a fact that beyond the first few days of Commission's proceedings it is not intended to print anything further?" The reply I received was, "All evidence considered by the Chairman as being of permanent public value will be printed. The evidence of many witnesses now in hands of printer." That was in April, before the mechanical contrivances of the Commonwealth Printing Department were being pushed, but we have not received that evidence up to the present. I think it is highly desirable we should have it before we approach the consideration of this important subject. I draw attention to this because Senator Pearce's statement does not accord with the telegram sent by the Prime Minister to the Premier, nor does it accord with what I stated in the corridor to a member, that the evidence had not been printed, although the member I referred to put it to the Premier, as my statement, that the evidence was being suppressed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. Wickens' evidence is very important.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I think it is important. I thought it only right to myself that I should make this explanation, as I have been given the credit, indirectly, for causing this telegram to be sent.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day—Conclusion.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the 7th June.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-reply adopted.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.44]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday next, 26th June.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.

lections from farming and pastoral areas separate and advise that to do so would cause considerable extra expenditure. (3) (a) Agricultural areas, £9,426,720. (b) Pastoral areas, £3,096,240.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for one month granted to Mr. Sampson (Swan) and Mr. Latham (York) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—FINANCIAL AGREEMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 14th June.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 19th June, 1928.

	Page
Question: Vermin, bonuses and taxation	98
Leave of absence	98
Bill: Financial Agreement, 2A.	98

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

QUESTION—VERMIN, BONUSES AND TAXATION.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH (for Mr. Lindsay) asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What amount has been paid by the Department of Agriculture as bonuses on dingoes, foxes and eagles, to February, 1928, together with the number of each in (a) the agricultural areas, (b) the pastoral areas? 2, What amount of vermin tax has been collected by the Taxation Department to February, 1928, in (a) the agricultural areas, (b) the pastoral areas? 3, What is the estimated value of unimproved land on which tax can be collected in (a) the agricultural areas, (b) the pastoral areas?

The **MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE** replied: 1, (a) Agricultural areas: Dogs, £4,102; foxes, £910; eagles, £83 10s.; total, £5,155 10s.; (b) Pastoral areas: Dogs, £12,690; foxes, £142; eagles, £490 5s.; total, £13,322 5s. 2, The total collected from the assessments for 1926-7 and the year 1927-8 up to February, 1928, was £36,254 8s. 11d. The Taxation Department do not keep col-

MR. PANTON (Menzies) [4.37]: A good deal has been written and spoken upon this question. I listened with deep interest to the utterances of various hon. members on the proposed agreement, and as regards opposition to it I regret to have to say that the members who have expressed themselves as adverse to the Bill have spoken purely by way of criticism and not in any way as offering a constructive alternative. Personally, I am quite prepared to admit that I would have liked to see the States obtain more than they are to receive under the agreement, but until such time as someone can put forward an alternative more advantageous to the States I must vote for the agreement as submitted by the Premier. In common with the Leader of the Opposition I am unable to find a better alternative.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I can find a better alternative, but I have not the chance.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. gentleman has as much chance as I have. Possibly, like myself, he lacks the ability to find a better one.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That may be, I will plead guilty.

Mr. PANTON: The hon. member need not get cross.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, no. I am merely suggesting that—

Mr. PANTON: For once I find myself in agreement with the "West Australian." I too, think we should when considering this financial proposal look a little beyond our own State.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Now we have it, of course.