

Noes—23.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. Molr
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Heal	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May
Mr. Jamieson	

(Teller.)

Majority for—3.

THE SPEAKER: As there is an absolute majority voting in the affirmative, I declare that the Bill has passed the third reading.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 2nd July, 1959.

CONTENTS.

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Government employees, dismissals	59
Railway rollingstock, construction outside Midland Workshops	59
Crosswalks, revocation of new regulation	59
DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES	60
COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION	60
BILL :	
Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) :	
1r., 2r.	60
Com., report, 2r., passed	70
ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, THIRD DAY	70
Speakers on amendment—	
The Hon. A. F. Griffith	70
The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	76

The **PRESIDENT** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Dismissals.

1. **THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND** asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What is the total number of Government employees dismissed since the Liberal-Country Party coalition government took office?

(2) What is the number of employees dismissed from each department or service involved in the Government's purge?

(3) Does the Government policy relate to labourers only, or are the professional and administrative staffs to suffer similar fates?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The hon. member's question involves an approach to all departments and it is hoped to have the information available by Tuesday.

In the meantime, the following is the position in regard to the day labour organisation of the Public Works Department:—

In the change-over from day labour to private contract work—which is in accordance with this Government's policy—the services of 131 men have been dispensed with to date by the Public Works Architectural Division.

Of these men, 58 have been placed in private employment through the efforts of the Architectural Division.

As 68 of the 131 men dismissed have not registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service, it is assumed that these 68 men have themselves obtained employment elsewhere. In the same period, 72 men have left of their own accord to take up work elsewhere.

These figures compare with 217 men who were sacked by the previous Government between October, 1958, and the end of March, 1959, during which time 57 left of their own accord and eight retired.

RAILWAY ROLLINGSTOCK.

Construction Outside Midland Workshops.

2. **THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND** asked the Minister for Mines:

For what reasons is it the intention of the Government to have new rolling-stock for the W.A.G.R. constructed outside of the Midland Junction Workshops on the cost-plus system as practised by the previous Liberal-Country Party coalition?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The reference to cost-plus system is not understood. Tenders for 200 KA wagons were called on a firm price basis and not a cost-plus system.

CROSSWALKS.

Revocation of New Regulation.

3. **THE HON. G. E. JEFFERY** asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the dangerous situation existing in relation to the safety of pedestrians on crosswalks, will the Government give consideration to the revocation

of the new regulation governing traffic on crosswalks which was gazetted on the 23rd June, 1959, in favour of the previous regulation which provided the pedestrian with greater protection.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The new traffic regulation 231, which was recommended by the Police Traffic Branch and the Main Roads Department Traffic Engineering Section, gives greater protection to pedestrians in respect to motorists who may cause a dangerous situation, which factor was not specifically included in the previous regulation.

DEPUTY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

On motion by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), resolved:

That in accordance with Standing Order No. 31a, the Hon. E. M. Davies, the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon and the Hon. A. R. Jones, be elected to act as Deputy Chairmen of Committees during the current session.

COMMITTEES FOR SESSION.

On motions by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), sessional committees were appointed as follows:—

Standing Orders.—The Hon. E. M. Davies, the Hon. H. K. Watson and the Hon. A. L. Loton.

Library.—The Hon. J. G. Hislop and the Hon. R. F. Hutchison.

House.—The Hon. W. R. Hall, the Hon. E. M. Heenan, the Hon. J. Murray and the Hon. L. C. Diver.

Printing.—The Hon. G. Bennetts and the Hon. J. M. Thomson.

Sitting suspended from 2.25 to 2.33 p.m.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (CANCELLATION OF PROCLAMATION OF BILL.)

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [2.34] in moving the second reading said: Firstly I would like to say how pleased I am that members did not listen to the suggestion made by Mr. Wise yesterday, when I asked for a suspension of Standing Orders. He said, "Who knows; we might not get this Bill for a couple of weeks." I am glad that we are in a position to deal with it this afternoon; although, perhaps, it arrived a little more hastily than I expected. Nevertheless, I

am pleased that I took the precaution of asking the House to suspend the Standing Orders, and that members agreed to the suspension.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I think the word "hastily" was well chosen.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As we all know, the last State general election was held on the 21st March, 1959; and on the 24th March, of the same year, three days after the general election, the Chief Electoral Officer wrote to the Minister for Justice and told him of the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly which, under the Electoral Districts Act, were out of balance. On the same day the Chief Electoral Officer sent a memo to the Solicitor-General enclosing a copy of his report to the Minister, and advising him that the Minister for Justice had said that it was Cabinet's desire that a proclamation should be issued under the Electoral Districts Act—it was Cabinet's desire that this proclamation should be issued.

The report of the Chief Electoral Officer indicated that seven metropolitan seats were well over the quota; and two in the agricultural areas and one in the mining and pastoral areas, were under quota. On the 1st April, 1959, the Governor-in-Council signed the requisite proclamation directing a redistribution and appointing three commissioners as is provided for in the 1947 Act. It is interesting to note that on this particular day two things became most evident—one was that there were two members of the previous Cabinet who attended on his Excellency at the Executive Council meeting, one being Mr. Wise and the other Mr. Nulsen; the other members of Cabinet, for some inexplicable reason, were not there. The second point of interest is that no other business was conducted on that particular day.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is not true; I repeat, it is not true.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I can remember one occasion when I made a similar statement; by interjection I said, "That is not true." I did not mean that the hon. member was a liar, but I was accused of calling him such.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I just say that your statement is not true.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I realise that by the use of the words, "That is not true," the hon. member means that it is a misstatement of fact and that I am not a liar! However, I am informed that that was the case but the hon. member should know better than anybody else, because he was there.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is right.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sure the hon. member will correct me on that point. I do not deny that the action taken by the then Government was in order—it

was in no way illegal—but I strongly question the circumstances under which the action was taken on that day.

The papers which led up to this proclamation were prepared by the Solicitor-General at the verbal request of the Minister for Justice, and were submitted to the Minister by the Solicitor-General under date the 25th March, 1959; and by which date it had surely become abundantly clear that the previous Government did not hold a majority of seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The Solicitor-General at that time made it perfectly clear to the Minister for Justice that, under the Electoral Districts Act, the commissioners' final report was not required to be submitted until eight months from the date proclaimed, in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of the Act, and, accordingly he recommended that the proclamation should state that the date of its issue should be the date from which the period should start.

It has been questioned as to why it was necessary to call Parliament together earlier than usual for the express purpose of dealing with this piece of legislation. That was contained in the opening paragraph of His Excellency's Speech. Anybody who has made a study of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, knows why it was necessary, because all one has to do is to calculate the time factor. One will then easily see that unless some action had been taken, and Parliament called together earlier than usual, the Electoral Commissioners might have found themselves in more difficulties. I want to contrast this action of the previous Government—and there are many members in this Chamber who were in Parliament during that period of contrast.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: It is quite normal.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I suggest the hon. member keep out of this, because her knowledge of the subject is limited to interjections, which will get her nowhere.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is only your idea!

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I'll say it is!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will be able to contrast this matter a lot quicker if I am permitted to tell the story without interjections. It will be remembered that we had a general election in 1956. Some interesting questions were asked in the Legislative Assembly in and around that time. If members refer to page 182, Vol. 1, of the 1953 *Hansard*, they will find that the member for Vasse—the present Minister for Lands—asked the Premier (the member for Northam) the following questions:—

Has the Chief Electoral Officer reported to the Minister concerned that from the state of the rolls made up for

the triennial election held on the 14th February, 1953, not less than five electoral districts fall short of, or exceed by 20 per cent., the quota as ascertained for such districts, provided for in the Electoral Districts Act, 1947?

The answer to that question was, "Yes." So it was clear on the 19th August, 1953—and that was the date the question was asked by the member for Vasse—that the Chief Electoral Officer had reported the circumstances.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: To the previous Government?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To the hon. member's Government.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: To the previous Government.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To the hon. member's Government.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I suggest you should not be complaining about an oversight on your part.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not complaining about an oversight on our part at all. The hon. member will have his turn shortly, and I think he is ready charged with all guns.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There are a few blanks.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I wish my gun was well charged.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As my colleague has said, I expect some of them will be "fizzogs."

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister will proceed with the Bill and not listen to interjections.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Very well, Mr. President. This did indicate there was a necessity to give attention to the issuing of a proclamation for a redistribution of boundaries. On the same day, the then member for Vasse continued with the question in these terms and said—

If so, what action has been taken by the Government to comply with the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947?

The then Premier (the member for Northam) in reply said—

This matter is receiving consideration.

That is where it stood apparently until the 2nd December, 1953. If members will refer to *Hansard*, page 2205, they will see that the member for Vasse submitted a further question to the then Premier (the member for Northam). In this question the member for Vasse—the present Minister for Lands—asked—

With reference to my question of the 19th August, 1953, concerning the action by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Government necessary to

comply with the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, and in view of the replies given by him that the matter was then receiving consideration, will he inform the House what action has been taken by the Government?

The then Premier (the member for Northam) replied—

The Government has not yet been able to give this matter full consideration.

Time passed until the 14th April, 1954. I would now refer members to Vol. 137 of *Hansard*, page 201, where the same member for Vasse, now the Minister for Lands, asked the then Premier (the member for Northam) a further question, namely—

With reference to my questions of the 19th August, 1953

We are getting now to the position where we have to remember years—not weeks and months—

. . . . and the 2nd December, 1953, concerning action taken by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Government necessary to comply with the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, and in view of the replies given by him that the matter was receiving consideration, will he inform the House what action has been taken by the Government?

The reply of the then Premier (the member for Northam) was, "No action has been taken up to date." The member for Vasse then, without notice, asked the then Premier a further question as follows:—

In view of that reply will he give the House an assurance that action will be taken soon to comply with the existing law?

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Surely he was not disappointed when he got his answer?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He certainly had to try hard enough. This time the then Premier (the Hon. Mr. Hawke) replied in the following terms:—

I will undertake to have the matter investigated and advise the hon. member by letter.

It certainly does not appear to have been of much consequence to have been told after all that time that he was going to consider the matter and that the hon. member for Vasse would be advised by letter.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: We did not want to be caught like that again.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That was in 1954.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: These are all reasons why the Bill should not be introduced.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It may be as well to point out at this time that between the first action and the second action 3½ months had elapsed.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Not an election, though.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That could be a very important statement; a statement which I will perhaps deal with a little later. Between the second and third action, 4½ months had elapsed, making a total of eight months during which the matter had not received final consideration.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You are complaining because we acted immediately this time.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Ultimately, the proclamation which brought about the redistribution of seats at that time was issued eight months later on the 16th December, 1954; and it will be realised that it took the Government 16 months to arrive at that decision. Sixteen months! This last one took about six days.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: As a result of the insistence of the member for Vasse.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member does not do himself much credit when he makes interjections of that nature. We know the circumstances that existed then, and we know the circumstances which existed on this last occasion.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You knew before the 1953 election.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Do you recall the 1953 election?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I recall that very well.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You knew the circumstances.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I recall the 1953 election extremely well. I have good reason to do so. It was on that occasion that I departed from the Legislative Assembly. Therefore there is nobody better able to recall that election than I. However, what a good thing happened to me, really, because I found myself here three months later.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: And now a Minister!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And I have enjoyed it ever since. On the first occasion it took 16 months, which can be contrasted with the six or seven days this time. It was quite clear that this particular proclamation was issued by a Government which had lost control of the Treasury bench.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: But had no idea when the others would take control.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the Leader of the Opposition would only keep on in those terms, I am sure I would be able to convince everybody that this Bill should be passed. The history is this: The election was held one week before Easter—a most inconvenient time.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Just as well it was not a week after.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We would have won more seats if it had been. I say it was a most inconvenient time.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I agree with you. I wish it had been a week later.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It proved to be an inconvenient time because Easter came and the system of postal voting, which we have, made it very difficult for the electoral officers to get their papers down, record the votes and count them. There were some seats in doubt but it was still apparent that the Government had lost control in the Legislative Assembly. I know the fate of the Murchison seat had not been settled, but that would not have made any difference to the ultimate situation because the then Government would still not have had the majority even if it had retained the Murchison seat. It had lost control.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: In spite of that, they were requested to carry on.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Because of the situation which prevailed.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Because the Liberal Government received such a shock when it found it had got back, that it was not prepared.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it is a poor state of affairs to hear Mr. Wise, with the experience he has gained, saying that it was asked to carry on because of those circumstances.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I am in a good mood, so do not be too provocative.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not being provocative at all. The Premier (Mr. Brand) phoned the then Premier (Mr. Hawke), I am told, and said it seemed obvious that the ultimate result of the doubtful seats would not be known until the rest of the preferences had been counted. The position at Mt. Lawley was also not at all clear. Mr. Brand said, "Could I make a request of you to carry on for another 5 or 6 days until the results can be known?" Mr. Hawke said, "Very well," and he carried on. And how he carried on!

He carried on in such a manner that I am quite sure that very few members in this Chamber will think he was fair or reasonable. Some members might think so, but I personally do not. His party was acting in a caretaking capacity and should not have taken the action it did in having this proclamation issued. In his speech, the Leader of the Country Party, now the Minister for Education, said that if his party had sufficient numbers in Parliament to form a Government with my own party, he would bring down a Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act to provide for more seats. I think he envisaged

one more, and he explained that it might be better to have more than 50 seats to try to overcome the possibility of a deadlock.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That would not necessarily overcome a deadlock.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not suggesting that it would but at least it was an explanation that he took to the people of the country in a policy speech; and the present Premier gave voice to the same idea when he spoke at places like Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. He said that in collaboration with the Leader of the Country Party he would give consideration to the matter that the Leader of the Country Party had submitted. Therefore, when the people went to the polls on the 21st of March they knew that part of the policy of the two parties, if they formed a coalition Government, would be to amend the Electoral Districts Act.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: They do that every time they are in office.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That statement is not true.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: It is. It is perfectly true.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Electoral Districts Act was amended in 1947, and it is interesting to note, since the hon. member wants to interject, that the Bill, opposed violently by Mr. Wise who was then in another place, found its way on to the statute book in 1947.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Violently is right.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was passed with the votes of the Government members of the time, and the two independent members of the time; and—because the Government of the day did not have a majority, and to make sure the Bill was passed—one member of the Labour Party voted for it also. That is how that Bill got on to the statute book. The late Mr. Needham went over to the Government side and voted for the Bill; and it is because of his assistance at that time that this legislation is now on the statute book. Is it not also interesting to observe that the hon. member who so violently opposed it in 1947 is now prepared to say that we should act on it?

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: How do you know?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And act very quickly while there is time. And that is what really took place. The last day that they were in office they said, "Let us slip into this because now we have the opportunity. Tomorrow we will not be the Government."

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Would you say that I was opposed, at any stage, to the two principles to which this Bill relates?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not suggesting that the hon. member opposed any principle, but I am pointing out the speed and alacrity with which this action was taken in 1959 in comparison with the 16 months that it took the same Government to take the same action some time before.

This Bill, short as it is, will give the opportunity of seeking the concurrence of Parliament in the proposals which will be put forward by the existing Government in respect of electoral districts. If Parliament accepts the alterations proposed, all will be well. If Parliament does not accept the alterations the proclamation will be made; and it must be quite clear that the present statute will be that under which any redistribution of seats will be carried out and put into effect. I think it is reasonable and fair, in view of the fact that the electors knew it was the written and expressed intention of the parties now in Government to bring down a Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act, that Parliament should at least be given the opportunity to consider that Bill and that it should not be forced, by an action which took place on the last day of the existence of a caretaker Government, to bring about a state of affairs that would force a redistribution of seats before anyone had a chance to see what was going to be done about it.

The proclamation denied the right of Parliament to give consideration to the matter. When the present Government took office on the 2nd April, 1959, having ascertained that this proclamation had been issued, it took steps to consult the law officers of the Crown as to what action should be taken, and they advised that there was no power in the Act for the revocation of the proclamation that had been issued or for the revocation of the appointment of the commissioners, although the Executive had, in their opinion, a full and unfettered discretion to decide the date upon which the final recommendation of the commissioners should be published.

The law officers said it would be competent for Parliament, by means of amending legislation, to revoke the proclamation, and that a Bill for such amending legislation would require an absolute majority on the second and third readings. In the light of that advice from the law officers, it was decided to introduce the present Bill. As it was undesirable to leave the decision of Parliament in doubt any longer than the present month, it was decided to call Parliament together earlier than usual.

I have pointed out, on the records that exist of the proceedings of Parliament, the great and undue haste on the part of the Hawke Government in connection with this proclamation, and the lag of 16

months that occurred on the previous occasion. I think the House will agree that the action which was taken by the Hawke Government was one which it had no right to take. Certainly it had no right to take that action, because it was there in the capacity of a caretaker Government, having been requested by the Leader of the Party which it was obvious would come into power in the space of a few days, to carry on as a caretaker Government.

When I go down to the office that I now occupy I see files marked "Left for the incoming Government," "Left for the decision of the incoming Minister," and "Left" because of this or that; and I think it ill became the previous Government not to mark this matter "Left for the consideration of the incoming Government." The action that the Hawke Government took takes me back to about 1947, when somebody asked did I remember the election. Although I was not then in Parliament I was very interested in politics, and I well remember the 1947 election and the set of circumstances which then arose, leaving the incoming Government something to do. That Government, when it came into office, found that a man had been left in the condemned cell at Fremantle Gaol for weeks and the file was marked—not literally, but in effect—"Left to the incoming Government." But the incoming Government did not have to make up its mind as to whether the man should be hanged or not, because he did away with himself.

I am certain that actions such as that of the Hawke Government, will eventually hang the Opposition, at least as far as criticism by the public is concerned, because it was not an ethical action. I hope that the Bill will be agreed to; and realising that this is Thursday afternoon and that some members may have commitments in the country, I hope that the debate may be concluded by 6.15 p.m., although that is in the hands of members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [3.7]: I think, Mr. President, that I can finish before 6.15 p.m. If I were to take the full time required to reply to the arguments so far associated with the Bill, they would now have been replied to completely. We have listened to the greatest trail of irrelevancies, expressed in a desire to smother up an improper attitude of Government, that it has been my privilege to listen to. This is a weird Bill; a Bill introduced in a most weird fashion.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: They're a weird mob.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Leader of the House was at some pains to continue with his irrelevancies rather than to explain the reasons for the Government being desirous of flouting the law. I will endeavour to be kindly in my initial remarks to the hon. member, because he is a new member of a Government, but he will not be there very long before he knows that a properly constituted Executive Council at any time is composed of two Ministers plus the Governor. May I let him know that, in very kindly fashion? May I let him know that, too, in view of his foolish remarks regarding the proper structure of the Executive Council, and in order that the proper structure of the Executive Council may gradually come to him.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is it not at least two?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is two plus the Governor; and in the absence of the Governor, also, an Executive Council meeting may be held.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Is it not at least two?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is, two.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: At least two.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We need not quibble over words. It is at least two if the Minister likes it that way. Let us say two; and that two were present. I suggest that there will be hundreds of Executive Council meetings held when the Governor will be absent and there will also be hundreds of such meetings held when two Ministers of the Crown are present, together with the Governor. Mr. Simpson knows that only too well, as you do, too, Sir. So let us not quibble over the use of words. I will leave the matter at that and in a kindly fashion I conclude by saying that the Minister will learn.

Most members who spoke were trying to find reasons why other Governments in the past did not act quickly or at all. However, most of those remarks were barely relevant because now the complaint is that the Government acted in a proper way to put the law into effect. It acted within the full authority of the law which was initiated and introduced by a coalition Government in 1947. So, not only did the previous Government perform an act which was not unlawful, but also it carried out the provisions of the law to the full.

I will now analyse the Bill a little further. It is a queer and most unusual Bill for a most unusual purpose. The short title is framed with the object of tying it to the existing law. It does not seek to amend that law. The short title is: "Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) Act, 1959", and the parent Act is the Electoral Districts Act, 1947. That

is if this legislation were to be an offshoot of that parent Act, but its sole purpose is to nullify the effect of the 1947 Act. Its sole purpose is to prevent the law being put into operation. Yet the short title attempts to suggest that the Bill is tied to the Electoral Districts Act of 1947.

Portion of the long title is: "An Act to cancel a Proclamation promulgated pursuant to the power conferred by the Electoral Districts Act, 1947." That is indeed a nice portion of a long title! So the law of 1947, by deliberate intent, is paraded—as it was on its introduction—as possessing two or three special virtues and, particularly, the virtue of automatic action. Much was said on that point. Another point in particular was the automatic effect of it on its presentation to Parliament. Much was said on that point, too. Those are two principles of the many that I oppose, and which will become law if the Bill is passed.

When the parent Act of 1947 was introduced, the Press gave it great support mainly because of the two principles which this legislation will destroy; and yet the gentlemen sitting in the front bench have sworn to uphold the law in every particular. That is one of the oaths they took. Despite that, they have decided to flout the law; to destroy the specific import of this law in which they found such virtue when it was introduced, and to say now, "We will have none of it on this occasion," even though the effect of the notification issued by the Chief Electoral Officer is that action must be taken under that law.

When the Bill of 1947 was introduced in November of that year, many vital provisions in it were paraded. But that Bill destroyed three Labour seats. That was rather vital! That was done with deliberate intent.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: A couple of rotten pocket boroughs!

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It also destroyed a Country Party seat. Was that a rotten pocket borough, too?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What do you think it will do on this occasion?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: This Bill cannot do anything such as that, but the result of implementing its contents will be just as sinister, as members of the Country Party will find out.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You have a very fertile imagination!

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, I am speaking in accordance with history. No amendment to the Electoral Act, in the history of this State, has ever been placidly introduced. Also, there has never been a placid introduction of an amendment to the Electoral Districts Act. I recall reading some remarkable comments made by you, Sir, as the Hon. C. G. Latham, M.L.A., when you were paying some attention to the

Bill introduced by the Mitchell Government. If I have time I will read them to the House.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Take your time.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will say what I want to say in my own time!

The Hon. L. A. Logan: You asked if you had time. You have three hours.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the Minister is to adopt that attitude I will mention that the debate on the third reading of the 1947 Bill lasted for nine hours. That is how pernicious it was! Also, all the speakers were on one side of the House. So, do not let us have any flippant remarks about my taking my time!

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There was nothing flippant about my remarks. You have three hours.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister will stop interjecting.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will now acquaint the House of how the 1910 Bill was dealt with. At that time *The West Australian* described the proceedings as being pandemonium. The following is an extract from page 2366 of Vol. 2 of the 1947 Parliamentary Debates; and they are my own remarks:—

If members wish to know what happened in 1910, I am sure they will get an inspiration from the index of the bound volume of *Hansard* of that year. That index of the "Redistribution of Seats Bill" gives the order of the comment on the proceedings as they developed—

Leave to introduce, point of order, dissent from ruling, point of order on the motion to print, carried on division, motion amendment to refer to select committee, negatived on division, to fix committee stage, point of order, disorder, point of order, dissent from Chairman's ruling, disorder, members suspended and removed, dissent from Chairman's ruling, privilege, inaccurate Press report, progress, committee resumed, points of order, members suspended, dissent from Chairman's ruling, Opposition members leave Chamber, committee concluded, Standing Orders suspension, point of order, members suspended, dissent from Speaker's ruling, passing and transmitting to Council.

That was the reception which the redistribution Bill received in 1910, and history has repeated itself. It had a somewhat similar reception when introduced as a Bill on more than one occasion. I would quote for inclusion in *Hansard* the debate which is reported on page 2366 of the 1947 *Hansard*.

It was the Bill of 1929, introduced by the Collier Government, which governed the action of the 1947 Bill which has now

become the law. In the 1947 Bill, some drastic and dreadful things were done. For 41 years the North had four seats in the Legislative Assembly. In 1947 the Government held none of them. The Bill absolutely provided for one of those seats to disappear. During the years when the four seats remained, and a provision was put into the law that they should always remain, the same Government which changed the representation from four to three held all the seats. There may be some connection. Of course, in the Bill which is to come forward with these electoral reforms and which we hear spoken of almost mythically, another one or two North-West seats are likely to disappear.

It could be that the quotas provided for in the 1947 law would be so varied that the Country Party might indulge in a little introspection and a little anticipation because, after all, one of the prime objectives of the Liberal Country League is to abolish the Country Party if it cannot absorb the Country Party. I can give some evidence of this if members would like to hear it, but I am afraid it will be most uncomfortable for some members opposite.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: That is quite irrelevant to the Bill.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is quite relevant to the Bill. Now the Country Party in its coalition will endeavour to ensure that its numbers are not further reduced, but with very slim prospects if the attitude of the Liberal Party is given full rein. One can imagine how long it will be before a Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act or the Electoral Act will see the light of day.

Here we return to the case of a Government ensuring that certain action shall be taken under the law, and being the first to insist that that action be not taken. These two principles stand out in the 1947 Act: The automatic action of setting in motion a commission to adjust boundaries if five or more districts fall short of, or exceeded by 20 per cent. the quota ascertained for such districts under the Act. Members will find that provision in Section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act of 1947. The latter part makes it clear that on receipt of recommendations they shall have the force of law, and the Parliament shall accept the report of the commissioners as deciding the next electoral boundaries, without Parliament having any say. This is to be found in Section 11 of the 1947 Act. It says that the final recommendations shall, without reference to Parliament by force of this Act, have the force of law and shall be effective as if enacted by Parliament.

So the law as it stands provides, firstly, for certain quotas to be applied to metropolitan, country and North-West seats; and, secondly, for action to be taken when the 20 per cent. either way comes into being. With much applause those principles,

when introduced, were said to be the cure for all time of any difficulty in or emanating from Parliament in regard to having the electoral districts and their boundaries properly put in order.

The arguments which were put up by the hon. member that the law should be prevented from taking its course until the Government gives effect to something said by its leaders in their policy speeches is absolutely specious. There is no harm in permitting the commission to continue to act, and to proceed with an investigation of the 10 seats out of the total of 50 acknowledged by law to be out of plumb, in readiness for any amendments to the Electoral Districts Act.

Also, I have pointed out—and I am certain the Country Party will find itself in an extremely bad position—it is not the prime object of the Liberal Party to ensure that there will be more country seats. Would anybody be led into believing that? Whatever emerges will fix or vary the quota to give maybe one or more seats; not that one or more seats will avoid a deadlock. In States and countries where the number is odd there are still deadlocks.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Tell us why the Hawke Government, in 1954, introduced a Bill to increase the seats in the Legislative Assembly to 52?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not know.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He did.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That may be so.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Not may be so; he did.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I turn to the very important and substantial point in this case. The Bill is framed to avoid the use of the law; to prevent the law from operating; and to prevent boundaries from being adjusted in accordance with the law—the law which had its genesis, by the action of a previous Government, quite lawfully. Here we have the Government anxious to stultify the action of the commissioners; anxious to flout the law; and anxious to prevent the law from being put into operation. We have had no reason given to us as to why that is necessary.

Let the Leader of the House read his own speech on the matter. He gave no reason whatsoever that was tangible as to why this course was necessary; and until a Bill can be brought forward to either juggle with the boundaries, the quota or something else, it is advantageous that the law by this Bill shall not be put into effect.

I am conscious of the fact that if one were to analyse the situation for hours, one could get nowhere. This Bill will pass. It will become law; one of the quaintest laws ever promulgated; amending no law,

but applying a corrective to the principles of the law in respect to which the Government credited itself and applauded itself. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [3.32]: I have listened to the Minister's explanation of this Bill and to the dissertation upon it by Mr. Wise. It seems to me that the measure really does not merit discussion on redistribution, the principles of redistribution or the great risks which some of our brethren in another place may suffer each time a redistribution Bill is brought down.

It would seem that this Bill has a twofold purpose which may be stated this way: Firstly, it is designed to frustrate an action by a retiring Government, which could hardly be said to be one done in good faith. Secondly, it seems that the Bill seeks to do nothing but clean up a drafting mistake in the relevant Act.

It is very extraordinary that Parliament should be called together to revoke a proclamation. Under general parliamentary practice, the power to do also implies the power to undo; and it seems extraordinary that the proclamation which was made by the Governor on the advice of Executive Council could not, with equal force, be revoked by the Governor in Executive Council. It seems to be nothing but faulty drafting in the Act which has occasioned Parliament being called together to deal with this problem.

For example, Section 38, of our Interpretation Act, provides—

Power given by any Act to make regulations, rules, or by-laws shall be deemed to include . . . power from time to time—

(a) to revoke the same absolutely, in whole or in part.

That seems to be a logical proposition with respect to proclamations also. Generally in an Act we find that when the Governor has power to do this or that by proclamation, he has power to revoke or vary the proclamation. I am rather surprised that that particular provision is not included in the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, as it is included in many other Acts. I am also surprised that this Bill has not been brought down to amend the Electoral Districts Act; presumably Section 12.

Section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act says that the Governor can issue a proclamation and such proclamation shall be issued on a resolution being passed by the Legislative Assembly in that behalf; or, if in the report by the Chief Electoral Officer to the Minister to whom the administration of the Electoral Act, 1907-1940, is for the time being committed, as to the state of the rolls made up for any triennial election it appears that the enrolment in not less than five Electoral Districts falls short

of or exceeds by 20 per centum the quota as ascertained for such districts under this Act. What should have appeared in that Act is the provision which is in so many others; that any proclamation made under Section 12 may be revoked or varied from time to time.

Such a provision can be found in the Wheat Products (Prices Fixation) Act, and I have no doubt that it is in numerous other Acts. Why it is not in the Electoral Districts Act is not at all clear to me. I am also at a loss to understand why the Bill now before the House does not place that provision in the Electoral Act and stop the farce of, perhaps in another two or three years, Parliament being called together again to revoke some future proclamation.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Government was anxious to give Parliament an opportunity to consider a Bill at a later date.

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: That does not answer my question. I see no reason why the Electoral Districts Act should not contain a simple provision that a proclamation made under that Act may be revoked. Had that Act contained such a provision, all that would have been necessary, when the new Government took office, was for it to issue another proclamation revoking the earlier proclamation.

I am surprised at this Bill being in the form it is, even if it is necessary. It does not amend the 1947 Act to overcome the really extraordinary position that has been disclosed by the action that has taken place.

I am going to support the Bill, because I think it is directed by an action which, in my opinion, was not taken in good faith, but at the same time, for the reasons I have explained, I feel the Bill falls short of what it really ought to do.

THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON (Suburban) [3.38]: I would like to inform the Minister that I am probably as well advised on this Bill as he is. I consider that the action of calling Parliament together at an early date to revoke a perfectly lawful act by the previous Government should receive the adverse publicity it deserves.

When we think of the action of the men who are now in the Government in trying to deprive people of their lawful right to register a vote in the ballot box in this State, we must say it is an impertinence for them to act as they are doing now.

The PRESIDENT: That has nothing to do with the Bill. It does not deprive electors of anything.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: An attempt was made to deprive electors of their right to vote. Objection was taken to the names of 700 electors in the East Perth and West Perth electoral districts, but it was disallowed by the court.

The PRESIDENT: Will the hon. member come back again to the Bill? This Bill is to set aside a proclamation.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: I can see an analogy. I think the Bill before the House will prove to have no analogy in history because, as Mr. Wise pointed out, an Act to undo what is lawful, or something that has been done in proper sequence, does smack of something besides democracy. We know this measure will be carried in the House, and no doubt during the session we will see, as I have often reiterated here, what might against right really means.

The Bill, which is the fault of the present Government, will be carried; but I just want to note the fact and let the people of Western Australia know the things that will happen here. The Government has already brought trouble and misery among the people of the State by the sackings that have been made and attempted, and by the other things that the Government has made public that it intends to do. I oppose the Bill.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines—in reply) [3.43]: I do not propose to take up much time in replying because, for one reason, there is not much to reply to. It is, however, interesting to see the attitude that is going to be adopted by the hon. member who has just sat down.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: By all her mates, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: She ought to be very happy that her party is now in opposition, because this will enable her to blast the Government of the day from one end of the State to the other.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: That is not in the Bill, is it?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is not in the Bill.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: I would rather not have the opportunity.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was said by Mr. Wise that I did not explain the necessity of the Bill. I think I did; but in case he did not understand what I said, may I briefly repeat that the Bill is necessary, as members will know, to prevent the proclamation that was issued by the previous Government on its last day in existence, from taking the passage that it is required to take before Parliament can be given a chance to consider a Bill which the Government of the day will bring down. The hon. member said that the commissioners had to deal with only 10 seats.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No, I did not.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I understood the hon. member to say so.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I accept your suggestion that I did not understand what you said, but I did not say that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member is a bit touchy today. I was not going to do any more than point out my particular point of view. However, we are in agreement, because we are agreed on what I was going to say. So, I will let it go at that.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I have just as good a working knowledge of the Act as you have.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member probably has a better one; but I would point out this to him: There would be nothing to stop the present Government from allowing the commissioners to take their course of action, and for the boundaries to be redistributed, and then for the objection period which is provided for in the Act, to run. If some members object, the objections are heard and the alterations may be made.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I wish to take the opportunity of pointing out to members, by quoting the first few words of Section 11 of the Electoral Districts Act, how the Government could have found an easy way to defeat the action of the outgoing Government in having the proclamation issued just prior to its leaving office. If the Government had wanted to commit a dishonest act it could have waited until the report had been made by the commissioners, and then it could have put the report in the waste-paper basket, because the Act lays down the things that shall be done. Section 12 of the Act states—

(1) The State may from time to time be wholly or partially redivided into electoral districts and electoral provinces by commissioners appointed under this Section in manner hereinafter provided whenever directed by the Governor by Proclamation.

(2) Such Proclamation should be issued—

(a) on a resolution being passed by the Legislative Assembly in that behalf.

The outgoing Government had all the opportunities in the world, had it wanted to do so, to present a resolution to the Legislative Assembly; there was no need for it to be presented to this Chamber—it could have been done in another place. While I am not certain, I venture to suggest that the seats which are now out of balance have been out of balance for some considerable time, and had the previous Government wanted a redistribution the words I have just quoted would have applied; but no such action was taken.

As members know, on the issue of a proclamation certain things are required to be done under the Act. The Chief Electoral Officer should report; the appointment of the electoral commissioners should take place; the electoral commissioners should deliberate and they should realign or readjust the boundaries if they think fit; and they should give a period of time for members of Parliament to object to what they have done—I think two months are allowed. When those objections have been overcome, the commissioners have to draw a new map showing the new boundaries, and they then have to complete their report.

The next step is set out in the first half a dozen words of Section 11 of the Electoral Districts Act, which reads as follows:—

At such time as the Governor should deem fit . . .

their actions should become valid. If the Government had wanted to be dishonest about this matter it could have put the report of the commissioners in the waste-paper basket; but that would have been wasting the time of the commissioners and wasting the time of members who objected to the conclusions reached by the commissioners. As members can see by the words I have just quoted from Section 11, the report is not promulgated until such time as the Governor should deem fit; therefore there is no obligation on the Government to do anything. If a Government were in power for 20 years it could continue to refuse to take action because of the wording of Section 11. But it was not this Government's desire that such a set of circumstances should prevail. All the Government asks is that this Bill be passed so that Parliament will be given an opportunity to consider amendments which will be presented later in the session.

It is easy for Mr. Wise to draw on his imagination and foreshadow what will take place. He said that he would judge it by history, and he tries to put into the hearts of members of the Country Party a great fear—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is already there.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —that the Liberal Party is out for the annihilation of the Country Party. But I would point out to him that this Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by the Attorney-General, who is the Leader of the Country Party. Therefore the hon. member's veiled insinuations will not carry much weight with those who give this matter any thought.

The Hon. J. Murray: Usually we call them red herrings.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is so easy, when one has nothing else to say, to resort to red herrings in order to have something to say.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You would be a good judge of that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is an easy statement to make, too. I want members to consider the action that the Government could have taken; but all the Government desires is to bring this matter out into the open and not take advantage of the wording of Section 11.

The Government wants this Bill passed in order temporarily to put aside what we refer to as a hasty action on the part of the previous Government. Therefore I can see no reason why this Bill should not be agreed to; I see no reason for the fears mentioned by the hon. member and, after all, if this or any other piece of legislation is presented to Parliament, it is for Parliament to decide its ultimate fate.

As regards the hon. member's statement that the Bill prevents the law from taking effect, everyone knows that laws are amended from day to day and from year to year, and that has been so from the beginning of time. Where the law has not been effective on occasions, amending legislation has been brought down to improve or alter the law. Therefore the hon. member's argument in that respect is not soundly based. I hope members will agree to pass this Bill.

The PRESIDENT: As this Bill requires the concurrence of an absolute majority it is necessary to divide the House. Ring the bells.

Bells rung and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—16.

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. A. R. Jones

(Teller.)

Noes—12.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. W. R. Hall

(Teller.)

Majority for—4.

THE PRESIDENT: I declare the motion carried with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.17]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

THE PRESIDENT: In order that the motion may be carried it is necessary that there shall be an absolute majority of members present and voting in favour of it. I shall divide the House.

Bells rung and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—16.

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. J. Murray

(Teller.)

Noes—12.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. W. R. Hall

(Teller.)

Majority for—4.

THE PRESIDENT: I have assured myself that there is more than a constitutional majority of members present and voting in favour of the motion and I therefore declare the question carried in the affirmative.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, to which the Hon. H. C. Strickland had moved an amendment to add the following words:—

We wish to protest strongly against the Government's policy of deliberately sacking many of its employees, and against the Government's expressed intention to sack additional large numbers in the future, as this policy is creating unemployment and hardship and widespread feeling of insecurity and unrest.

We wish also to protest strongly against the action of the Government in depriving many deserving single unemployed persons of supplementary help.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines—on amendment) [4.24]: The last time a member of this House moved an amendment to the Address-in-reply was in the year 1953, and it was done by Mr. Loton. On that occasion the amendment was passed, and those of us who had the privilege of doing

so, proceeded to Government House where we presented to His Excellency his own Speech in an amended form. I do not know what happened after that. I do not know whether the Government regarded it as a censure, because if it did it did not resign.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: That will be the day, when a Government resigns!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nothing happened except that the railway freights stayed up.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Do you think they may go up in the next three years?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the hon. member will put that question on the notice paper he will get a considered reply.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You assured us that they would not.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: They went up again from the year 1953. When Mr. Loton moved that amendment to the Address-in-reply he did so because he wanted to show his feelings in respect to the action taken by the Government at the time.

I had a look through the Hansard report to see what took place. Mr. Strickland secured the adjournment of the debate, but I cannot find where he subsequently answered the case. I think it was eventually handled by the late Gilbert Fraser. But in that set of circumstances there was an action which was not really a debatable one, because the fact was there, namely, that rail freights had been increased. Mr. Loton objected to the increase, and that was that.

The result of his motion did not bring about any change in the rail freights or in the Government's attitude. On this particular occasion the hon. Mr. Strickland has moved an amendment to the Address-in-reply, which I hope will not be carried, because I venture to suggest that the speech he made surrounding the words does not purport to be a true story of the case. I propose to tell the true story of the case to the best of my ability in the period of time that lies ahead of me.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You mean the real facts.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think this must be the second step taken by the Opposition in respect to a plan to defeat the present Brand-Watts Government; it is the second step. I think probably it was planned in the party room of the Labour Party when it was said, "Well, Mr. Strickland, you will have to do something about it in the Legislative Council. What can we do? I know, we will move an amendment to the Address-in-reply; that will give us some publicity." I suggest that we will have something along these lines also happening in the Legislative Assembly, because the Labour Party feels that it will give them some publicity. I can imagine

a hue and cry taking place in the Assembly, similar to that which occurred here when Mr. Strickland alleged that a certain set of circumstances existed.

The motion is in two parts. I am going to leave the second part of this to my colleague, because he is the Minister for Child Welfare and it was out of child welfare funds that this money was being taken. Mr. Logan is fully acquainted with what has taken place so, as I have said, I would like to leave the second phase of the motion to him. However, I propose to deal with the first stage this afternoon. I refer to the fact that this is the second attempt to bring about the downfall of the Brand Government, because the first time, in the reported words of the A.L.P. State Secretary, and the undefeated Federal President of the Labour Party (Mr. F. E. Chamberlain) "The first steps towards defeating the Brand Liberal Government was the protest meeting which was held down on the Esplanade round about June 12th, 1959."

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Is this report from *The West Australian*?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, it is from the *Daily News*.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is nearly as bad.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He said that the stop work meeting was a first step in an overall drive to unseat the Liberal Government. "This is a political dispute with the Liberal Government as the employer and as a Government," he said. Therefore, I repeat, this is a move by Mr. Strickland to unseat the Government. It is the second step.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: For what reason do you think it was moved? Not to pat you on the back!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is not going to have the effect of defeating the Brand Government, because in the last three months the Brand Government has established itself and is more safely in office than it was on the first day; and if it continues to improve it will become more safely entrenched as time goes on.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Say, three years.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We have been told by Mr. Strickland that nothing is more degrading than—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That is right.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —for a man to—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I said that nothing will bring about degradation more.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Thank you. He says that nothing will bring about degradation more than a man losing his job. I agree with him. The present Government went to the poll on a number of

phases of its policy. One was that it would bring down a redistribution of seats Bill. We have dispensed with that one, I am glad to say. Another was that it would change over from the day labour policy to one of tender and contract, and that in future, as far as possible, Government work would be let to private industry on a tender and contract basis; and it desired to make this changeover as gradual as it could. The Premier made this clear in his policy speech.

After the Government had been elected, it began to put into operation the policy upon which it had been elected, and I think the Premier said it would probably take two or three years before the whole phase of the changeover would be brought about, but that the men would be put off gradually and that as many as possible of them would be absorbed somewhere else in order to create the least possible amount of unemployment.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Will the Government be able to direct private enterprise to employ these people?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Fancy deliberately bringing about unemployment!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course, Mr. Strickland knows that as well as I do.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I am asking.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member knows the answer before asking. The Government cannot, thank goodness. And I hope that in this country that never happens.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How are you going to ensure that they are employed?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Let me give the figures up to date. One hundred and thirty-one men have been put off from the Public Works Department from the day labour force. Of these, 58 have been absorbed into private industry already, due to the efforts of the architectural section. They are not forced into other employment but are helped to get other jobs in private industry. In answer to a question this afternoon, I said that 68 had not registered for unemployment relief. It is reasonable to assume they have other employment because the Public Works Department has checked up on them to see whether they have registered or not.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Has it checked to see whether they are employed?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Have you any proof?

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: They have their addresses.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have just said that the department has checked up, and 58 are employed and the others have not registered, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that they must have found employment, because we could not find

anything to the contrary. In addition, 72 of them have left of their own accord and have gone into private employment.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Naturally they would rather get out of their own accord.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Therefore we have a situation where, in addition to the 68 who have not registered, 15 at the moment cannot be accounted for. These figures are what have induced the Leader of the Opposition to cause a hurly-burly and say that the present Government is bringing about a terrific state in the community, and forcing people into unemployment.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Seventy-two men cannot be accounted for.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What brought about this set of circumstances? The Hawke Government came into office in 1953 and in March of that year there were 1,191 day labour workers attached to the Public Works Department. By October, 1953, there were 1,471.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The works programme had been introduced.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Government had introduced a works programme all right, and it was to be carried out by day labour. They absorbed all those people from private enterprise. They had taken them out of their employment. They must have done, because where else could they have come from?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: They were carrying out your Kwinana project.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: They were not all engaged on that.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Most of them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Let us continue with the progress of the figures. In October, 1954, there were 1,568; in October, 1955, only about seven more—1,575; in June, 1957, there were 1,474; in October, 1957, there were 1,519; and in October, 1958, there were 2,145.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Because they built 13 high schools. That is why.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I venture to suggest that we cannot argue with the figures.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: We can argue about the works that were done.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: These people were employed somewhere before they were employed by the Public Works Department. I suggest they were taken out of private industry to build up a Government machine of employment of which the previous Government was very proud.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: But you will agree that they could have come from unemployment.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I agree that some could have. I do not know how many and neither does the hon. member.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You will agree that it is possible they could all have come from unemployment.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The same Government which employed those people was obliged to put them on the labour market. There were 217.

Several members interjected.

PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And the hon. member says there is nothing more degrading than to see a man lose his job. But did his Government make any attempt to see that these people obtained other employment?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Yes, we took them back.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Did it make any attempts—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What did it do? A week after the school vacation when all the school teachers went back happily together, they found themselves on the labour market.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Departmental.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Departmental! What a shocking state of affairs! It ill becomes the hon. member to say it was "departmental."

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Like your State Engineering Works.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Why does not the hon. member face up to the fact that I know the Minister for Education at that time blamed the department or the head of his branch and said he did not know it was going on? It is a very strange thing that it happened in a lot of departments.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: But they were not breadwinners.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The amount of public reaction that occurred at that time made the Government regard them as breadwinners because in no time they put them back to work. Nobody is better able to whip up meetings than the people behind this sort of thing.

Several members interjected.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know that this is smarting. I realise that when the truth is told to some people they do not like it and they protest. Therefore there will be protests now because this is the truth. It is not "do as I do" but "do as I say."

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: That is what we are doing.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will have an opportunity to speak later. Therefore will she please keep order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And because we have not done as they said, we have an amendment to the Address-in-reply, from which the hon. member hopes to gain sufficient publicity to help in the second phase of the destruction of the present Government.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: We object to your policy.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course they object to our policy. I would not expect them to do otherwise, but we have been elected on that policy.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: No.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And that is the policy that we are going to put into operation.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: And create all this turmoil.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: All this turmoil has not been created by the people who have been retrenched by the present Government.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There are only 15 of those.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And the men who waited outside the Public Works Department two months ago were not men who had been put off by Mr. Wild, but by some one during the regime of the previous Government, and they had remained unemployed.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How about those who were threatened?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not for the moment talking about those who were threatened. I am talking about those whom the previous Government put on the labour market, some of whom are still there. I am not talking about the men who are not included in this number. And what happened?

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: How do you know?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Australian Labor Party, in the words of Mr. Chamberlain, said that this was the first phase in a programme to defeat the Government. They tried to whip the workers up to a point where they were going to march on Parliament House.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Not Mr. Chamberlain!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: All right. I do not know who it was, but God forgive him! They were going to march on Parliament House. What happened? The whole thing went off just like a "fizzog" because they could not get the support of the rest of the unions.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Nor the support of the A.L.P. either.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: Not issuing a challenge, is he?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, I am not issuing a challenge. I am just relating the facts. I believe Mr. Thornton arrived at the same time, and everybody knows what colour jersey he wears. He came over here but nevertheless those people saw—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You would be glad to see him.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Those people saw that there was little purpose in coming here with an organised march, because they had not the backing of those who were trying to cause the trouble; yet the hon. member would say it was the Government which was trying to cause the trouble. Briefly, the facts are these: This Government, of which I am proud to be a member, was elected because of the stagnant situation in which this State found itself prior to the last election. That will make Mr. Strickland laugh, but it is the truth. The people of Western Australia liked the policy that we put forward better than that of the previous Government. In 1953 the position was the reverse.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: His Excellency's Speech does not support that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is a record of what has taken place—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: And the future is mentioned.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It also, to some extent, points to the future and what is intended; but in the main it lets us know what has taken place. This State still has on the statute book—I am looking forward to the time when I can introduce legislation to get rid of it—an Act the nature of which is to restrict trade; and because of that legislation, during the six years that the previous Government was in office nothing in the way of trade or industry came here.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Only about 500 factories.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member counts every little point; but I am talking about industries that really count—big industries and projects such as Kwinana.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: And now tell us about Medina and Calista.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Those white elephants!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Those white elephants came about during the last six years, because no further industry came to Western Australia. Provision has been made to attract industries to this State and the present Government is endeavouring to have them brought here and, with the energy of the present Minister for

Industrial Development, I am sure that industry will be attracted. If it is not, it will not be for lack of trying on the part of that Minister. I do not for one moment say that the previous Government did not endeavour to attract industries, because it did—unsuccessfully.

The Hon. R. Thompson interjected.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member has not yet made his maiden speech, and all I say to him is that if he wants to make his speech, sitting down—

The PRESIDENT: Will the Minister please address the Chair?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was only saying that if the hon. member wants to make his maiden speech sitting down, that is all right.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister had better get on with his speech.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Minister interjects consistently. Why does he object to other people interjecting?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not object. However, let us get on with the debate.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Tell us how you justify the sacking of people.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Let the hon. member tell us. Tell us how his Government justified the sacking of people.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: With us it was a matter of no money, but with you it is a matter of policy.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member says there was no money.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: With us.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There was no money in October, 1958, but in January, 1959, there was money with which to put the school teachers back. I appreciate that it is a different vote—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: According to you people, you will not have any money for years to come.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was a different department and a different vote, but what a change just because there was an election coming on. Those teachers were very smartly put back into their places. I was not a member of the Government at that time, but Mr. Strickland says there was no money. What brought about that state of affairs? It was brought about by the rise from 1,191 to 2,145 in the number of day-labour workers. That is what brought it about; taking men away from employment in private industry and putting them into the Government fold until the point was reached where they could not be paid any longer.

It is most revealing that the Treasury warned the then Government that it was getting into very deep water. The Treasury

said to the Government, "If you keep this up you will not be able to continue paying these men." It warned the Government that something would have to be done, and so the Government got rid of the men.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I tell you there was no money.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: While I admit that these men were working on State enterprises and tenders were not being called to any great extent and no major contracts let, the Government was doing all the work and private industry was being starved into the ground. That went on until the stage was reached where the people had the opportunity of effecting a change of Government. Members know, if they have their ears close to the ground, that there is abroad in Western Australia today a much greater feeling of confidence in this State than existed three months ago when the election took place.

I have, coming into my office, men from overseas, looking for investment in this country, and they say, "We have heard of the result of the election in Western Australia. There is a greater feeling of confidence abroad now than there was previously and we are glad that there has been a change of Government; because you people have said what you are going to do and you are fulfilling the undertakings you gave."

The hon. Mr. Strickland talks about the white elephants of Medina and Kwinana, but already the Cockburn Cement Co. is going to spend another £100,000 to increase and develop its plant there.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: What about the Swan Cement Co.?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What about it? What does the hon. member want to know about it?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the Minister had better take no notice of interjections, or we will never make any progress.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought I was making very good progress. I do not know what is meant by the reference to the Swan Cement Co. I was not talking about it, but was referring to the Cockburn Cement Co. and pointing out that it has sufficient confidence now—which it did not have previously—to make a further big investment in Western Australia. There are people coming here and beginning to inquire about Western Australia, as they think this State now has a good future. I went to the Eastern States prior to the last election and in conversation with business people over there I found that confidence existed in States such as South Australia and Victoria—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: What has that to do with the motion?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: At that time, when returning to Western Australia, one found that Eastern States people were saying, "We are worried about Western Australia. The Government in that State is too socialistic. It is carrying out all its works by day labour and is starving private enterprise out of existence." The result was that they were not interested in coming here, but I am quite satisfied that there is a new feeling of confidence abroad now. Not long ago I picked up a newspaper and read, on the front page, of the building projects now envisaged in Western Australia. The future was said to be bright, but Mr. Strickland, in moving his motion, would try to present to the public of Western Australia the view that things are bad; that the Government is set on seeing men sacked and thrown into the street.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Isn't that your policy?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is not the case. We have to correct this feeling of dejection among the people. Our hope is instead to create a feeling of enthusiasm, so that people will go out to work for themselves and employ their enthusiasm and capital in avenues from which they can get a profit and in which they can make their way, thus creating a stable market for our rural produce, as well as bringing secondary industry to Western Australia, because we realise all the time that, although ours is a primary-producing country, we must have secondary industries as well.

During the term of office of the previous Government we went through a period of stagnation from an industrial point of view, but the present Government is doing everything it can to attract new industries to this State. I believe that a motion of this nature is a poor attempt to smear the Government which, after all, has been in power for only three months.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is a protest against your policy.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Government has been in office for three months only, but the hon. member would attach to us the blame for things for which he knows his own Government was responsible. I am suggesting that if the present situation had not been built up by the previous Government, with the employment of 2,000 odd day labour workers, and if the wherewithal to earn money and create employment and give opportunity had not been taken away from private enterprise and planted in the lap of the Government—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Now tell me—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will make my own speech and tell the hon. member anything he likes afterwards.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Tell me why private enterprise does not build houses and why you do build them.

The PRESIDENT: If hon. members persist in interjecting we will never conclude the debate. I do not wish to be harsh, but I may have to be.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Private enterprise, of course, does build houses, and the hon. member knows it.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: But why do you have to build them? It is socialistic.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The State Housing Commission deals, as the hon. member well knows, with a certain section of the community—people who perhaps are not able to find houses for themselves. They are dealt with on a strict priority basis. Let me tell the hon. member, without being interrupted again—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: On a point of order—I did not say a word.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought the hon. member was going to prevent me from carrying on my speech. The State Housing Commission builds houses for the class of people I have mentioned, and it is subject to an Act, as the hon. member knows. There are many hundreds of houses built outside the scope of the State Housing Commission and I would like to see more of them built in that way.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Will you agree that you are the greatest landlord in the State?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I wish I were, but I am not. I have one block of land and one house in which my family lives, and I am happy about that. My speech has been prolonged by these interjections.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister has no right to take any notice of them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is not much more that I wish to say. I appreciate that no matter what I say in connection with this motion, Mr. Strickland will not agree with it, because he deals with the question from a different point of view. As a Government, we feel that the right course of action to take is to open the field of labour to free enterprise and have people employed in that way.

The Hon. J. J. Garrigan: Full employment?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We feel that, if the Government employs fewer people than it does at present, the others will go back into private enterprise and the State will be better off because of that. The motion is a futile attempt to smear the activities of the Government and make the people of this State think that we are sacking workers right, left and centre, which is not the case.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: But which your Government promises to do.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is not so, nor do the retrenchments which have taken place compare in any way with the activities of the previous Government. With members of the previous Government it is not a matter of "Do as I do," but of "Do as I say." I hope the House will not agree to the motion, for I can tell the hon. member now that it will not be accepted in any form but as an amendment to the Address-in-reply, although I do not for a moment suggest that the hon. member had not a perfect right to move the motion. However, couched in the terms in which he presented it to us, it could have no purpose other than to achieve some publicity in the second phase of a scheme to defeat the present Government.

THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West—on amendment) [5.0]: In speaking to the amendment to the Address-in-reply, and on the Government's intention to dismiss a large number of Government workers in the future, I point out that it is all very well for the Minister for Mines to eulogise the Liberal-Country Party Government on its policy speeches. I do not think any person in the community had any idea that the promises contained in the policy speech made by the Hon. D. Brand on the hustings would be carried out; namely, that if his party were returned to office the Government would change over from the day labour system to the system of contract by private enterprise. Further, no-one had any idea that the policy would be implemented in the manner in which it has.

When I read the propaganda issued by the Liberal Party to the effect that the changeover would be made gradually over a period of three years, I felt that neither I nor anybody else could quarrel with that policy. However, there are certain ethics that have to be followed in this matter. That is, the Government should keep its promise that it would implement its policy over a period of three years. If the Government had shown that it intended to do that, there would not have been, amongst the members of various unions, the dissension which Mr. Griffith has said was whipped up by the Australian Labour Party.

The result of the action taken by the Government to date is that many people are now deprived of their livelihood. I am not speaking of the persons who had their 17s. 6d. a week taken from them, but of that body of men which rendered excellent service to the Public Works Department who were employed under specific awards; and one of the clauses of those awards provided for long service leave being granted to them, not after 20 years' service as it is now, but after 10 years' service.

The principal tragic effect of the action taken by the Government to date is that there are approximately 2,000 women who are now wondering which of their husbands will have a notice in their next pay packets to the effect that their services are no longer required.

I know that in the past, as a worker, one of the things that I and my fellow-workers worried about most was the fear of whether we would still be in a job the following week.

Many of the people who have already been affected, and also those who are likely to be affected in the future by the action of the Government, are paying off their homes. In many instances, too, there are men who have only 18 months to go before they become eligible for long service leave, or only 18 months to serve before they reach retiring age. There seems to be no logical reason for this move by the Government except the extremely inadequate one published in the Press. What do we find as a result of these men being dismissed? In one case the first worker in question had his photograph, two columns wide, published in the Press.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Four columns wide.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That man was to be put off in the normal manner provided, and had no job to go to. However, he had a job to go to provided he gave the *Daily News* a story. That man made that statement at a public meeting; and he would not say that at a public meeting if it were not true. That is the sort of pressure that has been exerted on this man. It is actions such as that which have instilled fear into the wives of the men who are still employed. They have a feeling of insecurity in that they do not know whether their husbands will be next.

Many of these men have commitments to meet, such as instalments on a motor-car or some domestic appliance. One of the speakers at the Liberal Party conference said these men were all capitalists because they were buying motorcars and refrigerators. However, let him think that! How are these men to keep up their payments on such items when they have a false sense of security?

In addition, many of these workers have saved their money and planned how they will spend their long service leave. They have made arrangements to leave their children with relatives so that they may spend their holidays in the Eastern States. But what is the position now? Those people are frightened to spend that money on a holiday because they have to use their savings for sustenance unless they can prove to the Social Services Department that they are in want and are eligible for benefits.

It is all very well for the Minister to suggest what will happen under his Government now that they are in office; that private enterprise will be encouraged to establish industries here and so absorb those men who are dismissed from Government employment. I am a proud Australian and Britisher, and I ask the Minister: Why have we not had a number of industries established at Kwinana?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You tell us!

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Because the refinery at Kwinana happens to be British-controlled. I would point out that in Victoria five industries have been established mainly because the refinery there is controlled by American interests.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What has that to do with the position?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: It has a lot to do with it. The industries that are established in the Eastern States are subsidiaries of the companies that control the American refineries. Because of that, those subsidiary companies will not establish themselves here in association with a British-controlled company. That is an aspect to which we should give some consideration. It is a pity that such industries cannot be established in the Kwinana area because at Calista and Medina there is a fine school of 17 or 18 rooms, and also an excellent high school. It is only recently, however, that some employment has been found for junior workers at the refinery and the steel rolling mills.

Communities such as Calista and Medina will come into their own only when large industries such as those already established begin to employ the youngsters who are leaving the high schools, in the districts. Members should not think that the Labour Party did not try to achieve that object. When the trade mission went overseas last year it met representatives of industrial concerns which are extremely interested in establishing branches here. In fact, one concern has already established itself, at a cost of £180,000, in Rome-rd., Melville, but this is not widely known because the site is in a side street, and is not noticed by many people.

That is one industry that has already taken steps to commence operations in this State; and it is only one of the 500 that have. Therefore, there is no need for the Minister to make political capital of the fact that by virtue of his Government assuming office more employment will be created.

I agree with him that certain persons in the community are trying to whip unionists into a frenzy, but if the Government handles this problem in the proper way it will accede to the request of

the A.L.P. and deal with the problem by constitutional methods. There is no need for the Minister to mention that Thornton is our friend, because he is no friend of ours whatsoever. We do not want him, and I am sure the Minister does not want him, either.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You're telling me!

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Minister also complained that the Public Works Department drew in workmen from private enterprise. I made the interjection that we had built 13 high schools in the period the Labour Government was in office. Those high schools were of such a fine type that I know Mr. Cunningham would like two or three similar ones built in Kalgoorlie. Among them are the John Curtin High School, Medina High School, and Tuart Hill High School; and there is now one being built in Thomas-st., Subiaco, in the Modern School grounds.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They are all in the city.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The hon. member has a very fine high school at Narrogin.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: He does not belong to Narrogin.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: This body of workmen was built up gradually, and the Government, if it is intent on carrying out its policy, would do well to consider following the same practice by gradually absorbing these men into private industry. It could effect that gradual process by leaving the men who are now employed on the R. & I. Bank building in their present positions until the first floor of that structure is completed. There would be no need to dismiss any man until the private contractor was prepared to take over. By that time that contractor would probably be only too happy to continue employing those men.

The information that I have, however, is that the successful contractor is not taking over even one of the day labour men employed on the building. The work done on the underpinning of the Town Hall cost £60,000. The men employed on that work were very highly trained and, in my opinion, private enterprise should be proud to obtain their services. Mention has been made that a number of men were dismissed from various jobs because their services were superfluous. What about the State Engineering Works in Fremantle? Why were the services of the men who were dismissed from that concern superfluous? I would point out that the State Engineering Works has made £250,000 clear profit in the last five years. Doing what? It was doing subcontract

work for private enterprise. It is all very well for the Minister to smile, but I can bring evidence and plenty of it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: How much tax did it pay?

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: An amount of £98,000 was made by this establishment last year. There were 26 men sacked last week and 29 this week. Not one wife of the 200 men employed there knows whether her position is secure.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: And 217 persons were sacked last October.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have no argument with the Government's policy if it wants to make a change. It says that it has a mandate from the electors. I maintain it should bring about any change in a humane way. A number of these people have not been able to get jobs. Because they have been thrifty and saved a small sum over the years, they find they have to live on their savings at present. The Minister for Works has the address of every employee who has worked in this department, and it is easy to find out whether 70 or 80 of the men who were sacked are working. The Leader of our Party could then be given the information which he desires.

I do not want to take any mean advantage of the Minister for Child Welfare by what I am about to say, because he has not as yet spoken.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the amendment.

The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I think they are connected. If my remarks are not so connected, I do not know what is. Of course my remarks are connected with the Child Welfare Department, as is the amendment before us. A couple of years ago when a slight recession set in throughout the Commonwealth there was a great number of unemployed in this State.

A number of them did not have sufficient money on which to live, and the amount provided by the Social Services Department was not sufficient to enable them to pay for the cost of a bed. Many meetings were held in Fremantle. There was no Communist influence attached to these meetings, because neither Mr. Davies nor I am a Communist. Mr. Davies did play a very important part in the organisation of these men who were out of work, with a view to obtaining some benefits for them. Many requests were made to the then Premier, and he left it to the members in Fremantle to make some arrangements.

A great number of these people were sleeping on the beaches at night and had been picked up by the police for vagrancy. They were being picked up for sleeping behind the Church of England and the

Catholic Church on vagrancy charges, and sentenced to a week's imprisonment. These were clean honest people who had previously had nothing to do with the courts. We were asked to find a building in Fremantle so that they could be accommodated at night. The Premier gave an assurance that if we could do this he would find the bedding. Unfortunately we could not find a building.

The Premier, through the Child Welfare Department, made available a small amount of money to these people—17s. 6d. a week—to enable them to be provided with a bed. During the two years when this plan was in operation, 12,000 individual payments of 17s. 6d. were made. These figures are approximate. Not one of those 12,000 payments was made before ratification by a very high officer in the Child Welfare Department in the person of Mr. Mather.

These payments were made at the club-rooms of the South Fremantle Football Club. From 9 a.m. until midday each Wednesday, the single unemployed were attended to. No-one with the slightest indication of intoxication received any payment, and no-one received a payment without Mr. Mather having certified his neediness. Those people then went up to the cashier and were paid 17s. 6d.

In the afternoon the married people were attended to, and over the two years when this plan was in operation 12,000 payments were made. Anyone who has been in the public service for any length of time will be aware of the integrity of Mr. Mather. He was adamant that any person seeking relief, who had not played the game, be sent on his way; and many were.

If the Minister were to investigate the set-up under which people were paid when they were not entitled to receive payment, he would find a very small percentage. It might amount to 100 cases out of 12,000. Some people may be able to put it across Mr. Mather for one week, but not the next. What happened in Perth, I have not the slightest idea. My colleague and I in Fremantle were most interested in the unemployed people there.

On the very last day on which they received payment—they had been given a fortnight's notice of the suspension of these payments—some 220 people were attended to and received 17s. 6d. each by 11 a.m. By noon, 300 people had been dealt with, of whom 290 received payment and 10 were refused. All of the parliamentary members in Fremantle were present that morning. We inquired of various persons receiving assistance as to their situation, where they lived and what they were doing. We asked one from here and there, and not as they came through.

When I was questioning these people there was an officer from the department present, and he can verify that what I am

now saying is correct. The first case concerned a person over 45 years of age. He was rather big in build, and was a clean type of person. He is one who will normally get a job when one is available. He obtained a room and breakfast for £2 a week, and his fares were costing him 10s. for travelling to find work. These fares were for trips made to the meatworks at South Fremantle. He walked to North Fremantle and other places. In addition, his other expenses included toilet requisites such as soap at 1s. and haircut at 1s. per week. He did his own laundry but he sent out one white shirt to be washed each week. He could not pay anything towards the Hospital Benefits Fund. His total expenses came to £2 14s. 6d. With the added payment from the State Government he was receiving £4 2s. 6d. a week. Out of this he needed £1 8s. for the other two meals each day and for any other expenses.

The next person was asked the same question. He was a young man about 24 years of age who had been in permanent work in the wool industry for a long time. He had been ill, but on his recovery from illness he could not obtain employment. He lived at home and paid his mother £2 for board out of the £4 2s. 6d. he was receiving. He paid the usual fares and 4s. a week to the Hospital Benefits Fund. Because his mother was very old he had to send his laundry out, and that cost him 12s. 9d. a week. He had a surplus of a few shillings. The two persons I have referred to were behind in their union dues. They did not have the money to pay.

In the third case, the person's expenses were £2 1s. a week. He did his own cooking, but he had to buy the kerosene. He had £2 2s. 6d. left, and he was really rich!

The fourth person interviewed had a room costing £1 2s. 6d. a week. He cut the lawn and did other odd jobs, and for those duties he was supplied with breakfast, free. These cases concerned ordinary types of persons and not derelicts. This person paid 3s. 3d. a week to the Hospital Benefits Fund. He had £2 0s. 9d. left out of his £4 2s. 6d., so he was comparatively rich.

In the fifth case the expenses amounted to £2 2s. 6d. a week, and this person had £1 16s. left, but he had to purchase quite a quantity of medicine, because he had heart trouble.

Had we known the intention of the Government to discontinue these weekly payments of 17s. 6d. we would have invited the Minister for Child Welfare to come to Fremantle and see what was happening. I am quite sure that if he had done so, he would have been satisfied that very few people were putting it across the department. As this is the middle of winter, the least the Minister can do is to give serious consideration to reinstating the payments

of 17s. 6d. a week. If he agrees, we can produce the needy unemployed, and Mr. Mather can give him the full facts.

It is very difficult for the State to carry on this good work without co-operation and assistance from the Commonwealth Social Services Department. If the Minister were to call for an inquiry by his department, he would be completely astounded to find that the State had to find the money for the rendering of this sustenance through the Child Welfare Department.

I have the permission of one of the people mentioned by me to quote his name; in fact, he wishes me to do so, but I do not think that his name should be given because he happens to be unemployed. I can supply it to the Minister privately.

For some time, this chap was out of work in Fremantle. He obtained a job on the Commonwealth Railways out in the never-never country and he stayed at this job for 18 months. Finally he was a leading ganger. He is rather a diminutive type of chap, about 5 ft. 5 in. or 5 ft. 4 in. tall. After being outback for 18 months he began to feel the strain and considered he was entitled to some sort of a break. Therefore, he returned to the city.

He was only back one day when he was knocked down by a motorcar. Because of that accident he was off from work for five months. When he went back to the Social Services Department to see if he could obtain employment he was told that he could go back to the job which he previously held. He pointed out to them that he had been there for 18 months and that there were other fellows who had never left Fremantle. He also told them that he was living at home with his mother who was 74 years of age, and he considered that he should be given a job in the metropolitan area or, failing that, obtain the social service benefit.

He was unable to get the social service benefit and the Labour Government assisted him with the payment of 17s. 6d. I point this out in order that the Government may know what is going on. I believe that we should be Christian enough not to make this a political matter.

We in the Labour movement believe the unions, in their own right, should keep their own cases away from politics altogether. However, what did this Government do? It made the situation a political one by placing it on its platform. Therefore, politics were brought into it. It is against the milk of human kindness to bring in politics to decide whether a man gets food or not. I support the amendment.

On motion by the Hon. F. D. Willmott, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 2nd July, 1959.

CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Midland Junction workshops, idle machinery	81
Graham flats, change of name	81
South Perth Community Hospital, payments for construction	81
Spencer Park school—	
Electricity connection	82
Sewerage connection	82
Bananas, ban on sale in Eastern States	82
Transport of beans, freight subsidy	82
Railway Department revenue, segregated figures	82
Overhead pedestrian bridge, construction at West Northam	83
Electricity supplies, provision for Roebourne	83
State housing, Pilbara building programme	83
All-weather roads, construction in Pilbara electorate	83
Port Hedland harbour, soundings and action taken	83
Pilbara pastoral industry, recommendations of investigating committee	83
Marble Bar, provision of drilling plant	84
Point Samson, provision of potable water supply	84
Manganese and copper, tonnages shipped from Port Hedland	84
Child Welfare, remission of sentence on youth	84
Goldfields police boys' clubs, provision of assistance	85
Claremont Teachers' College, shortage of male staff	85
Third Teachers' college, location	85
State loan works, finance provided	85
Collusive tendering, application to public buildings	85
Bookmakers' turnover, weekly figures	85
Esperance land, Chase Agreement	86
Sewage treatment plant, effect on bathing beaches	86
Diphtheria, immunisation of South-West school children	86
Albany harbour, rock removal	86
Volunteer firemen, employment as fireguards	86
Consular representatives, invitations to opening of Parliament	87
State Housing Commission, drafting and architectural work	87
Workers' concession fares, abolition in metropolitan area	87
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE :	
North Kalgoorlie school, improvement to grounds	87
Talgarno rocket range, safeguarding of residents	87
Mr. John Alver, letter of goodwill	87
State Shipping Service—	
Approach to Commonwealth for financial assistance	87
Assurance of retention	88