

those relatives in their sorrow. I very much regret that occasion has arisen for the motion which I second.

Mr. STUBBS (Wagin) [4.36]: The passing of the late Hon. Henry Daglish removes a familiar figure in the life of this State for a period of nearly a quarter of a century. To those who knew him, he endeared himself, not only by his many good qualities, but by the kindness of heart which always actuated him in everything that pertained to the welfare of the people with whom he came into contact. The State has lost a capable and able gentleman; and I am sure the sympathy of every member of the House goes out to his bereaved widow.

Mr. SPEAKER [4.37]: Before the motion is put, let me say that I was closely associated with the deceased gentleman for many years in the Parliament of this State. I was returned to Parliament for the first time in the same year as that in which the late Hon. Henry Daglish was first elected. We were both returned on the same policy, and I had the pleasure of his association, during which I could not fail to mark his knowledge and ability. I was also associated with him in the first Labour Government of the State, and I realise that all that has been said about the deceased gentleman this afternoon is perfectly true. I regret indeed the occasion for this motion. I ask hon. members to rise in their places and pass the motion standing.

Question put and passed, members standing.

House adjourned 4.37 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 18th August, 1920.

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

QUESTION—FLOUR AND FODDER SUPPLIES.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What is the maximum milling capacity of the flour mills now operating in

the State? 2, What price has been charged by the wheat pool for wheat supplied to those mills for milling purposes during the last 12 months? 3, What prices have the millers been permitted to charge for flour for local consumption and export respectively during the same period? 4, What prices have the millers been permitted to charge for bran and pollard respectively during the same period? 5, Is it a fact that at the present time bran and pollard can be purchased from only one firm? 6, Is this distributing firm controlled by one of the principal millers in the metropolitan area? 7, What is the total quantity of bran and pollard produced by the local millers? 8, What is the quantity of bran and pollard shipped from this State during the last 12 months, and what is the quantity consumed locally? 9, What is the approximate quantity required for local consumption?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Approximately 160,000 short tons of flour (of 2,000 lbs.) and 66,000 short tons of offal, per annum. 2, 3, and 4, The prices on f.o.r. basis, metropolitan area, for local consumption of wheat per bushel and of flour, bran, and pollard per short ton of 2,000lbs. have been as follows:—Wheat per bushel—September 5s., October to December 5s. 6d., January 6s. 6d., February 7s. 8d., March to August 7s. 8d. Flour per ton—September £11, October to December £11 12s. 6d., January £14 2s. 6d., February £16 12s. 6d., March to August £17. Pollard per ton—September £6 5s., October to December £7 15s., January No sales, February £8 2s. 6d., March to August £7 15s. For export, the price of wheat for flour has varied from 8s. to 16s. per bushel according to date and destination of flour, and the prices of flour for export have been whatever the miller has been able to obtain at the particular destination sent. These are not known. 5, No. 6, Answered by 5. 7, Answered by 1. 8 and 9, Not known.

QUESTION—INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND, SUBSIDY.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: In view of the fact that the Government paid an annual subsidy to the Institute for the Blind when there were only 14 inmates, will the Government consider the necessity for increasing the amount now that there are 60 inmates?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The matter is under consideration.

QUESTION—IRWIN COAL SEAM, WATER SUPPLY.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is he aware that the supply of water for boring purposes on the Irwin coal seam will cut out at the end of the wet season? 2, If so, will the Government take immediate steps to arrange for a sufficient water supply to carry on boring operations during the summer months?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, The question will have full consideration with the view of meeting, if possible, the difficulty referred to.

BILL—TIME OF REGISTRATION EXTENSION.

Introduced by the Minister for Education and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. A. J. H. Saw, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings granted to Hon. A. Sanderson (Metropolitan-Suburban) on the ground of urgent private business.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings granted to Hon. A. Lovekin (Metropolitan) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Amendment—Single Chamber.

Debate resumed from the 11th August on the Address-in-reply and the following amendment moved by the Hon. A. H. Panton:—"That the following words be added to the Address—'And we respectfully suggest to Your Excellency that the time has now arrived when the Government of the State can best be carried on by a single Chamber elected on an adult franchise.'"

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [4.37]: I would like to welcome the new members to the House and to express my appreciation at seeing Mr. Clarke again returned to this Chamber. While we are all glad to see the new members we regret the defeat of others. I am going to give the amendment conditional support. I shall vote in favour of it but, if it is carried, I propose to move a further amendment to it and that is to add the following words:—"Provided provision be made for electors to initiate and veto legislation." I am taking the same stand to-day upon the amendment as I have taken in the past at all Labour gatherings, and Labour congresses. I have always held that government by one House is likely to lead to a great many abuses, and that one House of legislation with no check upon it is one of the worst possible systems that could be introduced into this State. It must be remembered that we are a sovereign State and that we have very great powers of legislation and, if we are going to hand over the whole of those powers to any one House, I think we should be taking a false and retrograde step. I have a very keen recollection of the treatment meted out to the Labour Government by this Chamber. I had charge of most of the controversial Bills brought before the House during the regime of the Labour Gov-

ernment, and I have keen recollections indeed of the manner in which some of those Bills were received in this House. I might indicate one to show the difference in the treatment which this Chamber meted out to measures brought forward by a Labour Government, and the measures brought forward by a Liberal Government. The measure I would select is the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill. When in 1902 a Conciliation and Arbitration Bill was brought forward by a Liberal Government, a measure which altered the entire aspect of our industrial affairs, it was mentioned or debated in this Chamber for something like six sittings, and the whole of the debate upon that Bill which completely altered the aspect of the industrial conditions of Western Australia, occupied 58 pages of "Hansard." When a Labour Government came along with an amending Bill, this Council, after debating it almost throughout the whole of the 1911 session, rejected the measure on two points. In 1912 when another Bill was brought forward, it was mentioned in this House and debated on something like 58 days, and the debate occupied about 628 pages of "Hansard." I am speaking now from memory. All those members who were here at the time when I had charge of that Bill might well smile. I remember one night when the division bells were continually ringing for a space I suppose of three or four hours, and the most amazing part of the whole thing was that the two points on which this House had thrown out the Bill in 1911, were passed without murmur in 1912, and are law to-day. All the chaos and all the ill that was going to result from the passing of those two clauses has not eventuated. The country has gone on just the same and nothing ill has occurred. I also remember when you, Sir, spoke on the Bill in 1911, you stated—

The House is making a mistake, and members later on might regret the opposition they are showing to the Bill.

In regard to government by one House, I would like to ask the mover of the amendment if he would be prepared to allow Western Australia to be governed by one House, as that House is at present constituted. That is the way to look at the proposal. Would Mr. Panton or any other member of the Labour party be content to allow Western Australia to be governed by the House of Assembly as at present constituted. I think not. I would not, and I would not be prepared to allow, if I could avoid it, government by any particular party in one House. We know that during the last few years the caucus system has been extended until now almost every party has its caucus. Not only the Labour party, but the National party and the Country party all have their caucus.

Hon. J. Cornell: And their conferences.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Supposing there is a party of 30 in the lower House, and the quorum is 20, a majority of 20 is 11 and,

consequently, the government of the country may be carried on by 11 members of Parliament. That is what has happened, and what will happen again. Then we are faced with the possibility of some party, such as the Country party, being dominated to a certain extent by an executive outside Parliament. We must realise the danger we are in if we have a single House of legislation without any check whatever under such conditions. Then comes the question of what kind of check we should institute. I have no hesitation in saying that the Chamber we have at present, elected on a property qualification, is the very worst kind of check Chamber that we could possibly create. If a man has, say, £50 worth of freehold property, or is renting premises worth £17 annually, why should he be entitled to a vote over another man? The possession of property is sometimes brought about by the exercise of some of the very worst passions of human nature—cupidity, avarice, covetousness. Again, in some places there is a household franchise. I believe that is so in South Australia. The household franchise undoubtedly is a better franchise than that which we have for this Chamber, because it recognises to some extent the home, recognises the people who are endeavouring to make their homes in the country. Again, I have heard a family franchise suggested. It has been suggested that there should be a vote for the head of a family, and possibly additional votes according to the number of one's children. That would certainly be an improvement upon the franchise which we have now. Again, an age franchise has been suggested. In some parts of the world that franchise exists. The old Romans, I think, used to have a house of ancients.

Hon. J. Cornell: Denmark has it to-day.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I do not think age always brings wisdom, or youth always brings folly. Again, there is the suggestion of an intellectual franchise. It would be a very good thing indeed if we could possibly bring about some system whereby electors who know something about political economy would be the ones to exercise a vote for a Chamber of this kind. Indeed, that would be the best franchise we could possibly have. But how are we to bring it about? I am acquainted with a man with a salary of £1,000 a year who says that he knows absolutely nothing about politics and does not want to know anything about them. But a man who does not know anything about politics knows nothing about the country he is living in. Therefore, the only possible check we can have for one House is by direct reference to the people themselves. That may be said to be a very cumbersome method, but I think we could devise some scheme whereby certain legislation would be referred to the people themselves to express an opinion upon. To those who would be timid of referring matters of legislation to the people on account of what

is called "mob rule," I would say that usually the referendum is a most conservative instrument and that up to date the exercise of the referendum in all parts of the world has been rather in the direction of allowing things to remain as they are than in the direction of making changes. I think that has been our experience in Western Australia also. There is another point I wish to refer to as regards the rule of one House. I am very much afraid that if we have one House of Legislature in this State, or for that matter in the Commonwealth, we are going to have what may be termed "the rule of the boss." If there is one thing more than another which strikes me, especially in view of the occurrences of the past few years, it is what I may call the tragedy of democracy, that is to say, the abdication of responsibility on the part of the individual. Or I may put it in other words, and say, the renunciation of individuality on the part of the mass of the electors. We cannot get away from it. We have had, and are now having, the experience of electors following small coteries of individuals, and it is a sad spectacle indeed. I do not think the Labour party will disagree with me when I say that in the present Prime Minister of the Commonwealth we have a man who is carrying thousands of people with him by his personality, without those people thinking of the results. I am an admirer of Mr. Hughes, and I am not speaking from any personal animus against him. Take the other aspect. I read the other day of 1,000 men meeting to decide whether they should go to work, and their decision resting with three or four men sitting thousands of miles away. Surely that is a renunciation of individuality, and surely that is not good for the community. If we are going to transfer those methods to a legislative Chamber without any check whatever, it is going to be a sad thing for democracy and a sad thing for Australia. I feel sure that Mr. Panton will be willing to support my amendment. I do not know that he would be unwilling to embody my amendment in that which he has moved. The question of the initiative and referendum is a part of the Labour party's policy, and I may mention that the late Labour Government introduced a Bill to establish the principle of the initiative and referendum. Had that measure been carried, the question of the abolition or continuance of this House could have been submitted to the electors. Surely, if this House is to be abolished, the best way to bring about its abolition will be through the will of the people if they so desire. Let me, in order to be fair to this Chamber, mention one or two things that have happened since the present Government have been in power. I desire particularly to draw the attention of Mr. Moore to what occurred here when the Forestry Bill was before this Chamber. I desire to do so because Mr. Moore is from the timber districts, and has lived many years in them. The hon. gentleman, quite rightly to my mind, pleaded for the recognition of the soldiers in regard

to the franchise for this House. But when the Forestry Bill was before another Chamber the right of the soldier timber hewer, and indeed of every hewer, to go back into the forests to hew, was denied. The Bill as it came to this Chamber did not give the soldier timber hewer the right to go into the forests and hew timber, and this property Chamber voted in favour of forcing the Government to allow the soldier timber hewer to go back to work.

Hon. T. Moore: That suited some of the employers in this Chamber.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It may have suited them.

Hon. T. Moore: It did.

Hon. J. E. DODD: That to my mind is beside the mark. It may have suited the employers, but it shows that the Chamber was willing to do what it considered justice, whereas the House elected on the adult franchise denied justice. Had there been only one legislative Chamber and that the present Legislative Assembly, the soldier timber hewers would never have got back to their work in the forests. Again, the Discharged Soldier Settlement Bill was, I think I am right in saying, made very much better for the soldiers by this House than it was when it came before us. I believe it was on that Bill that Mr. Hickey moved an amendment, which was carried, giving the soldiers certain privileges in the pastoral areas. I may also refer to the £26 exemption for children under the land and income tax. When the Bill imposing the tax came before this Chamber the exemption was £10 for each child. This House made it £26. Had there been only one House of legislation the law would still provide a deduction of only £10 for each child. Then again I remember that when the Land Act Amendment Bill, dealing with pastoral leases, came before this Chamber from another place, a large number of members here were highly indignant at the manner in which it was brought forward. A few of those members determined to stone-wall the measure unless more time was allowed for its discussion. What happened? Mr. Sanderson put up a speech of about two or three hours before the Colonial Secretary would agree to allow time for the discussion of the measure. I am only mentioning these matters in order to show Mr. Panton that if there had been one House with no check these matters would not have been decided as they were. I am not advocating that we should have a check for the sake of either one party or the other. I am advocating that we should have something as a check because I am satisfied that if we do not it will leave the way open to a great number of abuses. May I also point out what organisation can do if we like to get to work and bring about what, for the sake of a better term, I may describe as direct representation in this House. The North-East Province and the South Province are represented in this Chamber by hon. members who are in favour of altering its franchise to such an extent that the same electors as vote for the Assembly shall vote for the

Council—adult franchise with the initiative and referendum. There are two provinces where six members are in favour of that policy. In the West Province organisation has already returned two members favouring the same policy. If organisation can return two, it can return three. I pointed this out at recent Labour congresses, and if my friends will look up the records of Labour Congress debates they will see that what I am now saying is correct. In the Central Province there is the same state of affairs; two members have been returned and where two have been returned, three can be. Moreover, in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province we had two members returned in 1911 and 1912. Thus there are five provinces in which the majority of members have been Labour members. Five provinces each returning three members would give 15 members. Every capital city of the States and of the Commonwealth as a stronghold of Labour, and more members of the Labour party are returned for the metropolitan electorates than elsewhere. Surely it does not need any great deal of organisation in order to return a Labour member to this House for the Metropolitan Province, which would give Labour a majority in this Chamber. Is there anyone who would dare to assert that in the Metropolitan Province of 17,000 or 18,000 electors four-fifths of the electors are not employees? Of course they are. The vast majority of the electors for the Metropolitan Province are workers. I suppose out of the whole of that number, we would not expect to find more than a thousand employers living in the electorate. Surely therefore, it will require no great effort in order to get three members returned by that electorate to reform this House. I have always pointed out that if a policy acceptable to the people of Western Australia were placed before them, they would return enough members to this House to see that the reform was brought about. I sincerely hope Mr. Panton may see his way to adopt my suggestion and to make some allowance for the initiative and referendum, and to show the electors of Western Australia that we do not want one House to control the destinies of this State. I have had it stated to me that there is, in some part of the world, a system of one House legislatures. South Africa has been mentioned and also Canada. But let me direct attention to the fact that the countries where the single legislatures exist are very small indeed. Here we have an immense country and at any moment any kind of development may take place. We do not know that perhaps the richest oil fields in the world may be found here, just as we found the richest goldfields in the world. We do not know but that at any moment other goldfields like Kalgoorlie may be discovered. In fact, the potentialities of Western Australia are almost limitless, and to place a country like this in the hands of 50 legislators with no check whatever, is, to say the least of it, giving them a mighty big blank cheque, and

placing a premium on fraud and corruption of every kind. If the members of this House wish to popularise the Chamber—

Hon. A. H. Panton: We want to abolish it.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I am addressing now the members on the other side of the House. I would suggest that those who may be called Conservatives, or Liberals—I do not know what names they are known by—if they desire to popularise the Chamber, the suggestion which I made last session might be adopted, and that is that they all might go down to the Esplanade and in relays explain to the people the views which they hold. I am certain that, once we do that, there will not be any possibility of the electors of Western Australia desiring to abolish this House. I suggest that Mr. Clarke should go down to the Esplanade and lead off on the subject of subsidised creameries, fruit factories, etc. I was amazed, in picking up "The Worker" newspaper during the last elections, to find there a long statement by Mr. Clarke, in which statement he appealed for the votes of the electors of the South-West province. If the hon. member had gone to the Esplanade and given utterance to the programme which he set out in the statement published in that newspaper, the people would have been astounded. I suggest also that a number of other hon. members should do the same thing. Mr. Nicholson should go down there and discuss the fruit industry. Mr. Ewing could deliver an address on the "Equality of Colliery coal." Mr. Lynn might speak on "How to force socialism on the Government." Mr. Duffell could talk on "State insurance." Mr. Miles would be interesting to listen to on "Doctors," while Dr. Saw could address the crowd on "The Nationalisation of hotels." If all this were done, the House to be abolished would be the Legislative Assembly and not the Legislative Council. Further than that, Mr. Baxter would be interesting to listen to on the wheat pool, and in thinking this matter over the other day, I felt that if the suggestions I have made were carried out, and if hon. members would only give utterance on the Esplanade to some of the views which they expound in this Chamber, the public would become familiar with the views held by members of the Upper House. At the present time the short paragraphs which are published of the members' speeches delivered in this House are hardly ever taken notice of and the general public do not know the opinions that hon. members hold. If my proposals were carried into effect, the newspapers, rather than devote a few lines to a member's speech, would publish it, as the American newspapers do, under great headlines such as "Boodle votes Democracy," "House of Fat and Socialism," "Fossils, the popular House," and in that way, further, there would be removed the misconception which exists in regard to what is called the "House of Fat." I am going to support the amendment moved by Mr. Panton but I shall do so with the reservation that I have outlined.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I will accept that.

Hon. J. E. DODD: If the hon. member will agree to insert that the electors should have the right to veto and the right of referendum, I will support the amendment. If the hon. member will not agree to my proposal and his amendment is carried, I shall move an amendment in the direction I have suggested.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.8]: I join with hon. members in welcoming the new members to this House and also in expressing regret for the absence of those who met with an undeserved fate. The most interesting part of this debate is the self-abnegation shown by the mover and the seconder of the amendment. The mover has only been with us some 13 or 14 months and the seconder for a brief space of a week or so, yet they propose to commit hara kiri and they invite other hon. members to perform the same happy despatch.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It shows we are not selfish.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: For similar self-sacrifice we would have to go back in history for centuries, to the long Parliament and the occasion of the self-denying ordinance. The mover and seconder really have set a splendid example, and in thinking over their example I was reminded of a little incident the occurrence of which I heard some time ago. A gentleman had acquitted himself with credit in the great war, but owing to certain casualties which had occurred he unexpectedly succeeded to a peerage and £10,000 a year. Shortly afterwards he went to the opera, and while sitting in the stalls with a friend an alarm of fire was raised. To the astonishment of the friend the newly-made peer was the first to bolt from the theatre. The alarm turned out to be a false one, and when the newly-made peer somewhat shamefacedly returned, his friend said, "I did not think you would have done that sort of thing." The reply was that his friend had not just succeeded to a peerage and £10,000 a year. I must congratulate Mr. Dodd on the splendid defence of the second Chamber which he set up. There is very little more to be said after the address made by that hon. member. Personally, I have only heard one argument against the existence of the second Chamber, and it is on the score of expense. If, however, the value of this House can be expressed in money, and it were put down at the small sum of £15,000 a year, and if that were its total value, I would be sorry to occupy a seat in the Chamber. On the other hand, I think there are very solid reasons to be urged in favour of the existence of a second Chamber. The first one is that it moderates and stabilises legislation. It ensures that measures, once they become law, are very largely altered. That is to say, they are very rarely reversed. They may be amended in various directions. But what would be the position if we only had one Chamber? I feel confident that the work

or one party in power would be to reverse the legislation of the party that had gone before. We are saved from that fate by the fact that we have at the present time a second Chamber. There is another reason why the second Chamber should exist, and it is that it ensures a full debate before any measure becomes law. Hon. members can imagine the wonderful opportunity which would be given, if there were only one Chamber, for a party wishing to bring in some legislation which they knew would not be popular, rushing it through the single Chamber and making it become law before the people were aware of what had happened. Even during the brief period I have been here we have had instances of that description. Take the amendment of the Health Bill, which went through the lower Chamber in perhaps one sitting and before the people realised what the import of that measure was. Afterwards, when the measure came before this Chamber, we had a very full debate on it and it was altered in many respects and, although it still meets with opposition, we can at any rate say that the subject was well thrashed out before it became law. Undoubtedly the Legislative Council serves as a brake on hasty legislation. It has been urged that measures sent to this House by the Labour party met with a very different fate from those sent up by the Liberal party. Perhaps there was a reason for that. Take, for instance, the present Government. Would any hon. member propose to put a brake on them?

Hon. T. Moore: No.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: No. Hon. members, I think, would rather spur them on. So there may be good reason for legislation coming up from another place with the Labour party in power meeting with more opposition than the measures sent along by a Liberal Government. I would point out to hon. members that change does not necessarily mean progress. All through nature we find that change does not necessarily mean progress, that nature sometimes side-steps and sometimes retrogrades. So it is with legislation. Everyone must admit that there must be a second Chamber, and the corollary follows that it must be elected on a franchise different from that on which members of the Legislative Assembly are elected. The mover and seconder have spoken as though the Legislative franchise were a mere property one. There is the household franchise of £17 per annum. We must have some different franchise in order to differentiate between the legislator in this Council and that in the Legislative Assembly. Were it not so we would become a mere replica of the lower House. If that should ever come to pass I for one would support a proposal to abolish this Chamber. That is the failing with the Senate in the Commonwealth. It is a mere replica of the party in power in the lower House.

Hon. A. H. Pantou: It should be abolished.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I do not think there is really any demand for the abolition of this House. I fancy that we are debating in a very unreal atmosphere. I listened to Mr. Pantou's speech and was surprised at its mildness. I fancy that his 14 months sojourn here has had an extremely beneficial effect upon his constitution. The arguments of the new members who supported him, I thought, savoured somewhat of the hustings. Arguments of a different nature are required in this Chamber than usually find favour on the public platform. I also listened to the admirable speech of Mr. Dodd, and was only astonished at its conclusion, which was that although he favoured the second Chamber and damned with faint praise—or hardly even that—Mr. Pantou's motion, he proposed to support it.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East) [5.17]: I support the amendment. I am only surprised, after hearing the remarks of the various speakers in opposition to it, that good and sound arguments have not been put forward for its defeat. Reasons must of course be stated in support of the amendment. I remember the interjections that were made only a few days ago, when both Mr. Pantou and Mr. Moore were speaking, with the object of inducing those hon. members to state what legislation or proposed legislation had been rejected by this Chamber that would have been in the interests of this State. I propose to refer to two Bills submitted to this House within the last few years that, in my opinion, would have been of material benefit, not only to the people of this State, but to the good government of the State, had they been passed into law. In 1914 the Labour Government sent up a Bill for the purpose of enabling the people to have a direct voice in the legislation of their country. The Legislative Council in its wisdom and its conservatism rejected that measure. I refer to the Initiative and Referendum Bill. That goes to show that at that time members of the Legislative Council were not prepared to give the people of this State a say in the government of their country, or the framing of its laws. After the remarks of the hon. members it seems to me that there are still those in this Chamber who are prepared to refuse to the people the right to legislate in a direct fashion. That is one of the reasons why I am prepared to say that, so far as the will of the people is concerned, this is a House of obstruction. It is one of the reasons which actuates me in supporting the amendment to the Address in reply submitted by Mr. Pantou. I should also like to refer to the action of this Chamber last year, when called upon to deal with a Bill sent up from another place. This was a Bill to broaden the franchise qualification, to enable citizens of this State who have not a vote to take part in the election of representatives to this House. I well remember the statements made by various hon. members of this Chamber at that time. I take this opportunity of congratulating

the leader of the House on the able speech he made on that occasion, not only when introducing the Bill but when replying to the criticism which had been lodged against it by hon. members. The majority of members here did not then consider that the people of this State were mentally qualified to elect representatives to this Chamber. Not only in Australia, but throughout the world, there is a general movement so far as the civilised peoples are concerned in the direction of stretching out their hands to get more power in the government of their countries. We have only to take the case of the United Kingdom during the last four years. Amending legislation has been brought down that broadens the franchise for election to the House of Commons. Only a few years ago it was thought almost impossible for the House of Commons, as then constituted, to grant the franchise to women, and yet with all the conservatism and all the factors working against democracy in the Old Country we now see in operation there a measure of women's suffrage. It is unnecessary for me to refer to the other Continental countries, where changes have also taken place. The will of the people in Russia, being suppressed as it had been for centuries, burst forth in 1916. Not only did they dethrone the Tsar, but they smashed the nobility and aristocracy of that country. We have men in this Chamber, apparently, who are prepared to hang on to ancient institutions and to the limited franchise qualifications, so long as the people will allow them to do so. Whilst realising that position, I also know, from being personally in touch with the people of the State, that there is a movement in the direction of their getting a greater say in the government of the country. The trouble is that there are members who are not prepared to take notice of what is going on. Statements have been made on the platform, and articles have been written in the Press, drawing attention to the industrial unrest so prevalent in the Commonwealth, and yet when asked to give the people a greater say in the framing of the laws of the land in which they live, members are prepared to stand where Western Australia stood when responsible Government was granted. When the Constitution Act Amendment Bill was introduced last session very slight amendments were asked for, so far as the qualifications of electors for this Chamber was concerned. I will admit that there was a provision to confer upon the returned soldiers the right to vote for this Chamber.

Hon. T. Moore: How did it get on?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is only necessary to refer the hon. member to "Hansard," where he will see not only the fate of the Bill, which was laid aside, but also the division list. It may be of interest to some hon. members to be reminded that during the whole period of the war, and at the time when this vote was refused to returned soldiers, there were men of enemy origin and of

enemy birth, who had become naturalised British subjects in Australia, entitled to vote for this Chamber. They had the necessary qualifications, and their names were on the electoral rolls of the various provinces. If hon. members desire to do so they can see the rolls for themselves with the names of these people on them. They can also ascertain for themselves whether these people were naturalised, or whether they were natural born citizens and British subjects. Although the Labour members of this Chamber actually supported the Bill then brought down we are not prepared to stand there to-day. I should also like to refer to the Constitution of the different States of Australia. It was pointed out last year, when the leader of the House was replying to the various speeches made in opposition to the Constitution Act Amendment Bill then before the House, how these Constitutions operated in the different States. He showed that New Zealand, although at the time having a House of representatives elected on the adult franchise, had a Legislative Council as a nominee Chamber. He also pointed out that this year the amended Constitution would take effect, and that New Zealand would have a Legislative Council elected on the adult franchise. The property qualification has been done away with, if it ever existed. I do not know the conditions regarding the candidates that were nominated to the Legislative Council of New Zealand, but I do know that they are elected on the adult franchise. In 1918 the Government in South Australia amended the Constitution so far as it affected the Legislative Council electoral qualifications. Not only did this broaden the household qualifications, but also conferred upon returned soldiers the right to vote for that Legislative Council. It was pointed out on that occasion by the leader of the House that, within the British Empire, there were only four second Chambers, or Upper Houses, elected on the restricted franchise, namely, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Take the Constitutions of the various States within the English-speaking world, leaving out Australasia. I will instance Canada. It may be pointed out that the majority of the provincial Parliaments of Canada consist of only one Chamber. It has been mentioned that they are not Sovereign States but merely provinces. When we consider the population of Ontario, which is two millions, and not 330,000, and that the people are satisfied to have a single Chamber legislature, that should be sufficient not only for the members of this Chamber but for the people in the State. There are only two provincial Councils of Canada working under the bi-cameral system of government. All the other provinces have their single chamber legislatures. Leaving Canada and taking in the United States, I agree that almost the whole of the States within the union have the bi-cameral system of government. But the second Chamber is elected on an adult franchise, the same fran-

chise as that exercised for the election of the House of Representatives.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about Queensland?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Queensland of course has a nominee Chamber. Fortunately for the people of Queensland they have a Labour Government working in the direction of bringing about the total abolition of the second Chamber in that State. The American States have the bi-cameral system of government, and in addition to having the election of the Upper House by adult suffrage, just as in the case of the Lower House, the people have the right to review the legislation by way of the initiative, referendum and recall. So the will of the people is supreme in respect of legislation. They have not only had conferred upon them the right of election of the second Chamber by the adult franchise, but they also hold the power of government through the instrumentality of the initiative, referendum and recall. That is the position in the United States. Before leaving the United States, I might add that although it was a much discussed issue for centuries as to whether those States had sovereign rights, it is, generally admitted to-day that they have not sovereign rights, that there were no States in existence before the union, and therefore the States of the union have not sovereign rights. But if we go to Switzerland, we find the cantons or States are States with sovereign rights, and almost every one of those States has a single chamber legislature. Therefore it will be readily realised that Mr. Pantou is not asking for anything novel or which has not been tried in other parts of the world. All that he is asking for is that we shall have a single chamber legislature elected upon the votes of the people, that is on the adult suffrage. In addition to the single chamber legislatures in Switzerland, they have also the right of the initiative referendum and recall, with the exception of one canton. The will of the people is supreme in respect of legislation. Although Mr. Pantou in his amendment only proposes a single chamber legislature elected on an adult franchise, it must necessarily follow that the party to which Mr. Pantou belongs would not be satisfied with so much. The initiative referendum and recall is part of the policy of Labour, and it would be the duty of a Labour Government in office in a single chamber to bring down such a measure and make it law, to give the people of the State the right of working as a Legislative Council or second Chamber through the initiative, referendum and recall. That is what would check hasty legislation. We have only to take the history of government in America, Canada, and Switzerland to see that where the initiative, referendum and recall is in operation the will of the people is supreme, and the laws enacted or rejected by the people are rejected or enacted in the best interests of the people of the State. I propose to refer

to the position as it exists to-day in connection with the franchise qualification for this Chamber. It was pointed out last session in reference to the North Province that whilst that province returned three representatives on a strictly limited number of votes, quite a number of the voters were resident within the Metropolitan or Metropolitan-Suburban Provinces. In accordance with our Constitution, plural voting is permitted. People who have a vote for the Metropolitan Province, or a number of them, are also qualified to vote for the North Province, and people living in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province are qualified to vote for the North and other provinces. A similar position exists throughout the whole of the provinces, other than the Metropolitan or Metropolitan-Suburban Provinces, and it may also apply to these latter provinces. Clearly here is double representation. Electors qualified to elect representatives to the Chamber for the Metropolitan Province are also qualified to determine the issue of an election in the North Province or any other province in the State. That is the system which we find member after member getting up and supporting, declaring that we have a system, a democratic Government in Western Australia under our present bi-cameral system of Government. How long is this state of affairs to continue? It is all very well for members who, perhaps through stress of business, do not get into touch with the representatives of the great majority of the people to take up this attitude, but it is just as well for us to realise the position. Working men and working women are expected to obey the laws of the State. How can we go to the workers of Western Australia and ask them to respect the laws of the State if we deliberately deny them a vote in the making of those laws? That is the issue with which members of the House are confronted.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: The workers have a full voice in the other House.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: We are coming to that presently. From what Sir Edward Wittenoom said a few evenings ago, I am pleased to find that we agree on at least one issue. We have come to the conclusion that the interests of the people of the State can best be served by a single chamber legislature; we disagree only as to the qualification of the elector. Perhaps the same causes that have influenced Sir Edward Wittenoom in coming to his decision have influenced me also. It will be generally admitted that the people of Australia are over-governed. We have more than 650 legislators, 64 Cabinet Ministers, six Governors and a Governor General, seven Presidents and seven Speakers. We are very fortunate in having a number of people prepared to take on these positions and to work under our present system; but it is something which the people of Australia are beginning to take into consideration. We know there is a movement throughout Australia in the direction of unification and in the direction of re-modelling the Federal

Constitution and abolishing the Federal Senate. It is not then a question of a single chamber legislature, but a question of conferring a far greater measure of local government on the people of the various districts throughout the States. Also actuating the people in that direction is the desire to effect some real economies in government. Sir Edward Wittenoom pointed out the other night that certain young ladies pay nothing to the revenues of the State notwithstanding which, having reached the age of 21 years, they are qualified to vote. Sir Edward could have gone further and pointed out that although there are in the State people who pay nothing to the revenues of the State, yet have a vote for the Assembly, and that if any of them were to receive as a birthday present a freehold of £50 value, he would also have a vote for this Chamber. That position is in existence to-day. There are in the State young people who not only pay no taxation, but are in the fortunate position of owning freeholds, and so are entitled to vote for the Legislative Council.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They are in a very small minority.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Still our system permits this sort of thing, notwithstanding which we call ourselves a democracy. I am finding no fault with it. I believe that every person 21 years of age should have a full voice in the government of the country. So Sir Edward Wittenoom's remarks, in my view, cut very little ice as an argument in opposition to the amendment submitted by Mr. Panton. Sir Edward Wittenoom declared that he did not think the idle, lazy, and the unthrifty should receive the same consideration as those who are out building up industries in the State. But the position remains that there are many idle people, many unthrifty people in the State who, through their qualifications, exercise a vote for this Chamber. Our Constitution and franchise qualification permit this sort of thing. There might be certain people who have the right to vote, and yet are not qualified by their own thrift or industry.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Bring in an amendment to prevent the lazy ones from voting.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: If the hon. member submits an amendment, this House will give it the consideration it deserves.

Hon. J. Cornell: That will be trying to control Nature's laws.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: While dealing with this matter of the lazy and the thriftless, and of people who, through their station in life, are not in a position to vote for this Chamber, I would instance the army of prospectors who have been operating throughout the mining areas of Western Australia during the last 20 years. Only recently Mr. Ever, one of the prospectors of the White Hope, who has been prospecting for the last 20 years, was denied a vote for this Chamber. He is an industrious man, a man who has gone out and assisted to build up the mining industry in this State; yet he was denied full citizenship rights for the State.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Because he had not a stake in the country.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: He has a stake in the country now, and the Constitution says in effect, "Yes, you have been lucky in discovering the White Hope; we shall now give you a vote for the Legislative Council." The same applies to his mate, Mr. Slavin. There are hundreds of men working in the primary industries who are denied the right of full citizenship. When the matter was before this Chamber last year, what happened? Members were prepared to sit tight and offer nothing in the direction of broadening the franchise to entitle those who are assisting in building up our industries to a full voice in the government of the country.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: The Government tried to rush it through at the eleventh hour of the session.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: There was plenty of time to deal with the measure. There was no time limit; we could have gone on for a month or six weeks, even into the year 1920, in order to consider that measure thoroughly. When Mr. Duffell was speaking, he referred to the small rental value of 7s. necessary to qualify for a vote for this House, and said that, in his opinion, the heads of families should have a vote for the Council. I might tell the hon. member that there are men who have raised families in this State, not in the city, and who have been assisting to build up the primary industries for years, and who are not yet qualified to vote for this Chamber, simply because they are living in houses which are suitable, from the point of view of climatic conditions, but are not considered to be of a clear annual value of £17. I remember one case in point. Out of this family two, and I believe three, lads went to the war; yet the father and mother were not entitled to a vote for this Chamber, and they never will be, although they have reared a family in the house they now occupy. It is all very well for members of the Metropolitan or Metropolitan-Suburban provinces to refer to the rental qualification of 7s. or 6s. 9d. a week. I would suggest that they broaden their views by looking at other parts of the State, where they will find people who are out battling and pioneering and doing good service for the State, and yet are denied, by reason of the locality and the nature of the structure in which they reside, a vote for this Chamber. These things are worthy of consideration. I am satisfied that a majority of the people in this State are not prepared to permit the qualification as it exists to continue. It is perhaps as well that a majority of the people do not know that, under our Constitution, an Australian aborigine, if he possesses freehold of a value of £50, is entitled to a vote for this Chamber.

Hon. T. Moore: So is John Chinaman if he is naturalised.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Whereas men who have gone away and fought for their country, together with their parents,

brothers and sisters, are denied a vote for this House.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The soldiers get it under the repatriation scheme.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: How do they get it? How many soldiers have been settled on the land? I noticed the other day that the number was something in the vicinity of 3,000, out of a total of 30,000 men who went away. How can men in the timber industry and in the mining industry qualify under the repatriation scheme? It is as well for members to wake up and see what is going on, and inquire who are entitled to vote for this Chamber and who are denied a vote.

Hon. T. Moore: Never advise a soldier to go to the Repatriation Department.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The same argument applies to the Asiatic who becomes naturalised and acquires a freehold of £50 value, whether he be Afghan, Chinese, Japanese, or any other of the Asiatic races. At the same time, we deny the people who are prepared to do their bit towards the defence of Australia a vote for this House.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: If an Afghan can get £50 worth of land!

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Take the timber industry in the South-West. The men engaged in the industry live in a shack which is provided for them at a cost of 5s. or 6s. a week. There they rear their families, and it takes them all their time to live. At present they have not an opportunity, and perhaps neither the desire nor the money, to put £50 into a block of land in order to qualify for a vote for this Chamber. The same applies to the men working in the mining industry, of whom there are thousands. We are told that the man who qualifies is the man who has a stake in the country. There are men who have been denied a vote, who have been prosecuted and persecuted for trying to get a vote, and they are men into whom the country has a stake instead of them having a stake in the country. If members go to the sanatorium at Wooroloo they will find there men who have been battling for the last 25 years to build up the mining industry, men who are now patients in the institution with their lungs full of particles of rock and dust. These men were refused the right to vote, and they were prosecuted two years ago for attempting to have their names placed on the roll of electors for the Council. Yet this is what members call a democracy? These self-same men were looking to the Labour Government in 1913 and 1914 to enact legislation to ensure that healthy conditions obtained in the mines. What happened to that measure when it reached this Chamber? I refer to the Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill, which had been shaped and moulded to protect the health of the men in the industry. That measure was rejected by the Legislative Council. The same applies to the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill. When the Government of the day made an honest effort to

bring within the scope of that Act the disease known as miners' complaint, this House rejected the measure. Yet members say that men who have launched out and have been industrious and thrifty should have a vote for the Council. I would advise members to visit Wooroloo and look at some of the men there, men who have assisted to pioneer the great mining industry of this State. Mr. Duffell said it was an easy matter to get a vote for this Chamber. If he would go through the agricultural and mining districts of this State, he would find how hard it is to get a vote for this Chamber. Men who are doing their bit to build up the agricultural, mining, and timber industries, cannot get a vote for this Chamber. There is no provision to enable them to qualify. Last year we tried to do something for them, but a majority of the members of this House disallowed the passage of the Bill. Mr. Duffell complained of the small percentage of electors who went to the polls on election day. What is the reason for it? I do not know what has actuated the people in the Metropolitan-Suburban province, but I know something about the goldfields provinces. There was a war of prosecution, persecution, and intimidation. We had evidence of it and the result is that, while the franchise remains as at present, people will refrain from going to the poll for fear of being prosecuted. When they go to exercise their votes, they are asked to make declarations of their belief that they are fully qualified to vote, and that in itself intimidates electors and they decline to go near the polling booth. But while they refuse to go to the polling booth and to risk prosecution, they resent the state of affairs which exists to-day. They say such a state of affairs should not be permitted to continue, and that this House should be wiped out. An institution which has to be bolstered and buttressed up by prosecutions, as this Council has been within the last two or three years, deserves to go out of existence. I wish to deal further with the matter of the prosecutions to which I have referred, in order to emphasise the desirability of carrying the amendment. I wish members to know something of what has taken place during the last three years in connection with the franchise for this Chamber. An election took place on the goldfields two years ago. I intend to quote from a copy of a file laid on the Table in another place last session in connection with the prosecution of persons whose names were placed on the rolls for the North-East and South provinces during 1918. The first communication I will read is as follows:—

National Federation and "To Win the War," Kalgoorlie, 15th April, 1918. The Hon. R. T. Robinson, Attorney General, Perth. Dear Sir, I am directed to bring under your notice an important matter that in the opinion of my Federation warrants prompt investigation at the hands of the Electoral Department, that is with reference to enrolments for the

North-East and South Provinces electorates. The qualification claimed for enrolment in five separate cases as set out in the list attached are: 1, Freeholder for land comprising part of a gold-mining lease on which the persons claiming enrolment have resided for a considerable period. 2, Freeholder for land which is a residential block leased from the Crown at 10s. per acre, the transfer of which has not been effected. 3, Householder by a married woman residing with her husband. 4, Householder by person residing on Crown lands. 5, Householder by person residing in a one-room camp on a lease, the clear annual value of which would be nearer 17s. per annum than £17. Hon. J. W. Hickey: Who signed that letter?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is signed "Edgar H. Harris, Acting Secretary."

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Is that the same Mr. Harris as has been elected to this Chamber?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I believe so. It appears, therefore, that the Electoral Department of Western Australia enlarged their staff by taking in the officers of the National Federation, Kalgoorlie, for the purpose of enabling the Chief Electoral Officer to carry out his duties. Mr. Harris's letter continues—

The above are typical of many of a similar character, together with numerous claims by persons unlawfully "squatting" on the gold-mining leases, many of their dwellings, if they can be defined as such, being valued from £2 to £10.

Thereupon the Attorney General writes to Mr. Harris under date of the 18th April, 1918—

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, and to inform you that the Chief Electoral Officer has been instructed to take immediate steps for the investigation of the cases you have submitted for inquiry, and to institute proceedings against the claimants in every case where the Crown Law officers recommend such action as an outcome of their review of the evidence that will be available. There will be no delay in this matter, and I am hopeful that any proceedings that may be instituted from the information laid by you will be finally dealt with in sufficient time before the election, to be of service as a warning to other electors similarly situated, and to prevent the exercise of the franchise by such persons at the forthcoming elections.

There was the intimidation. The National Federation of Kalgoorlie got into touch with the Attorney General a few days prior to a Legislative Council election, and the machinery of the National Federation was placed at the disposal of the Attorney General. Further, the Attorney General was pleased to accept the machinery of the National Federation and the assistance of that Federation's officers. The result was that as soon as communications had been received, advice was sent on from the Attorney General's department with a view to bringing

before the courts persons who had been wrongly enrolled. I just refer to these cases in order to show what can happen under our present Constitution.

Hon. H. Stewart: Wrong enrolment.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It goes to show that the State Electoral Department took into partnership a political organisation on the goldfields for the purpose of denying the people the right to enrol, and also with a view to intimidating electors who were qualified, from going to the polling booth. When we find communications from the secretary of the National Federation to the Chief Electoral Officer—

Hon. E. H. Harris: Pointing out that you stuffed the rolls.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: You said nothing of the kind; you were not game to say that.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: We find communications from the secretary of the National Federation on the goldfields to the Chief Electoral Officer pointing out that so many declaration forms would be required, and the Chief Electoral Officer asks the acting secretary of the National Federation, Mr. E. H. Harris, the exact number he will require for the purpose of challenging voters on election day. From these facts we can see how smoothly the officers of the National Federation, a political organisation, were working in conjunction with the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, and how the whole thing dovetailed. On the 19th April, 1918, the Chief Electoral Officer writes to "Mr. E. H. Harris, National Federation, Kalgoorlie," as follows:—

I beg to refer to interview at my last visit to Kalgoorlie and shall be glad if you will inform me, as promised, as soon as possible of the likely number of challenges you will make use of at the various polling places in the North-East and South Provinces, so that I will be able to provide a sufficient number of declaration forms for such purpose.

This letter of the Chief Electoral Officer amounts to requisitioning the machinery of the National Federation in order to carry on the war of persecution on the goldfields. On the 22nd April, 1918, Mr. Harris, acting secretary of the National Federation, Kalgoorlie, writes to Mr. Stenberg, Chief Electoral Officer, Perth—

Replying to yours of the 19th instant re number of forms required, I have not overlooked the matter. I will advise you as early as possible as to my requirements. That is what is going on under our present system of election. Last session, upon the matter being brought before this House, hon. members in their wisdom decided that such a state of affairs should be allowed to continue. I said a little while ago that we of this party are not now prepared to support the amendment of the Constitution Act which we supported last session. We know that the people of this State desire a greater

broadening of the legislative machinery. We know that the people are not prepared to allow this sort of thing to continue, the Chief Electoral Officer, getting in touch with the secretary of the National Federation, or any other federation, in Kalgoorlie, and taking that secretary into his department to administer the electoral law of this State; to carry out the Constitution Act so far as it applies to this Chamber. I have gone far enough to prove that the officers of the National Federation in Kalgoorlie got into touch with the Attorney General for the purpose of carrying on a war of intimidation against people who held different political views from those of the National Federation in Kalgoorlie. We have the complaints that have been submitted. Hon. members can have access to the file if they so desire, if they take an interest in knowing how the Constitution Act can be operated to intimidate people from coming to the polling booth, people who have reared families, and are good citizens, and are assisting to build up one of the greatest industries this State has. Those are the people who have been persecuted and prosecuted. At the same time, let me point out, both Federal and State legislation render enrolment compulsory. These people, if they make an error in filling in a claim card, are liable to be prosecuted for making a false declaration, while we have such institutions as the National Federation to carry on the war and win it as they did on the goldfields.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Who instructed the Chief Electoral Officer that in 1914 there were more names on the electoral rolls than we had adults in the State?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I know nothing of who instructed him. I want to draw attention to the view taken by the Chief Electoral Officer of his functions. I have a list of names of people who were prosecuted on the goldfields in this connection, and also copies of the communications which passed between the National Federation, Kalgoorlie, and the then Attorney General, Mr. Robinson, and copies of the communications received by Mr. Stenberg. To finish up with, there is the opinion of Mr. Stenberg as to what was likely to happen in the near future unless the electoral law was amended.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Has it happened?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No. Mr. Stenberg pointed out, addressing presumably the then Attorney General, Mr. Robinson—

In conclusion, I desire once more to draw attention to the very urgent necessity for the revision of the Legislative Council qualification before the next election, which is due in about 18 months' time.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What is the date of that?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The 24th September, 1918.

Hon. A. H. Panton: About the time the war was finished.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Chief Electoral Officer's minute continues—

This is not a new suggestion of mine, but was made as early as 1912 in my second report on the working of the Electoral Office (copy of such recommendation hereto attached). Since then I have repeatedly drawn attention to the difficulty the department is labouring under in connection with Legislative Council qualifications, and it is to be hoped that the Government can see its way to take some definite action at an early date in order to prevent the otherwise sure recurrence of similar trouble at a later date. Notwithstanding all the prosecutions that had taken place with the view of vindicating the law, we find the Chief Electoral Officer admitting, in his communication to the Attorney General, that there is a difficulty in connection with the administration of the Legislative Council franchise.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: At the tea adjournment I read a paragraph signed by the Chief Electoral Officer dated the 24th September, 1918. This paragraph was to the Attorney General and read as follows,—

This is not a new suggestion of mine, but was made as early as 1912 in my second report on the working of the Electoral Office. Since then I have repeatedly drawn attention to the difficulty the Department is labouring under in connection with Legislative Council qualifications.

The Chief Electoral Officer is not the only one in this State who has been labouring under difficulties so far as the Legislative Council qualifications are concerned. I referred before the tea adjournment to prosecutions that had taken place on the goldfields—prosecutions of innocent people. Many of those people pleaded guilty to the charges of making false declarations, at the time they signed their claim cards. They did that for the purpose, many of them, of saving the additional expense of having to put up a defence. The view taken was that the cheapest way to get over the difficulty would be to plead guilty. Let me review some of the cases dealt with, and one of them in particular which came under my notice. It was the case of a man whom I had met about 700 miles from Perth. He was out in the Erlistoun district prospecting 16 years ago. He had worked in the mines and he had a home, such as it was, on a goldmining lease. This man was prosecuted for making a false declaration. The result was that he was fined. That is the way we repay some of those who have done their part so far as developing the goldmining industry of Western Australia is concerned. I am bringing a portion of the contents of this file under the notice of yourself, Mr. President, and hon. members for the purpose of showing what has happened under the present Constitution Act regarding

the franchise qualifications. This matter was referred to last session, but apparently a majority of members were not prepared to give the question serious consideration. The result is that at the present time there is a general movement throughout the State in the direction of bringing about the abolition of this Chamber altogether. Further, when we considered the small percentage of voters who go to the poll, I for one am not surprised, knowing as I do that many are afraid of being prosecuted, more especially when they are asked to sign a declaration before handing in their ballot papers. This is a state of affairs that should not be permitted to continue in what we are pleased to term a democratic State like Western Australia. If this is anything in the nature of democracy, I am prepared to admit right away that I do not understand what democracy means. I was rather inclined to think that democracy meant Government by the will of the people. We have not that in this State. We know that in another place the representatives are elected on an adult franchise and we also know that the electorates comprise some 160,000 voters, while we are faced with the fact that those entitled to vote for this Chamber number not more than 50,000. On the one hand we elect to another place a Government placed there by the will of the people for the purpose of enacting legislation that the people desire to be enacted, and at the same time we elect them on a restricted franchise to this Chamber to nullify the wishes of the people elected on an adult franchise in another place. I intend to vote for the amendment, but before concluding my remarks, I desire to again refer to the war that was carried on two years ago on the eastern goldfields. I want to bring this under the notice of hon. members for the reason that it is likely to occur again at any time. In a State such as ours where political parties are coming into existence two or three times a year, and even it may be said almost every week, such a thing as happened two years ago may happen again in connection with the Legislative Council elections, and realising as I do that the matter was taken in hand on the eastern goldfields with the view of intimidating the electors going to the polling booths, as well as having innocent people prosecuted, it is a subject that should receive the serious consideration of the Legislative Council. Mr. Harris, who was secretary of the National Federation at Kalgoorlie two years ago, is a member of this Chamber at the present time.

Hon. A. H. Panton: And is still secretary of the federation.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I do not know, but it will be very interesting to hear what Mr. Harris has to say in connection with the amendment that is before the House. It has been the policy of labour for years past to broaden the franchise of the Upper House, but it was not the policy of labour to institute proceedings, or to go through the rolls

and to ferret out those cases where people had made mistakes so that prosecutions could be instituted. On the other hand there are men who are prepared to restrict the franchise by prosecuting people so that a particular candidate might be returned. The policy of Labour has always been that Government must be by the will of the people. I pointed out earlier in my remarks that the amendment merely states that while a single-chamber legislature should exist, it is realised at the same time that the policy of labour includes the initiative and referendum, and it is the intention of the labour movement, in the event of the amendment being carried to at once adopt the proposal for the initiative and referendum so that the will of the people may be supreme so far as legislation is concerned.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [7.40]: Allow me at the outset, Mr. President, to offer you my congratulations on having so successfully presided over the deliberations of this Chamber last session. I desire also, in common with other hon. members, to congratulate the victors in the recent campaign and to record my regret for the slain. At a later stage I too may be one or the other. It may be said, and fairly too, that the sponsors of the amendment have been somewhat tardy in submitting it. So far as my memory carries me back the abolition of the Legislative Council was the first plank of the Labour party's platform.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You are just as guilty as the rest.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The first five years I served in this House, were served under that auspicious banner. Hon. members who agreed with me, and others who disagreed with me, will recognise that I never hid my light under a bushel so far as that plank was concerned. However, it is the first time in the history of this House that such a motion has been launched, and not only is it tardy but it is long overdue. As in war so it is in politics. The greatest authorities on war have told us that while tactics from time to time alter, the strategy remains the same. I take it now that the strategy is there, but the tactics point to what is likely to happen in the near future, and that is a general election. During the course of his remarks, Mr. Moore claimed my support for the amendment. He said that I was elected pledged to the abolition of the Upper House. I was. I have been re-elected since, and I am not pledged one way or the other to its abolition. That brings me to Mr. Cunningham's remarks. As a member of the Nationalist Labour Party, I was one of those innocents marked for slaughter in the South Province election of 1918. This is the first occasion that I have referred to it or taken any exception to it. During the many years in which I was connected with the Official Labour Party—for a quarter of a century I belonged to no other party—I have not had

to answer for any man being enrolled whom I thought was not entitled to enrolment. When I was first returned to this Chamber I had an honourable opponent in Mr. Davies, the Mayor of Boulder. I was at the time secretary of the Kalgoorlie Trades Hall. We made a campaign in order to get as many persons as possible on the roll. I put on some 600 names and Mr. Davies put on some 350 names, and out of the lot there were not 30 whose applications were rejected. After six years another election came on and I was again elected for the South Province. At that election I found, despite the decline of the goldmining industry, that there were 800 more names on the roll than when I was first elected. Though there were few Parliamentarians who took an active part in endeavouring to secure my defeat there were many who took an active part in getting together the material with which to defeat me, that is, the putting of electors on the roll. There is a humorous side to what Mr. Cunningham has termed the political war of 1918 on the goldfields. On that occasion one prominent member of the Labour party on the goldfields, who was over-zealous in securing electoral claim cards for the purpose of placing people on the roll, took exception to certain names that had been placed on the roll, because they were the names of persons belonging to the Nationalist party, and informed the Chief Electoral Registrar that the National party were striking any assumed labour supporter, who had doubtful qualifications, off the roll, whereas no objection was taken to anyone who was likely to vote the National ticket, and who had doubtful qualifications. The Chief Electoral Registrar asked this labour supporter to supply him with a list of persons who, he thought, should not be on the roll. He supplied a list of 15 names, but when it was found that he had witnessed 12 of the claim cards himself he let the matter drop. As the qualification for enrolment for the Legislative Council elections is as it is, it should be accepted as it is. Any man who advises another to get on the roll runs no risk himself, but the man who, unfortunately for himself, wrongly gets on the roll, though in good faith, is landed in the law courts and mulcted in a fine. If the franchise is not as desired, our proper course is to revise it. I intend to approach the question from the point of view of whether or not the existence of this Chamber is justified. If it is justified, should the present franchise remain as it is? I am in this peculiar position, that come what may and for all time I am marked for slaughter in the political arena in this State. The sponsors of this amendment—I am speaking for the organisation to which they belong—would hang, draw and quarter me whenever the opportunity offered.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Don't you deserve it?

Hon. J. CORNELL: What is more, they would be more pleased and more satisfied if they succeeded in beating me and other

members situated as I am, than they would be in beating the most ardent, hide-bound, crusty tory who had ever entered this Chamber. I know that to be the case. There are other political interests represented in this Chamber, and if they had an opportunity of beating me I would certainly meet with that fate, but those in question when beating me would not have the same gratification that would be felt in the other case I have mentioned. I have yet to learn that there are not some reasonable people in this community who are imbued with a fair sense of justice.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: You have never found them.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have. They may not be numerically strong, but they will always respect honesty and sincerity of purpose.

Hon. A. H. Panton: When you can find them.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am certainly going to kick hard before I die politically. However I may stand politically I cannot bring myself to sacrifice my principles for the sake of political expediency or for some splenetic political purpose. Whilst I adhere to everything I have said on the floor of this House I would say that I am not in accord with the bi-cameral system of government: if it is to remain, I am not in accord with the franchise upon which members of the Legislative Council are elected. I am not going to deal with the Bills which have been rejected by this House, nor with those which have been passed. I have been long enough in politics to know that when a Bill is rejected in either this House or another place, it is the result of party machinery and party manipulation. I have yet to learn that the supporters of this amendment, either in a collective or individual capacity, are possessed of any more toleration, or breadth of outlook, or a fairer sense of justice and of a fair deal, than the most conservative politician in this country. I have heard a lot said about democracy. There are many sins which have been committed in the name of democracy.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Especially when the war was on.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have yet to learn, in the work and doings during the last few years of the party mainly responsible for this amendment, that it can lay any greater claim to democracy and the exercise of clemency than any other political party in this country. The only point that concerns me is that we are over-governed in this Commonwealth. We have too many members of Parliament and too many parties. We can do away with at least half of these. There is only one logical and concrete way of bringing about better government, and fewer Parliamentarians in this country, and that is by throwing the whole concern into the melting pot, both Federal and State Parliaments. Let us evolve from that some sensible and logical system of government. I am inclined personally to the Canadian system, that is to say, we should surrender our lots as sov-

foreign States, and give the Federal Constitution the unwritten powers. But would we be any better off other than in the small saving which would be effected by the abolition of this Parliament, or of one House, if we are going to continue on present lines? I think not. There is a force that is more apparent in this land than many hon. members suppose. It is the force of public opinion, and the advancement of thought and education in the young people of the State. I make bold to assert that there is in the State a majority in favour of the abolition of one or the other of the two Houses. We cannot procrastinate. It was said by Dr. Saw that there has been no demand for the abolition of this House. But members of Parliament should not wait for a demand. They should be the leaders. They should lead thought in the direction of improvement in our Parliamentary institutions. When the amendment is put I will vote for it, for exactly the reasons given by Mr. Dodd, that is to say, in order that, if it is carried, the words proposed by Mr. Dodd may be added to the amendment. It will then give the proper touch to the policy of the Labour platform, which is the abolition of this House, or the abolition of both Houses and the setting up of one House elected on adult suffrage subject to the initiative and referendum. Seeing that this proposal has been on the Labour party's platform for many years, it is strange that the sponsors of the amendment should bring down a proposal to abolish this Chamber and forget the essential part of the platform, which is that the will of the majority of the people should rule, should have the right to veto and to initiate. It is somewhat of a satire that it should devolve upon Mr. Dodd and me, who were for so very many years connected with the Labour party, but who are now considered no longer fit to associate with that party, to direct attention to this executive feature and indicate our intention to so amend the amendment should it be agreed to by the House.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [84]: I am quite opposed to the amendment. I should be sorry to think it were possible to find a sufficient number of members to carry it. From time to time we have new members coming in, and we are always pleased to welcome their arrival. It has been my experience to find a great change come over new members. The longer they are associated with the House and the better acquainted they become with the affairs of the State, the more necessary do they find the Council to the well-being of the community as a whole. If any new member looks around the Chamber he will find practically every section of the community represented. I do not think we could desire any better system than one which provides for the representation in this House of every industry and every calling. I am more particularly opposed to the amendment because of the quarter whence it comes.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Naturally.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We realise that this has been one of the foremost planks of the Labour platform for many years past. This plank no longer finds favour with the community, and so it is deemed necessary to elect a new general who will adopt novel tactics. So far the tactics have been to endeavour to reduce the franchise of the Council with a view to its ultimate abolition. Those tactics have not succeeded. Now Mr. Panton comes along and says that with a view to economy this House should be abolished. There is very little doubt that the franchise would have been widened ere this had it not been for the realisation that the object of the Labour party is to abolish the House altogether. When a man attempts to borrow a knife confessedly for the purpose of stabbing the owner, it would be very foolish on the part of the owner to hand over the knife. The Council has always had that view before it, namely, that behind any request for a broadening of the franchise lies the idea of ultimately sweeping away the House. Efforts have been made from time to time with that object. Up to the present those efforts have failed. Now it is suggested that on some other plausible excuse we should be asked to tamper with the franchise. It is asking a little too much of us. If the mover of the amendment were in earnest in his professed desire to economise the resources of the State he could have come forward with very much better proposals, proposals more acceptable to the House and to the community. I fail to remember any strong agitation on the part of the public in favour of the abolition of the Council. One hears it mooted in certain quarters from time to time, but there never has been any strong public demand for it. Generally it is heard merely as an election cry calculated to gain votes. However, it is not a very agreeable cry in the ears of the electors of the Council, who have striven to obtain their privileges and who prefer that the other fellow should go and do likewise rather than seek to reduce existing privileges. Members of this House regard their legislative obligations from the point of view of the community as a whole. In spite of isolated instances of rejection by the Council of measures brought down, I should like to hear of any clear case on the part of the Council of obstruction to the public interests. The Council has passed purely experimental legislation from time to time. I have here a list of 19 measures, practically all Labour laws, each of which has been passed by this House. This list does not embrace all the measures agreed to in the interests of democracy. We passed the Factories Act in 1904 and again in 1911.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The worst Act in Australia.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We passed the Early Closing Act, with its half-dozen amendments extending over the period between 1902 and 1912. We passed the Industrial Arbitration Act, the Mines Regulation Act, the Coal Mines Regulations Act, the Mining Act, the

Workmen's Wages Act, the Truck Act, and the Bankruptcy Act, which enables many to dodge their obligations. We passed the Shearers' Accommodation Act, and the Workers' Homes Act, under which, by the way, almost anybody can obtain qualification as an elector of the Council. We passed the Navigation Act, the Merchant Shipping Act, the Inspection of Machinery Act, the Trades Unions Act, the Masters and Servants Act, the Employment Brokers Act, the Employers' Liability Act, and the Workers' Compensation Act. I ask members, after having listened to this list of legislation, apart from various measures put through this Chamber to authorise steamships, fish shops, and butcher shops, and half-a-dozen other things—

Hon. J. Cornell: And the Moneylenders' Act.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Do not all these things go to show that the Legislative Council has certainly never strained at passing measures in the interests of the workers of this country? When we are told that members wish to do away with the Legislative Council in order to reduce the cost of government, I feel somewhat astounded. None of the independent countries of the world has been at all successful unless it had two Chambers. It has been the generally recognised system under which countries have progressed. All of the most successful countries have had the two Chamber system. We must recognise that during the period of history when the greatest countries have worked under a one-Chamber system, that regime has usually been followed by revolution and very serious riots from one end of the dominion to the other, and it has been necessary to revert to the bi-cameral system.

Hon. T. Moore: Which countries are they? You are generalising again.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: England tried the single Chamber and the result was that the King was brought to the scaffold. France tried it and the people there had their difficulties—the most appalling tyrannies the world has ever known. We hope Australia does not wish to travel in the same direction. It is suggested that we should try a system which has been proved time and again to be a failure.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Were any of those elected on an adult franchise?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: America tried the same thing and found it was unsuccessful, and reverted to two Chambers.

Hon. T. Moore: England has only got the adult franchise recently.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It has been found generally that, whatever the suffrage, one Chamber was a failure.

Hon. T. Moore: Where the autocracy ruled, yes.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It was necessary to revert to the two Chamber system. If the amendment is passed and we do away with this Chamber, we shall soon be in the same difficulties, and after a number of us have

passed out, or have been passed out by a revolution, the country, I suppose, will revert to the two-Chamber system. If we put the whole of the electors on an equal footing, a majority of the people would immediately start to exempt themselves from any taxation and would, as far as possible, raise the whole of the taxes from the few individuals who would have no House of Parliament to preserve their rights. There would be no inducement to people to build up anything because the majority would extract the whole of the taxes from them. It goes without saying that this would be done. We have seen what happened in Queensland. There they had a referendum of the people with an idea of doing away with the second Chamber. Most of the people fortunately showed their good sense by refusing to give the Government authority to pass that measure. It is now suggested by the Labour party in Queensland that there should be an income tax exemption to the extent of £400. Already we see that the object of these people is to exempt themselves and get a free hand to place the whole of the taxation on one section of the community, the minority every time of course. There would be no House to safeguard their interests. The Labour party in this State attempted to do something of the kind in 1912. Mr. Scaddan's Government sent a measure to this House and we had something to do with passing it out. That was the Labour Government's suggestion for an income tax exemption to the extent of £250. What was that but the same idea that there should be a general exemption as wide as possible so that the few would have to pay the greater amount of taxation. It is most necessary that we should retain the Legislative Council with the one object, if for no other, of having a safeguard for the minority who extend away into the outback parts and into the northern areas of the State and have not an opportunity of keeping themselves before the public eye. Those who are able to get on the Esplanade and make orations and get freely reported in the Press receive encouragement at all times, and have the opportunity to express their views, but many of the sounder men, who are building up our industries and working hard in the outback areas doing their bit, are seldom heard of. It is necessary to have a Legislative Council with representatives to look after their interests and see that they are not wiped out. If they are wiped out, it will be a poor lookout for labour and all other interests in this community. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any further, but I wish to make it clear that I would never feel inclined to alter my attitude with regard to abolishing the Legislative Council.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East). [3.23]: In rising, to speak in opposition to the amendment now before the House, I do so, not

because I am afraid that the amendment will be carried, but because I feel that a silent vote given by the leader of the House on a question of this importance to the House itself might possibly be misunderstood. One reason why I am opposed to the amendment is because I am opposed to unification, and I think that any step taken in the direction of interfering with the strength and efficiency of State Parliaments is a step towards unification. To my mind it is something more than a coincidence that the advocate of the abolition of the Legislative Councils in the different States is invariably a supporter of the policy of unification. I say it is something more than a coincidence. It suggests to my mind that those who desire unification clearly feel that the abolition of the Legislative Councils will so impair the efficiency of the legislative machinery in the States that unification would be the only possible result. We have heard a great deal during this debate about the cost of parliamentary government in Australia. I question very much whether those who talk so much about the cost of parliamentary government in Australia have troubled to get their facts in order or their figures into proper perspective. The present total Commonwealth and State expenditure on revenue account in Australia is approximately 100 million pounds per annum. The cost of the whole of the State Governments and Parliaments is about £600,000. That is to say, the total cost of the State Governments and Parliaments, as compared with the revenue expenditure of the Commonwealth and State Governments, is .57 per cent., or one-one hundred and seventy-third part of the total. The advocates of this amendment tell us that, by its adoption, we shall save £12,000 per annum. I wish to refer to another feature of that argument a little later on and show how other advocates of the amendment have entirely done away with that saving, because they suggest an alternative which would be a great deal more expensive. The mover suggested that it would result in a saving of £12,000 per annum.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I said £15,000.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That does not make very much difference. This would be .20 per cent., or one-five hundredth part of our annual revenue expenditure in Western Australia. It might be contended that when we want to save money, any amount, no matter how small a proportion it bears to the total is worth saving. I am quite in agreement with that contention, but I do say that a saving of such minute proportions is not worth considering if there is any danger of it impairing our system of parliamentary government. The two things are not worth weighing one against the other. If it can be demonstrated that the system of parliamentary government would be impaired, it is not worth arguing that, by doing away with the Legislative Council, we should save £15,000 per annum, or one-five hundredth part of our

total revenue expenditure. It is also said we are over-governed. On what is that argument based? Mr. Cornell used the same argument this afternoon. Does he base it on a comparison with other parts of the world? In considering this matter, it is not merely population that we have to take into account, but territory as well. I do not suggest that mere territory requires representation, but I say that the large territory, and particularly the undeveloped territory, cannot be properly governed by the same number of members of Parliament, or the same number of Parliaments, as small and compact communities. It would be ridiculous to say that population alone should be the basis on which to decide how many Parliaments and members of Parliament we require. Reference has been made to the United States of America. It is true they have a very much bigger population than Australia at the present time, but when the Union was established, they had a territory about one-third the size of Australia, with a population about one-half of our present population, and they had 14 Parliaments each with two Houses. That was the position when America was only about half the size of Australia. They had far more Parliaments than Australia.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That does not make it right.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am asking the hon. member where he goes for his comparison. If he says Australia is over-governed, let him look around the rest of the world and, taking all the circumstances into consideration, territory as well as population, let him ask himself whether, as a matter of fact, we in Australia are over-governed at the present time. I would take him first of all to America and tell him that there, with far fewer people than we have, and a smaller territory, they had more parliaments and more members of parliament than Australia has to-day. Then let us turn to Canada. There they have 10 parliaments as against our seven, and the populations of the two countries are not so very greatly different. It is true that in seven out of nine provincial parliaments in Canada there is only one House. But hon. members must bear in mind that the central Government in Canada deals with a very much larger number of subjects than are dealt with by the Federal Government of Australia to-day. The central Parliament of Canada is not to be compared in any way with the Federal Parliament of Australia. In the Federal Parliament of Australia we have about 75 members in the lower House and 36 in the upper. In Canada they have 220 odd members in the lower House, three times the number that we have in the Federal House of Representatives; and in the Upper or Dominion House of Canada, the Senate, there are 96 members, almost three times the number of members we have in the Senate. Consequently if we take America at

that stage of her development when she could be compared with Australia, or take Canada as she is to-day, we find that Australia is not an over-governed country. I think that if we were to take the countries of Europe one by one we would come to the same conclusion—that is, making due and reasonable allowance for territory and population—that Australia is not to-day an over-governed country. I do not intend to enter into any long discussion as to the rival merits of the bi-cameral and uni-cameral systems of Parliament, but I would suggest to the supporters of the amendment that they have not brought forward any instance to support the theory they wish us to accept, that the uni-cameral system is the better system. Mr. Hamersley has pointed out instances in England and France where the uni-cameral system was adopted and abandoned. I think that was quite a fair contention to put forward, at least a contention that the other side should meet, that the experience of the world is all in favour of the bi-cameral system. Now we are told that if this amendment is carried and this House is done away with, then something else is going to be substituted in the place of this Chamber. But, before referring to that point, I do not think I can allow to pass without comment the statement of Sir Edward Wittenoom that he was anxious to see the Senate abolished. We have all heard of the curate's horse that was hard to catch and no good when caught; and the hon. member seems to regard the Senate in the same light, as a place very hard to get into and no good when you get there.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: I would like to say, in explanation, that I do not want the Senate abolished, but desire the abolition of the system on which the Senate is now elected, a system that makes it merely a replica of the House of Representatives and therefore unnecessary.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Personally, I consider that the Senate has not had a fair trial. I have advocated long before I came into this House, and I still advocate, the system of proportional representation for the Senate, because I believe that such a system would make the Senate what it was intended to be—a States House rather than a party House. But in the meantime I would urge upon those who value the Senate lightly, to remember that it is in the Senate and in the Senate only that the distant, the weak, the small, from a population point of view, States have the same representation as the older, centrally situated, powerful, and populous States of Australia. For that reason I say Western Australia should be the last State in the Commonwealth to advocate the abolition of the Senate. Reverting for a moment to the argument that Australia is an over-governed country, I would make this statement, that, taking it by and large, as the Americans say, Australia is to-day, and has been, a well governed country. I would go

further and say that it is because Australia generally has been a well and cleanly and honourably governed country that it is to-day probably the most prosperous and probably the happiest country in the world. The advocates of this amendment did not at the outset tell us what alternative they suggested. Now we are told that we are to have the initiative and referendum. When the mover and the seconder had resumed their seats I was under the impression that they were going to be satisfied with one House and adopt the Canadian system. If that was the case, the only logical course to pursue would be to hand over to the Federal Government all those things that in Canada are under the control of the central administration. It would be simply a step towards that unification which I know those hon. members desire, and to which I am entirely opposed, not from a Western Australian point of view only, but from an Australian point of view, because I believe it would be detrimental to the development of all parts of Australia. What benefits are we likely to receive from doing away with this House and substituting the initiative and referendum? Undoubtedly all the saving that is supposed to result from the abolition of this Chamber would disappear at once, because we could not hold the number of referendums that would be necessary and pay for them with what it costs to keep up this House. Personally, I am not enamoured of the referendum. I do not think our experience in Australia is likely to make anybody think too highly of the referendum. In that country where it is used more frequently than anywhere else, Switzerland, it has undoubtedly been a means of keeping things as they are. It has not been an instrument of progress, and I think that if we had the referendum instead of the Legislative Council those who at the present time are advocating the change would find it very much harder than they do under existing conditions to introduce legislation in accordance with the spirit of the times. To my mind our system, subject to certain qualifications that I shall refer to later, has a very great deal to commend it. We must have some check against hasty legislation and we must have some method of review. One strong argument in favour of our Legislative Council is its continuity. It preserves a kind of continuity in the Parliamentary machine. The Legislative Assembly goes to the country every three years, and it is not at all infrequent to witness violent changes of public opinion. If we take one election, and then another election following it three years afterwards, we can hardly think it possible that the people could have changed their minds so greatly as the poll seems to indicate. As a matter of fact, they have not changed their minds anything like so greatly as the poll seems to indicate. All that the electors can do in an election for the Legislative Assembly is to express a preference for one party as against the other to

rule the country. That is all the electors can do. They show a general leaning towards the policy of the party that they choose. But it would be absurd to suggest that the electors endorse every plank in the platform of the party that they choose. It would be equally absurd to say that electors who at one election returned a certain party with a large majority and three years later returned another party, desire that all the work of the party they had previously supported should be uprooted, that the whole thing should be revolutionised. Of course, they do not desire anything of the kind. They merely express a general preference for the party they choose and a general support of its policy. If there were no Legislative Council with its continuity of office and its different method of election, not purely on the question of franchise, then it would be right to assume that after a general election of the Legislative Assembly, if that election happened to oust the party that was in office before, there should be an uprooting of what had been done and a general revolution, and a carrying into effect of every plank of the platform of the successful party. Can anyone say for a moment that that is what the public want, that that is what is indicated when the electorate, having decided to elect a Labour Government; decide three years later to elect a Liberal Government? There is not that change in public opinion. The Upper House because of its continuity of office is one of the best safeguards we could have against revolutionary action of that kind. It is one of the best protections that the public have. This House takes cognisance of the public mood. We recognise that in a general election the public decide that a certain party shall take office. Then it becomes our duty as a House of review to say whether we think the public desire that every plank in the platform of that party should be put into operation at once. Another good element which this House introduces into parliamentary government in the wider constituency. I suggest that the wider constituency does in many cases mean, at all events it should mean, a wider outlook. I think that Western Australia so far as its Legislative Assembly is concerned is reasonably free from what is generally known as the parish pump member. But it is inevitable that the man elected by a very small constituency must have his views coloured by the opinions and interests of that small constituency. It is all for the good in the framing of legislation for Western Australia that the Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly should come before another House, the members of which are elected by a very wide constituency, a constituency so wide that the feelings of any small locality cannot possibly influence members. I have no doubt that that is one of the reasons why it has been found possible for this Chamber to make so many improvements as it undoubtedly has made in the legislation submitted to it. Theoretically, it may be safely argued that an Upper Cham-

ber with continuity of office and elected over a large area by constituencies with diversified interests is a satisfactory safeguard against hasty legislation and is a well constituted Chamber of review. Now what has been the practical experience? I do not think any one can deny that the practice so far as this House is concerned has entirely supported the theory. This House has checked hasty legislation which it felt was not in accord with the will of the people; and over and over again it has improved the legislation submitted to it. We have had certain measures mentioned as illustrating the tendency of this House to reject the measures put forward by the Labour Government. The first Bill mentioned in this connection was a taxation Bill. It was called the Income Tax (War Emergency) Bill. The measure was introduced in the Legislative Assembly just one week before the close of the session. It was a Bill manifestly unjust in its incidence and most extraordinary in the method by which the money raised under that Bill was proposed to be spent. The measure was rejected by this House, and within a month of its rejection the party that put the Bill forward went to the country and, very largely because of that Bill, lost practically the whole of its majority, so large a portion of its majority that it was unable to hold the reins of government through another Parliament. What better vindication could this House have of its action than that? What better indication could there be that this House accurately interpreted the will of the people when it rejected that Bill? I repeat, the measure was brought forward in the closing hours of the session and was rejected here. A month later the party responsible for the measure went to the constituency. The Bill was one of the strongest arguments used against that party when before the electors. It had a magnificent majority when it introduced the Bill, but it came back with its majority almost entirely gone, reduced to such an extent that the Government were unable to survive through another Parliament. Having rejected that measure it was said that this House subsequently passed another taxation Bill at the instance of the Government, of which I was a member. There was no resemblance whatever between those two, except that they were both taxation measures. I do not think there is any necessity for me, on this motion, to discuss the individual merits of Bills. It is sufficient for me to point out what I have done in regard to Bills which the Chamber has rejected. Mention has been made of a number of Bills which have been rejected but only two or three of them have been quoted. If they had been placed before us one by one we could in calm review give ample justification for what the House did. For every Bill quoted as having been rejected by this House we can quote dozens of instances of Bills having been made far more acceptable to the public. I have no doubt that the supporters of this amendment have searched

very diligently through the records of the Council for years past to find something to bolster up the amendment. What have they found? They found a taxation Bill which we were justified in throwing out and one or two other measures of comparatively minor importance. Let me refer to a Bill which was brought before this House by a Liberal Government and rejected. I refer to the first Land Tax Bill. The measure was the first introduced in Western Australia and it was rejected by the Legislative Council. A little while later an election took place in the constituency that was closely interested in the question and land taxation was made the one and only issue of that election. The advocate of land taxation, a man who had rendered conspicuous service to the country, the late Hon. George Throssell, won the election and afterwards when the Bill was again presented to the House the Legislative Council accepted the will of the people and passed the measure. In the majority of cases when the House rejects a Bill it rejects it in order to give the public further time to consider it, and not until this House has by repeated rejection, by stubborn rejection of Bills which it is obvious that the people want—until the House has done that, can it be fairly said that it is standing in the way of the will of the people. It is entirely within the province of this House to throw out a Bill because they say "In our opinion the people do not want the Bill." It may be on the political programme of the party they return, but the public has no chance of going through the programme and saying "We agree to this thing," or "We agree to that," but if a Legislative Assembly election were fought on a clearly defined issue, such as a Bill rejected by this House, and the electors gave a decision which unmistakably and clearly showed that the people wanted the measure passed, the position of this House would be entirely different. The House would hesitate to refuse to take notice of the expression of the will of the people. I repeat that the Legislative Council has rejected measures because they were not in accordance with the wishes of the people, because it was the desire that the people should have an opportunity of expressing their wishes on those Bills, and as in the case of the Land Tax Bill, the Legislative Council has not hesitated to reverse its decision to give effect to the clearly expressed will of the people. We have heard a great deal said as to whether this is or is not a party House. I say unhesitatingly it is not a party House in the sense that the Legislative Assembly is, and if it were it would entirely lose its value as a House of review. In the Legislative Assembly under our present party system of government, the party tie must necessarily at times be very tight. I am not speaking of caucus or instances such as Mr. Dodd referred to to-day, where 11 out of 20 could tell the other nine to vote as they liked. That, however, is taking an extreme case. I say that in the Legislative Assembly a member must often be faced with the choice of two positions, that he must either vote for a

measure that he does not altogether approve of, or else he must risk the political life of the Government that he does believe in. It is impossible under our party system of government to escape from that. There must be many occasions on which a member of the Legislative Assembly perhaps silently, perhaps with some excuse to his constituents, when his own conscience compels him to say, "I do not like the Bill but I must vote for it or else turn out of office the Government that I generally agree with, and put into office a Government I almost entirely disapprove of." In this Chamber we are free from any obligation of that kind. Every hon. member knows without embarrassing a Government in whom he generally believes that he can attack any Bill or portion of a Bill that the Government bring forward. Any member, no matter on what side of the House he may be sitting, no matter how keenly he may support or disapprove of the party in power, knows that what he does is directed simply to the measure itself, and that it has no bearing on the general government of the country. This is the fifth session in which I have had the honour and privilege of leading the Legislative Council, and hon. members know that the opposition I have had to face has come mostly from those who, in a general way, may be termed political supporters of the Government that I am a member of. If some of these hon. members were in the Legislative Assembly they would find their freedom of action considerably restricted. They would find that it would be dangerous, and in all probability they would not like to attack the Government strongly on any point they did not agree with and would find it still more dangerous to vote on the other side and thereby risk the fate of the Government. In this House there is no such influence, and for that reason it is an effective Chamber of review. To-day I find myself with every member of the Labour party sitting behind me, and it has been my experience, in many sessions in connection with many Bills that I have presented, to find amongst my staunchest supporters, members of the Official Labour party. I do not know how many Bills the House has rejected during the period it has been under my leadership, but I can recall two. One was a Bill to place the railways of the State under three Commissioners, and the other was a Bill introduced last session to amend the Constitution. I regret the rejection of both those Bills, but I say again that both those Bills were rejected by those who may in a general sense be termed political supporters of the Government. I do not think that the people of this State or any other State of the Commonwealth have made any demand at all for the abolition of the Legislative Council. Reference has been made to the referendum taken in Queensland. Queensland I suppose might be described as the most advancedly democratic of the States of Australia, whatever that might mean, and the referendum was taken by the Government in the heyday of its popularity.

A big vote was polled. It was taken, rightly or wrongly, in connection with the Federal election and that accounted for the big poll. The majority against the abolition of the Legislative Council was overwhelming. If that was the case in Queensland, what are we to assume will be the opinion of the people of the other States of the Commonwealth? It was only quite recently that the Labour party altered their programme in regard to the Legislative Council. Even that party, up to a few years ago, merely sought an amendment of the franchise of the Legislative Council with the view of the ultimate abolition of the Chamber. That was then, so far as the Labour party were concerned, in the dim distance. It has been only within the last year or two that the Labour party have striven to bring it into the realm of immediate practical politics. I have no fear of the amendment being carried any more than the mover has hopes of its being carried. For that reason I do not propose to labour the question, but I would like to sound a note of warning to those members who think that this Chamber is perfect, and who because they think it is perfect, have in the past resisted every attempt that has been made to liberalise its constitution. When I sought election to the Legislative Council first of all some 10 years ago, I advocated household suffrage as being one of the qualifications that was necessary for the Legislative Council, so that it should be kept in touch with the general community of Western Australia. I am still firmly of the opinion that household suffrage is a sound and proper qualification for this Chamber. My contention is that any person who takes upon his shoulders the full responsibility of citizenship should have full powers of citizenship. I entirely agree with Mr. Moore when he speaks of the people in the timber areas who have their habitations, homes and families there, and cannot secure qualification under the present franchise—I agree that those people should be given the franchise for the Legislative Council, and I also agree with Mr. Baglin that people who have made flats their homes should also be given the franchise. The present wording of the qualification clause is indefinite and liable to misconception; it has been misunderstood and until it is put right will constantly cause trouble. Several years ago an interpretation was given to the words "clear annual value," which the Parliament that passed the last amendment of the Constitution did not intend. Parliament intended it to have a more liberal interpretation than was given. I do not suggest that the interpretation was wrong, but it was different from what Parliament intended. Last year an amendment was submitted on this particular point. I do not consider that the amendment as it came to this House was perfect. It was altered from what the Government had originally

drafted, but it was competent for this House at that time to have taken the matter into consideration and put forward an amendment which would have been clear and intelligible, and would have given what I firmly believe should be given, that is, household franchise, as one of the qualifications for the Legislative Council—

Hon. J. Nicholson: But not introduced at the eleventh hour as was done.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was introduced some time in November and the session as a rule runs on to December. That Bill was rejected not by a majority vote, but because a sufficient majority could not be secured. Mr. Duffell has already recanted and it is not at all unlikely that if the hon. member then took the view that he holds now we would have got the Bill through. I also support for reasons I gave at the time, the giving of the franchise to every man who fought for his country in the recent war. It is just as well that hon. members should pay some heed to the recent election results with the view of asking themselves whether this House really stands quite as high with the public as they would like. In 1912 in the whole of the contested provinces the percentage of votes cast to voters enrolled was 60.69. In 1914 the figures were 61.18 and in 1916 they fell to 52.91. In 1918 they fell to 37.20, and in the last elections recovered only slightly to 40.27. From my point of view, and speaking as a warm advocate of the Legislative Council, I do not like to see the percentage of recorded votes in contested seats to voters on the roll falling off so much as 20 per cent. for the period of six years. Six years ago we could get a poll of 61 per cent. at every contested election. To-day the average is 40 per cent. As against that it has to be remembered that the percentage was pulled down materially by elections in provinces where there was no keen party issue, and undoubtedly it is impossible to get the people to go to the poll in a Legislative Council election when the election is only between two individuals. Take the case of Mr. Duffell, for instance. He was fighting an opponent whose party politics did not differ very greatly from his own. No doubt there was a great difficulty in a big province like that in getting people to go to the poll. I venture to think that had Mr. Duffell's opponent been a straight-out Labour man there would have been a big poll. I do not say who would have won or who would have lost, but that is one of the reasons why the poll for last year was so small. But in every province it was small as compared with what appertained a few years ago. The falling off in the number of electors is, to my mind, a matter to which we should give some consideration. The figures I have given are, highly suggestive, and do suggest the need for some action that will bring us into closer accord with the spirit of the times. We should have a reform which will bring the House into closer touch

with responsible public opinion in the State. Without that reform I think there is some danger—I do not say it is an imminent danger—of this House losing the prestige it has fairly won, and the high place it deservedly holds in the public mind. I wish to refer to some remarks made by the seconder of this amendment. I am sure he made those remarks without understanding the position. I mean when he reflected upon the attendance of hon. members here. He has overlooked the fact that several members of this Chamber are away from Western Australia. It is well for their constituencies, and for the country, that members of this Chamber and of another place should, as far as they can, spend a portion of their recess in travelling. The hon. member was also probably not aware that other members are away through illness. I am sure you, Sir, will agree with me when I say that I question if there is any Parliament or branch of Parliament in Australia or elsewhere, where members attend to their duties more diligently than is the case in the Legislative Council. We have, in fact, splendid attendances. It is a rare thing indeed for any member to be absent without some good reason, and it would be misleading to the public and unjust to members themselves if it went forth, as suggested by the seconder of the amendment, that members of the Legislative Council took very little interest in their business, and that this was one reason for the suggestion to abolish the Chamber. I think it was the same hon. member who said that in coming here he felt he had reached a dead-end and did not expect to do any good. I can assure him that his initial endeavour, notwithstanding the intent on his part, will not do any harm. As to his general impression of the usefulness or otherwise of this Chamber, I confidently predict that it is one which experience will remove. I can safely assure him that as a member of the Legislative Council he will find ample opportunity for doing good, and I also feel confident he will make each of those opportunities his own. I oppose the amendment.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Hickey, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 18th August, 1920.

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

PETITION—RETURNED SOLDIERS' ASSOCIATION, GERALDTON BRANCH.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [4.38]: I have to present a petition from the Returned Soldiers' and Nurses' Association, Geraldton branch, dealing with the resumption of pastoral areas in the Murchison district. The petition contains 213 signatures and is in accordance with the Standing Orders. It is respectfully worded and ends with a prayer. The phraseology is in accordance with the Standing Orders, but a certain number of the forms that were sent out were not in accordance with the Standing Orders and have, therefore, not been included. I move—

That the petition be received and read.

Question put and passed; petition received and read.

On motion by Mr. Willcock, petition ordered to be printed, and made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

QUESTION—TRAMWAY EXTENSIONS.

Mr. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has he given consideration to the question of extending the tramway system to the suburbs in the metropolitan area? 2, Has he made special inquiries on the subject? 3, Is he satisfied that there is urgent need for tramway extensions? 4, Has any report been formulated? 5, If so, is the report available to hon. members? 6, Do the Government intend to proceed with the extensions? 7, If so, when? 8, If not, why?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, 2, 3, and 4, Yes. 5, 6, 7, and 8, The question of providing tramway extensions is under consideration in conjunction with loan expenditure on public works generally.

QUESTION—WATER SERVICES, AGRICULTURAL AREAS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the total revenue received by rates services and excess water