

such a thing. If a special Bill is brought down in each case it would be very little cost to the country, of no cost to the local authority, and be a great protection to those interested in municipal life. Not only shall I vote against the clause, but I think, for the reasons given, the Committee should reject it.

Mr. FOLEY: I move an amendment—

*That in Subclause 1, line 2, after the word "municipality," the following words be added:—"After such municipality has decided in the affirmative by a referendum of ratepayers."*

I do not agree with the Attorney General. In a Bill of this description we want to make it definite that the ratepayers shall be consulted. I think the clause can remain with good effect with the amendment I have proposed. Further, this amendment would save the Committee from putting through any Bill at some other time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think it wise for the Minister to accept the amendment. If we do accept it, would it not be necessary to provide some machinery for taking a referendum? It would also be necessary to re-draft the measure for that purpose. It would be much safer to stand by the old principle of introducing a short Bill, which would not cause much delay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I ask the hon. member not to press the amendment and I think it would be better to strike the clause out.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

#### BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT ACT CONTINUANCE.

##### *Second Reading.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [4.30] in moving the second reading said: The object of this measure is to continue the operation of the Licensing Act Amendment Act, 1914. That Act, hon. members will remember, is one which gives power to restrict or pro-

hibit the sale of liquor in certain cases of emergency, in certain times of stress, and, as phrased by the previous Administration, in times of riot. The measure has frequently been renewed by another Act, and also by resolution. A resolution of the House can take effect only once after the passage of the measure. It will be remembered that last year a resolution was carried extending the terms of the Act, and on that account it is impossible to adopt the same procedure again this year. The Act will expire on the 30th September, and as it is considered desirable that its operation should continue for another year, I therefore move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

##### *In Committee, etcetera.*

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### MOTION—EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, COMPULSORY SERVICE.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.36]: I move—

*That having regard to the overwhelming majority cast in this State in favour of conscription on the 28th October, 1916, this House is of opinion that it is the wish of the people of Western Australia that the Commonwealth Government should again submit to the people the question of compulsory military service, in order to meet the urgent need for recruits to reinforce our units at the front.* In placing this motion before the House, I desire to say that I look upon it as a purely formal matter. As the motion sets out, the question, after having been submitted to the people, was carried in this State by an overwhelming majority. There were 94,069 votes recorded in its favour, and 40,884 against it. While admitting that the present scheme must have every assistance which public men can give it, one cannot help

thinking that there is only one way to deal with the foe, and that is by organisation. Unfortunately, under our present system, that is too costly to the State, and moreover, it does not tend towards organisation. We are at the present time opposed to the most scientific race the world has ever known, and up to date, as has often been said, we have only muddled along. I am not going into the pros and cons of compulsory national service, but it has been repeatedly asked outside what the public men are doing. The object I have in submitting the motion to the House is to assist the Federal Government to come to a decision. Personally, I regret having to ask the House to agree to a motion favouring the submission of the question to the people once more. I am firmly convinced that the Federal Parliament should accept that responsibility. But in view of the promise made by the Prime Minister, I am reluctantly compelled to ask that the matter should again be referred to the people. If it had been possible, I would have liked to ask the Commonwealth Government to introduce compulsory national military service in the State of Western Australia. That of course is out of the question. It is impossible for the Federal Government to introduce a law which would deal with only one section of the people. I am not going to say any more. I look upon this as a purely formal matter, and the object I have in view is to assist the Federal Government. I am convinced that in submitting the motion I am voicing the opinion of the majority of the people of this State, which opinion was given expression to on the occasion of the referendum taken on the 28th October last, and endorsed at the more recent elections.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) [5.40]: I think it is a matter of regret that an hon. member of this Assembly should submit a motion of this character in a session such as the one we are just about to terminate. Most of us are as anxious as the hon. member to see this terrible war, which is an outrage on civilisation, brought to an end victoriously for the Allies, but the people of the Commonwealth have decided the subject matter of the motion by referendum, and when an hon. member brings the subject up in the form that the member for Katanning

(Mr. Thomson) has done, it seems to me it is prostituting patriotism and dragging it through the mire. We in Western Australia put up our fight for compulsory service, and we were quite satisfied with the result which was achieved. We are also satisfied to-day that the people in this State have done their duty nobly. We have sent 10 per cent. of our population to the front and in some parts of the State, 20 per cent. of the population of those centres has gone to assist in this dreadful struggle. Before an hon. member submits a question like this to Parliament, I think he himself should, if he is fit and well enough to go forward, offer his own services, instead of trying to force others to go. We have members here who are able and strong enough to go to the front, yet they make no effort in that direction. They prefer to submit a motion of the character we have before us now, dealing with a question which has already been decided, and which they know cannot do any good. If the motion would do any good, if it would assist in any way to win the war, there would be some excuse for it, but it is absolute nonsense to bring it forward, and it is only in keeping with many other actions of the member for Katanning. Why does not the hon. member himself enlist? Why does he not show that he is prepared to do what he is asking others to do? I am speaking as one of the strongest conscriptionists in the country, but we put up our fight in October last, and now we should abide by the decision of the majority. If we in Western Australia were not doing our duty, there would be occasion for the hon. member to submit his motion, but we have done our duty to a great extent, though perhaps not so much as we would do if we were called upon. The reason why the motion was brought forward, the hon. member says, is to assist the Federal Government. I contend it will not assist them in the slightest degree, nor will it help to bring about what he desires. The motion has been moved with one purpose in view only, and that is to indulge in a little flag waving before the elections, and when there is no necessity for it. Moreover, if every fit individual in Western Australia were to enlist, that would not have the effect of turning the tide of the battle. We can only do our level best, and

we should pause before considering seriously a motion such as the one we have before us. I do not know whether the hon. member has ever tried to enlist himself. If he has not, he should have done so. He is young and able-bodied, and it would be more honourable and more becoming for any man desirous of upholding the honour of his country, if, before submitting an empty motion such as this, he offered his own services for the front. We have heard a great deal from those on the platform who are desirous that others should go to the war but who, for many reasons, are themselves not fit to enlist. I contend that it would be the manly part for anyone, before asking other people to go to the war, to make an effort to go himself. I think the motion has been brought forward by the hon. member from motives of flag waving, for the purpose of trying to induce certain influences at the forthcoming election. So far as assistance to the Commonwealth Government is concerned, or assistance in the recruiting campaign, or towards bringing about a speedy conclusion to the war, I do not think the passing of the motion by this House would do any good in any one of those directions. The motion serves to show the class of people we have in this community who, instead of going themselves to the recruiting office, prefer to bring forward empty motions on the eve of a general election.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.46]: One is inclined to doubt the sincerity of the hon. member in bringing forward a motion of this nature for discussion on the eve of a general election. I would remind the House that the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, caused to be summoned a special session of the Federal Parliament to discuss this question, and the decision of that special session was that the time had not arrived for conscription to be introduced. That was the opinion expressed by the Federal Parliament, and Mr. Hughes then said that on the question of conscription he was prepared to let bygones be bygones. The Director of Recruiting also declared that the conscription issue was not to be dealt with by his officials on the public platform. Mr. Hughes also stated that the time had not arrived to bring forward conscription in accordance with his promise

prior to the Federal election. By whom are we to be advised—the member for Katanning or the Prime Minister, who should be in a position to know best? In view of these facts, one is inclined to suspect the possibility that it was with some other object that the hon. member has introduced his motion. We have been told that the members on this (Opposition) side of the House are opposed to recruiting, but I want to say this, that there is no member of this Chamber who has done more for recruiting than those sitting on this side. With reference to members opposite—of course there has recently been a shuffle—but there was at one time a request preferred to members opposite to go on to the platform and speak in favour of recruiting, and on that occasion not one member could be found to do so. The true position is that every section of the community of this State has done its utmost to assist recruiting, and it is impossible for any one to define those who have assisted and those who have not. How could they be defined? But we have it on the authority of Mr. Hughes that if everyone does his best to assist the voluntary effort it will be sufficient for the time being. To me it is clear that the object behind this motion is more political than patriotic. And I want to express my opinion here that the passing of the motion will not be of any great assistance to the Federal Government. Rather I am inclined to think that it will do more injury than good and that it will make the work of recruiting harder.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [5.52]: I regret that the hon. member has seen fit to introduce a motion of this character at the present time. I think it is well known to the Commonwealth Government that the people of Western Australia are in favour of conscription; they expressed that opinion during the referendum. That is well known and I do not see that the mere passing by this Parliament of this motion will be of any great assistance to the Federal Government. They have already had an expression of opinion from the people of Western Australia. To my mind it is not desirable to discuss controversial matters of this character during the present short session of Parliament.

There is really no need for the motion at the present time. Nor do I consider it expedient to allow a matter of this nature to go to the vote. Parliament was called together for the simple purpose of voting supplies and to go into the question of any necessary legislation. At the same time I cannot agree to the suggestion that the object of the hon. member in introducing the motion was to make this question an election cry. Western Australia has undoubtedly responded well to the call of voluntarism, but probably there are still some hundreds here who might still be able to go to the war. At the same time, in my opinion, many have gone who should not have gone. I am expressing only my own opinion in regard to this motion, but I do not think it right to suggest that even those who oppose conscription are necessarily disloyal. I really cannot feel that any expression of opinion on this question is required at the present juncture, and I do not think any good will be done by our passing the motion.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [6.1]: I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning—in reply) [6.2]: I did not take this step without a good deal of thought or without consulting a good many people. I yield to no man in this State in my desire to see the war won. In reply to the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman), who has taxed me with kite flying—

Mr. Holman: It is a fact.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no reason to be afraid of my position in my constituency on this question. I did my part on the 28th October last, and am proud of the result. Therefore I hope the hon. member will disabuse his mind of the idea that I was endeavouring to do any kite flying. He says the motion is an empty one, and he wants to know why I do not enlist. He has no right to ask me such a question. During the whole course of the war I have never said to any man, "Why do not you enlist?" In all earnestness I say there are thousands of men who would welcome the deciding of this question by the military authorities. I refer to men

who, by reason of having heavy responsibilities, are unable to come to a decision. When the member for Murchison accused me of kite flying, I think he must, to use a phrase of another hon. member opposite, have had his tongue in his cheek. In my electorate I know of cases of married men with seven and eight children enlisting. I will not say they should not enlist. A married man has as much right as a single man to fight for his country. But it is not economically sound, it is not in the interests of the country, that married men with large families should go to fight while eligible single men are apparently available. I desire to see the country organised. Men are leaving the primary industries, not only farming, but also gold mining. Under proper organisation the men to go to the Front would be elected from the spheres in which they could best be spared. I shall not deal at length with the arguments of the member for Murchison. He said that we have sent away 10 per cent. of our population. I yield to no man in my appreciation of what Western Australia has done in this war. But we, as a Commonwealth, have pledged Australia to the last man and the last shilling, and, if needs be, we must carry out that pledge. In reply to the hon. member's argument that it is time to pause, I say we shall not be able to pause in this struggle until victory has been won. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) says I claim to have more knowledge than Mr. Hughes. I claim nothing of the kind, but I do know that this State is sending, proportionately, more men than any other State of the Commonwealth, and I know that the units of other States have been reinforced by Western Australian soldiers. Having visited the Eastern States, I know there are thousands of men there apparently eligible. If those eligible and fit men will not go of their own free will, is the present position fair to our men? The member for Murchison said that we have sent away 10 per cent. of our population. We have not sent one man away. Every man who has gone from Western Australia up to date has gone of his own free will. There are thousands of men who will welcome national service, well knowing that when the military authorities send for them they will be wanted. But the question

is a most difficult one for any man to decide for himself. I wish to disabuse the mind of the House of the idea that I had any intention of kite flying. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) may well laugh. Over 6,000 men have gone to the front from Kalgoorlie. The hon. member has reason to be proud. It ill becomes him to sneer when a motion is before the House asking for men.

Mr. Green: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has stated that I have sneered. I take exception to that term, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Kalgoorlie takes exception to the word "sneer."

Mr. THOMSON: I withdraw the observation that the hon. member sneered. I will say that he sniggered.

Mr. Green: This is the cheapest thing that has ever been put up in this Chamber. It is childish, it is kite flying, it is waste of time. We have heard ten thousand speeches like this one.

Hon. P. Collier: I ask that the member for Katanning make an unqualified withdrawal. He withdrew the word "sneer" and substituted "snigger."

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the member for Katanning to withdraw unreservedly.

Mr. THOMSON: I withdraw unconditionally, well knowing that, despite the opposition of hon. members on the other side of the House, the people of Western Australia will welcome such a motion as this.

Hon. P. Collier: You would not move it unless you thought it was popular.

Mr. THOMSON: I have no desire for popularity. I am doing what I deem to be my duty. I have moved the motion in all sincerity, and leave it in the hands of the House, earnestly trusting that it will be carried.

Question put and passed.

#### PAPERS—MINES INSPECTOR AND A FALSE CHARGE.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [6.10]: I move—

*That all papers referring to the allegation of Workmen's Inspector of Mines Crocker, at Kalgoorlie, being a member of the I.W.W. be laid upon the Table of the House.*

I am taking this action because I have been unable to obtain the information from the Attorney General by way of question. Some two or three months ago, I understand, the then Minister for Mines received a letter from some person in Kalgoorlie—I do not know from whom—alleging that Inspector Crocker was a member of the I.W.W. In the first place, I think the House should express its resentment of the practice, which apparently has grown up recently, of anonymous letter writers being permitted to make charges against members of the public service without those members having an opportunity of knowing who it is that makes the charge, and so of adequately defending themselves. I do not know the contents of the letter in this case, but, at any rate, the letter was of such a character as to induce the then Minister for Mines to communicate with the Kalgoorlie warden; and as a result of that communication the warden called up Inspector Crocker and questioned him as to whether the charge was correct or not. I take exception to that. I am not a lawyer, but I have always understood it to be one of the first principles of British justice that no man shall be called upon to answer a charge unless he is confronted with his accuser. As a result of the letter, Inspector Crocker appeared before the warden under circumstances recalling the Star Chamber, and the warden cross-examined or questioned him, in order to satisfy himself whether or not the charge was well founded. I gather that the warden's report to the Minister was favourable to Inspector Crocker, because the Minister allowed the matter to drop. Nevertheless I contend that no Minister is justified in calling upon any public servant to make a defence against any allegation or charge unless that officer is confronted with his accuser. Even if an individual writes a letter to the Minister making a charge and marks the letter confidential, action should not be taken. The person making the charge must be prepared to come out in the open and disclose his identity; otherwise the letter and the charge should be ignored. If the individual who accused Inspector Crocker was not prepared to come out in the open with a definite charge, the Minister should have ignored the letter, without