only remains to add that such things as the personnel of the Commission may be discussed and that completed proceedings are open for debate.

I turn now to the question of the application of the sub judice rule to conciliation and arbitration proceedings for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes. These instances represented 32 per cent of our sub judice cases in the last two decades.

Prior to 1956, there existed a Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Court set up by federal statute in accordance with the constitutional power given to the Commonwealth Parliament that it may legislate with respect to conciliation and arbitration for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes extending beyond the limits of any one state. This court was thought to have judicial powers and its proceedings were generally covered by the sub judice rule. In 1956, doubt arose as to these judicial powers and the Act was extensively amended to alter the structure of the arbitration machinery by separating the judicial functions from the conciliation and arbitration functions. The Commonwealth Industrial Court was established to deal with related judicial matters and the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was set up to deal with conciliation and arbitration.

As proceedings in the Industrial Court are of a judicial nature, the sub judice rule has an application in respect of its proceedings. It was in relation to the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission's dealing with wages and conditions of employment, one point of view being argued by the trades unions, the other by the employers, that difficulties arose. In effect, the Commission is dealing with questions which are the very lifeblood of the country and touch directly on the hip-pocket nerve and standards of living of the people.

The Commission does not exercise judicial powers and does not therefore fall easily into the pattern of the sub judice rule. Considerable thought was given by the Chair to this problem and certain conclusions were reached with which I am in agreement. The study commenced by observing that a royal commission is not a judicial body but that, as the sub judice rule had effect in respect of the proceedings of a royal commission, there was argument for its limited application to proceedings of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. At the same time it was recognized that the fundamental rights and interests of the House must be kept in mind.

Proceedings before a royal commission ordinarily relate to a specific subject in a relatively narrow field but matters before the Arbitration Commission, particularly a hearing of a basic wage case, are of wide significance. This being so, the automatic application of the sub judice rule to exclude from discussion in the House all references to the matter of basic wage and related aspects would prevent the House from discussing subjects in which it had an over-riding public interest, particularly if the hearing extended over a long period.

On the other hand, if the real purpose of the restriction which the House places upon itself is to avoid as far as possible interference with justice, in the wide sense of that word, and if the proceedings do not extend over an unduly long period, it is reasonable to apply the rule to the extent appropriate in the immediate circumstances. The principle which has since been followed is that reference to the proceedings and evidence in a case currently before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission should be avoided, but a reference to a matter not directly or immediately related to the proceedings of the Commission would not necessarily be out of order. In either case, the paramount needs of the House in the national interest may be such that consideration of the subject as a whole should be unrestricted. To my mind, every case must be looked at in the light of the circumstances.

As a part of my theme, and it may well be that the path I am treading can now