

THE PREMIER: It is not in their platform.

DR. ELLIS: I do not say it is, but it is a self-evident fact that a platform that does not differentiate one part of the State from another should have such a plank in its platform.

THE PREMIER: The clothing factory at Subiaco?

DR. ELLIS: That is not in the platform. The party to which I have the honour to belong wish to represent the whole State and not a part of it.

MR. MORAN: That same party supported the Government two years ago in raising the railway rates.

DR. ELLIS: I am not saying that in the past they may not have done so, but I say they have done it in ignorance.

MR. THOMAS: Time after time it has been stated to the House.

DR. ELLIS: There is a new party now, who will see that such things continue no longer. I look to the new members to say, whether on the coast or on the fields, that equal opportunity shall be given.

MR. THOMAS: That was one of the main points of the no-confidence debate.

DR. ELLIS: I have nothing to say to past Parliaments, thank God, but I hope to have a great deal to say to the present one; I hope to have a great deal to say on the question of centralisation. Let us know what each part of the State is debited and credited with. Let us have some idea of it, because that is the only way to manage any reasonable commercial concern. Are we not all here as directors of the commercial enterprise of Western Australia, and should we not know all the figures and insist on all the figures being published in an ordinary way? I have shown that there is ample reason why we should have that statement in the future. We want to see an equality between the coast and the fields, and I look to the party in Opposition to see that no inequality occurs in the future, so that the separation between the coast and the fields may no farther prevail.

MR. E. NEEDHAM (Fremantle): Seeing that no member on the Government side cares to reply to the onslaught made by the member for Coolgardie, I want to keep the debate going, and I rise to address this House for the first time. It was not my intention at the outset of the debate to take part in it, owing to a

physical difficulty; but as the debate has progressed I have physically improve slightly, and consequently I take the opportunity of joining in the fray. At the outset I can assure hon. member that I will not trespass long on the time of the House, particularly after the lengthy oration we have had from the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis). I am entirely in accord with the amendments moved by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish). I consider the Government of the day have taken a roundabout way in trying to find out the opinion of this House. Remembering as I do the famous policy speech given in the Queen's Hall I thought the Premier would have faced this Parliament with something tangible in the shape of a programme, some strong remnant of that policy speech; but instead of that he has adopted this method of challenging the opinion of Parliament and in his reply yesterday to the member for Subiaco he adopted the same tactic as used in the historic campaign which has led up to the present position, the gist of his remarks being an attack on the party which now constitutes the Opposition in this House. He says we (Labour members) are entirely wrong in the position we take up to-day. It is very strange how some politicians use their thoughts as one would use his wardrobe, doffing or donning them at will. We heard some time ago that the Labour party in Australia were wrong in seeking power without taking responsibility. That was an old gag, and it has been used by the Premier; but so soon as that fallacy was exploded and the Labour party proved they were prepared to take the responsibility of office, we find the Premier and several more of his class turning round and saying that the Labour party have no right to aspire to the "sweets of office," as they term them now that we are prepared to take the responsibility of office.

THE PREMIER: I said nothing of the sort.

MR. NEEDHAM: First the Premier said the Labour party were in the position of desiring assistance, and that they wished to occupy the direct Opposition benches. [Interjection by the PREMIER.] I say you have forced the position on us and we are not cowards enough to shirk the responsibility that is now thrown on



us. I say advisedly that the day has passed for the Labour party occupying the position of a third party in the State, and that the time has arrived when in every Parliament in Australia the Labour party will either be the party in power or the party in direct Opposition. I will now refer briefly to the Governor's Speech as framed by his advisers. We are told in it that the Fremantle Harbour Works have been completed, at a cost of £1,500,000. I fail to see how these works can be complete without the addition of a Fremantle dock, and I do not care what party may occupy the Government benches, that is a work which will shortly have to be started.

MR. A. E. THOMAS: There are works of more importance.

MR. NEEDHAM: I question that. I desire to impress upon members this fact, that I am not approaching this matter in any parochial spirit, for it is a work of national importance. Hon. members may laugh; but those laugh best who laugh last. The Premier himself admitted that it is a work of national importance when he was speaking in Fremantle; but I recognise, while reading the Governor's Speech, that the reference to this matter is only another of the promises that are like the proverbial pie-crust, made to be broken—

THE PREMIER: You have no foundation for that.

MR. NEEDHAM: A promise made to be dangled before the electors. We have had too much of this from the old Governments in the past, and I hope the Government in the future will set a better example. [Interjection by MR. MORAN.] Fremantle in the past has been treated somewhat as a step child. It is said that Fremantle is the first and last port of call in the Commonwealth. Yes; in more ways than one: it has been the first place forgotten and the last place thought of.

THE PREMIER: Base ingratitude!

MR. NEEDHAM: Mention has been made somewhere of a proposal to construct a floating dock to cost £100,000. That would be an unsatisfactory makeshift, and I trust that whenever the work is taken in hand it will not be on the penny-wise and pound-foolish principle. We do not want a dock that may just serve the needs for to-day or to-

morrow, but we want something in keeping with a work of such national importance. I do not need to quote figures for proving the necessity of this work. It is well known to hon. members. I simply point out the neglect of the Government in not including a dock for Fremantle in the proposed works.

THE PREMIER: There are no works proposed in the Speech.

MR. NEEDHAM: Another matter in the Governor's Speech is that in the course of a few months the Railway Workshops at Midland Junction will be completed. In these few lines of the Speech the Government stand condemned. Six months ago those workshops were not completed, were in a worse state than they are at the present time, but notwithstanding that fact, three hundred workmen were rushed from the Fremantle Workshops and put pell-mell into the new workshops at Midland Junction. Those workshops are costing an unnecessary amount of money, and I contend that the work which has since been done at the Midland Workshops could have been done just as well at Fremantle, if not better. I have made this statement before on a public platform, that the removal of those men from the Fremantle Workshops to Midland Junction was nothing more nor less than a huge political dodge. I do not intend to dwell on the railway administration referred to in the Speech, especially after the remarks made by the member for Coolgardie, which compel me now to adopt different tactics. But allow me to add this, that we have a service seething with discontent from one end to the other; and from a discontented service you cannot expect beneficial results. Another matter referred to in the Speech is immigration. I am not in accord with that paragraph in the Speech at the present time. The idea is laudable; but charity begins at home, and although I recognise a necessity for importing desirable immigrants who will take up land and assist in developing the resources of this State, yet I contend that we have at our doors a vast number of men who, if given proper facilities, would be the first to put the land to a practical use. Let us deal with the problem at home, before we go abroad and seek to attract desirable immigrants. Perhaps the Minister for



Lands will say that everything has been done that can be done to induce people to take up land and work it. It is a very fine thing to give 160 acres free to a man in the country or to an immigrant newly arrived, without a prospect of getting from it the ordinary sustenance of life. It would be better to induce people already in the country to take up the land on conditions enabling them to make a living. I will briefly touch on the remarks of the member for South Fremantle in moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply. He said the Labour party will not get to the position it ought to occupy so long as it is trammelled by the caucus. The hon. member knew when he made the statement that there is not a political party in any portion of the British Empire but has its caucus. The members who occupy the Government benches to-day would not face this House unless they were assured of a solid following behind them. The hon. member also said that the Labour party had no right to oppose the Government at the general election. It reminds me of erecting a figure on a pedestal, with a caution that persons looking at it are not to touch it. I fail to see what the member for South Fremantle has done in the past that he should be exempted from a contested election; and I can assure him that at the next election he will not be so cocky as he has been on this occasion. Dealing with his remarks, is it just an ordinary coincidence that the Labour party to-day occupy the position they do; that in the Victorian Parliament there is a solid body of members; that in Queensland there is a fair proportion; that in South Australia there is a fair proportion also; and that in Western Australia a party of 22 has been returned to this House in the Labour interest, to take up the challenge given by the Premier? We have to-day a Labour Ministry governing the destinies of the Commonwealth; and still the sun shines! Is that a mere coincidence? No; it is the law of evolution, and it only shows that the day is at hand when the victories the Labour party have won will be more emphatic, and they will reach a still stronger position. In conclusion, I desire to thank hon. members for the patient hearing they have given to a new member. I did intend to speak longer;

but having listened to the deluge of figures from the member for Coolgardie, he has taken a considerable amount of wind out of my sails; so I will content myself with again thanking hon. members for the patient hearing they have given me, and express a hope that our deliberations in this Chamber will be attended with beneficial results to the State whose destinies we are called to guide.

MR. MORAN: Can we not come to a division now, before dinner? What is the good of spinning it out any longer?

SEVERAL MEMBERS: Divide!

After a pause,

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I rise to speak with very great regret, more especially because I know that certain charges concerning administration will be made against the department which I control. I think it very unfair that statements are made in this House when a man has no chance of replying to them.

MR. MORAN: The Minister can get a chance by an amendment.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think it a wise thing. It is what I expected from some goldfields members, more especially from the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), who always waits until the attacked person has no chance of replying and then makes charges which that person will have not the slightest chance of refuting. It is with the deepest regret that I speak before the hon. member; but still there are certain charges made regarding administration, and I shall take this opportunity of replying to them. In the speech made by the leader of the Opposition, attention was drawn, at least it was stated that the cost of administration had been considerably increased in our various departments. It is only fair to myself to point out the work of the Mines Department in regard to the cost of administration and efficiency of work done. Certain figures were also used by the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis), and I am afraid that the member for Coolgardie has waded through the figures of the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas), for they are altogether mixed. I do not know whether the hon. member is interested in the Esperance Railway and Collie coal; but his figures seem to be somewhat mixed, and I do