

Hon. G. FRASER: I will make allowances for all the shrinkage, but in spite of all that, houses are costing £100 more than they should.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Will the cost be any less when the workers get a 40-hour week?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member is trying to start an argument on a matter that I am not prepared to discuss at this stage. I will debate that question later in the session, but not today.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member should address the Chair now and then.

Hon. G. FRASER: I beg your pardon, Sir. At this stage I am merely mentioning, in passing, the cost of building today.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would you suggest what would be a reasonable profit on a £1,000 job for a man who takes all the responsibility?

Hon. G. FRASER: In assessing the figure at £100, I have taken into consideration what I would regard as a reasonable profit.

Hon. A. Thomson: What is a reasonable profit?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would say 10 per cent. on a £1,000 job.

Hon. F. E. Gibson: That is too much.

Hon. G. FRASER: And on that figure the buildings are costing £100 more than they should.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You would put them through the Bankruptcy Court!

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member always looks for something big, but I am satisfied with something reasonable.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is a lot of guess-work.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is not, and I will prove that to the hon. member. I will show him the actual figures. I am not talking through my hat.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Where does the £100 go?

Hon. A. Thomson: Any contractor who made an average of 10 per cent would consider he was doing very well indeed.

Hon. G. FRASER: I will make this definite statement, and am prepared to substantiate it: That the cost of building today is 20 per cent. over and above the cost of materials and labour. That is a pretty fair statement to make. That is what

houses are costing today. I am pleased indeed about the appointment of Mr. Wallwork, and hope that in his report he will make recommendations whereby some control may be exercised over the actual cost of buildings. We have solved the problem up to the stage of a man building a house and then have left the matter alone. I want the whole thing completed and I feel sure that when the report is delivered, something on those lines will be done. Preference is made in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to quite a lot of legislation to be introduced this session. Amongst it is the everyday question of starting-price betting. I understand that there is also to be a Bill regarding trotting control, so that we can look forward to what might be termed a sporting session. The matters I have mentioned, together with consideration of the constitutional aspect of this House and many other interesting subjects set down for debate, ensure that we may look forward to an enjoyable session.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 25th July, 1946.

	Page
Meeting of the Assembly	9
Message, opening by Commissioner	9
Summons from the Lieut.-Governor's Commissioner	10
Bill: Railway (Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe) Discontinu-	
ance	10
Lieut.-Governor's Opening Speech, distribution	10
Address-in-reply, first day	10
Adjournment, special	13

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to Proclamation by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, which Proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. G. Steere).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the

Legislative Council Chamber. Honourable members, having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, returned to the Assembly Chamber.

Sitting suspended from 12.12 to 3 p.m.

SUMMONS FROM THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S COMMISSIONER.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in reply to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council and, having heard His Excellency's Commissioner deliver the Opening Speech (*vide* Council report *ante*) returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

[The Speaker took the Chair.]

BILL—RAILWAY (HOPETOUN-RAVENSTHORPE) DISCONTINUANCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [3.38]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "The Railway (Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe) Discontinuance Bill."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

MR. SPEAKER: In company with hon. members of this Chamber, I attended the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency's Commissioner was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For greater accuracy I have had printed copies of the Speech distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. SMITH (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [3.39]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in reply to the Speech delivered to Parliament on his behalf:—"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament."

I think that every member of this Chamber will extend the sincerest sympathy to Sir James and Lady Mitchell on account of their

recent sad bereavement. This is the thirteenth year in succession in which the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, to which the motion refers, has been delivered by His Excellency Sir James Mitchell—this year, of course, by proxy. It is appropriate to remark on this occasion that Sir James Mitchell and Lady Mitchell have brought to the office of King's representative in this State not only the requisite dignity but application to their duties and responsibilities that have never previously been excelled. Both Sir James and Lady Mitchell are blessed with personalities designed, it would seem, for the high offices they occupy. The respect they have inspired has not only maintained but has extended the importance and prestige of the vice-regal office in this State, and the manner in which they have interpreted and carried out the functions of that office is widely and favourably appreciated by all sections of the community.

There was no necessity on this occasion for the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to contain any expression of fervent wish for an early victory. Fortunately, since the previous Speech was delivered the long desired victory has been achieved, and I think we can look forward now to many years of peace. Fortunately, too, this State has had during the last decade or so progressive Governments the policies of which would have meant much more definite progress had they not been impeded by the depression and the aftermath of that depression and the war and its aftermath. It is necessary, I think, to call attention occasionally to these national contingencies because there is a tendency in the Press and elsewhere to parade the effects of these causes or contingencies, and to push the causes themselves into the background.

It is interesting to recall the period of the depression when no money could be found for all the works that are so essential for our progressive development. At that time there was no shortage of manpower or material and, in fact, throughout the State thousands of men were vainly seeking for employment. Yet during the past six years we have been able to find so much money in the cause of destruction, with which was bound up, of course, that of self-preservation, that for a very considerable period that expenditure exceeded £1,000,000 per day. I trust that now the Commonwealth Government and other Governments are to exercise greater control over the machinery of finance

and over the supply of the means of payment, we shall rapidly emerge from the era during which it has been frequently said that we did not have sufficient money to put in hand those public undertakings and to establish those public utilities so essential if our industrial activity was to go forward with increased momentum.

I notice from a perusal of the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that a deficit of £912,559 has been achieved, or should I say has resulted from the operations of the last financial year. I compliment the Government on its enterprising outlook. I know during the past five or six years it had been found necessary for the successful prosecution of the war, that previous Governments should try to balance the budget. I trust now the war is over, that in future the best interests of the State will not be sacrificed to the fetish of balanced budgets—not that I am an advocate of reckless expenditure, but the Government never existed that did not have on its hands approved plans for the provision of amenities and improvements the cost of which was far in excess of the resources at its disposal.

I appreciate the fact indicated in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that Western Australia is co-operating with the Commonwealth with respect to migration. If the Pacific War has taught us anything it is the necessity for increased population. In that regard I think it needs to be emphasised that people want more than room. They want food and clothing, and a reasonable standard of living under decent civilised conditions. I was very pleased to see that the Premier recently gave publicity to the fact that although there is much room in this continent of ours, much of it is not living room. Australia comprises approximately 3,000,000 square miles. Of that aggregate area a section of about 1,000,000 square miles has a rainfall of 10 inches per annum or less, and much of it is as barren as the Gobi Desert. Another section consisting of 1,000,000 square miles has a rainfall of 20 inches or less and the remainder—another 1,000,000 square miles—is represented by our agricultural fringes where we have a bountiful rainfall, about a quarter of which, however, has to remain under its forest cover in order to ensure its continuance.

Recent history shows that the magnet for the migrant today is not the vast open

spaces. A century or so ago that was the magnet, but then there were really open spaces and not large tracts of country held out of production by persons for speculative purposes; those spaces were free for alienation to the enterprising settler. History and statistics prove that during the period from 1920 to 1930, while Canada, Australia and New Zealand were engaged in an intensive migration campaign, more people migrated from southern and south-eastern Europe to England than migrated to all those other countries with all the inducements they were offering. Actually, the great magnet for the migrant is social security. I am aware that there are some people, misanthropes, many of them, who probably are still willing to undertake the pioneering work of opening up vast empty spaces without Government assistance, but that number is rapidly decreasing.

It is pleasing to see that the Commonwealth Government also is directing its attention to migration, because I feel that in the agricultural fringes we had had a more intensive development and consequently a greater population. The Commonwealth's policy is, after the returned servicemen and women are properly rehabilitated and re-established, to undertake a campaign by which it hopes to attract to this country 70,000 migrants per annum.

Mr. Thorn: Do you think that will be in our time?

Mr. SMITH: That, added to the 70,000 increase which we may reasonably expect from births, will give us a two per cent. increase per annum on our present population, which I think is about equal to this country's absorptive capacity and is generally regarded by economists as a standard of efficiency. Someone asked, "Do you think that will be in our time?"

Mr. Thorn: I mean the rehabilitation of our soldiers.

Mr. SMITH: Does the hon. member think we will be able to attract 70,000 migrants per annum in our time?

Mr. Thorn: I do not mean that at all. I was referring to the rehabilitation of our soldiers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SMITH: I do not know whether the hon. member meant that, but I am saying that it will depend upon the social security

we can offer the migrants and whether that security is greater than that which is offering in the countries from which the migrants might reasonably be expected to come. The big industrial city, as history and statistics prove, show and demonstrate beyond dispute, is the magnet for the migrant today, and therefore it behoves us to do all we possibly can to expand the secondary industries of this State in order that we may rear up within it a better balanced economy.

I am pleased to see that the efforts of this Government and of its immediate predecessors, as the outcome of their policies, are resulting in the establishment and the encouragement of the establishment of secondary industries in this State. Their efforts are bearing fruit. It is gratifying to find from the Lieut.-Governor's Speech that factory employees, for instance, during the past year numbered no less than 29,146, and that the wages bill amounted to £8,000,000. The schemes that the Government is proposing to undertake for the supply of power in the South-West and for comprehensive water supplies to the agricultural and goldfields districts by the raising of the Mundaring dam, the Wellington dam and the Stirling dam, are going to attract population to this State. Those are the kind of public utilities which will assure an increase in population; they will also assure that such increased population, added to our present population, will not press against the means of subsistence.

To develop and open up the resources of a community we require public utilities. Public utilities will enable us to exploit our resources through the skill of artisans, craftsmen, and engineers for whom the British race is so noted. They will be able to make possible a greater population in Australia by increasing its capacity to absorb people. Experience has taught us, too, that there is nothing so valuable in attracting people to a country as a goldmining industry. This State, in the 61 years from 1829 to 1890 only mustered 50,000 persons; but from 1890 to 1900, during which period the principal gold discoveries were made in the State, our population increased by 130,000, making a total of 180,000 persons in this State when we entered Federation. That demonstrates the importance of a goldmining industry to a country, and particularly to this one. I regret that every time the

Mining Editor of "The West Australian" writes about the goldmining industry he sees fit to make a gibe at the Commonwealth Government about it.

Mr. Mann: And he is right, too.

Mr. SMITH: On the 16th day of this month he wrote an article that reeked with suspicion, because the Commonwealth Government is taking a greater interest in mining activities throughout the Commonwealth, because it has set up a national mining council, because it has established a bureau of mineral resources and of geology and geophysics, and because it has appointed an inter-departmental committee to deal with the application for funds from the various interests of the Commonwealth, with the object of affording assistance to all kinds of mining within the Commonwealth. Because the Commonwealth Government has done that, the Mining Editor of "The West Australian" writes an article reeking with suspicion. He wonders whether the Commonwealth intends to invade the State's rights to alienate land and minerals.

Mr. Mann: That is all that is left.

Mr. SMITH: In a later article he said that the Commonwealth Government was indifferent to the goldmining industry. The present Commonwealth Government is not indifferent.

Mr. Mann: This present Commonwealth Government.

Mr. SMITH: Of course, if the mining editor was referring to all the Commonwealth Governments since the inception of Federation, that is an entirely different matter, because there have been anti-Labour Governments on the Treasury bench in the Federal sphere for 33 years out of 45. None of these did anything to assist the goldmining industry, but one of them did deprive it of not less than £3,000,000 that rightly belonged to it. The present Commonwealth Government is anything but indifferent; as a matter of fact, it is sympathetic to the goldmining industry, just as a previous Labour Government was that granted the gold bonus. The present Commonwealth Government appointed a mining panel in 1944 which it asked to make recommendations.

Mr. Mann: Are you on that panel?

Mr. SMITH: Yes. Some of our leading mine owners and mine managers are on it, too.

Mr. Berry: Has it anything to do with coal?

Mr. SMITH: No; it has nothing to do with coal; it is exclusive of oil and coal. This mining panel has had many meetings during which it has looked into the whole question of the rehabilitation of the gold-mining industry throughout Australia. It has made recommendations to the Commonwealth Government and every one of those recommendations has been approved and adopted by that Government. Yet the Mining Editor of "The West Australian" cannot write an article without including a gibe that the Commonwealth Government is unsympathetic to the goldmining industry. I do not know where that kind of criticism gets us. As a matter of fact, it is made under what is called the fifth freedom, the freedom of the Press, which has been interpreted as the freedom which tosses people about at random by lies. I am very pleased indeed that the Government proposes to bring down some new legislation this session.

Mr. Leslie: That is a change.

Mr. SMITH: It is not a change. I am gratified with the type of legislation it is proposed to bring down, although I presume the whole of the Government's programme is not indicated in the Governor's Speech, and it will be necessary to bring down a great deal more legislation than has been mentioned here today.

Mr. Abbott: Vermin and betting control.

Mr. SMITH: At least during the session there will be an opportunity for members to express themselves in respect of the kind of legislation that the Government should bring down. I have no doubt the Government will have a legislative programme that will be well favoured not only by this House but also by the other place. I can only conclude by quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson on this question of legislation when he said—

The law is only a memorandum. We are superstitious, and esteem the statute somewhat: So much life as it has in the character of living men, is its force. Our statute is a currency which we stamp with our own portrait: It soon becomes unrecognisable, and in process of time will return to the mint.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. T. Tonkin—North-East Fre-mantle): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Mr. Watts, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gaseoyne): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 30th July.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.5 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 30th July, 1946.

	PAGE
Auditor General's Report, Section "B," 1945	13
Chairman of Committees, election of Hon. H. Seddon	13
Chairmen (Temporary) of Committees	14
Questions: Charcoal iron and wood distillation, as to production, costs, etc.	14
Chandler Alunite Works, as to production, costs, etc.	14
Timber—(a) as to provision of seasoned jarrah	14
(b) as to export of jarrah	15
Bill: Supply (No. 1), £2,700,000, 1s.	22
Address-in-reply, second day	15

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

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Section "B," 1945.

The PRESIDENT: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of Section "B" of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1945. This will be laid on the Table of the House.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Election of Hon. H. Seddon.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.35]: I move—

That Hon. H. Seddon be elected as Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.38]: I desire to express my thanks to the House for the honour conferred upon me in my appointment to the position of Chairman of