

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

## FIRST SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

*Pursuant to Resolution passed in the Legislative Assembly on the 29th September, 1943, and under the provisions of the Legislative Assembly and General Election Postponement Act, 1942, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor issued his warrant for a general election of the Legislative Assembly, this being held on the 20th November, 1943.*

*The Eighteenth Parliament was convened for the despatch of business on the 27th July, 1944, and the First Session was commenced on that day.*

### Legislative Council.

Thursday, 27th July, 1944.

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### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at noon.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

### PROCLAMATION.

The Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. L. L. Leake) read the proclamation of His Excellency the Lieut-Governor summoning the first session of the Eighteenth Parliament.

### COMMISSIONER.

His Excellency's Commissioner (His Honor Mr. Justice Dwyer) having entered the Chamber at noon, a message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, the Commissioner requested the Clerk to read His Excellency's Commission to do all things necessary in the name and on the part of His Majesty the King or in the name and on the part of His Excellency for the opening and holding of the first session of the Eighteenth Parliament.

The Commission was read.

The Commissioner read the following statement:—

*Mr. President, Hon. Members of the Legislative Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly—*

I have it in command from His Excellency the Lieut-Governor to inform you that, at 3 o'clock this afternoon, His Excellency will declare to you the causes of his calling together of this Parliament; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should first be chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, members of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and having been duly sworn by me in accordance with the terms of the Commission granted me by His Excellency, you do elect your Speaker and notify the same to His Excellency.

The Commissioner and members of the Legislative Assembly retired from the Chambers.

### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

The members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, the Clerk of Parliaments announced the return of writs for the election of members, showing that the following had been duly elected:—Hon. J. M. Drew (Central), Hon. G. B. Wood (East), Hon. L. B. Bolton (Metropolitan), Hon. F. E. Gibson (Metropolitan-Suburban), Hon. G. W. Miles (North), Hon. E. M. Heenan (North-East), Hon. J. Cornell (South), Hon. A. Thomson (South-East), Hon. L. Craig (South-West), Hon. W. H. Kitson (West). These members took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

*Sitting suspended from 12.20 to 2.58 p.m.*

## LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3 p.m. and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—*

Since last Session, Parliament and the State have suffered by the loss of Mr. R. S. Sampson, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Swan, who rendered many years of faithful service to the people of Western Australia. It is with great regret also that I record the passing of the Honourable W. C. Angwin, who served the State with distinction in a number of important positions.

The successful invasion of Western Europe, combined with the magnificent victories of the Allied Nations on other fronts, has added to our confidence in certain victory.

The removal of the imminent threat of enemy attack has made possible the relaxation of some of the Civil Defence restrictions. Nevertheless the organisation and training are being maintained to meet an emergency should the necessity arise.

Enlistments of both men and women from Western Australia remain the highest per capita of any State in Australia. Contributions to war savings certificates and war savings bonds continue to be above the Australian average. Subscriptions by the people to patriotic funds have been maintained and approximately £1,250,000 have now been collected for this purpose.

Ministers have maintained the closest co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in matters associated with the war and post-war planning. State Departments are still carrying out much important war work and, in collaboration with Commonwealth Departments, are making considerable progress in the preparations for reverting to a peacetime economy.

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—*

For the fourth year in succession the State has experienced a surplus, the revenue

for 1943-44 exceeding the expenditure by £38,021. It has again been possible to make a limited provision for arrears of maintenance which will have to be made good when war conditions permit.

Loan expenditure is still restricted to works which either have a defence value or are of an essential character. Our Public Debt has been further reduced, borrowings for the year being less than contributions to the Sinking Fund.

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—*

Despite the many difficulties inseparable from wartime conditions, intensified efforts to improve and increase the scope of Secondary Industries in Western Australia have been rewarded by a gratifying expansion.

A notable example is the production of potash from alunite, which has already made a valuable contribution to the State's fertiliser requirements. Substantial progress has been made with the construction of the large State pilot plant to produce alumina from the residues.

Complete details of the availability of necessary utilities such as electric power, fuel, process water, rail and harbour facilities, are being compiled to aid the regional planning of selected areas.

As part of a plan for the post-war development of basic industries, a large State wood distillation and charcoal iron pilot plant is now being erected. The Commonwealth Government has made a grant of £30,000 to the State to assist in the development of this industry. The grant will ensure its successful operation and should therefore hasten the day when the iron and steel and associated industries are solidly established in Western Australia. The latest grant of £30,000 is additional to a Commonwealth grant of the same amount made to the State some time ago for the establishment of electric steel furnaces.

Gold mines which have ceased production because of manpower shortage and other war causes are being maintained to permit of early re-opening once the existing difficulties are removed. Approximately 4,500 men are still employed in the industry and for the year 1943 nearly 550,000 ounces

of gold were produced, valued at over £5,700,000.

The State is supplying important strategic minerals essential for war purposes, including tantalite, beryl, mica, antimony, arsenic, asbestos, and red ochre. A mine to produce pyrites has been brought into production with State Government assistance, and phosphatic rock is being obtained from a deposit within the State. The continuance of production of these minerals after the war will materially assist in the development of the State, particularly of the North-West.

The production of coal at Collie is being considerably increased by the operation of the Stockton open-cut and the Wyvern Colliery, which were both sponsored by the Government.

The opening of the present season was not promising, but the opportune rains which have fallen generally throughout the agricultural districts of the State, although very belated, have somewhat relieved anxiety. The result of the season will depend to a greater extent than usual on good finishing rains and heavy intermediate falls to replenish water supplies. Seasonal circumstances in many of our pastoral areas are far from satisfactory.

Manpower shortages have caused acute difficulties in most of our rural industries. Much has been achieved in reaching production goals in spite of many war-caused disabilities, and District War Agricultural Committees have assisted in both State and Commonwealth spheres to make production and manpower problems easier of solution. The State Government is taking every opportunity to protect the wheat industry from any further shrinkage and to plan for its re-establishment in its proper place in our economic life. Steps are being taken to ensure permanency in our rural economy of such new industries as flax. Initial experiments in the Kimberley district with fodders under irrigation have given promising results, and other examinations which will be links with successful settlement are at present under investigation.

In spite of heavy demands and the disabilities caused by shortages of materials and labour, the stock population of the State has not diminished.

An extensive examination has been made of unalienated areas in the South-West portion of the State likely to be suitable for land settlement. The provision of further

farms from Crown lands is being preceded by exhaustive examinations and soil surveys and investigations into the economic possibilities of drainage extensions.

The plans for the re-valuation of Conditional Purchase holdings in our outer areas are nearing completion.

Hundreds of natives who were previously unemployed are now engaged in profitable occupations, principally in pastoral and farming pursuits.

The resources of the Railway Department have been fully taxed to cope with the heavy demands of defence and civilian traffic. The construction of additional locomotives, carriages and goods wagons is proceeding. Five Standard Garratt locomotives have been placed in service, and an additional five are being constructed. Tenders for six Diesel trains to cost approximately £150,000 have been received and are now under consideration. Provision is being made for expenditure on deferred maintenance and improved services, which will be undertaken as soon as conditions permit. Progress is being made with the construction of a deviation to eliminate the working of trains through the tunnel at Swan View.

Information is being prepared by the Railway Department in connection with the investigation by the Commonwealth into the standardisation of railway gauges in Australia.

Tenders are being called for the plant for the new Power Station to be erected at South Fremantle.

The Public Works, Water Supply, and Main Roads Departments have been substantially engaged in carrying out defence works. It is anticipated that these will gradually reduce in volume. It will then be possible to undertake some of the arrears of maintenance works.

The State Shipbuilding Yards have successfully launched five vessels built of local hardwoods, and war work of considerable magnitude, including shipping repairs, has been successfully carried out at the State Engineering Works.

It is anticipated that the report in connection with the inquiry into the proposed development of an electricity supply scheme for the South-West will be submitted later in the year.

The Boyup Brook reservoir which has been completed, will materially assist in the processing of locally grown flax.

Surveys and investigations are in progress in connection with post-war public works, particularly a scheme for the reticulation of water to serve 12 million acres of the State's agricultural areas.

As a first step towards meeting the acute housing shortage, a programme of 75 houses has been approved for Western Australia. Construction has already commenced on 10 houses at Boyup Brook and 15 at Collie, while tenders have been called for 50 to be erected in the metropolitan area. The second allocation to this State will be 90 houses, and it is intended to build 50 in the metropolitan area and 40 at various country centres.

In addition to relieving the immediate shortage, this programme, which it is hoped to expand from time to time, will establish the nucleus of the organisation necessary to undertake the huge task of meeting post-war housing requirements. Great difficulties are being experienced in securing the necessary manpower. A conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers will be held shortly to consider financial and other details of the scheme, and in the meantime arrangements for the necessary funds are being made by the Commonwealth Government.

Action is being taken to obtain land for the post-war housing programme, and legislation will be introduced conferring the power to execute compulsory land resumptions where necessary for this purpose and for slum clearance.

Far-reaching developments are in progress in connection with the health of the community, and recent conferences between Commonwealth and State authorities have been most encouraging. A review of hospital activities and organisation within Western Australia, particularly in the light of post-war requirements, is being made by a departmental committee. War conditions have greatly restricted the extension of hospital facilities, but work on the Perth Hospital is in progress. Amendments are contemplated to the Health Act and the Nurses Registration Act, and it is proposed to introduce a Bill dealing with the Physical Fitness Committee.

Plans which are now being formulated to give effect to the amendment to the Education Act passed last year, include the selection of sites for new schools and the enlargement of existing areas to meet the demands of the post-war period. A measure will be introduced to increase the annual grant to

the University to £40,000, and to make other amendments to the University Act.

The technical educational facilities of the State have been used by the Commonwealth to train 7,300 men and women of the Armed Services. Preparations are being made to meet adequately the demands of pre-vocational and vocational training of discharged soldiers, and the vocational guidance of children leaving school is being further developed to include students in larger country centres.

Consideration is being given to the establishment of facilities for dealing with sub-normal and delinquent boys and girls. Measures will be introduced to improve the Adoption of Children Act and the Guardianship of Infants Act.

The Government has approved of the principle of establishing free country lending libraries with limited Government financial assistance. An honorary committee is being appointed to recommend a scheme suitable to Western Australian conditions.

The demand for timber continues to exceed production capacity, which is limited by manpower and machinery problems. A substantial post-war programme is in preparation to make up the leeway of forest development and regeneration.

The quantity of firewood supplied through the Forests Department during the past six months was 85 per cent. greater than for the corresponding period last year. For the twelve months ended June 30th, 1944, approximately 60,000 tons have been supplied to woodyards, State Schools, Hospitals and other institutions.

The fisheries research programme initiated in 1941 has been steadily pursued, and valuable information relative to many phases of the fishing industry has been obtained.

The Public Trust Office in its second year considerably increased its business and has rendered valuable service in handling deceased soldiers' estates.

A measure will be introduced to create a Promotions Appeal Board for Government employees.

A Bill will be placed before you to liberalise the franchise for the Legislative Council.

Other measures dealing with industrial, agricultural and social matters will also be placed before you for consideration.

I now declare this Session of Parliament open and trust that Providence may bless your labours.

His Excellency then withdrew from the Chamber.

*The President took the Chair*

## **BILL—GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS.**

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** 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 "An Act to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Guardianship and Custody of Infants."

Leave given: Bill introduced and read a first time.

## **LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.**

**THE PRESIDENT:** For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor copies of the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. These will be distributed among hon. members.

## **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.**

*First Day.*

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [3.25]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver:—"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council 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 have moved a similar motion on so many occasions that I am beginning to wonder whether I am moving it again—or yet! I am deeply grateful for the honour accorded me.

**Hon. J. Cornell:** It may have been Hobson's choice!

**Hon. G. FRASER:** Things have not reached that stage yet. We meet this year in a much happier frame of mind than that in which we have assembled in the previous two or three years. We can congratulate ourselves on the position that we, together with the Allied Nations, hold today. As recently as this time last year our country was in very grave danger but, owing to the wonderful manner in which the Allies have car-

ried out their task during the past twelve months, we can today feel that we are safe from any possibility of aggression. The feat accomplished by the Allies recently is one of which the people of Australia are immensely proud. It must easily have been the greatest military feat in history. I refer to the landing on the French coast, and not only the landing but also the successful retention of the bridgehead established at that time. Progress since then may not have been as rapid as many would have liked, but nevertheless we can be satisfied that the bridgehead was successfully established, and we feel confident there will be no retrogression.

I do not attempt to set myself up as a prophet as to when the war will end, but, that bridgehead having been established, it is not too much to hope, perhaps, that our next assemblage will be the first after the declaration of peace. I compliment all sections of the people in Australia on the excellent manner in which they have conducted themselves during the years of war through which we have passed. Particularly would I express gratitude to the large band of voluntary workers who, in many ways, have helped Australia's war effort. Many of them have done their ordinary day's work and then tackled another job in the interests of the nation. To those people we must take off our hats. Many of our services have had difficulty in carrying on, and I would pay a particular compliment to the various transport organisations, particularly in this State. I am taking into consideration both Government and privately owned transport systems when I say that if we appreciate the enormous responsibilities thrust upon those in control of them, the shortage of manpower and, what is even of greater significance, the shortage of parts required for the renovation of the vehicles concerned, we must indeed take our hats off to those concerned for the excellent manner in which they maintained the several services in running.

Having dealt with aspects of the war to that extent, I suggest that we must now look forward. One of the greatest weaknesses of Australia—probably it is realised today as never before in our history—is that the country has found itself with insufficient people successfully to defend its shores. I was surprised to note from the reading of His Excellency's Speech that the theme that is so popular with the Lieut.-Governor—I refer

to the populating of the country—was not mentioned. We should take that matter into account and consider how we can successfully increase our population. It has to be done; we cannot shut our eyes to the fact.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Yanks are helping us.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is so but, of course, they are taking our lady-folk away! We cannot advance the interests of Western Australia and Australia generally unless we increase our population considerably. There are two ways by which that result may be accomplished. The first is to secure the increase of our own population locally, by encouraging, so to speak, the Australian-born migrant. A cursory examination of the position emphasises that in the past there has been a serious decline in Australia's birth rate. If we cast our minds back to the early days we find that in most instances the colonists who settled here had very large families. If we consider the average family today we find that it is very small. There must be some reason for that decline. I do not know that we have seriously examined the position to ascertain the cause. When we take into consideration the fact that in past years the person with a large family was practically left to his own resources and was required to fend for himself in the interests of his family, we possibly put our finger on one of the reasons for the shrinkage in the size of families today.

It must be freely admitted that in earlier times and until recent years those having large families were left to themselves to provide education and medical attention for their respective offspring. No assistance whatever was afforded them. The result was that many of those families lived on or below the bread line. If we were to investigate the matter we would probably find that most of those who were formerly members of large families are today the fathers and mothers of small families. I am satisfied that the explanation is that, because of their childhood experiences, they were convinced it was impossible for them under existing conditions to rear large families. I am pleased to say, however, that in recent years Australia generally has adopted a different attitude. Today, viewing the matter from the national point of view, some assistance is being given to persons with large families. A system of child endowment has

been introduced. Certainly the amounts provided are not very large, but at any rate something is being done along those lines.

We also find that attempts are being made to deal with the greatest tragedy of ail, one of the greatest inducements to people not to have large families. If the husband in the days I speak of were an ordinary worker he could not, because of the low wages paid in industry, make provision for insurances so as to safeguard the interests of his family should anything happen to him. Under those circumstances if the man died his widow and children were left to the mercy of a cold world. Of course, in later days we have had the Child Welfare Department to which widows could apply for help, but the assistance rendered by the department has not been extensive and certainly not sufficient to enable the widow to look after herself and provide for her children in the manner we would desire. Today some relief is afforded in that widows' pensions have been provided. We also find that consideration is being given to the provision of medical and medicinal requirements. When this latter step becomes an accomplished fact, I think that, combined with the other improvements I have mentioned, together with a system of unemployment insurance and sickness benefits, we will go a long way towards finding a solution for the reasons that have actuated persons in having small families.

Hon. J. Cornell: You will have to go a lot deeper into the problem than that.

Hon. G. FRASER: Admittedly I have not gone into the matter deeply at this stage, for time will not allow me to do so today. The fact remains that in Australia we are doing something along the required lines, and when these beneficial moves become accomplished facts, I trust we shall see a gradual increase in the population of Australia. We must realise that if we cannot increase our population very appreciably locally, the necessity will arise for us to secure population from elsewhere. While I fully realise that it is necessary for Australia's population to be very considerably augmented, I trust that no immigration policy will be rushed ahead during the early years after the war is concluded. I express that hope for the reason that I believe that throughout the world

there will, in the early post-war years, be so much work to be undertaken by the various nations that if we were to rush forward with an immigration policy, we would not get the right type of migrant. I remember quite well, in the years just prior to the 1914-18 war, when thousands of migrants were brought here under the immigration policy that was adopted at that time. I saw the migrants leaving the boats at Fremantle and going to the Immigrants' Home from which they were sent into the country districts. I appreciated the fact even then that a vastly different immigration policy was required if we were to secure newcomers of the type we desired for Western Australia. I do not wish to see a repetition of any scheme such as that inaugurated in those days.

Hon. A. Thomson: The majority of those people proved to be good citizens.

Hon. G. FRASER: Quite a number of them did; quite a number of them did not prove to be good citizens. I had to take action to assist quite a number of them to secure their passages back to England. I freely admit it was not the fault of the individual himself. I think it had a lot to do with the manner in which the immigrants were obtained and the parts of Britain from which they came.

Hon. A. Thomson: The trouble was that men were brought from crowded cities and put on the land.

Hon. G. FRASER: Exactly. I think also that many people were able to get a rake-off when they secured immigrants and they were not too particular as to the type of person they secured. I admit that many of them proved to be good citizens. All the same, there were some failures at that time. As mentioned by Mr. Thomson, many people were brought out here to farm who were quite unsuited for that pursuit. As I have already said, I do not blame individuals. Many of the migrants who came to Western Australia had been city dwellers from the time of their birth until they were brought here and shanghaied into the rural areas. They were placed in an absolutely impossible position.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They came out for the very purpose of being placed on the land.

Hon. G. FRASER: We were not too particular as to the parts of the country in which we settled those migrants. I daresay

Australian city-bred people would have shown as many failures under similar conditions. After the cessation of hostilities there will be so much reconstruction work to do that one does not know where to turn in order to obtain the necessary labour. The subject is one which should receive the serious consideration of Australian public men before any attempt is made to implement a scheme. Personally I would greatly prefer child migration to adult migration. From child migrants we can obtain settlers suited to this country in far larger measure than from adult migrants. Bringing adults from the other side of the world, away from their friends and relatives, is to make a transference in connection with which it will be extremely difficult to produce satisfactory settlers.

Hon. A. Thomson: But our forefathers were fairly successful!

Hon. W. J. Mann: These people came of their own free will.

Hon. G. FRASER: People often do things of their own free will and later feel very sorry for having done them. The subject, however, is a very large one, and will have to be tackled in an extremely serious manner. One of the first things to receive the attention of Australian statesmen will be the housing problem. His Excellency's Speech mentions that proposals to overtake the housing shortage are now being put in hand. However, there will be so much competition for the limited number of tradesmen available that it is highly desirable only the most urgent jobs should be done by the Government, so that the surplus of tradesmen from that aspect can go on to the necessary work of home building. Prior to the war the average number of buildings erected annually was about 3,000. During the last four years building construction of that type has not taken place. Consequently the metropolitan area is about 12,000 houses short. It is evident that a considerable leeway has to be overtaken in that regard alone. In view of the limited number of tradesmen, to which I have already referred, it seems that at least 10 years will be required to overtake arrears in housing accommodation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That statement shows the foolishness of the restriction on apprentices in the past.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member's contention is not very sound, but I shall

not deal with it at this stage. Other occasions will present themselves for discussing the subject. The urgent necessity, I repeat, is for the building of homes. Many commercial concerns are in need of extensions of premises. I hope that the managements of those concerns will be patriotic enough to put in hand only such extensions as are absolutely indispensable, and that thus the majority of tradesmen will be left to apply themselves to home-building. The Speech also contains a reference to the slum problem. That reference will be welcomed by many members. Nevertheless I hope that the slum problem will not be tackled until the necessary work of home-building has been done. In the past we have adopted a policy of allowing suburbs to become fairly extensive before dealing with the matter of sewerage. I trust that if the necessary manpower is available, sewerage work will proceed simultaneously with the development of new suburbs, so that while the homes are being built sewerage connections can be made. There are several areas which, immediately upon the cessation of the war, will become hives of building industry. I refer particularly to land south of the river, to Canning Bridge and Applecross. In those areas are numerous sites suitable for the building of homes adjacent to the city. I repeat that builders will become extremely active in those areas immediately after the cessation of hostilities. His Excellency's Speech exhibits a new feature in that it contains more forecasts of departmental proposals than any other Speech to which I have listened in this Chamber. Proposed legislation embraces many subjects.

Hon. A. Thomson: Some of those proposals have been mentioned many times already.

Hon. G. FRASER: Judging from the outburst during the Lieut.-Governor's Speech one matter that will be well debated is the liberalising of the Council franchise. Mention was also made in the Speech of industrial, agricultural and social legislation. I hope members will give to the industrial measures to be submitted the same sympathetic consideration that they will give to the agricultural and pastoral legislation.

Hon. J. Cornell: They always have done that.

Hon. G. FRASER: If they have, I cannot recollect any industrial legislation that has been passed in recent years. I may have a bad memory but I have no such recollection.

Hon. J. Cornell: The late Alex McCallum's Industrial Arbitration Act was the best in the world.

Hon. G. FRASER: That was 20 years ago. I was referring to legislation passed in recent years. Should I say, then, that at least 90 per cent. of industrial legislation submitted to this Chamber has not been passed? I repeat that I hope as much sympathetic consideration will be given to industrial measures as is given to Bills designed to assist the agricultural industry.

Hon. L. Craig: Who said there were any?

Hon. G. FRASER: They are on the programme. Much agricultural legislation has been submitted in recent years and the measures received good support from this side of the House. Our friends of the Country Party have had a change of name. They now belong to the Country and Democratic League. I hope they will live up to what is implied in the word "democratic." I am wondering whether on the billheads and letter-heads of the new organisation there will be a query after the word "democratic." If so, the query will be answered in the next few months. I can see quite an interesting session ahead of us and hope that, after having faced the electors, many of our members have come back with the determination in future to give greater support to industrial and social legislation than they extended in the past. More information concerning prospective legislation has been supplied in the Governor's Speech on this occasion than in the past, and that is a change in the right direction. I hope that change will be perpetuated to an even greater extent in the future. The people of Australia and of this State are to be complimented on the excellent judgment they showed in returning the Labour Party to power in both the Federal and State spheres. By their decision they have endorsed the activities of the Willecock Government in this State over a number of years and, in the Federal arena, have given a vote of confidence to a man who I consider will be acclaimed in history as one of Australia's greatest Prime Ministers, and also to his followers. I feel sure the people will not regret the decision they made on those occasions.



Hon. J. Cornell: Time will tell.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but that is my belief.

Hon. T. Moore: Time has already told.

Hon. G. FRASER: A matter which has agitated the public mind for some time is the future of the Swan River. Many have been disturbed in the last few months by rumours that portions of the river will be leased to aviation companies immediately after the war. Part of the people's playground has been taken away from them during the war and there have been no very serious complaints because it has been realised that the river is required for war purposes. I refer particularly to Crawley Bay. There is no doubt the commercial airlines are endeavouring to obtain the right to utilise this area after the war. The Government has not made any decision on the matter but I would like the Chief Secretary, when replying to the debate, to give us, if possible, some indication as to the Government's intentions.

Hon. A. Thomson: If you do not want airliners to land in Perth, send them to Albany; we will have them.

Hon. G. FRASER: I suppose there are other sites available but we should do our best to reserve for the use of the people the one I mentioned. The slogan throughout the metropolitan area is, "Hands off the river," so far as using it for commercial aviation is concerned. It is the people's playground and as this city extends there will not be many other such reserves left for them. I hope the Government will make an early announcement regarding its policy in that connection.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central): I formally second the motion.

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

*House adjourned at 3.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, July 27th, 1944.

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### 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. Steers).

### 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. Hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice Dwyer, having been commissioned by the Lieutenant-Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members; also writs for by-elections for North-East Fremantle (Ministerial), and for Avon and Swan.

All the members elected, with the exception of Mr. Abbott, Hon. A. A. M. Coverley, Mr. Newton, Mr. Raphael, Mr. Styants and Mr. Wilson were present, and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute and signed the roll.

### ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

**THE PREMIER:** The House being duly constituted, I now move—

That Mr. Sleeman do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.