

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament was prorogued on the 8th January, 1919, until the 7th May, 1919. It was further prorogued to the 10th June, then to 24th July, and finally to the 31st July, 1919, when it met for the despatch of business; and the Third Second Session commenced on that day.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 31st July, 1919.

	PAGE.
Opening of Parliament	1
Commissioner to Swear in Members	1
Swearing in of Members	1
Election of President	1
Governor's Opening Speech	2
Obituary, Sir Henry Briggs	4
Motion, Peace	6
Bill, Health Act Amendment, 1R.	6
Address-in-Reply, moved	6

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at noon pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman).

COMMISSIONER.

His Excellency's Commissioner (the Chief Justice, the Hon. Sir Robert Furze McMillan, Kt.) having entered the Chamber, a Message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Assembly having arrived accordingly, His Honour the Chief Justice requested the Clerk to read His Excellency's Commission to do all things necessary in his name for the opening of Parliament. The Commission was read.

The Commissioner then read the following statement:—

Mr. President, Hon. members of the Legislative Council and gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly,—

I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to inform you that he will in person in this place declare the reasons of his calling this session of Parliament so soon as the members of the Legislative Council notify to him that they have elected their President.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

The members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, the Clerk of Parliaments read the Commission appointing the Chief Justice to administer the oath of allegiance to newly elected members.

The Clerk announced the return of writs for the election of members for the East and West Provinces, showing that the Hon. Charles Farquharson Baxter (East) and the Hon. Alexander Hugh Panton (West) had been duly elected.

The Hon. C. F. Baxter and the Hon. A. H. Panton took the oath and subscribed the roll. The Commissioner then left the Chamber.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Clerk of Parliaments reported that the office of President was vacant.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North): Owing to the death of the late President, it becomes necessary to elect a new one, and I therefore have much pleasure in proposing the Hon. Walter Kingsmill as President of the Legislative Council. Mr. Kingsmill has been amongst us for a great number of years and has occupied at different times various positions in connection with the Government of the State and with Parliament. Of more recent date the position he has occupied—and, may I add, that he has done this with conspicuous success—has been that of Chairman of Committees. I look upon the position of Chairman of Committees as a very arduous and exacting one. It is almost more arduous than that of President, because the Chairman of Committees has to preside over discussions where the laws and rules of the House are very often more freely interpreted than they are in the discussions which take place under the presidency of the Chair. We must congratulate the hon. gentleman upon the manner in which, under his Chairmanship, these discussions have been carried out. I have no hesitation in saying, and I

believe my remarks will be endorsed by hon. members, that the Hon. Walter Kingsmill has been successful in carrying out satisfactorily the duties attached to that position. I am of opinion, therefore, that we can find no better man than he to preside over the deliberations of the Legislative Council, and that being so, I have much pleasure in proposing him for the position of President.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban): I have much pleasure in seconding the proposal that the Hon. Walter Kingsmill should be appointed to the position of President of the Legislative Council. I am sure we all endorse what has been said by Sir Edward Wittenoom. We are fortunate in being able to avail ourselves of the services of Mr. Kingsmill in the presidential Chair. He has had a long and distinguished career, and has been intimately connected with the government of this State. He commands the confidence of members of the House, no matter where they may sit, and, in addition to that, he is very experienced in our procedure. I am sure, therefore, we shall all welcome him in the position of President, especially as he enjoys the complete confidence of members of this Chamber.

No other member being proposed,

The Hon. W. KINGSMILL rose in his place and said: I wish to express to hon. members assembled here my deep appreciation of the honour they have done me in electing me unopposed to what is the highest purely parliamentary position in the State. I should be possessed of very much less feeling than I give myself credit for if I were not deeply touched by the confidence hon. members have expressed in me, and by the practical proof they have given of that confidence. My experience in the Legislative Council has taught me at all events, one thing amongst many, namely, that this is a House of fairness and a House of justice. It affords to its officers and Ministers its hearty support so long as it is satisfied—and it always has been satisfied—that these officers and Ministers are acting in the best interests of the House, or in what, in their opinion, is in the best interests of the House. I feel that I have before me a very arduous task in succeeding our late President. That hon. gentleman possessed to a very marked degree the confidence and respect, and, I may say, the affection of hon. members of this Chamber. I have to thank hon. members very heartily, and hereby make my acknowledgment of the very high honour they have bestowed upon me. I submit myself to this Council.

Having been conducted to the Chair,

The PRESIDENT-ELECT said: I beg again to formally acknowledge the high honour which hon. members have bestowed upon me, and to place myself in the hands of the Legislative Council.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): As leader of the House, I desire to congratulate you, Sir, very heartily upon your election to the office of President. I feel it is unnecessary for me to say more than that I am sure I am voicing

the opinion of all members of the House when I say we are satisfied that the privileges of hon. members and the traditions of the House will be safe in your hands. I shall have very much pleasure in presenting you as our new President to His Excellency the Governor before the House reassembles at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

Sitting suspended from 12.21 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: I have to inform the House that I have waited upon and have been presented to His Excellency the Governor as President-elect of the Legislative Council, and His Excellency has been pleased to signify his approval of the choice of the Council.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the 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 Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

The opening of the Third Session of the Tenth Parliament of Western Australia follows closely upon the celebration throughout the British Empire of the signing of Peace, and you will be asked to adopt a resolution expressing gratitude to Almighty God and congratulation to His Majesty the King on the triumph of the allied arms and of the cause of freedom and justice.

In the great work of reconstruction with which we, in common with the whole civilised world, are now confronted, my advisers recognise that the first duty of the State is to suitably repatriate our returning soldiers, and hereby to afford those whose courage and self-sacrifice have preserved our liberties the widest opportunity of contributing to the development of the country and the happiness of its people.

Whilst the State Government is at all times anxious to assist and to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government in the work of repatriation generally, its direct duties are to afford the widest scope for land settlement by returned soldiers, and to extend to them practical and effective preference of employment in the public service.

In both these directions every effort is being made to meet the obligations of the State. The activities of the department of repatriation—a comprehensive review of which will be submitted forthwith for your information—are being stimulated to the utmost.

As an aftermath of the war grave industrial turmoil is manifest in almost all parts of the world, and my advisers propose to ask Parliament to give immediate consideration to this problem as it applies to Western Australia, in the firm conviction that the restoration of unity in the community and the peaceful and

uninterrupted pursuit of commerce and industry are the first essentials to individual and national well being.

It is recognised that the high cost of living and the prevalence of unemployment are disturbing factors requiring prompt remedies. Five years of warfare, necessarily involving the disruption of industry and finance, the limitation of useful production, and the inflation of credit, have created adverse conditions that time alone can overcome, but my advisers are convinced that the high cost of living is contributed to by the utilisation of opportunities to extort inequitable profits. For much of this, influences beyond the control of the State are responsible; but, in order to protect consumers against local exploitation, you will be asked to pass legislation giving the Government power, whilst present abnormal conditions prevail, to regulate the prices of commodities, having regard to the reasonable profits and risks of the producer.

Believing that increased production—particularly the local production of many necessities of life now imported from outside the State—is the only foundation on which the permanent prosperity of the country can be based, the Government will use every effort to open up land for occupation and use. In this connection the steady expansion of rural settlement, the recent establishment of secondary industries closely associated with production from the land, and the prospect of an abundant harvest are encouraging evidences of returning stability. It is the purpose of the Government, so far as financial considerations will permit, to endeavour to cope with the difficulty of unemployment by the establishment of developmental works, and to encourage private citizens in the pursuance of a policy of confidence and enterprise.

The construction of freezing works in different parts of the State is expected to lend stability to our pastoral industry and to contribute to the general introduction of the sound system of mixed farming in our agricultural areas.

Notwithstanding great difficulties largely arising out of war conditions, our mining industry is still an important contributor to the gold supplies of the Empire, whilst many of our base metal deposits offer possibilities of further profitable exploitation. Our coal deposits at Collie have been of incalculable benefit to the State during the past five years, and have afforded a striking illustration of the advantage of stimulating the development of local supplies of essential requirements. Help is being afforded to returned soldiers to prospect the vast and almost unexplored mineral areas of the State, and it is hoped by wise encouragement and assistance to the industry to do much to restore mining to the position of prosperity it occupied a few years ago.

My advisers are increasingly impressed with the great possibilities of further settlement and development of the North-West, and recognise the responsibility of insuring to that portion of the State adequate and reliable facilities of transit.

In view of the need to increase our present sparse population the question of immigration is receiving the consideration of the Government, with due regard to the present responsibility of absorbing our returned soldiers and relieving the unemployed market. Negotiations are proceeding with the Imperial Government, and it is hoped that arrangements will be made whereby the State will be assisted to secure and to satisfactorily settle upon the land considerable numbers of Imperial service men.

Every effort is being made to cope with the present epidemic of pneumonic influenza, and there are encouraging indications that the precautions taken by the department, combined with the ready co-operation of the public, have been generally effective.

During the war the employment of large numbers of medical men on active service has left many of our country districts without medical aid. With the restoration of normal conditions it is hoped that the requirements of settlers in this respect will be met.

The steady development of the policy of public education, so essential to the requirements of a democratic community, is being pursued so far as the necessary limitation of expenditure will permit. It is hoped that it will now be found practicable to give further attention to the important matter of the systematic medical examination of school children.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly--

The revenue for the financial year just completed amounted to £1,944,850, and the expenditure to £5,596,865, leaving a deficiency on the twelve months' operations of £652,014, and increasing the accumulated deficit to £3,418,479. Now that peace has been restored it is confidently anticipated that the resumption of normal conditions in our great revenue-earning departments, combined with the general expansion of business consequent upon increased production, will lead to a gradual improvement in our financial position.

The financial arrangement which existed with the Commonwealth during the war period has practically terminated, and it will be necessary to revert to the method of obtaining funds for financing the loan requirements of the State which existed before the war, and preliminary action has been taken in that direction.

The principal funds for carrying into effect the scheme for the land settlement of returned soldiers are being supplied by the Commonwealth Government.

My advisers are giving careful consideration to the expiry at the end of the current financial year of the financial agreement under the Commonwealth Surplus Revenue Act, 1910, and are fully alive to the fact that the completion of a new agreement on equitable lines as between the Commonwealth and the States and as between States and States is vital to the preservation of the spirit of the Commonwealth Constitution and to the future financial stability of Western Australia.

The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the current financial year are now in course of preparation, and will be submitted for your consideration as early as possible. In the meantime you will be asked to grant temporary supplies.

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

A large number of measures of greater or lesser importance to the good government of the State and the development of its resources have been prepared or are in course of preparation.

Subject to the determination of my advisers to invite your first consideration to those matters immediately connected with the grave problems with which the State is at present confronted, the following, amongst other, Bills will be submitted as time and opportunity permit:—

Bill to Regulate the Sale of Commodities, Traffic Bill, Road Act Amendment Bill, Justices Act Amendment Bill, Crown Suits Act Amendment Bill, Police Act Amendment Bill, Electoral Act Amendment Bill, Midland Railway Powers Bill, Pearling Act Amendment Bill, Shops and Factories Bill, State Children Act Amendment Bill, Fruit Cases Bill, Droving Act Amendment Bill, City of Perth Endowment Lands Bill; and several continuance Bills.

I now leave you to your labours, trusting that by the blessing of Divine Providence they may prove of material advantage to the State.

[The Governor then retired, and the President resumed the Chair.]

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

THE PRESIDENT: For the sake of greater accuracy I have obtained from His Excellency the Governor copies of the Speech His Excellency has just delivered, which will be distributed among hon. members.

OBITUARY—SIR HENRY BRIGGS.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): Since the last meeting of this House death has removed one of whom I am sure it is no flattery to say that for many years he was its brightest ornament. The late Sir Henry Briggs was a member of the Legislative Council for some 23 years. For six years he occupied the office of Chairman of Committees and for 13 years he presided over our deliberations with rare dignity and wisdom. During the past few sessions, all of us have noticed from time to time with deep regret and grave anxiety indications of failing physical vigour, and we have at the same time admired the courage with which he combated his growing infirmities and his devotion to the duties of his office. Those of us who have been privileged to listen to the late Sir Henry Briggs on the rare occa-

sions when he addressed this House or outside assemblies must often have regretted that his occupancy of the office of President deprived Parliament of the services of so brilliant a speaker and so clear a reasoner. He was a delightful man to listen to—delightful because of his wide vocabulary, his inimitable choice of words and the eternal verity of his ideas. We all regarded him as an ideal President because of his firmness and his fairness. It was, I think, his passionate love of liberty that excited in him so deep an abhorrence of license. He was one of those who held that the right of free speech implied an obligation to silence on the part of listeners, and that the observance of order was the first condition precedent to the enjoyment of liberty. In his firm but kindly rule over this House he had an easy task because of the respect, the confidence, and the affection with which he was regarded by all members, and because every member felt that his own personal privileges as well as the traditions of the House were being upheld in a perfectly impartial and fearless manner. There are other members, some of whom sat with the late Sir Henry Briggs when he was a private member, others who like myself feel deeply indebted to him for the kindly help he always extended to new members, who will desire to say a few words in support of this motion. May I be permitted in conclusion to say that I feel I am expressing the confident belief of all the members of this Chamber when I say that in electing you, Sir, to occupy the office Sir Henry Briggs filled so long and with such success, we have assured ourselves that the privileges of members and the traditions of the House are in equally safe hands. I beg to move—

That this House desires to give expression to its deep regret at the death of our late President (Sir Henry Briggs), and to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered by him to the Parliament and the State in the 23 years of his membership of this Chamber and more particularly during the 13 years in which he presided over its deliberations.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North): I rise with unaffected sorrow to place on record my regret that the President who has been so long amongst us has passed away. His services in connection with this House have been in the most eminent degree satisfactory. He carried out the duties of President with strictness, justice, impartiality, and singular ability. Owing to his efforts, the standard and the dignity of this House in debates have attained such a level that I have no hesitation in saying it will compare favourably with debating assemblages in any part of this Commonwealth. It is perhaps of a singular fitness that I should be one of those associated with the motion proposed by the Colonial Secretary, because it was under my auspices that the late Sir Henry Briggs entered Parliament. It was in the year 1896, or 1897, he made his debut; and at that time I had the honour of occupying the position

so ably filled at present by Mr. Colebatch as leader of the Legislative Council. I well remember the trepidation and anxiety of the late Sir Henry Briggs when he was called upon to undertake the task of proposing the Address-in-reply. In referring to officials of Parliament, and I may also add to members of Parliament, I am put in mind of a little book which has been for a long time before the public, called "Ships that pass in the Night," and I am pleased to think, in this instance, that our late President has left behind him a wake which will always redound to his honour and credit. During the long time I have been in Parliament I have seen members come and go. The position of a member of Parliament is ephemeral, and to a large extent uncertain, depending in a considerable degree on the wavering opinion of electors, who, I think, always have a sneaking regard for change. Our late President was of a kind and genial nature, but owing to his indisposition of late years he could take little part in social matters. The leader of the House has spoken so fully and so well with regard to our late President that it leaves little to add. It has been a great satisfaction to me that I have been able to add my tribute, and also to second the motion before the House. In conclusion, I feel sure that I am expressing the feeling of all the members of this Chamber with respect to our departed colleague when I express the hope that for ever may he rest in peace.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West): As senior member for the West Province, and as a colleague of the late Sir Henry Briggs, I desire to add my quota of appreciation of the services rendered by the late gentleman to his province and to the State. It will be within the knowledge of many that Sir Henry Briggs came to Western Australia with high scholastic attainments. He came here at a time when it was most essential that such a valuable asset as was possessed by him should be imparted to a young community, and he freely imparted that which he possessed. To-day his influence is reflected in many of our best citizens throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia. The late Sir Henry Briggs was a genial and warm-hearted gentleman, and it was given only to those closely associated with him to know of the many valuable gifts which he bestowed, and which I am sorry to say many in the West Province miss from his kindly hands to-day. He was a true and loyal colleague. When I entered this House as junior member for the West Province he gave from the wide experience which he possessed that generous advice which at all times is so essential to younger members. And that advice was not confined to his junior colleagues, but was freely imparted to every member of the Chamber, irrespective of political creed or opinion. I recollect that in the early days of Responsible Government Sir Henry Briggs ably advocated many measures, and so helped in no small degree to mould the public mind of Western Australia. It was at that time he gathered round him so large a circle of

friends. His name will last in remembrance and esteem, with the deepest respect and the most loyal affection of all those amongst whom he moved. Personally, I deplore the loss to the State of the late Sir Henry Briggs, and as one of his closest personal friends I regret extremely the loss of a friendship that was absolutely loyal and true. Little more can be added to the graceful tribute paid to the memory of Sir Henry Briggs by the mover and the seconder of this motion. I add my quota, with a feeling of deep regret that the occasion arises for it to-day.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): May I add one stone to the cairn of respect raised by hon. members to our late President. He is dead, which must inevitably have been expected, as the late gentleman had reached and passed the allotted span of life. I deeply regret his loss, for two reasons: One is that Sir Henry Briggs represented the type of man that is hard to find to-day. The type is disappearing of the man of freedom of thought and freedom of action, and, above all, of love of tolerance. I also regret Sir Henry Briggs' death because in the demise of our late President I have lost one of my closest personal friends. Well do I remember how on entering this Chamber I felt something wrong with my knees, being over-awed both by the solemnity of the House and the seeming austerity of the President. However, I soon learnt that beneath the apparent austerity there was a kindly feeling and a kind heart. I am not qualified to speak of our late President as other hon. members are, since my acquaintance with him has extended over only seven years. However, I think those who have been through the mill must have arrived at the conclusion that true friendship, like true love, does not take years to make. In conclusion, let me again express my deep regret at the death of Sir Henry Briggs, and let me say that you, Sir, in following him have a hard task to perform. Still, I feel that though Sir Henry Briggs is no more, you, Mr. President, will ably uphold the traditions which he has left to this House.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central): I wish briefly to add my tribute to the memory of the late Sir Henry Briggs, who presided over this Chamber with such distinct and marked ability for a period of 13 years. The late President was generally recognised by all sections of the community as one of nature's gentlemen. In joining in the general expression of regret, we all feel more than a pang that the President has not been permitted to be here to-day when the curtain has just been rung down on the greatest war of history. It would have been indeed fitting had Sir Henry Briggs been spared to preside over a meeting of this House in such circumstances. I trust the soil will rest lightly on him. I hope that we who cherish his memory will follow the example he has set up for our guidance, so that when our time comes our memory may obtain at least some of that respect which the memory of the deceased gentleman evokes to-day.

The PRESIDENT: Before I put to you the motion which has been proposed and seconded and supported, I may, perhaps, be allowed to express my own deep regret at the termination of a very long friendship between the late President and myself. We came into the Legislature of the State within a few months of one another. It fell to my lot—I have always looked upon this as one of the greatest happinesses I have enjoyed—to be a good deal associated with the honourable and distinguished gentleman who has passed from amongst us into the shadows. He was, as has been pointed out, an arresting personality; and in searching through the pages of history for someone who was a prototype of our late President it has always occurred to me that Dr. Samuel Johnson approximated more nearly in character and attainments to the late President than anyone I can think of. I suppose in the life of every man there is some ever sounding underlying keynote, some watchword which rings ever and always in his ears, impelling him to the course of action which he takes throughout his life; and I have always thought that the keynote of the late President's life, the watchword of his aim and career, was "Knowledge," the gaining of knowledge for himself and the imparting of knowledge to others. Great are the opportunities and great the responsibility—too often, alas! not adequately recognised—of those who shape and mould the minds and characters of our youths. It must have been gratifying to the late Sir Henry Briggs to see amongst all branches of activity and in all walks of life men who as boys had been under his care. I mourn the termination of a long friendship. It will be always a source of pride to me that that friendship lasted for so many years. It will be a matter of greater pride, mingled with a sense of the deepest responsibility, that other members of this House have thought me worthy to follow, as President, at however great a distance, the footsteps of that gentleman who has gone before me, who trod with footsteps unflinching and undeviating the path of Parliamentary rectitude for the 13 years during which he filled the office of President. I will ask hon. members, as a mark of respect to pass this motion standing in their places.

Question put and passed; members standing.

MOTION—PEACE.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): I move—

That a joint message from both Houses of Parliament be transmitted to His Majesty the King, expressing deep and sincere gratitude to Almighty God on the consummation of a righteous and victorious peace, and congratulations on the success at arms of the British and Allied Nations.

I am sure no weak words of mine are necessary to commend this motion to the acceptance of hon. members. As the text of the motion indicates, a similar motion is being submitted in another place.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (Honorary Minister): I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT,

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): 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 to amend the Health Act, 1919.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban): I move—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us:—
"May it please Your Excellency. We, the members of the Legislative Council 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."

May I take this opportunity of expressing my accordance with the sentiments that have fallen from the various speakers on the loss this Council has sustained in the death of our late President, Sir Henry Briggs, who presided over our deliberations for so many years with rare dignity and impartiality? As the mouthpiece of this Council, on many public occasions his fine presence and dignified bearing, and the sonorous periods with which he was wont to clothe the thoughts of a mind richly stored with learning and wisdom, added a lustre to this House and to the Chair he so ably filled. May I also tender to you, Sir, my felicitations on your having been chosen by your fellow members to occupy the place of one whom we so deeply revered, a place which you are so well qualified to adorn? It is fitting that on this occasion I should follow our usual practice in welcoming new members. We have amongst us to-day one whom the ejection of the West Province have chosen to succeed the late Sir Henry Briggs. The new member will find the atmosphere of this House more serene and less electrically charged than the hustings; and he will find also that within these walls we manage to respect those with whom we politically differ, believing that each of us is animated with the same object and working for the same end, namely, the good of the people and the advancement of the State. The period through which the British Empire has lately passed has been, without doubt, the most momentous in its annals. The bomb cast at Sarajevo started a conflagration the like of which the world had never before experienced. The war was waged with a violence probably unequalled before, and certainly in a manner

which we had hoped Christianity, the march of civilisation, and the spirit of that humanitarianism which was the distinguishing characteristic of the nineteenth century, had banished for ever from our midst. But, to the astonishment of the student, the reverse was the case. The war was waged with a fury which showed how little the passions of men had been changed in the course of centuries. During that anxious time the best elements in our midst were praying for the hush of political strife. Only by united effort, it was apparent, could we overcome the malignant forces threatening our very existence. A divine providence crowned the heroic efforts of the Empire's sons, and by the valour of all the Allied forces a signal victory was achieved. But at what cost? Nearly a million of the best young manhood of the Empire have been slain. Probably an equal number have been crippled for life. Vast wealth has been dissipated in creating machinery useful only for war. Industry has been crippled and the minds of men have been disturbed and torn from their peaceful routine. Like a mighty river they are everywhere breaking from the channels which hitherto restrained them. Great nations have been overwhelmed and for the moment submerged by the mad torrent. Which of us has any clear conception as to the condition of the component parts of what were once the Russian, the Austrian, and the Turkish Empires? To many these considerations may seem remote from the particular circumstance in which this State is placed. But it is not so. We are experiencing the outer ripple, the agitation produced on the outskirts by the mighty tornado which is raging throughout the world, the centre of the cyclonic disturbance being Russia. The world is on the verge of a cataclysm. It is because I hold these views that I plead to-day for unity. Only by unity did we win the war; only by unity can we solve the difficult problem of reconstruction, whereby men and women of all classes may enjoy the fruits of their labour, and the security of the realm be maintained. The problems probably present themselves to most of us in these terms: First, industrial and social unrest; second, the high cost of living. These two are interdependent. To what causes is the high cost of living mainly attributable? Undoubtedly to the scarcity of commodities. And this is brought about in various ways. In the first place some 20 to 30 millions of men for the past five years have been diverted from useful production and mainly engaged in seeking to slay one another. Probably an equal number have been employed providing clothing, food, and equipment necessary to these huge armies engaged in slaughtering. Large areas of highly productive land have been laid waste, large centres of industry destroyed. Huge quantities of commodities, through the agency of the torpedo, have been sent to find a resting place at the bottom of the sea, there to be followed by a large proportion of shipping, the machinery of distribution, while another large proportion of shipping has been

engaged in transferring men instead of material. Can it be wondered at that there is an extreme shortage of commodities all over the world? But this original disease is made worse by various other bacteria which are known to pathologists as secondary invaders. The first one is the "parasitic profiteer" and the second one the bacillus "striki," an organism as venomous as the rattle snake, which strikes quickly, strikes hard, and strikes all. Profiteering is undoubtedly harmful, but it does not diminish the world's output of any particular commodity profiteered, although it may injuriously affect correlated industries. It is also harmful because unjust to the consumer, and it breeds discontent. Undoubtedly it is a fertile source of the world's unrest to-day. It is because I regard profiteering in this light that I welcome the determination of the Government to bring in a measure designed to check excess profits.

Hon. J. Cornell: We had that four years ago.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: But it lapsed on that occasion. In normal times interference with supply and demand is, I think, harmful. When commodities are scarce prices rise, thereby checking waste and inducing economy in their use. Furthermore, the increase of prices stimulates production until finally the equilibrium between supply and demand is restored. But the present times are not normal. Take for instance the recent rise here in the price of meat. This was not due to any shortage of meat in the State, but was a temporary shortage in the South due to difficulty in getting supplies from the North-West, owing to the shipping strike. Furthermore, so paradoxical are conditions at present that whilst our granaries are filled to overflowing, the price of bread is rising. Under these circumstances I think we must agree that the machinery of adjustment between supply and demand has broken down, and therefore the agitation for price fixing is justified. Another cause of the high cost of living is undoubtedly the inflation of the currency. In the United Kingdom the current notes now amount to the enormous sum of 350 millions—and that issue is being increased month by month—as against a total gold reserve of only £28,500,000. All economists are agreed that every additional increase in currency notes diminishes their purchasing power. It must be remembered that this addition to our currency is no increase in the wealth of the community. The printing press cannot create wealth, no matter what good it may do in other directions. The inflation of the currency is dangerously deceptive because it gives rise to an apparent increase in wealth and creates an exaggerated idea of the prosperity of the community. In Russia this has been carried to such lengths that the value of the rouble has fallen from 2s. 1d. in normal times to the value of 1½d. of our money. A reel of cotton in Russia costs 30 roubles, which would have been equivalent, before the war, to £3. A pack of common playing cards, which are a Govern-

ment monopoly, costs 15 roubles, and a suit of clothes is worth 800 roubles. It is impossible to get a suit of clothes in Russia without a permit from the Government. That permit, though issued free, guarantees spoils to the victors, and can be sold in Russia for 700 roubles. The financial condition of the State is giving cause for considerable anxiety. Last year we had a deficit of £650,000. We cannot, of course, compare our deficit with that of Russia, a country beloved by Mr. Walsh and various citizens of Townsville, who wish to establish a Soviet Government here. I find that the expenditure for 1918 in Russia was 47 thousand million roubles and the deficit 43,000 million roubles, the income being only 4,000 million roubles. It is desirable that the proper relationship between income and expenditure should be restored as early as possible, in order that our credit may remain good and our solvency be unimpaired. But we must not be led into any financial scare or panic. We must think of the causes which have been underlying any deficit. For the last five years about a tenth of our population, and that the most virile and productive, has been withdrawn from useful production and been away at the Front. The services of these men there have been beyond price, but from the point of view of the revenue they cannot be regarded as producers. Another cause of the deficit is the crippling of our industries. The important industries of timber and pearling have been quite crippled because of the war. All of our industries have suffered from shortage of labour, difficulties of getting supplies, and difficulties of transport. So far, none of our successive Governments appear to have been capable of adjusting our finances. The reason, I take it, is that the population of the State is too small for the burdens put upon it. The cost of administering this huge area is too great, and the only real remedy lies in increasing our population. At present we have a golden opportunity which may never come again. The unsettling effects of the war have been such that the minds of men in the Old Country are being turned towards emigration, and we must take care that no financial stringency allows this tide to be deflected. We must see that our returning soldiers are justly and generously dealt with, and at the same time try to attract men and women of the right stamp to come to these shores. There is another reason connected with defence, and why it is necessary for us to encourage immigration. For the moment we are safe, sheltered by the might of the naval forces of the Empire, but it would be folly for us to imagine that this security is going to last for ever. Do we sufficiently realise what might have been the fate of Australia and the British Empire during the great war, if one of our Allies had played us false? In spite of intrigues from Germany she remained true to her word, but other conditions may occur. I was sorry to see at the conference in Sydney recently of the A.L.P. three important platforms were adopted in conjunction; first, a White Australia; sec-

ond, the cultivation of an Australian as opposed to an Imperial sentiment; and, third, the abolition of compulsory service for home defence. The first plank, a White Australia, gives offence to our fellow subjects in India, and also to the Chinese and Japanese. The object of the second one must undoubtedly be to weaken the ties of Empire. As to the third, we are told by a returning delegate that it was adopted almost without discussion. In the meantime the Japanese are speaking of increasing their army divisions and their navy, and yet an important section of our people proposes to abolish compulsory defence. The Romans had a saying, "Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." I understand it is not the intention of the Government to increase taxation. I know that taxation is high, and that the people here have to bear the burden of both State and Federal taxation. Possibly the financial advisers consider that increased taxation would do more harm than good by increasing our financial stringency and crippling our industries. I cannot pose as a financial expert, but my observations do not support their views. On my return to Australia I find the same pursuit of pleasure, the same reckless expenditure on luxuries, and the same extravagance that existed before the war. I would welcome any measure that would reduce the cost of living. We must remember that Western Australia depends on its primary industries, and that our prosperity depends on what we can get out of or take off the land—gold and other minerals, including coal. I am glad to see that there is a prospect of our coal being more largely used in the future. The Germans have discovered a method of creating electrical power from their brown coal, and what the Germans can do we can do. Besides things in the ground we have our crops, fruit, timber, and our flocks and herds and their produce. These must be the main stay of this country for many a long day to come, until our population increases sufficiently to enable us to become a manufacturing centre. We are not in the happy position of those South Sea Islanders who manage to make a living by taking in each other's scanty washing. We must depend largely upon our exports, and that being so it is obvious that the price which we can afford to pay for labour is limited. We have to compete in the markets of the world. When the farm ceases to show a profit the farmer will cease to extend his operations and to bring more land under cultivation. As soon as that profit is converted into a loss the farm will fall out of cultivation and rack and ruin will ensue. High wages, out of proportion to the value of the labour rendered, cannot be the sovereign remedy for the evils of the State, but rather should we seek an improvement by turning our attention to lessening the cost of living. I am sorry to take up the time of the House with these truisms, but there seems to be an opinion abroad that there is some fortunatus' purse called capital, on which we can live without work. The eminent econo-

mist, W. H. Mallock, in his production entitled "Wages, War, and Capital," comes to the conclusion that if the annual savings of the United Kingdom were divided equally between the inhabitants of the United Kingdom it would only increase their income by £4 per head; or to put it another way, if the income from the investment of the home capital in the United Kingdom were divided amongst the inhabitants therein, it would only mean £7 per head. There is no royal road to prosperity, and there is no quack panacea or cure-all for the evils of poverty or disease. Their causes lie deep rooted in human nature. Wise legislation has done much in the past but there remains still much more to be done. The violent dislocations of industry only defeat their own ends by diminishing production, enhancing prices and decreasing employment. I am glad to hear that the Government, in conjunction with a vigorous land policy, intend to start an agricultural college. A scientific education is as necessary for the farmer as for any other professional man. It quickens the interest in country life, besides rendering the land more productive. If we wish to attract people to the land and arrest the constant exodus which is taking place from the land into the towns, we must do so by rendering country life more varied and more interesting. I hope the Government will be able to do something in the way of higher education for the toiler in the cities. The number of students at our University has increased from 184 in 1913 to 400 in 1919, and there is every prospect of a further increase next year. If these figures are increased it may be necessary to augment both the accommodation and the staff, as a result of which a larger expenditure will be required upon the University. The University has been starved in equipment and buildings since its inception. I am not one of those who think that money spent on higher education is wasted. I believe that the future of democracy depends on the amelioration of the lot of the masses of the people and upon their higher education. During the war the battle cry has been to make the world safe for democracy. The problem presenting itself to us now is how to make democracy safe for the world. If there is to be any permanent improvement in our condition it can only come about by raising the moral, mental, and physical status of our people. It may surprise hon. members to know that in London and Leeds more money is spent on education proportionately than in this State, whilst in the United States of America even double our amount per head of the population has been expended. The Government intend, I believe, to ask Parliament to continue the existing hours for the sale of alcoholic liquors, namely, from 9 to 9. In 1921 the subject of liquor reform will be submitted to a local option vote, and it is to be desired that a solution of the evils of excessive drinking will be found. I do not regard total prohibition as a satisfactory solution, because I consider it to be an unwarranted interfer-

ence with the enjoyment of the people, and furthermore, I believe it will bring in its train worse evils in the way of sly grog selling, bad liquor, secret drinking, and the increased consumption of such harmful drugs as cocaine and morphia. The experiments being carried out in the United States will be watched with interest by all lovers of temperance. Nor am I satisfied with the present condition of things whereby men and women ruin their bodies and minds and become a burden to the State. I believe that reasonable temperance reform will include State control of hotels, the lessening of the alcoholic contents of wines and beers, and a further reduction of hours. I would plead with all my power for a greater spirit of tolerance and good will in our midst. During the past five years a heroism has been shown unexcelled at any period of the world's history. In the storm of shot and shell on the narrow beach at Anzac Cove, where men wasting from dysentery kept their posts, in the trenches of France and Flanders, in the cold and wet, and where hell itself seemed to have let loose its fury, in the stifling heat, dust, and malaria of the Jordan Valley, on sea and on land, a courage and endurance have been shown which have immortalised the name of Australia. Victory has been won and Peace declared. Let us not by our internal dissensions throw away the fruits of Victory, but let us resolve that the same high courage and self-sacrifice shall consecrate our labours in solving the difficult problems of Peace.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Lynn debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.20 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 31st July, 1919.

	PAGE.
Meeting of the Assembly	9
Message—Opening by Commissioner	10
Armistice, letter in reply	10
Australian Imperial Forces, letters in reply	10
Swearing-in of Members	10
Summons from the Governor	10
Bill: General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amend- ment, 1R.	10
Motion, Peace	10
Obituary, Mr. Herbert Robinson	10
Obituary, Sir Henry Briggs	11
Governor's Opening Speech	12
Address-in-Reply, moved	12

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk (Mr. A. R. Grant).