

world, the facts regarding the fertility of our South-West lands. We have an Agent General at Home. I am glad to see that the Commonwealth Government are to work in with this Government. I hope that in the near future we shall have thousands of people coming to this State to settle our rich South-West.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Where will you get your thousands of people?

Mr. PIESSE: I am glad to see that it is the intention of the Government to continue the wheat pool, by introducing a Bill for the compulsory pooling of wheat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You do not believe in freedom of trade.

Mr. PIESSE: I do not understand the interjection. The wheat pool has rendered valuable service both to the producer and the consumer.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They had to pay through the nose for their wheat.

Mr. PIESSE: Had it not been for the pool the hon. member and his constituents would have paid a very much higher figure. The producer and consumer would have been fleeced to the tune of many thousands of pounds had it not been for the pool control. I am glad the Government intend to carry on that particular pool. Although we see from time to time, through the Press, that it is the intention of the Federal Government to do away with the pool, I am pleased to be informed that such is not the case. We find that the Price Fixing Bill is to be re-enacted. That also has rendered valuable service to the community.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not for the wheat.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PIESSE: The hon. member is endeavouring to put me off the track as far as possible, and evidently the Honorary Minister, too, finds some amusement in my remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss Ministers and hon. members on this motion.

Mr. PIESSE: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.39]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday next.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.40]: I would suggest to the Premier that he should amend the motion to provide for the adjournment until Tuesday week. We know that an important conference takes place in the City next week, and that it will be attended by a large number of members of this Chamber. I am sure it would be asking too much of those hon. members to expect them to

attend this conference during the day, and to their legislative duties during the evening.

Mr. Maley: You hardly know whether to attack the Government now or next week.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In order that hon. members may be afforded an opportunity of devoting their full time and talent to this conference, I suggest that the Premier make the adjournment until Tuesday week.

Mr. Johnston: The importance of the occasion merits an adjournment.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [4.41]: I suggest to the leader of the Opposition that we might meet on Tuesday next as proposed by the motion, but that he might be able to find pairs for those hon. members who may be away. I hope hon. members will agree to the adjournment to Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.42 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 10th August, 1920.

	Page
Visit of the Prince of Wales	13
Question: Wheat Board representation	14
Address-in-Reply, Second day, amendment, Single Chamber	14

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

VISIT OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCE OF WALES.

The PRESIDENT [4.32]: I have to report to hon. members that according to the resolution of the House at its last meeting, I waited to-day on His Excellency the Governor and presented to him the Address which this House was pleased to pass. His Excellency has been pleased to hand me the following reply for transmission to this House:—

The Governor has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of an Address passed by the Hon. the President and members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia on the 5th August, 1920, and to intimate that it will afford him pleasure to transmit this Address by telegram to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies for transmission to His Majesty the King. Government House, Perth, 10th August, 1920.

QUESTION—WHEAT BOARD
REPRESENTATION.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Honorary Minister:—1, Are there any reasons why Mr. Sinclair J. McGibbon was not re-appointed as the growers' representative on the Wheat Board? 2, If so, will the Minister take the members of the Legislative Council into his confidence and state what the reasons are?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, Yes. 2, I will take an early opportunity of doing so.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second day.

Amendment—Single Chamber.

Debate resumed from 5th August.

Hon. A. H. PANTON (West) [4.40]: At the outset I wish to take the opportunity to welcome the new members to this Chamber. From my knowledge of the members who have recently been elected, I feel sure that they will be an acquisition to the debating powers of this House. I wish especially to welcome my colleague Mr. Moore, in view of the fact that the electors of the Central Province have been good enough to show their gratitude by repatriating a returned soldier to the position he now holds. Dealing with the Speech of His Excellency, I am pleased that the Government intend to bring down a Bill to amend the Public Service Act with a view to establishing the much discussed board. Personally I regret that the Government were unable to see their way clear to grant the service this board as far back as last November. Had that been done, I am satisfied that the unfortunate strike which recently took place would not have occurred. It is impossible for me to conceive why the salaried staff of the Government are not just as much entitled to an independent tribunal as are the wages staff of the Government. Practically the whole of the wages staff enjoy an independent tribunal in the shape of the Arbitration Court, and, in my opinion, it is equally essential that the salaried employees of the Government should have an independent tribunal. However I understand that the Public Service Act will be amended for this purpose, and I trust the service will get something like what it has been asking for. I wish to point out to the Government another section of their employees who are deserving of consideration, namely, the nurses in the Government hospitals. This is a section into whose wages and conditions the Government might well inquire. According to my information, the payment for the first year of the probationary period is £18, for the second year it is £24, for the third year £36, and for the fourth year £72. The consequence is that a considerable number of nurses are leaving this State because the remuneration in other parts is higher. They are being offered as much as six guineas a week to go

South Africa, and large numbers of

trained nurses are leaving the State. This a question which concerns not only the Government of the day but the people of the State generally. Trained nurses are as essential as are trained doctors. As a matter of fact, the work of the doctors would not be so successful if it were not for the good nursing of the trained nurses at their disposal. We should make every effort to retain in the State the services of these highly trained nurses, and one method of retaining them is by paying them a remuneration which will make it worth their while to stay. I am pleased to see another item mentioned in the Governor's Speech—the Shop and Factor Bill—and I hope that on this occasion something more than bare mention of the subject will result. It is essential that this Bill be referred to a select committee. There are so many conflicting interests in regard to the shops especially, and in regard to the amendments necessary that it would be to the advantage of members not conversant with these working conditions to have the Bill referred to a select committee; for preference to a joint select committee of both Houses. If this is done, I am satisfied that the evidence which will be tendered in support of the interests of the shopkeepers and the mass of evidence which will be placed at the disposal of the select committee by the workers, will prove of great benefit to the House when the Bill comes before it. I trust, therefore, that the Government will take the matter into consideration, with a view to having the measure referred to a select committee. Otherwise I feel sure from my seven years' experience of shop assistants that there will be endless disappointments and endless confusion. Touching the same Bill, it is regrettable that the measure was not brought down earlier last session, and gone with, as the condition of many of the factories is deplorable for a young State like Western Australia. During the last six months there have been many disputes, which I have taken some little part, and which have necessitated my obtaining a certain amount of information regarding the wages and conditions for and under which many of the employees, more especially women, are working in our factories to-day. I ask the indulgence of the House while I place before hon. members a few facts which will give some idea of the conditions under which West Australian workers are to-day working, and the result, I hope, will be to facilitate the passage of the Bill when it comes along. During last Christmas the community was faced with a strike of that section of the hotel and restaurant employees known as the waitresses. On going into the condition under which many of the waitresses and kitchen maids work, we found that these employees were allowed only a quarter of an hour for their tea on both Friday and Saturday of every week. Taking into consideration the fact that these girls are working from nine or ten to 12 or 14 hours on Friday and Saturday, it must be agreed that a quarter

of an hour is hardly sufficient for the evening meal. I have taken a few of the tea rooms haphazard, and I will now give hon. members a few facts concerning them. A section of the girls start at 8 a.m. and work till 2 p.m.; start again at 6 p.m. and work till 7 p.m.; then stop work until 9.15 p.m., when they resume until 11.30 p.m. That makes 9½ hours' work in the day, spread over a period of 15½ hours. In order to put in the 9½ hours work, the girls are at the disposal or call of the employer during a period of 15½ hours per day. In another instance we found that the girls started work at 8 a.m. and worked until 11 a.m., started again at 12 and worked until 2, stopped work at 2, and resumed work at 6 o'clock until 11. They worked 9½ hours during a period spread over 14½ hours. On Fridays the girls in all these shops were working 10½ hours spread over 14½ hours. The pantry maids were in a somewhat different position. They started earlier in the morning, at 7 o'clock, and worked till 8 o'clock; then they stopped work until 9, and worked till 1 o'clock when they again stopped work. Thereupon they worked from 2 to 3, and again stopped work, and then worked from 4 to 5, when once more they stopped work until 6 o'clock, from which hour they went on until 11 p.m. It works out at 12 hours' work, spread over 16 hours for the day. That is to say, the girls were at the disposal of the proprietors for 16 hours during the day, in order to get in 12 hours' work.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Why do they stop in those situations?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Simply because if they went to another shop they would probably find themselves in a worse position, as I will presently show. Moreover, there are not enough men to marry all these girls.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They will not take domestic duties, will they?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Domestic duties mean 23 hours out of the 24. It may be said that the hours during which the girls are off are at their disposal. There might be something in that argument if rest rooms were provided, where the girls could spend the hours off duty resting, or perhaps reading. But at practically every shop there is neither a rest room or even a change room for the girls. Consequently the girl has either to go and sit in the ardens during her hours off work or else wander back home. The argument used by the average employer, and probably it is a good one, is that he is unable to provide a rest or change room owing to the whole of the available space being required for his business. Just to illustrate the necessity for the rest room, I may mention that we found that among 208 girls working in tea rooms and cafés, and not residing on the premises, 9 per cent. lived within half a mile of their work, 23 per cent. lived over half a mile but under a mile from their work, 3 per cent. over a mile but within two miles of their work, and 52 per cent. lived over two miles from their work. Hon. members will see the force of the argument that if

these girls are going to be occupied over such a long spread of hours some conveniences should be supplied for them to rest in. As regards the change room, the position in tea rooms and restaurants is that the employer generally insists on the girls wearing a certain uniform, according to the taste of the employer. One, who is perhaps the nearest approach to a socialist, has all his waitresses decked in red. Notwithstanding the fact that the girls have to provide these uniforms, they naturally do not want to go out in the street in a glaring red or blue dress, and consequently they have to change their dresses when they come to work and when they leave. Owing to the want of a change room, we found many girls are compelled to change from uniform into ordinary dress in the kitchen. In no less than three places we found that while the change was going on in the kitchen the male employees, who are frequently Greeks or Swedes, were dodging in and out of the kitchen.

Hon. J. Duffell: Is that an absolute fact?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It is an absolute fact. Another fallacy entertained by many people not conversant with the condition of these employees is that the low rate of pay received by the girls is made up by the amount of good food that they receive when working on the premises. This is a complete fallacy. With the exception of the restaurants where hot meals are provided, in very few cases do the girls get more than one hot meal a day. Many tea rooms supply no hot food other than tea, the beverage. In one shop where no hot meals are served at all there is a hot meal provided at mid day, but this meal consists of one leg of mutton for 20 girls, no vegetables being supplied. Hon. members will recognise that 20 healthy Australian girls would make a pretty big hole in a leg of mutton without vegetables. Another establishment supplies bread and butter for breakfast and bread and butter for tea, and allows 3s. 6d. per day for a hot meal for 18 girls at mid day. I mention these facts because so large a section of the community believe that the girls employed in restaurants, hotels, and tea rooms are doing very well with 36s. a week and meals. On going into the matter, however, one finds that these girls have either to provide their own meals or else live on bread and butter and an eighteenth share of a hot dinner costing a total of 3s. 6d. It is interesting to show exactly what happened after the strike. I wish to mention certain facts in view of the intention of the Government, expressed in the Governor's Speech, to continue the operations of the Prices Regulation Commission. As a result of this strike, which, of course, did not last long, the girls received increases varying from 8s. to 12s. per week. It is frequently stated that increase of wages naturally means increase of prices. Now I want to show hon. members just exactly how the increase of prices and increase of wages operated on this particular occasion. I am strongly of opinion that the instances I am

about to give are typical of the effect of increased wages in raising prices. As I have stated, the increases obtained by the girls were from 8s. to 12s. per week. A temporary agreement was made, and during the negotiations information was obtained as to the number of meals supplied and the number of staff employed at various restaurants. To these data we have subsequently applied the increase in the price of meals made, it was stated, in view of the increase in wages. Right throughout the metropolitan area the master caterers' association decided to increase the price of meals by 3d. Now this is how it worked out in most cases; I have picked only a few, of which I shall not give the names. In one cafe 750 meals were served weekly. An increase of 3d. per meal in that case means £9 7s. 6d. The increase in wages worked out at two waitresses, whose increases were 8s. 6d. each, 17s., one pantry maid 8s., and one kitchen maid 8s., or a total increase in the wages bill of £1 13s. Deducting that £1 13s. from the £9 7s. 6d. it appears that the proprietors made a gain of £7 14s. 6d. per week out of the 3d. increase in the meals. A coffee palace served 2,100 meals weekly, the increase of 3d. on which amounted to £26 5s. The increased wages in that establishment were kitchen maid 12s., two housemaids each at 8s., 16s., two waiters each at 8s. 6d., 17s., and a pantry maid 8s., the total increase in the wages bill being £2 13s. Deducting that amount from the increase of £26 5s. in the price of meals it appears that the coffee palace made a profit of £23 12s. per week by reason of the increased wages. In another dining room, where 1,500 meals were served per week, the increase of 3d. represented £18 15s. per week. The increase in the wages bill represented five waiters at 8s. 6d., being £2 2s. 6d., one pantry maid 8s., and one kitchen man 9s. 6d., or a total of £3. In the case of that dining room, therefore, the increase in wages brought a weekly profit of £15 15s.

Hon. J. Duffell: What about the increased cost of foodstuffs?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I am talking about the increased profit due to the increase in wages. This all happened the same week, so that no question of increases in the prices of foodstuffs generally enters into consideration. Another dining room, serving 1,050 meals per week, has reaped from the same circumstances a weekly profit of £10 12s. I mention these facts just to show there is another aspect to the argument invariably used, that an increase in wages inevitably means an increase in the cost of commodities. From the cases I have quoted it is plain that the employers have been making a considerable profit out of the increased wages which have been given. Dealing with factories in general, another dispute I had occasion to investigate was that of the boxmakers. The conditions in this particular factory are so deplorable, and serious accidents so frequent, that insur-

ance companies have refused to accept a further risk in regard to it. We are trying to find out what the Inspector of Machinery has been doing in the matter, but up to date we have not had much satisfaction. In giving these particulars I desire hon. members to help me to secure better legislation in the directions. I would now like to deal with another class of factory, with which we have lately come into contact. That is a confectionery factory. We found on investigation that the girls working in this particular factory, their average ages being from 15 to 21 years, have been earning very small wages. Out of the 31 girls who were present at meeting I found that 10 were earning less than £1 per week, that another 10 were earning between £1 and 22s. 6d. per week, and three were earning between 22s. 6d. and 24s. per week, that five were earning between 24s. and 30s. per week, and that three were earning between 30s. and 35s. per week. The girls are all doing piece work and some idea of what they are doing may be gathered from the following particulars.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What ages do you say?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I said from 15 to 21. One particular girl, aged 20, with three years' service, is engaged in wrapping lollipops in paper. She gets ½d. per dozen for lollipop sticks, 1d. a pound for toffee, and ½d. a pound for cutting, sorting, and packing. That after three years of practical experience she averages about 22s. per week. Another girl of 18 years of age has 12 months' experience and she is engaged on peppermint, conversation, and common almond paste. This girl gets 2d. per lb. for making up the paste, 1d. for stamping out the peppermint, and 2d. for stamping out and putting on the wrapper for the conversations. She averages from 16s. to 30s. a week, or her section does. The remarkable part about this factory is that the floor is cement. The whole of the staff is on piece work, and on Friday they each have a section of the floor to scrub on their hands and knees. This work takes from one hour to one and a half hours to do in each section, and the girls get nothing for doing it. This is to say, they all help in dirtying the floor and for these magnificent wages have to clean it up in their own time. Another section is the fancy chocolate section, the making up of those boxes which people buy at 10s. 6d. These boxes hold two lbs. of chocolates. The packing is done by girls from 18 to 19 years of age. In order to pack these boxes with two lbs. of chocolates, the girls have to pick the chocolates from eight different heaps. For this work they get ½d. per lb. for assorted chocolates, or 1d. per box on every box they pack. During the visit of the Prince of Wales these girls had an increase in wages because they were packing special boxes, of the covers of which was the Prince of Wales photo. For doing this they got an extra 1d. per box, so that during that particular week they were earning up to 30s., but on the average their earnings are 22s. 6d. If these girls

are called upon to do "straight packing," they get the magnificent return of 3s. per cwt. on the chocolates they handle, and it takes the whole day in which to pack a single cwt. I think I have said enough to induce hon. members, when the measure consolidating the Shops and Factories Acts comes along, to do something towards assisting in the betterment of the conditions appertaining to these particular industries, seeing that they affect the potential mothers of the race of Australia. If our young women are to be sweated in this fashion and if legislation is not provided to safeguard their interests, we shall have only ourselves to blame if the future generations of Australia are not as they should be. The Early Closing and Factories Act in this State is the most obsolete law in Australia. There has been little or no amendment to it since 1902.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Do these girls have to keep themselves on these wages?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Yes, or else their parents have to. In justice to the employers in this confectionery factory, I may say that they do supply milk and sugar and tea for the mid-day meal, but the employees have to supply the rest. Mr. Harris in his maiden speech, upon which I congratulate him, said he considered the Government had lost an unique opportunity in not endeavouring to bring the employers and employees together. Whilst I am inclined to agree with Mr. Harris in that statement, I should like to point out that during the last six months practically 95 per cent. of my time has been devoted to doing something of that sort. I am chairman of, what is known as, the disputes committee of the metropolitan area. During the last six months we have had handed over to our control no fewer than 38 disputes in the metropolitan area. We have negotiated with the employers across the table in all of these cases. I wish to pay a tribute, in passing, to the large section of employers which has shown an earnest desire to negotiate in this way. Out of the 38 disputes there have been but five strikes and 33 agreements arrived at by round-table conferences. I contend that this principle of round-table conferences should be extended and encouraged.

Hon. J. Duffell: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Last session the leader of the House made a statement to the effect that unfortunately many of the employers were not prepared to concede anything except at the point of the bayonet. I am satisfied that had that position not appertained in a few of the cases there would not have been even five strikes and we should have been in the happy position of settling the whole of the 38 disputes. These round-table conferences are of necessity taking the place of the Arbitration Court. I think the secretary of the Employers' Federation will agree with me when I say that the Arbitration Court during the past seven months has been the office of the Employers' Federation. Naturally we ask ourselves why such a large number of organisations are refusing to go

to the Arbitration Court. This is a very serious matter for the whole of the community. Whilst we agree with round-table conferences, the fact remains that the law of the land is in favour of the Arbitration Court. The object of the Arbitration Court is to settle disputes between organised workers and employers. Underlying the operations of the Act is the principle that there shall be one union in one industry in a given locality. Notwithstanding all the efforts made by a large section of the workers and of the employers to bring about round-table conferences, there is unfortunately a particular section which is doing its best to upset the affairs of the others. Conferences of this description can only be carried out by sections of organised workers and organised employers. The employers are just as well, if not better, organised than are the workers themselves. We find that the President of the Arbitration Court gave a decision in regard to the registration of what is known as the National Waterside workers, the effect of which is that they had to work alongside another union. Until that time president after president of the Arbitration Court had refused to agree to the registration of more than one union in one industry in a given locality. Unfortunately at the time the President saw fit to alter the decision, and we all know the results. I do not wish to dwell on that particular phase of the case, however, because the leader of the House has stated in no uncertain terms the result and the cause of that result. I venture to say that eight out of ten people will agree with the leader of the House when he stated that there can be no industrial peace where two organisations are registered in the same locality and in the same industry. Notwithstanding this we find Mr. Harris stating that he thought the Government had missed an unique opportunity in that they did not endeavour to bring together employers and employees. He must have been talking with his tongue in his cheek when he said that. We know that Mr. Harris and some of his friends are doing the very opposite to the doctrine they are preaching. We have seen the latest move by a section of the opposition, as we may term it, to organised labour, that is the system of obtaining, if possible, the registration of two organised sections of workers in the one industry in opposition to those who are already organised in that particular industry. We know what has happened in that particular case. Now we find the President of the Arbitration Court giving a ruling on the goldfields the other day, wherein he makes the following statement:—

This was the view taken by Mr. Justice Northmore in the case of the Fremantle National Waterside Union of Workers, and I propose to follow his judgment in this case. I am not forgetting that the opposing union is about to appear before the local Arbitration Court, but for the reason I have given and because the evidence has satisfied me that the interests of the members of the applicant union would not be carefully safeguarded by the op-

posing union, I have come to the conclusion that the members of the applicant union cannot conveniently belong to the opposing union. I am therefore of opinion that the applicant union should be registered and an order made to the Registrar accordingly.

That in itself sounds all right, but when we know that an organised effort is being made by a section of the community to try on what is termed by members of the I.W.W. "white-anting the labour movement," we can realise the danger of it. If Mr. Harris and his friends wish to bring into vogue this system of white-anting the labour movement, they had better approach some other section of organised labour than this particular one. On the goldfields there exists this unique position, that over 2 000 organised workers are going to the Arbitration Court on the 5th of next month for an award in this particular industry. I ask Mr. Harris, who has taken such an active part in this matter, what position they are going to occupy when the Arbitration Court award comes out. Are they going, like the cuckoo, to sit back and take to themselves all the results of organised labour, or do they propose to go to the Court and get an award for themselves, bringing into existence two awards for the one industry. We can imagine what the effect is going to be. Not only has this happened on the goldfields, but we have the unique spectacle of the Secretary of the Master Caterers' Union at Mt. Barker endeavouring to organise the rural workers, who are already members of the A.W.U. I am very much afraid that the rural workers down in the Mount Barker district must be a sort of Rip Van Winkle community if they do not realise the meaning of the secretary of the Master Caterers' Union trying to organise a section of the employees union. I want to issue this warning, but if that section of the community are going to lay themselves out to bring about a strife which we hope to settle for good and all, I am much afraid the efforts being made on behalf of organised labour, to bring about a better understanding by means of round-table conferences, will be futile. I notice it is intimated in the Governor's Speech that it is intended to re-enact the Prices Regulation Act. I trust that the Government will see their way clear to first of all get the ideas of the members of the Prices Regulation Commission before they re-enact the legislation, because I realise, and they too will realise, that after the experience we have had, the members of the Commission will be in the position and are in the position to give the Government reasons for amending the existing Act. The desire should be to make the Act a great deal easier to operate than is the case at the present time. Many people seem to think that the Prices Regulation Commission are not doing all they should do. I agree with that, but I know that the reason is that the Act will not permit them to do that which they would like to do. There is just one other subject I wish to deal with before I resume my seat, and it is a matter

that will probably interest hon. members here. My desire is to test the feeling of hon. members in connection with the question of the abolition of this Chamber, and it is my intention, before I close, to move the addition of certain words to the Address-in-reply to the effect that the time has arrived when the government of the State can best be carried on by a single Chamber elected on an adult franchise. I do not propose to occupy very much time in discussing this subject, because I feel convinced it will commend itself to hon. members. Analysing the figures in connection with the Legislative Assembly elections of 1917, I find that in the contested districts there were 137,755 names on the roll, and the votes recorded in connection with the elections totalled 62 per cent. In connection with the Legislative Council elections of 1918 in the contested provinces, there were 48,310 electors on the roll, and the votes recorded totalled 38 per cent., or just about half the percentage of the votes recorded for the Legislative Assembly. The figures so far as the last Legislative Council elections are concerned, are of such recent date that it is unnecessary for me to refer to them. Probably, however, one of the most regrettable features was the Metropolitan-Suburban Province election. There we find 13,322 names on the roll for that province while only 2,594 electors exercised the franchise, leaving 10,725 electors holding property qualifications who were not even sufficiently interested to record their votes.

Hon. J. Duffell: Or attend meetings.

Hon. J. Cornell: I can understand that.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It will be evident to hon. members that there is not much democracy in legislation which provides for 38 per cent. of voters reviewing the work of those who represent 138,000 people. If that is what we are going to term democracy, I am afraid we shall have to get a new definition of the word. One of the growing needs, in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of other hon. members as well—I am sorry Mr. Holmes is not here—is that there should be economy so far as Government departments are concerned, and I am going to appeal to hon. members to say, not on the question of the abolition of this or any other House, but on the score of economy, that government in Australia is costing altogether too much. It is ridiculous to argue that for five million people it is necessary there should be seven Parliaments, seven Governors, and 678 members of Parliament. The Legislative Council of Western Australia is costing no less a sum than £15,000 per annum. That expenditure, I venture to say, is not warranted in view of the financial straits the country is in at the present time. Further, two Houses of Parliament are not necessary.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittencoom. Do away with the other one.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I shall leave that to hon. members. I am not concerned which House remains so long as the House that is left is elected on an adult franchise.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: This was the democratic House last session.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: That was because I appeared on the scene; I gave it a democratic tone. In view of the fact that the Commonwealth Government have assumed so many functions of the State Government, it will be agreed that whatever need there was for two Houses of Parliament in each State prior to Federation, that need no longer exists. To-day we are faced with the fact that hospitals and schools are being starved; they are in need of financial assistance which it is not possible to give them. I am a member of the board of management of the Perth Public Hospital and I speak with authority. I also spent a considerable amount of time in the country during the past twelve months and my experience is that the schools built to accommodate fifteen or twenty children, seven or eight years ago, are to-day asked to provide for as many as fifty. Although I do not represent a farming province, I desire to say a word on behalf of the farming section of the community, and it is that the schools are built too far away from one another, and they are altogether too small for the rapidly increasing population in the various districts. Take the Lake Grace district. The children there have to travel many miles to school. An instance that came under my notice was that of a girl of seven years of age driving her younger sisters a great distance to school while bush fires were raging around. It is useless to ask people in the towns to go on the land if we are not prepared to give them better facilities for the education of their children. The abolition of this Chamber will release a sum of £15,000 which can be made available for those who are settling on the land. The time has also arrived when traditional ideas should be lost sight of. Surely after the war we have gone through and the upheaval that has taken place we are not going to perpetuate traditional institutions, and I say with all due deference to this Chamber that it is one which, in my opinion, is no longer necessary. In my opinion it has been kept going merely because it is a traditional institution. Undoubtedly there is now a growing demand for the abolition of the Legislative Council, not only of this State, but of every State in the Commonwealth.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is not so in Queensland.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I am dealing now with Western Australia, and besides we do not want to see a repetition of what happened in Queensland or even in New South Wales. As there is such a demand for the abolition of one House we should not wait for that demand to become more accentuated. I want to see hon. members of the Legislative Council in this State set an example to the Governments of the day in the other States of the Commonwealth, and if they desire to do that they will support the amendment which I propose to submit. If that amendment is carried it will be an intimation to the Government and also to the people of

Australia that we, at any rate, are prepared to fall into line with the growing demand of democracy as we find it to-day. Without any further delay I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the Address-in-reply:—“And we respectfully suggest to Your Excellency that the time has now arrived when the government of this State can best be carried on by a single Chamber elected on an adult franchise.”

Hon. T. MOORE (Central) [5.23]: I have listened with interest to what Mr. Panton has said in connection with the amendment he has just moved. I intend to support it with a few remarks which I think are necessary. Having lately been returned by the electors of a portion of this State I wish to point out that on every occasion I was before those people during the progress of the contest I made it clear to them that I stood for the abolition of the Legislative Council. I have at all times pointed out that in my opinion this House was an unnecessary Chamber, and that, as a matter of fact, it existed to block legislation which would be of use to the masses.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Give us some instances.

Hon. T. MOORE: I will give instances as I go along. As Mr. Panton has stated, the time has arrived when, as the outcome of the spread of education, the people desire to have a say in the affairs of the country in which they happen to have been during the greater portion, if not the whole, of their lives. There are many people who have resided here all their lives and who have reared families and who have never had the right to vote for a candidate for the Legislative Council. That very fact must appeal to members of this Chamber. Surely the men who have said so much in recent times about democracy will not be deaf on this occasion! What a lot we have heard in recent years about democracy! What a lot we have heard about making the world safe for democracy and about the men whom we sent away to make democracy safe! Who were those men? Many of those who went away were born of mothers and fathers who had never a vote. In the timber country where I lived for many years there were fine old pioneers who year after year were struggling to rear families. Some of their children have blossomed forth as educated men, men who have made names for themselves. Many of these men went away to fight for democracy. I was sorry to notice, when this measure came before the House a few months ago, the spectacle of members who had been boasting about the wonderful thing called democracy, refusing when the vote was taken on this subject, to give the men who went away to fight for democracy, a vote for this House. I do not believe in class legislation at all. It would have been wrong to have given the soldiers a vote if the mothers and fathers who bore them were not also allowed to vote for this Chamber. I was astonished to find

that, even after the lesson we have just learned, the lesson of the value of man power—for after all it was man power that counted in the war—I was astonished to find that men who prate so much about democracy should by a vote cast in this Chamber deprive the men who went away to fight, and their mothers and fathers, of a vote for this Chamber. I am surprised that such members could say they believe in democracy when they sit here and vote to kill it on every possible occasion. When Mr. Panton was speaking, Mr. Cornell interjected to the effect that he would be quite safe in moving for the abolition of this House. I understand that Mr. Cornell came into this House pledged to support a measure of this kind, and I feel sure he will do his utmost not only to honour that pledge, but to persuade other members who do not think as we do, to support it also. This House has in the past been the means of blocking legislation which would have been of advantage to the great masses of the people, and this House when dealing with different Governments, has adopted different attitudes. I wish to refer to the time when a Labour Government were in office in this country. As a matter of fact there never was a Labour Government in power in this State because the power always lies with this Chamber. We are often told that there was a Labour Government in power, but we know very well that this Chamber, having the right to say what legislation shall go on the statute-book, leaves the Government without power, and we have never had a majority in this Chamber. On every possible occasion, when useful legislation was sent along to this Chamber, it was turned down. In connection with the Income Tax Bill sent to this Chamber during 1914-15, there was an interesting debate. One hon. member who now holds a very important position in this House—I refer to the President—stated on that occasion in the course of a speech in opposition to the Bill—

There are, and the Government in the bottom of their hearts know it, excrescences on the commercial life in the State which the Government should make an endeavour to lop off or amputate. I refer to the State enterprises.

On the ground that he believed these enterprises were a waste of money, he refused to vote for the measure of taxation. As a matter of fact, that taxation proposal was thrown out by this Chamber. Since then when other taxation proposals of a similar nature have come before this Chamber, they have been altered in a respect which does not do credit to this Chamber. They have been altered to reduce the amount of exemption on which taxation shall be paid, from £200 to £100, and passed subsequently when another Government was in office. It is rather a disgrace to think that to-day we tax a person who is earning over £100 from personal exertion. I can give a case in point. A man 75 years of age who refuses to take the old age pension,

makes a little over £100 a year by personal exertion and he is taxed on his income. Yet members know how difficult it is to-day to keep body and soul together on £100 per year. Let members consider what a lot of young girls are earning just £2 a week. We know what responsibilities they carry. Many of these girls have just as many responsibilities as men; they have in many cases widowed mothers and little sisters to support, and because they make a little over £100 per year, we call upon them to pay income tax. When a just measure of taxation was proposed by a Labour Government we know what attitude was adopted by this Chamber. On that account, I say, this House stands here to block legislation. When this Council refused to pass money Bills, it refused to allow the Government elected by the whole of the people to carry on the affairs of the State in the manner they thought fit, that Government having just been returned by a fine majority, this House proceeded from the outset to block its legislation. The people had given the Labour Government a mandaté to do certain things and this House blocked them, and I say that on that account if on no other, this House should be abolished. There are many men and women in this country who have no right to a vote for this House. There are very many of these people who are sufficiently intelligent to exercise the vote. The only thing lacking is that they do not possess bricks and mortar. Take our goldmining centres. Look at the number of men who put in years and years of their lives there. They get together a little habitation sufficiently good to live in and to enable them to battle along. After years of pioneering work, many of them have not been able to get together very much, and many of them finish up at the Woorloo Sanatorium. These are the men who have opened up this country and have made this country, but we give them no voice in the election of members for this House. I have come into this House, and to me it seems to be a kind of a dead end. I feel that I have no right to be here. Mr. Panton said I had been repatriated. It is a rather remarkable kind of repatriation. I am in earnest in my desire to see the whole of the men and women of this State exercising a vote for this House, for those without the right to vote have as much intelligence as those who possess it. Some members of this House have more than one vote. At my election at least one member exercised a vote in my electorate and I know he had votes for many other electorates, and I suppose he exercised them also. I do not think he voted for me. I believe that no one has a right to more than one vote. To give him more than one vote is absurd. While we give one man eight or ten votes, we refuse a vote to other people who have just as much right to the privilege. I marvel at this, especially after the times of trial through which we have recently passed, and wonder how long

the people of this State will tolerate this Chamber. Members are playing with a fire. If they are going to keep this Chamber to buttress and retard legislation which is desired by the whole of the people, I wonder how long the people will tolerate it and how long it will be before they rise up in force and abolish this House.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: You have not told us of the particular legislation which has been blocked.

Hon. T. MOORE: I have told the hon. member one phase of it—when you interfered with money Bills and when the Government in office, by the mandate of the people asked this House to pass certain legislation and this House refused to pass it. It is time the system was altered.

The PRESIDENT: It is usual for hon. members to address the Chair.

Hon. T. MOORE: I apologise. It is rather remarkable to find how little interest is taken in this Chamber by the members of the House. Nothing further need be said beyond calling attention to the fact that there are so few members present. How many of those who are present can say they are here honestly believing that they are going to do any good?

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is getting pessimistic now.

Hon. T. MOORE: Not at all. We shall never do much good while we permit this state of affairs to exist. After all it is men who matter, not other things. I hope members will take that view. We are here on this planet for a certain time and I suppose we all do the best we can. If, unfortunately, some of us are not able to get sufficient money to buy a home which would entitle us to a vote for this Chamber, surely we should not be deprived of that privilege.

Hon. J. Duffell: If you rent a house for 7s. 6d. a week, you get a vote for this Chamber.

Hon. T. MOORE: Surely those people who are good enough to go out back and do all the hard pioneering work are good enough to exercise the franchise for this Council. Members should remember how much has been said in the past few years regarding democracy. What was it that mattered in the last few years? Was it bricks and mortar that saved the people during the recent war or the men we sent away? When members again record their votes on this question, I ask them to give to men the right to vote for the country they were good enough to fight for and not only to them but to the fathers and mothers who bore them.

On motion by Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.54 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th August, 1920.

	Page
Visit of the Prince of Wales	21
Notices of Questions	21
Questions: Wheat (1) Quota for export, (2) Bulk handling at Geraldton	22
Fremantle hospital, fees for certificates	22
Old Age Pensioners, rations	22
Loan, offer from London	22
State Steamers (1) "Kangaroo," (2) "Bambra," (3) New vessels, (4) Mr. Bennett's qualifications, (5) "Penguin"	22
Boulder Miners' Strike (1) Payment to special constables, (2) Cost of prosecution	23
Railway Extension, Narembeen to Bruce Rock	24
Railway Matters (1) Widgiemoorla Station, (2) Return tickets, (3) Motor Ambulances, (4) Returned Soldier Employees' holidays	24
Nationalist Workers	24
Immigration (1) Arrangement with Commonwealth Government, (2) Ex-Imperial Soldiers	24
Vermoin Act (1) Wire netting supplies, (2) Wire netting, cost	25
Game Act (1) Kangaroo skins, (2) Opossum trapping	25
Agricultural College site	25
Machinery purchase terms	26
Redistribution of seats	26
Alunite Deposits	26
Ive's Find (1) Crushing facilities, (2) Medical facilities	26
Tributing on Mines	26
Sitting Days and Hours	26
Government Business, precedence	26
Committees for the Session	26
Address-in-Reply, second day	31

Mr. SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

VISIT OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Mr. SPEAKER: In accordance with the resolution adopted by the House last Thursday, I attended His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address to His Majesty the King, adopted by this Assembly. His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

The Governor has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of an Address passed by the Hon. the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia on the 5th August, 1920, and to intimate that it will afford him pleasure to transmit this Address by telegram to the Right Hon. The Secretary of State for the Colonies for presentation to His Majesty the King-Government House, Perth.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.43]: With your permission, Sir I should like to make a suggestion to hon. members in regard to the asking of questions. I suggest that it would be of great convenience to Ministers and heads of departments generally if hon. members, in giving notice of questions during the week, would ask for replies on the following Tuesday. No