

planation to be given on a Supply Bill. All the details will be furnished on the Estimates, which will be brought forward much earlier than they were last year.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Is not this Bill on the basis of that of last year?

The **MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES**: Yes.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Then, this is no economy.

The **MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES**: The amount is below that of last year. There is nothing further for me to say. I hope the second reading will be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [5.54]: I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, the 12th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 30th July, 1930.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

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

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A message from the Commissioner appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour the Chief Justice (Sir Robert Furse McMillan) having been commissioned by the Governor appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members; also writs for by-elections for Irwin-Moore, Maylands, Mt. Marshall, Nedlands, Northam, West Perth, and York.

With the following exceptions, all the members elected were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute and signed the roll: Miss Holman (Forrest), Mr. Lamond (Pilbara), Mr. H. W. Mann (Perth), Mr. Teesdale (Roebourne).

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.34], addressing the Clerk, said: The House being duly constituted, I now move—

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

The **MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. C. G. Latham—York): I second the motion.

Mr. STUBBS (Wagin): I submit myself to the will of the House.

There being no other nominations,

The **SPEAKER-ELECT**, having been conducted to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the motion, said: It is indeed extremely difficult to express in adequate language the thanks and gratitude that is in my heart for the great honour which my fellow members have conferred upon me this day. Truly I realise the responsibility attached to the office of Speaker. My predecessors have filled the Chair so ably and

so upheld the dignity of the position and all it stands for that my task in carrying on is not an easy one. Yet I shall endeavour, with the goodwill and kind co-operation of hon. members to discharge the duties in a manner that will give satisfaction to the House. Again, I thank you.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.40]: I desire to congratulate you, Sir, upon your elevation to the very important post you now occupy. During my 20 years of Parliamentary life I have sat under many Speakers. Amongst these was the member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy), who is now occupying a seat opposite, Hon. G. Taylor, who failed to be returned to Parliament at the last elections, and the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), who has just vacated the Chair. I think these gentlemen have set an example that might well be followed by subsequent Speakers. All have ruled this House fairly and capably. It can be said of this Parliament that over the many years during which they have ruled the House, we have been a very peaceful and happy people. I wish you, Mr. Speaker, a long and comfortable term of office.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [12.42]: I join with the Premier in offering my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, upon your appointment to the very honourable office you now hold. I trust your term will be agreeable and pleasant. For many years past we have been able to conduct the business of the House very harmoniously, so much so that the intervention of the Speaker has seldom been called for. I think I can speak for the older members of the House when I express the hope that this condition of things will continue. If the many new members who have entered Parliament do not prove to be too turbulent, your term of office should be a pleasant one. I congratulate you upon your appointment.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER ELECT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.43]: I desire to announce that His Excellency the Governor will now be pleased to receive the Speaker and myself.

Sitting suspended from 12.44 to 12.54 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to report that I have submitted myself to His Excellency the Governor and that His Excellency has been pleased to express his satisfaction at the choice of the Assembly in the following terms:—

The Hon. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly,—It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner, and I have the honour to affirm the constitutional rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Legislative Assembly of this State (Signed) William Robert Campion, Governor.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. H. W. Mann (Perth) took and subscribed the oath, and signed the roll.

Sitting suspended from 12.57 to 2.55 p.m.

COMMISSION.

Mr. Speaker announced that His Excellency the Governor had been pleased to give him a commission to swear in members.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech (*vide* Council report *ante*) returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber. Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.25]: 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 intituled an Act to continue the operations of the Industries Assistance Act, 1915.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: In company with hon. members of this Chamber I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the speech His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For greater accuracy I have had printed copies of the Speech distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. PARKER (North-East Fremantle) [3.28]: I move—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—'May it please Your Excellency: We the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.'

May I be permitted to express pleasure that His Excellency the Governor is to continue in his office as representative of His Majesty for a further period. May I also congratulate you, Sir, on the dignity the House has conferred upon you. I, as a new member, will have to crave your indulgence. I should also like to precede my remarks by congratulating the Premier on his again taking over the reins of office, and congratulating Ministers on having accepted responsibility at such a time as this, when no doubt their duties will be very onerous. We are passing through very serious times. No good purpose can be served by trying to make out who is responsible for what has happened in the past, and who is the cause of the present dreadful times through which we are passing. On the contrary, it behoves us all as individuals to do our utmost to assist in bringing the State through the present financial crisis. We must face the facts as they exist. Loan moneys have been curtailed almost to vanishing point. Private individuals are unable to borrow money to extend or improve their holdings and develop the country. The result is that there is very much unemployment, and many industrious people are out of work. I hope that all party differences will be put aside with a view to assisting the Government and Parliament to bring about a better con-

dition of affairs for the welfare of the country and the individuals in it. Our industries are very seriously handicapped because loan moneys have stopped, and apart from the excessive taxation that has been imposed upon industries, there have been the further handicaps of tariffs, bounties and embargoes. In this State we have but a small community, and our factories cannot carry on economically because they have not the local market for their industries. They cannot be conducted as economically as is done in the larger centres of population. It is well known that when a factory is started here, goods are dumped into the State from other parts of the Commonwealth, with the result that we cannot find employment for our people as we should be able to do. Those industries that require nursing, as they are being nursed, are not really worth the while of Australia at large. We have, for example, the sugar embargo, which directly and indirectly is costing us a large amount of money. We have an abundant supply of fruit in this State, which cannot be turned into preserves and jams because of what we have to pay for sugar. The fruit is, therefore, going to waste when it should be put to useful account. The only State that really derives any benefit from the bounty is Queensland. Although this Parliament and this Government cannot rectify the position, we can do our utmost to educate the people to understand what is really happening. The Government should bring pressure to bear, wherever it is possible to do so, to have the sugar embargo removed. Bounties should not be granted, but if they must be granted, and undoubtedly they have been granted, they should be given all round. The effect of the bounty policy upon Western Australia is that the primary producer has to pay. We have reached the stage now when our wheat and our wool will not provide sufficient to pay the bounties and the tariff charges. Every commodity required by the primary producer is taxed almost to breaking point, and those industries are not now paying their way. The markets of the world have fallen and we cannot stand the strain. Undoubtedly the bounties were given when prices in the world's markets were high. No effort seems to have been made since to reduce the bounties with the alteration in conditions. Bounties no doubt are very good when it comes to a question of nursing an industry in order

to put it on its feet, but if industries have to be nursed continuously, whether they would be worth having or not, we cannot afford to do it. Western Australia enjoys a large export trade, but we find that our exports are being used to pay for imports into the other States. Western Australia therefore is suffering. If only we could do away with the tariff charges and the bounties, the State would soon be in a flourishing condition. We would not then require any gold bonus, nor the organisation for the marketing of our dried fruits. All the people would live comfortably, and we would be able to develop our gold mines. It is unfortunate that Queensland should have opposed the gold bonus, when we are supplying so much to that State to maintain its sugar industry.

Mr. Sampson: We want secession.

Mr. Munsie: Who wants it?

Mr. PARKER: We have a great deal of unemployment in our midst. The Government are deserving of congratulation upon the efforts they have made to relieve immediate distress.

Mr. Panton: Where?

Mr. McCallum: "Work for all." A thousand men are now in Blackboy Camp in want of work.

Mr. PARKER: That has been largely brought about by the fact that in the last few years we have been living in a fool's paradise. We have spent more money than we have earned. We have given employment when money was available to pay for it, but now that loan moneys are cut down and our revenue is reduced, we have to return to a working basis and get on our feet again. We have to regulate and reorganise matters so that everyone can get employment. No doubt the Government have an unpleasant task before them. I believe that every member of the House will agree that we must face the facts, get down to work and reorganise. It may be that we are going to have retrenchment, and for a short while the general hardships will be greater. Nevertheless, I feel sure if we set about things in a business-like manner we can do a great deal in the way of reorganising the position, and ultimately find employment for all. I could suggest many things to the Government, some of which, however, may not be feasible until the money is available. One matter seems to be extremely urgent. It has been urgent for many years, and is now more urgent than ever. I refer to the disgraceful state of the

bridge across the river between North Fremantle and Fremantle. This bridge is wholly in the electorate I represent, and I regret to have to say that I am ashamed of it. The only value attached to the timber is that it is old and seasoned.

Mr. Sleeman: We can easily get it knocked over.

Mr. PARKER: Another big storm or two would soon do that, and we should lose the value of the timber for furniture, because it would be washed out to sea. The bridge is old and creaky and dangerous to users. I trust the Government will decide immediately where the new bridge is to be placed and have it built with the first moneys available. The work will absorb a large number of men. It is most unpleasant for Western Australians to have to bring visitors, who come to the State for the first time, across such a rickety and dangerous structure. I trust something will be done with respect to it at the earliest possible moment. I also suggest that it is the duty of the Government to reorganise the railway system. I am speaking more of the suburban part of the system. Undoubtedly this is not popular. No desire seems to be displayed to encourage people to travel on that system. Every little pin-prick that can be devised seems to be put into practice. If a man puts his feet upon one of the seats, it costs him 10s. besides having to spend a day in the police court.

Mr. Panton: The seats are made to be sat upon.

Mr. PARKER: I could mention quite a number of pin-pricks, all of which are forcing the people to travel by char-a-banes and taxis.

Mr. Corboy: Do the char-a-banc owners let you put your feet on the seats?

Mr. PARKER: Char-a-banes and taxis should be allowed to run, and people should be allowed to travel on whichever they like. It is a short-sighted policy for any Government to maintain roads running parallel to the railways and yet fail to encourage people to use the railways. Fares should be reduced. The trains have to be run, and they might as well be run full as empty. I trust the Government will continue to run their trains, and run a frequent and useful service.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The service has been cut down on the fields.

Mr. PARKER: If the people were encouraged to travel by the railways there would be less necessity for the maintenance

of the roads between Perth and Fremantle. Many of the taxis and char-a-banes would be diverted so that they would be taking people to the railway stations instead of bringing them into the city. I suggest to the Minister for Railways that ground might be made available for suburban residents, so that owners might park their motor cars there. The owners could then leave their cars at the station and travel by train. This would bring more revenue to the railways, and relieve the congestion in the city consequent upon the present shortage of parking space. It is a disgrace to see our trains so empty and to find so little done to popularise them, whereas the road services are well patronised. Something must be wrong. We have to pay interest on the railways, and we might as well get people to travel by them if we can. I should like to see appointed a Minister for transport. That office might be combined with the office of Minister for Railways, and the occupant of the two offices could control the roads as well as the railways. When a country railway is required, he could decide whether it would be better to build a road or a railway for the time being. In the past it has been customary to build high roads parallel to and alongside of a railway line. This high road competes with the railway, whereas it should have been established some distance away and used for the opening up of new country. That is a matter that could be dealt with by the one Minister instead of passing through different departments. It could also be handled more expeditiously in the way I suggest. In the Speech the Government have shown that the proposed legislation is not by any means to be of a window-dressing nature. It is a sincere effort to bring the administration of justice up to date and make for essential amendments to the statute-book. His Excellency's Speech also shows that ample time will be allowed for the discussion of the financial position. I trust, however, that opportunity will also be afforded for considering the schedule, if nothing else, of the Workers' Compensation Act. There is not the slightest doubt that the schedule is causing a heavy drain on industry. A large amount of money is being paid to the insurance companies because, in my opinion, the schedule has not worked justly. If the schedule were brought up to date so as to adjust the evils it was originally introduced

to remedy, I feel sure that premiums would be lessened and that there would be more money available for industry.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [3.46]: I formally second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

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

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,730,000.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER

(Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.48] I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Question put and passed.

Chairman of Committees, Election.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.49]: It being necessary at this stage to appoint a Chairman of Committees. I move—

That the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

In Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Richardson in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.51]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1931, a sum not exceeding £1,730,000.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted

Committee of Ways and Means.

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Richardson in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.52]: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1931, a sum not exceeding £550,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £50,000 from the General Loan Fund, £30,000 from the Government Property Sales Fund, and £300,000 from the Public Accounts for the purposes of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

It is the usual practice to introduce at the beginning of the session a Supply Bill covering two months. The amount of loan funds available being less, there is a reduction in the amount asked for from that source. Otherwise the Government are merely following the ordinary custom in asking for supply when the House meets.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [3.54]: I have no objection to offer to the granting of supply. Naturally the Government must have money to carry on, and the supply granted by the last Parliament will be exhausted to-morrow, at the end of the month. There is, however, one matter which I would like the Premier to explain. During the past 24 hours we have learned that the hon. gentleman finds himself unable to attend the special meeting of the Loan Council at Canberra next week. I am quite sure that every member of this Chamber will sympathise with the Premier as regards the cause which prevents him from attending the meeting in question, and all will wish for Lady Mitchell's speedy restoration to health. From the Press we learn that the Government, or the Premier, has appointed Sir Hal Colebatch to represent this State at that meeting of the Loan Council, as of course the gentleman in question is quite competent to do. The agreement contains a provision whereby the Government can appoint any person they choose to represent them. However, I consider it highly desirable that, the Premier himself not being able to attend, one of his Ministers should go to that meeting of the Loan Council. I venture to say that many people do not realise the seriousness of the financial situation which now confronts Australia. Perhaps only Ministers and those who have been privileged to attend

Premiers' Conferences or meetings of the Loan Council during recent years, are fully seized of the seriousness of the position. When the Premier received the invitation to attend the meeting of the Loan Council, he consulted me regarding the adjournment of the House over next week. In view of the need for the representation of the State at that meeting I offered no objection whatever to the proposed adjournment. I should like to see Western Australia represented at the meeting by a Minister now that the Premier finds himself precluded from attending. It is necessary that the representative should leave for Canberra to-morrow evening, and even at this eleventh hour I suggest that the Premier reconsider his decision and see whether it is not possible to have a member of the Ministry representing Western Australia at the meeting of the Loan Council.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.57]: As the Leader of the Opposition has said, it is competent for the State to be represented at the meeting of the Loan Council by anyone whom it may appoint. In any case the Under Treasurer will be present. Sir Hal Colebatch has not only had experience as a Minister here, but also rendered distinguished services to this State for several years in London. At the Loan Council he will meet the representative of the Bank of England; and because of his knowledge and experience, Sir Hal, who is also a representative of this State in the Federal Parliament, will be able to represent Western Australia fully and well at the Loan Council. I realise the difficulties that confront us because of the extraordinary position obtaining in Australia, and I realise too all that it means to attend a meeting of the Loan Council at this juncture. There never was a more difficult time ahead of Australia. The opportunity is afforded us of meeting the representative of the Bank of England, and advantage will be taken of it. I may mention that I have had some opportunity of discussing matters with Sir Otto Niemeyer as he passed through Fremantle. I regret very much that personally I am not able to attend the meeting of the Loan Council.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Is this a one-man Government?

THE PREMIER: No; not like the one the hon. member was in.

Mr. Corboy: It is curious that you have his late Leader with you.

The PREMIER: We have, I think, provided satisfactorily for the representation of the State at the Loan Council. For anyone going to Canberra from Western Australia, it would mean rushing over there, spending six or seven hours in Canberra, and then rushing back. The Under Treasurer, as I have said, will attend the meeting; and I was at Canberra a few weeks ago. Ministers are very busy indeed, especially the Minister for Lands, who is getting the unemployed placed on the land; and this is a most inconvenient time for any member of the Government to go away. It was felt by Ministers that the work could be done thoroughly well for us by Sir Hal Colebatch. At any rate, it has been decided that that gentleman be asked to represent Western Australia; and I believe that the people of this country, and this House also, will be perfectly satisfied with the work that he will do.

MR. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [3.59]: I do not consider the Premier's explanation at all satisfactory. It is totally contrary to custom and practice that this State should be represented, and the country's business done, at a meeting of the Loan Council by a man who is not a member of this Parliament. That such a man should deal with confidential information relating to the finances of the State, and that he should in fact handle State finances, is surely a departure which this Chamber will not tolerate. Are we to understand that this Government have but one Minister capable of handling the finances? Are we to take it from the Premier that he cannot trust one of his Ministers to go over and sit at this conference? Is this an admission on his part that he is the only man in the Cabinet with the capacity and knowledge to sit at this conference? We were all interested to see how this coalition Government were going to work; and this is the first evidence of it. Apparently the Premier will not trust his lieutenant out of his sight. Last time the Premier went East to attend the Loan Council he saw to it that his lieutenant was out of the State. He met him over there, and they attended the Council together. But we learnt on Monday last that this coming conference was of so much importance to Western Australia that Parliament was to be asked to adjourn, that our business was to be hung up for a week to allow the Premier to attend the conference. We all agreed to that, and the Leader of the Opposition acquiesced in

the Premier's request that that should be done. But now, suddenly, it seems that the conference is of so little importance as not to warrant the sending of a Minister, and someone outside of this Parliament is to deal with this confidential matter of finance which is so vital to this State. The rank and file members of this House will not be taken into the confidence of members of the Loan Council. We are not to know anything of their deliberations, but an outsider is to know everything. No member of this House will have the information, other than at second-hand.

The Premier: Nonsense!

Mr. McCALLUM: Why is there not another Minister to go? Are we to take it that the Premier will not trust the Leader of the Country Party to represent the State at the conference?

The Premier: Certainly not!

Mr. McCALLUM: Is it that the Premier wants to keep his eye on him, and that he will not allow him out of his sight so early in the history of the coalition Government?

The Premier: Don't be impertinent.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier took the Leader of the Country Party with him on the first occasion.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. McCALLUM: No, he sent you ahead, so that he could get you out of his road. It is not only a reflection on this Parliament, but a decided reflection on every other member of the Government that the Premier will trust none of his colleagues with this mission. He says that Colebatch has the necessary ability and knowledge, but that none of the Ministers have it.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. McCALLUM: Your speech was tantamount to the admission that you have not a Minister capable of doing what Colebatch can do. I could argue a great deal as to the advisability of that particular gentleman being asked to represent this State, but I do not want to do that. However, I do say it is most desirable and of the greatest importance that a member of the Government should be at this forthcoming conference. Will the Premier tell us why he has altered his mind so quickly? In Monday's "West Australian" he announced that this conference was of so much importance that he himself should be there; and we all agreed to hang up the business of Parliament for ten days to permit of his being present. We know the unfortunate reason why the Pre-

mier himself now cannot go; but surely he should be sending one of his colleagues. There is at least one Minister who always has his bag packed ready to catch the next train. If this is to be glossed over; if this Parliament is to let go unchallenged a decision so vital regarding the question of finance, which the Constitution empowers this Parliament to deal with and which the people have sent us here to control—if somebody outside this Parliament is to be dealing with State finances, what a pitiful pass for this Government to have come to so early in their history! Because the leader of this two-party coalition cannot go, he cannot trust one of his Ministers to go, or alternatively he has no Minister of sufficient ability to deal with the occasion. It is a pitiful display of weakness on the part of the Leader of the Ministry to say that he has to hand the financial business of this country, the representation of his Cabinet, over to somebody who has not been elected to this Parliament at all. That outsider is to be our spokesman at a conference which, I believe, is of vital importance to the State. I voice my protest against this innovation. It is decidedly the first time it has ever happened. Of course, at merely formal meetings of the Loan Council, Treasury officials alone have gone over to attend; but during the six years we were in office, whenever it was impossible for the Treasurer to attend important meetings of the Loan Council, other Cabinet Ministers went in his stead.

Mr. Willcock: And this is likely to be the most important meeting in the history of the Loan Council.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, for there will be present the representative of the Bank of England to meet the financial heads of the States. We are advised that it will be the most important meeting of the Loan Council in the history of that body, and now our Parliament is not to be represented by any of its members. What kind of a position will the Parliaments of the Eastern States and of the Commonwealth think we are in? What kind of a Parliament and Government will they think we have when we cannot be represented at such an important meeting as that? The Premier has nothing to complain of in the attitude of this side; because as soon as he mentioned it to the Leader of the Opposition he received that gentleman's acquiescence in the proposed adjournment of Parliament; but now, when he cannot go himself, the Premier says the Government

are not to be represented by any Minister. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in saying that even at this late hour there is any amount of time for a Minister to get away. This Parliament is entitled to have information as to the doings of the Loan Council from a man who has sat there, listened to and taken part in the discussion. We want such a man here amongst us, so that we can have the benefit of the information he will have gained. Given that advantage, we would be able to frame our decisions in the light of the information brought to us. But we are to be denied that. Because of this, the Premier is doing an injustice, not only to the Parliament of the State but to Western Australia as a whole. It is a decided insult to every member of the Ministry, and a distinct reflection upon them all. The Premier told them in the speech he made just now that he does not consider any one of them the equal of Colebatch.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. McCALLUM: Of course you did. Your speech cannot be interpreted in any other way. You have told them to their faces you do not consider you have a Minister the equal of Colebatch—either that, or you will not trust them.

The Premier: You are a mischief-maker.

Mr. McCALLUM: There is no other excuse, no reason why a Minister could not catch to-morrow night's train. It is an obligation the Premier owes to the House that we shall have sitting with us someone with first-hand knowledge of what happens at the Loan Council meeting. Then, when a question arises in the course of debate, we shall be able to get the necessary information from that member. I urge the Premier to review his decision and send to the Loan Council a member of the Government.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [4.10]: I hope the Premier will reconsider this matter. While I recognise that Ministers themselves should be the best judges as to whether they are being properly treated, members of the House are justified in appealing to Ministers to see that their rights and privileges are safeguarded. No minister has any justification for sacrificing privileges that are his right to take part in deliberations upon matters of the highest importance to the State. Although the matters to be discussed at the

Loan Council may not come within the category of a particular Minister's responsibilities, surely it will be admitted that when the responsible Minister cannot attend such a conference, one of the other members of the Cabinet can accept the responsibility and carry out his duty to the State. The Premier must recognise that this particular meeting of the Loan Council will be the most important that has ever been held in the history of Australia. The special representative of the Bank of England is at present in Australia for the purpose of discussing with Commonwealth and State Ministers the financial position of both the States and the Commonwealth. Despite that fact, we are asked to agree that we are incapable of finding a direct representative in this State who can go to the conference to deal with financial matters of vital importance to every soul in this State. It is useless for the Premier to say he cannot spare his Ministers. He could spare himself, and his responsibilities are greater than those of any of his Ministers. Had it not been for a most unfortunate circumstance, which we all so deeply regret, the Premier would have been able to proceed to Canberra. On the other hand, it is going too far to say that while it was competent for him to make up his mind to attend the conference—and to that end to ask Parliament to adjourn so that he could do so—we must now accept the statement that none of the other Ministers can spare the time. I tell the Premier that that is a little too thin for the people of this State to accept. One of the Ministers could get away. There has been ample time for a Minister to make the necessary preparation. The Premier has known of the position all too long, I am sorry to say, in the circumstances. Certainly he has known for quite long enough to enable one of his other Ministers to have sufficient time to prepare for the trip. Even now there is time for a Minister to leave for Canberra and to make the necessary preparations to be able to deal with the important questions that will arise at the meeting of the Loan Council. We can appeal to the Premier to reconsider his decision from a Western Australian and a Parliamentary point of view. I do not desire to reflect upon the integrity or ability of Senator Sir Hal Colebatch, to whose appointment as the representative of the State at the Federal Loan Council we are asked to agree, but I am not prepared to put that hon. gentle-

man on a pedestal as a financial expert. There are others who could be selected from our representatives in the Federal House. I am not objecting to Sir Hal Colebatch being appointed, but I submit that such an appointment is open to misunderstanding. It could be said by people from overseas who were unaware of the special circumstances, that Western Australia was so barren of ability that it was impossible to find one man locally who was capable of attending the meeting of the Loan Council and dealing with the financial affairs of Western Australia. They might say that we were so barren of ability here that we had to secure as our representative a member of the Federal Parliament to represent the interests of the State at one of the most important gatherings ever held in connection with our finances.

Mr. Willecock: And that we were indifferent as to the result.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Then again, as has been pointed out already, who is going to report to us regarding the proceedings of the Loan Council? Just imagine this House having to ask a departmental officer for a report in such circumstances.

The Minister for Lands: It has been done before.

Mr. McCallum: Not in connection with such an important matter as this.

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. McCallum: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Governor's Speech has disclosed the position of this State from a financial point of view, and it is useless to compare happenings in other times with what may be done in the face of the vital circumstances that obtain to-day. What is the good of talking about secession if we are to admit we cannot manage our own affairs? On this particular occasion—the first important call upon us since the secession movement was inaugurated—we have to admit that we have not one Minister who can go to Canberra to deal with most important financial questions, and that we have to go to the Federal Parliament to secure a representative for this State. There is another point of view. I do not like introducing it, but it represents a phase that must be taken into account. There are others in the Federal Parliament who could have been selected for this task, others who have given longer service to Western Australia over a series of years and who have had as great an opportunity

of understanding the peculiar difficulties confronting this State. There are several members in the Federal Parliament who have had Ministerial experience and have rendered great service to this State. Why should they be thus ignored? Had one of those members been appointed, the action of the Government would not have been liable to be misunderstood as is the selection of Sir Hal Colebatch. There are men in the Federal Parliament who hold high offices under the Federal Constitution. There is one such man in particular, and had he been chosen the position might not be so open to misunderstanding. As it is, we are asked to endorse the selection of a man who at the present moment is doing his best, from my point of view, to harass the financial administration of the Federal Government. Here we are going out of our way to select the man who has put forth a maximum effort to prevent the legislative ideas of the Federal Government becoming operative. He has endeavoured to prevent them from carrying out their financial policy and at the present moment he is assisting to hold up one particular Bill that deals with difficulties affecting both Western Australia and the Commonwealth. Despite this, we single out that very man at this particular juncture and ask him to appear on our behalf as the representative of this State, at a conference with the Prime Minister, Mr. Scullin. If we were to agree to such a proposal, it might be said that we endorse the attitude adopted by Senator Sir Hal Colebatch. It might be said that that hon. gentleman was so strongly supported here with regard to his attitude of hostility to the financial proposals of the Federal Government, that in our enthusiasm regarding his efforts we had selected him as our financial representative to voice the case on behalf of Western Australia. I cannot understand the Government taking such a step, and I am astounded at the attitude of the "West Australian," the leading paper of this State, in their issue this morning in which they casually pass over the announcement of Sir Hal Colebatch's appointment. It is astonishing to think that a newspaper that voices public opinion would tolerate a proposal of this description without a protest, particularly when a protest from that source would have materially assisted to secure other arrangements. There is still time for that to be done, and I am indeed disappointed that the "West Australian" did

not outline the seriousness of the proposal to appoint someone from outside Western Australia, someone not directly in touch with Parliament and our special difficulties at the moment, to discuss our finances at the meeting of the Loan Council. I appeal to the Premier to reconsider his decision. I repeat that there is still time for the necessary arrangements to be made, and I hope that we will not let it go forth to the world that we cannot get even one Minister from our State Cabinet to represent us on such an important occasion and bring back to us his own report on the proceedings, so far as he would be permitted to discuss such matters in Parliament. I quite understand that at such a gathering confidential matters will be dealt with. Surely the Premier should secure first-hand information regarding those matters, and should not require to wait until he receives correspondence from Sir Hal Colebatch dealing with the position. Even so, I do not know that Sir Hal would be justified in committing to paper confidential information disclosed at the Loan Council. We want someone to represent the State at the meeting of the Loan Council who will come back with his report, and assist the Government in dealing with the difficult circumstances confronting them to-day. I earnestly appeal to the Premier to reconsider the matter, and make it convenient for one of his Ministers to represent Western Australia.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Bill introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolution, Bill introduced, and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.22]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford) [4.23]: I am disappointed that we have no evidence in the Bill of any honest endeavour to readjust the financial position of the State in proportion to the special circumstances that exist to-day. The Bill under discussion is purely a continuation of the expenditure that would be provided in ordinary circumstances for the first two months of the financial year. Whilst that might be justified if

an existing Government had continued on into the new Parliament, it is a wrong practice for a new Government to adopt when coming into power after a long period of time.

The Premier: It is always done.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, but I submit it is not the right thing to do. We are told daily that we should take into consideration the special financial circumstances of to-day, and readjust our private and public expenditure in order to meet those special circumstances. The Premier preaches that as much as anyone. He now brings down this Bill, and we as members are expected to endorse it. Whilst the Premier may have made an effort, he has failed to show where economies can be effected. The amount he has asked for from the General Revenue Fund, from the Sales of Government Property Trust Fund, and from the Public Accounts, is identical with the amount that has been asked for in Supply Bills over the last two or three years. I submit that the Premier cannot anticipate that he is going to get anything like the same revenue for the next two months that was received in the corresponding period of the last two or three years. He should have disclosed to the House and the people that he has realised the special circumstances, and as evidence of his determination to economise, he should have informed the House by the amount of supply he was asking for that he was going to administer the affairs of the State on a lesser amount than was previously required. He will be compelled to spend less money. He will not have it to spend. Why, therefore, ask the House to endorse this Bill, when we know that he will not get the money, is not likely to get it, and cannot therefore spend it? The Premier has been in office for three or four months. He should be capable by this time of determining exactly what he can spend from General Loan Funds, from the Public Accounts, and from the Government Property Sales Account.

The Minister for Lands: That will all be settled later on.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The point I wish to emphasise is that we are living in very difficult financial times. It is no use saying we must wait for the Budget for everything to be made clear. We cannot wait until the Budget is introduced. We must start economies at once. The Government have already been compelled to economise in certain direc-

tions, because they have not the money with which to get along. The Premier now asks us to grant him the same amount that was granted by previous Parliaments for a similar period. We in this House cannot agree to the granting of this money when we know that it is not available to spend. I was disappointed that the Premier did not bring down a Bill for a lesser amount showing a greater sense of proportion in regard to the possibility of raising the money and in regard to the possibility of spending it. He should have disclosed by the Bill exactly what the Government intended to do for a readjustment of the expenditure of the Government. All I want to do is to enter my protest against this happy-go-lucky way of doing things. There is no sort of reform about it. It is the same old thing that we have had before. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Parker) has lectured us on what we should do. We are not, however, doing anything. We are simply going on as we have done in previous years, and we are asked to do it all over again. I would not so much mind if we were sure of getting the money. When we know we cannot get the money there is no right to authorise the expenditure. The passage of the Bill will not give us the money, nor should we have the right if we could get the money, to spend it at the same rate as before. Of what use is it for the hon. member to lecture the people about the need for realising the financial position and then supporting a Bill of this kind? The measure merely asks us to endorse an expenditure which the country cannot stand. In any case, we shall not get the money to spend.

The Minister for Railways: Then why worry?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have heard that voice before saying "Why worry?" There were days when I used to worry myself blue and the hon. gentleman would put his hand on my shoulder and say, "Bill, you are always worrying; everything will come right in due course."

Hon. P. Collier: They were the days of "Happy Jack."

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Where have you got to now?

Mr. Munsie: He ended up with "Gone a million."

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: There were some who did worry, and who used to com-

plain of the extravagance in public expenditure. If we had done a little more worrying about things then, we would not be in the position in which we find ourselves to-day. It is because we have a lot of Happy Jacks and optimists who say "Do not worry" that many of us will have to worry and that this Parliament will have a lot of worry within a short period if it is to carry on. I am not going to be among the optimists who say "You must not look at the black side; everything will come right." I will not have it that things will come right. I am going to try to steer things so that they may take the proper course. I refuse to be like Micawber, waiting for something to turn up. This Bill has evidently been influenced by the Minister for Mines. Presumably he said to the Premier in Cabinet, "What is the use of worrying? Get the same supply that was granted on the last occasion. Ask for it in the same old way. Imagine you have the money and you will lead the public to believe that everything in the garden is lovely." We are asked to grant £550,000 from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund. We had that two or three years ago. We are asked to grant £30,000 from moneys to the credit of the Government Property Sales Fund. We had that years ago. We are asked to grant £300,000 out of the Public Account. We had that years ago. And, as if we had as much money as we had years ago, Happy Jack says, "Why worry?" Then the Premier evidently turned round and said, "Very well, we shall put up the same old Supply Bill in the same old way, and we will get the member for North-East Fremantle to lecture the House upon the gravity of the situation, appealing to members to curtail private and public expenditure and realise that disaster is upon us." The public will see that the hon. member has talked a lot of wind and that the Supply Bill makes it appear that our affluence to-day is what it was years ago. The Supply Bill indicates no reform. It is not what the people of the State expected of the Government. We thought the Government realised the seriousness of the financial position and therefore, by their Supply Bill, would have indicated what the Budget might be expected to disclose. To-day we are asked to grant supply for two months. We have no right to pass the Bill because it contains no indication of serious endeavour on the part

of the Ministry to curtail expenditure. I regret that, in the four months the member for Northam has been in charge of the Treasury, he has not delved sufficiently deeply into the financial position of the State to ascertain not only what is required, but what is possible for the first two months of the financial year, thus indicating to Parliament and to the country a genuine effort to reduce expenditure and to grapple seriously with the present financial difficulty.

The Attorney General: Your friends have been in office for the last six years. Have you been in a dream or in a trance?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Attorney General is another of those members who speak of the seriousness of the situation and say, "We must wake up." I have wakened. The sad part is that the Government content themselves with preaching to others about waking up. We have had too much preaching in the past; we want some indication that the Government will practise what they preach. This Bill discloses no evidence of practice and I enter my protest against it accordingly.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [4.33]: I welcome the entry of the member for Guildford-Midland into the debate because from his remarks I feel certain he will be a very great help to the Government in the years that lie before us.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you do a lot of these things, I shall talk a lot. Do sensible things and you will not hear from me.

The PREMIER: There could not have been a fitter occasion for the hon. member to air his eloquence than to-day. However, he has been beating the wind, because he knows I have merely adopted the usual course of asking for supply.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Good God, we cannot do things in the usual way! Do not you realise that?

The PREMIER: I find no difficulty in doing things in the usual way—the usual, economical way. It does not follow that the money authorised by this Bill will be expended. The trouble is that much of the expenditure covered by the Bill represents salaries which must be met. The hon. member is so frightfully and painfully anxious about the financial position that he says I

have been in office four months. He has forgotten just how long it is.

Hon. P. Collier: It seems a long time.

The PREMIER: Perhaps so. If I could have taken every item and made a reduction I might have done it, but the hon. member should realise it is not imperative that the money we ask the House to vote to-day should be expended. I shall be bringing down the Budget in another month.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Shall we get the Budget in a month?

The PREMIER: I hope to present it as soon as the Address-in-reply debate has been finished. I think it is due to members that the Budget should be presented early this year. I hope that will be satisfactory to the hon. member. It is well known to the hon. member that the expenditure necessarily occurs no matter what one might do; it is the revenue that is so uncertain. The late Government endeavoured to reduce expenditure before they went out of office, and we are trying to do likewise. Members will see, when the Budget is presented, that we are reducing expenditure in many directions. A painful process it is, but in the altered circumstances in which we find ourselves, it is unavoidable. I assure members that expenditure is being reduced and that they will be satisfied with the efforts of the Government when the Budget is presented.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Supply Bill does not disclose it.

The PREMIER: No; it was impossible to disclose in the Supply Bill all the items which will appear in the Estimates and which will show a reduction. I promise that the Estimates will be brought down as early as possible, and that members will have all the information and time necessary to discuss them fully.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

Sitting suspended from 4.42 to 5.55 p.m.

Returned from the Council.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Bill without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [5.59]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 12th August, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 12th August, 1930.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.0 p.m., and read prayers.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBER.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan-Suburban) took and subscribed the oath, and signed the roll.

QUESTION—LOAN COUNCIL.

Representation of the State.

Hon. E. H. GRAY (for Hon. C. P. Williams) asked the Minister for Country Water Supplies: 1, Has the attention of the Minister been drawn to the paragraph, published in the "West Australian" of 30th July, 1930, reading as follows: "Loan Council—The State's Representation—Though Lady Mitchell's health had sufficiently improved yesterday to enable the Premier (Sir James Mitchell) to return