

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Another thought which occurs to my mind on this question is that only a few months ago the leader of the Opposition in another place found reason to exclaim most sincerely and most fervently, "Thank God we have a Legislative Council!" When these facts are taken into consideration, one cannot but express himself in favour of the retention of this Chamber. At the same time, while I have been a particularly strong advocate of a restricted franchise for this Chamber, I do realise that it should be elected by the people who have a stake in the country. I do not refer to bricks and mortar, but to real live people, people who are married and have homes, though they may be paying as little as 7s. 6d. per week rent. Heaven knows that in these times one cannot obtain much of a house for 7s. 6d. per week. Under these conditions it is clear that every person, other than those people whose hats cover their responsibilities, has a vote for the Legislative Council of Western Australia. If such a person has not a vote, it is his or her own fault. Certainly it is not the fault of the Electoral Department, who during the last two years have been most vigilant to see that every person entitled to be enrolled shall have an opportunity of enrolling. To that end the department have taken the trouble to visit the offices of municipal councils and road boards, and the Taxation Department, and every other Government department where information can be obtained as to persons entitled to be enrolled for the Legislative Council. Further, the Electoral Department have gone to the expense of posting claim cards to the householders whose names appear on the various municipal and road board registers. If the householder has failed to fill in and return the claim card as requested, it is not the fault of the Electoral Department. Therefore, if Mr. Moore is anxious for the people to whom he referred so eloquently yesterday afternoon to be on the roll of the Legislative Council, I say the door is open and the way is easy.

Hon. T. Moore: What about all the men living on mills in houses for which they pay 6s. per week?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I am not in a position to reply to that interjection, because I do not know anything about those men. All I can say is that if they are living in houses carrying rentals of less than 7s. 6d. per week, they are obtaining their houses very cheaply.

Hon. T. Moore: But their wages are low.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I look upon this Chamber as the bulwark of the State.

Hon. T. Moore: And of democracy?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: If it is necessary to put those men on the roll, I would advise them to see to their enrolment straight away. I am prepared to go this far, that I would be willing for every returned soldier to have a vote for the Legislative Council. When we bear in mind the apathy of the people of this State during the last Legislative Council election, we must recognise that something

should be done to arouse greater interest among the people who have the privilege of voting for the Legislative Council. It is all very well for candidates seeking re-election, or seeking election for the first time, to go to great expense in providing committee rooms and all that kind of thing, and to be at the trouble of preparing addresses which would undoubtedly prove interesting if only the people would come along to hear them. But those candidates are extremely disappointed when they find a mere handful of people come to listen to them. I am prepared to alter my views regarding the franchise for this Chamber very considerably if it can be shown that by amendment of the franchise we can secure better attendances at election meetings and greater interest in elections. I sincerely hope that the majority of this Chamber will vote against Mr. Panton's amendment. At the same time I give both Mr. Panton and Mr. Moore credit for being in real earnest. Later on we shall be able to give our views as to economy and as to ways and means by which money can be saved to the State. In the circumstances I shall have no hesitation in voting against the amendment.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN (West) [4.55]: I appreciate the welcome which has been extended to me, and desire to endorse the complimentary references which have been made to Mr. J. F. Allen, lately a member of this Chamber. I re-echo the remarks which have been made regarding Mr. Allen. The contest in the West Province was fought on the most friendly terms. The majority of the electors having declared against Mr. Allen, I, too, think that this House has lost a very valuable member. I trust, however, that before six years have expired, remarks of the nature of those made to-day concerning Mr. Allen will be made regarding me. With reference to the duties of membership, I am here to do my very best in the interests of the State as a whole, and particularly in the interests of the province I represent. Whilst I am a member of this House I shall give to legislative duties every attention, and members will find that I shall do everything I can to forward the interests of the people. Coming now to the amendment, I may say that if I had had a hand in the framing of it, there would have been a straight out declaration for the abolition of the Legislative Council. The amendment does not ask for that, but says that in the opinion of this House the State can best be carried on by a single Chamber elected on an adult franchise. The amendment does not declare either that this House should be abolished or that the Legislative Assembly should be abolished, but merely that there should be only one House elected on an adult franchise. I support the amendment because I believe the time has arrived in the history of this State when the people desire only one Chamber to rule them. I am convinced, particularly so far as the electors of the West Province are concerned, that if a referendum



on the subject were taken to-morrow, a large majority of the people would declare in favour of a single Chamber. Twenty years ago, when the people of this continent were asked to vote for the establishment of a Federal Government, one of the strongest arguments used, and an argument that I feel sure influenced thousands of people to vote for Federation, was that there would, under Federation, be no need for Legislative Councils in the States, that the Federal Parliament taking over many large departments, at least one of the Chambers of the State Legislatures could be abolished, with a corresponding saving. I claim that the will of the people should at no time be vetoed by the vote of a House elected on a property qualification. What do we find in this State to-day? We have about 160,000 people voting at the Assembly election. At one period 160,000 of our people are asked to declare through the ballot box whom they wish to rule over them, what Government they desire to control the destinies of this State. That vote is taken, and the people declare who shall govern them. I say that is democracy. I say that when the adult people, both male and female, are allowed to voice their opinions through the ballot box, that is full and free democracy. But later, at another period, we find that a further vote is taken; but instead of 160,000 people being consulted, only 50,000 are consulted. Whilst I admit that there are about 60,000 people who are entitled to vote at Legislative Council elections, it has to be remembered that quite a number of these have votes in various provinces, and bearing that in mind we are safe in saying that not more than 50,000 people should be allowed to vote at province elections. If we are going to ask the representatives of all the people to frame certain legislation, and at the same time give the right to 50,000 people to elect another body of men to veto such legislation, then we are creating an anomaly, and one which should be wiped out. I am sorry that Sir Edward Wittenoom is not here, because during the debate yesterday afternoon he frequently desired to have pointed out to him what legislation had been blocked by this Chamber that was of a progressive nature. I have heard that cry pretty often, and again this afternoon from Mr. Duffell. Mr. Duffell said this is a non-party Chamber. That is only a plan to throw dust in the eyes of the people. This Chamber, ever since its constitution, has plainly demonstrated that it is a party House, and to say at this late hour that it is a non-party House, is to speak twaddle and endeavour to camouflage the position.

Hon. J. Duffell: It is only camouflage so far as your party is concerned.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: During the time the Labour Government were in office, 4½ years, this House was responsible for rejecting, or at all events mutilating, no fewer than 33 Bills sent up by that Government, and yet it is said we are a non-party House. Had these Bills been sent up by another Government they would have been passed by this Cham-

ber. Take the Prices Regulation Bill as an example of what I mean. The Labour Government sent up a Bill to provide for a Prices Regulation Commission to last for a period of 12 months, but this Chamber refused to pass it although it claims to be a non-party House. Last year when the present Government sent up a similar Bill it was passed by this Chamber. There is only one conclusion to be drawn from an attitude of this description. It seems very plain that many of those 33 Bills that were rejected by the Chamber were rejected for no other reason than that they were sent up by the Labour Government.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is a strong statement to make.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: It is just as well to be candid and to voice one's opinions and convictions. During the campaign in which I defeated the late member, Mr. Allen, I made it clear to the electors of the West Province that I desired them to vote for me, first of all because I was a Labour candidate, and secondly because I believed in the abolition of the Legislative Council. I was told by many people that I was losing votes, but my object was to come to this House with the assurance that I had the majority of Labour supporters behind me. Since I have told them plainly from every platform that I am in favour of the abolition of the Upper House, I can do nothing less than support the amendment which provides for a single Chamber.

Hon. J. Duffell: You will be sorry if it is carried.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: Not at all. I have never starved up to the present and I am not particular whether I get out of a job to-morrow or not. I can find another job, but the hon. member may not be able to do so. With further reference to the 33 Bills I have alluded to, I desire particularly to mention the Public Works Act Amendment Bill. This provided that land required to be resumed for public purposes might be compulsorily acquired at a price representing an advance of 10 per cent. on the valuation placed on such property by the owner for taxation purposes. That appeals to me as a reasonable kind of measure. The Government said that if they wanted to resume land for public purposes in the interests of the public, it should be resumed on that basis. There was not very much wrong about that particular Bill, and yet it was rejected by this Chamber. The Council could not allow that kind of legislation to go upon the statute book, and therefore refused to pass it. I have figures here to show how necessary it was for a Bill of that nature to be passed into law. There is one instance of an owner who valued his property for taxation purposes at £830, but as soon as the Government claimed the property for public purposes, he wanted £1,750. It was only worth £830 for taxation purposes, but this jump occurred as soon as the Government wanted it. The question was submitted to arbitration and the owner got £1,600 for the land. Another owner valued his property at £150

for taxation purposes, and demanded £1,400 when the Government wanted it for public utilities. Upon reference to arbitration the owner received £478. In another case the owner valued his property at £1,000 for taxation purposes, and demanded of the Government no less than £4,000. I have a list of many instances of that kind. If we are sent here to protect the interests of the public, to see that they are not robbed and exploited, then, when legislation of this nature comes before us, it should be passed. Some hon. members who voted against this particular Bill will no doubt be able to enlighten the House as to why they did so. Because of their instructions to defeat the Bill at that juncture the State lost thousands of pounds. There are many hon. members who are representing vested interests in this Chamber. They are sent here and have to deliver the goods. If they do not, they may lose their seats at the next election. If they are here simply representing a section of the community and vested interests only, the time has arrived when there should be a single Chamber, one elected on a broad adult franchise. I am pleased that Sir Edward Wittenoom has re-entered the Chamber and am ready to furnish him with a list of the 33 Bills I have referred to. I cannot believe that this is a non-party Chamber, but possibly when I am here a little longer I may—

Hon. J. Duffell: Know more about it.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I may do so. But the more I know about it the more convinced shall I be that this House is useless and that the people do not require it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you examined the virtues of these Bills or the reasons for their rejection?

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I have a good idea of most of them. I have been a fairly close student of all the Bills which have gone through this Chamber and I can name a good many of them.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Have you got them?

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I have them here. I have named one in particular. Possibly the hon. member may be able to tell me later why it was rejected, in company with the others I have mentioned, by this House. I was amused at Mr. Duffell's remark that merely those persons who only had a hat on their head were denied a vote for this particular Chamber. I should like to take him to Fremantle to see Princess Buildings, owned by Captain Biddles. There is a great scarcity of housing accommodation at the port, and later on I will ask this Chamber to do something to see that more accommodation is provided at Fremantle. Owing to this lack of accommodation people are compelled, very often against their wish, to live in rooms, either furnished or otherwise, and several families have to live in the one house. Over the Princess Theatre there are chambers known as Princess Buildings, and Captain Biddles lets rooms or flats there to people who have to pay from 15s. to £1 a week. These people have not the right to

vote. There are no means of getting them the vote because they pay their rent to Captain Biddles, and therefore cannot be placed on the roll. This happens all over Fremantle. There are hundreds of people to-day who have, I presume, as much at stake in this country as Mr. Duffell, and yet are denied a vote for this Chamber.

Hon. J. Duffell: You cannot name one.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: One has to consider what a stake in the country really is. Of course if bricks and mortar constitute a stake in the country, and if sheep and acres constitute a stake, then it is all right. Every man has to comply with the laws that this particular House enacts, and that being so I claim that every person should have the right to say who is going to represent him. There is nothing else for it. If we go on inflicting on the people of the State a certain amount of legislation and possibly punishment for crimes, those people have a perfect right to say who shall frame the laws.

Hon. J. Cornell: What will you do about those who break the laws?

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I suppose if our friend were punished for every law he broke he would not be here to-day. That would apply possibly to all members present. I am supporting the amendment principally because I believe the people of Western Australia are over-governed, and that the time is ripe for us to submit to the people of Western Australia the question whether they want the two Chamber system or not. I really believe that if a vote were taken to-morrow a large majority of the people of Western Australia would declare against the bi-cameral system. If the amendment is not carried I certainly think we should at least give the people an opportunity to say what they want. I leave the question to the good judgment of hon. members. So far as I am concerned I have a mandate from the electors of the West Province, and I would be failing in my duty and failing in that promise if I did not support the amendment. I am prepared to go even further and to vote for a straight-out resolution for the abolition of the Legislative Council.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [5.19]: I am sure that all of us in the short life we have passed in this world appreciate a new sensation, and I can honestly admit having experienced one yesterday afternoon when I heard the speeches of the two hon. members who proposed and seconded the amendment to the Address-in-reply. I listened with the greatest attention to their remarks, and I brought to bear a fair amount of intelligence, at any rate as much intelligence as members on this side of the House are allowed to have, when listening to the hon. members' speeches. With regard to what Mr. Panton had to say, I am sorry to have to declare that his remarks did not carry conviction to me. He appeared to be exceedingly half-hearted in his advocacy of