

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament was prorogued on the 26th June, 1946, to the 25th, July, 1946, when it met for the despatch of business.

Parliament was opened by the Honourable Sir John Patrick Dwyer, Commissioner for His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 25th July, 1946.

	Page
Opening of Parliament	1
Proclamation	1
Commissioner	1
Swearing-in of members	1
Election of President	2
Presentation of President Elect	2
Lieut.-Governor's Opening Speech	2
Bill: Friendly Societies Act Amendment	6
Lieut.-Governor's Speech, distribution	6
Address-in-reply, first day	6

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at noon.

PROCLAMATION.

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

COMMISSIONER.

His Excellency's Commissioner, the Honourable Sir John Patrick Dwyer, Chief Justice, having entered the Chamber, a message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, the Commissioner requested the Clerk to read His Excellency's Commission to do all things necessary in the name and on the part of His Majesty the King or in the name and on the

part of His Excellency for the opening and holding of the third session of the Eighteenth Parliament.

The Commission was read.

The Commissioner read the following statement:—

Hon. Members of the Legislative Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

I have it in command to inform you that at three o'clock this afternoon, I, on behalf of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, will declare to you the causes of the calling together of this session of Parliament; and it being necessary that a President of the Legislative Council be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, Honourable Members of the Legislative Council, after those who have been newly elected have been duly sworn by me in terms of a Commission granted to me by His Excellency, do elect your President and notify the same to His Excellency.

Members of the Legislative Assembly retired from the Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

The Clerk of Parliaments then announced the return of writs for the election of members, showing that the following had been duly elected for the province set opposite their respective names:—Hon. C. F. Baxter (East), Hon. J. G. Hislop (Metropolitan), Hon. J. A. Dimmitt (Metropolitan-Suburban), Hon. W. R. Hall (North-East), Hon. C. H. Simpson (Central), Hon. G. Bennetts (South), Hon. A. L. Loton (South-East), Hon. W. J. Mann (South-West), Hon. E. H. Gray (West), Hon. R. M. Forrest (North).

These members took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Clerk of Parliaments reported that, following upon the resignation as President of the Hon. Sir John Waters Kirwan, the office of President was vacant.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [12.22]: I move—

That the Hon. James Cornell do take the Chair in the Council as President.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [12.23]: I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion.

HON. J. CORNELL: I am deeply appreciative of the honour about to be conferred upon me and I agree to accept the position of President.

No other member having been proposed,

THE PRESIDENT ELECT: I have already intimated that I am deeply appreciative of the honour conferred upon me. All I wish to add is that for the past 20 years hon. members have weighed me in the balance as Chairman of Committees, and I do not think they have found me wanting. The office of President—the highest that can be conferred on any hon. member—carries grave responsibilities. I follow excellent men—I think I am James the Seventh—who have filled that position honourably and well and impartially. I will endeavour to carry out the duties of President as impartially as I carried out those of Chairman of Committees for 20 years, irrespective of the political creeds of hon. members. I will endeavour to be fair and just.

Sitting suspended from 12.30 to 3 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF PRESIDENT ELECT.

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

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

The Commissioner entered the Council Chamber at 3.2 p.m. and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attend-

ed in the Chamber, obediently to summons, on behalf of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor delivered the following Speech:—

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

On the 10th June, 1946, the people of Western Australia joined with other peoples of the British Empire in appropriate celebration of the historic victory over our enemies won at such grievous cost.

In common with the rest of the World the State faces serious problems due to the disruption of industry, trade and commerce inevitably arising from six years of war.

Ministers fully recognise the heavy responsibility which rests upon the community to re-establish in civil life those whose service and sacrifice contributed so much to our national preservation. Plans prepared in advance have been put into operation and no substantial unemployment problem has yet been created by rapid demobilisation. Many important industries in country areas are unable to secure the labour they require. In other industries employment is restricted by a shortage of materials.

The position is being constantly and closely watched. With the commencement of the Commonwealth Unemployment and Sickness Benefits Act, the Commonwealth Government has assumed responsibility for providing employment, but a great obligation still rests upon the State. A State Post-War Works Committee has been created and allotted the task of planning State works. Representatives of the Commonwealth Government have been appointed to this Committee, which, by working in close co-operation with Federal Authorities, hopes to maintain continuity of employment.

In many parts of the world the task of reconstruction has been impeded by grave industrial turmoil. It is extremely pleasing to record that industrial harmony continues to prevail in Western Australia.

Western Australia has the capacity to produce vast quantities of the food which the world so urgently needs. By increasing production we can make a substantial contribution to relieving the starvation and

misery which confront millions of our fellow men. The Government is endeavouring to promote the maximum production of food in the shortest possible time.

Improved results have rewarded the constant attention given to the pressing problem of coal supplies which have been inadequate to meet the expanding requirements of transport, industry, power and lighting. The Government has sought to adjust differences of opinion existing between mine owners and employees and to eliminate all factors which have retarded production. The appointment of a Royal Commissioner (Mr. W. J. Wallwork) who has been continuously available to deal with difficulties as they arise has resulted in marked improvement, not only in production, but in the general atmosphere.

As a result of a comprehensive inquiry undertaken by the Commissioner into all aspects of the industry, considerable information will shortly be available which will lead to improvements in working conditions, to an increase in productivity, and generally to an adjustment of many problems at present associated with the industry.

One of the most acute and difficult war-caused problems facing the Government is the grave housing shortage. No effort is being spared to remove the many obstacles impeding the construction of the State's arrears of housing requirements, and Ministers are concentrating on expediting provision of materials which continue in short supply.

Until housing materials become available in greater quantities it will unfortunately be necessary to retain the allocation of building permits to ensure that urgency of need is the determining factor in using the limited supplies.

During the year ended the 30th June permits were issued for 1,483 dwellings and 620 houses were completed or in course of construction under the Commonwealth-State Rental Housing Scheme. The Housing Division of the Public Works Department has completed 29 houses under day labour conditions and has a further 106 under construction.

A Magistrate has been commissioned to conduct a comprehensive examination of the causes of shortages of materials and

labour, and to recommend remedial measures. While formidable difficulties remain to be overcome, definite progress is being made and steady acceleration in the rate of building is expected.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

Expenditure for the year 1945-46 exceeded revenue by £912,559.

Under the Commonwealth Income Tax (Reimbursement) Act, the State has submitted a claim to the Commonwealth Grants Commission for the amount necessary to enable the budget to be balanced, and Ministers are hopeful that the full claim will be met.

In spite of the protests of the State Governments, the Commonwealth Government has decided to continue the system of uniform taxation adopted during the war as a temporary measure. This action, if permanent, will have far-reaching effects on the financial position of the State. When the Commonwealth Government could not be induced to abandon its proposal, the States endeavoured to make the best possible bargain and an agreement was reached whereby the States will receive additional compensation. For 1946-47 Western Australia will receive the substantial increase of £740,000 over the figure payable under the wartime arrangement, and as population and national income grow, all States will receive additional payments.

Mr. President and Hon. Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

Approximately 300 men are employed on the preparation of farms for the War Service Land Settlement Scheme. The main Dairy Farm project includes 225 farms and allotment is expected to commence at an early date. Great difficulty has been experienced in obtaining sufficient farms in wheat and sheep areas. A number of holdings have already been purchased and allotment of some should commence in the near future. The training in agriculture of ex-servicemen was commenced early this year on selected farms and at the Muresk Agricultural College. An intensive course of training for returned service men with

previous experience of farming and who are to obtain farms under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme will shortly be provided at the centre being established at Harvey.

The Rural and Industries Bank which commenced business on the 1st October, 1945, has now seventeen branches and eleven agencies. Business is steadily increasing and prospects for the future are bright. Public support has fully justified this progressive legislation.

The Government is fully seized with the vital importance of increasing the State's population and the question of immigration is receiving careful consideration. The State was represented at a Conference of Commonwealth and State officers and a Committee has been appointed to investigate the absorptive capacity of the State. In order to encourage a rapid revival of tourist traffic, the Tourist Bureau has been re-organised and use is being made of films as a medium of publicity.

The season for our primary products has opened favourably throughout the South-West and the greater part of the wheat belt.

The world-wide food shortage has greatly altered the short term prospects for some of the State's agricultural products, and for some time to come there will be a ready market for all the wheat and meat that can be produced. In co-operation with the Commonwealth and other State Governments, Ministers are endeavouring to stabilise the price of certain primary products over a number of years, and measures to give effect to the wheat price stabilisation scheme will be placed before you for consideration. The prospects for adequate supplies of fertilisers are brighter than for some years, and it is anticipated that during the coming season producers will be able to obtain full requirements.

Efforts are being made to obtain markets for our commodities in the Near East and India. After an interval of several years the export of fruit to the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries has been resumed.

Modern laboratories have been erected to deal with problems of animal health and nutrition.

Plans for rehabilitation of the gold mining industry formulated by the Government prior to the end of the war have been put into operation as far as possible. These plans include intensified geological exploration and research, assistance to prospector and State Battery facilities.

Many ex-servicemen eligible under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme have joined the Schools of Mines at Kalgoorlie, Norseman and Wiluna, and many more are expected as demobilisation progresses.

Many mines compelled to close during the war have re-commenced operations and monthly production figures are encouraging. While many war caused difficulties remain there is every indication that this great industry will steadily return to the outstanding position which it formerly occupied among the industries of the State.

The State and Commonwealth Governments have agreed to provide finance to enable the Freney Oil Bore in the Kimberleys to be deepened, and boring will commence as soon as possible. It is hoped that exploratory oil work will be undertaken on other likely properties.

For the year 1945 factory employment reached the all-time record of 29,146. The figure of £8,001,000 for wages and salaries paid was also a record.

Secondary industries financially assisted by the Government continue to make marked progress. Inquiries are being received continually from Eastern State manufacturers desirous of extending their activities to Western Australia. The Small Arms Ammunition Factory at Welshpool has been leased from the Commonwealth Government and accommodation amounting to 300,000 sq. feet has been made available to sixteen industrial undertakings.

Construction of a Wood Distillation and Charcoal Iron Plant at Wundowie is proceeding satisfactorily and production will commence early in the new year. About 100 tons of potash fertiliser are now being produced weekly by the State (W.A.) Alunite Industry at Chandler. As soon as modifications and additions to the plant, now in hand, have been completed, grade and output will be improved still further.

In addition to participating with representatives of the Commonwealth and

Queensland Governments in the Northern Australia Development Committee, the Government is taking independent measures to increase production and improve living conditions in the North-West. Research Stations are being set up in the Kimberley and Pilbara districts. Cool stores are being established at each North-West port and plans for considerable public works are in hand. Jetties are being repaired and additional storage facilities provided at Point Samson to handle blue asbestos from the Hamersley Ranges. Acquisition of the new freighter by the State Shipping Service will effect an urgently required improvement in transport. The Wyndham Meat Works expect to treat 28,000 head of cattle during the current season. A commencement has been made on a road programme totalling £165,000.

As a first step in the co-ordinated development of Fremantle Harbour, the Government has engaged the services of a very highly qualified harbours engineer to prepare a comprehensive scheme which will progressively meet immediate and future needs, and to locate a suitable site and draw up plans for docking facilities at Fremantle. Extensions to North Wharf quays and Victoria Quay are in hand.

The Government has purchased some of the equipment required for the deepening of Bunbury Harbour, and proposals for the progressive development of Albany Harbour have been prepared.

The construction of Stirling Dam to provide water for the irrigation of areas North and South of Harvey which was suspended during the war was resumed in February last.

Measures have been prepared for your consideration which provide for the necessary administration of country water areas and for a scheme for the reticulation of water over an area of approximately 12 million acres extending from near Dalwallinu in the North to near Borden in the South. Preliminary work for the raising of Mundaring Weir by 32 feet is in hand.

The Government has purchased a large range of modern earth-moving, road-making and land-clearing mechanised plant. An extensive road programme has been prepared but shortages of labour and material have delayed operations.

The years of war left a legacy of deferred work to be carried out in the Railway Department. The Government has commenced a rehabilitation and deferred maintenance programme involving an expenditure of £3,776,000 over a period of 10 years. The programme covers new locomotives and rolling stock, additions and alterations to the Midland Junction Workshops including new machinery, country road services to be operated in conjunction with railways, and deferred maintenance to permanent way and buildings. Improved coaching stock in hand or in course of design includes day and sleeping coaches, and dining and kitchen cars.

The Railways will provide better passenger services by eliminating mixed trains and substituting direct passenger trains. The use of diesel-electric rail cars has been greatly extended over country branch lines. Execution of this policy will be expedited with the delivery of six new diesel-electric trains now on order from England.

The question of effective co-ordination of all forms of transport is now under consideration and amending legislation will be placed before you.

The Electricity Commission has assumed control of the Government Electricity Supply and has taken preliminary steps to acquire the undertaking of the Collie Power Company. The carrying out of the South-West Power Scheme will be prosecuted vigorously and particular attention given to the improvement of electricity supplies in country towns.

Foundation work in connection with the new power station at South Fremantle is well forward, and the objective is to complete it at the earliest possible date.

The production of timber is still only two-thirds of normal but is expected to improve as more men become available and new mills are established. In order to satisfy local demands exports are reduced to a minimum. The report of the Honorary Royal Commission appointed to examine the Timber Industry Housing Bill introduced last Session is available for your consideration.

Several vessels have been acquired, fitted with refrigeration and made available to ex-servicemen for deep sea fishing. Pearlising is being re-established and pros-

pects in Whaling are being vigorously pursued. An active policy of fisheries research is proceeding.

Important advances in the sphere of public health are receiving consideration, including a campaign against tuberculosis, provision of better pre-natal care and obstetric facilities, and extension of school medical and dental examination. The Government has adopted a system of Regional Hospitals and improved medical attention, diagnostic facilities and hospital accommodation will be provided in rural areas as quickly as circumstances permit.

It is hoped that the necessary facilities will soon be available to give effect to the decision to raise the school-leaving age. Recent improvements in education include the payment of allowances to afford country children greater educational opportunity and the employment of itinerant teachers to supervise the work of Correspondence pupils. No less than 150 bus services now convey pupils of former one-teacher schools to large country centres where they are afforded opportunities of a wider and more liberal education. More than 6,000 ex-servicemen are receiving vocational training in the State's technical institutions.

State expenditure on the welfare of aborigines has reached a record figure and further improvements are contemplated. Thirty-eight natives have applied for certificates of citizenship under the provisions of the recent legislation.

In addition to the Bills already mentioned a comprehensive programme of legislation has been prepared, including measures dealing with industrial matters, milk, vermin, control of betting, and the functions of the State Insurance Office. A Bill will be introduced to provide for holding a referendum on certain questions relating to the Legislative Council, and measures to amend the Traffic Act and the Feeding Stuffs Act will also be placed before you.

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

His Excellency's Commissioner then withdrew from the Chamber.

The President took the Chair.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [3.30]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to amend Sections 7 and 12 of the Friendly Societies Act 1894-1939."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

The **PRESIDENT**: For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, copies of the Speech that has been delivered on his behalf to Parliament. These will be distributed among hon. members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [3.37]: I move:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in reply to the Speech delivered to Parliament on his behalf:—

"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech delivered to Parliament on your behalf."

At the assembling of this first session of Parliament since victory in World War 2, we find some strange faces in the Chamber. In the first place we miss very much the genial personality of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor. We greatly regret the reason for his non-appearance today. I would, at this stage, like to offer my deepest sympathy to His Excellency in the great loss that he has sustained. We were pleased to see His Honour, the Chief Justice, and I think his appearance here today goes some way towards making history. During my period in this Chamber, at any rate, I cannot recollect either the Governor or the Lieut.-Governor not delivering the Governor's Speech on any previous occasion.

At this stage I wish to congratulate our worthy leader, the Chief Secretary, on his appointment as Agent-General. I think members will agree with me that it is an honour well deserved. He has given wonderful service in this Chamber, and I feel sure that he will give just as good service on the other side of the world. We shall miss him greatly, and the high standard he has set in this Chamber will be very difficult of attainment by his successor.

I wish also to congratulate the new members. For some years we have passed through the battle of the elections and have re-assembled with the same faces. On this occasion, however, we have three new members. I should like to mention that I will indeed miss my old colleague, the Hon. Tom Moore, and to a lesser extent the former member for the North Province, Mr. Cornish. Of course, it goes without saying that Sir John Kirwan will be missed by us all. I have deferred expressing, till last of all, my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your appointment to that high office, but the fact that I have mentioned you last of all does not mean that this represents the least of my congratulations. You have certainly earned the honour that has been conferred upon you today, and I feel sure you will carry out your duties as President just as ably as you carried out the duties of Chairman of Committees. I know that quite a lot of the unruly members of the Chamber will want to test you out today with a view to ascertaining how severe you are likely to be in future in presiding over our debates. Perhaps somewhat contrary to my usual practice, I shall not give them an opportunity.

Hon. W. J. Mann: For a change!

Hon. G. FRASER: It will probably be quite a change. In order not to give them that opportunity, I propose not to touch upon anything controversial but rather to prefer one or two requests which I hope will not fall upon deaf ears.

First of all I wish to make a request to the Minister in charge of the Land Titles Office. Anyone who has had to do business in that office in recent years will agree with me when I say that quite a considerable change is required there. So far as the staff of the office is concerned, one could not wish for a better. The members of the staff are courteous, obliging and patient. The trouble

is that the office is woefully under-staffed. The accommodation provided also needs to be improved. It is rather galling when members of the public having business to do in that office have to stand for one, one-and-a-half or two hours to put through an ordinary transfer which, if they could get proper attention, would not take more than five or 10 minutes. The position is more unfortunate when some of the law clerks are congregated there, and if one is unlucky enough to get behind two or three of them, one has to wait from one to two hours in order to get attended to. Men required for the staff cannot be picked up in the streets, and I think the Minister might well endeavour to recruit some younger men who could grow up in the office and familiarise themselves with the business. I feel sure that the members of the present staff, who are doing a wonderfully good job, would welcome any assistance that could be given to them. Right through that office, considerable delay is experienced by people who have business to transact. This, as I have explained, is not the fault of the staff; it is due to the fact that the office is woefully under-manned. The mere fact of having to wait two or three months for a title after having put through the transfer is interfering with the ordinary course of business.

Recently I noticed mention in the Press of the intention to build a new bridge across the Swan River at Fremantle. Since that announcement, I have carefully scanned the Press daily in search of some intimation from the Government as to whether it is proposed to build the bridge in the near future or in the dim future. This is my second request, namely, that the Government will give some further information on this matter. I make this request because people living in the area—in North Fremantle and part of East Fremantle—are feeling considerable concern. Right through the war years they have been unable to get any renovations made to their premises, and now when there is a chance of getting them made they are afraid that immediately afterwards the Government will come along and resume their properties. If an intimation were given that the bridge would not be built for some years, the people in those areas would feel a little more contented. They would know what they had to face and what it was necessary for them to do.

I notice that there appears to be a lack of co-ordination or co-operation between various departments. When public works are being carried out in that district, I should like to see some co-operation between the Minister for Railways in regard to the proposed new bridge and the Water Supply and Sewerage Department. The Water Supply and Sewerage Department has, within the last week or so, resumed activities in that area, and here again the owners of the properties I have indicated may within the next year or so be faced with the question of connecting their premises with the sewerage system and a year or so after may find their properties being resumed by the Government. Therefore I should like some announcement by the Government as to what its intentions are.

For a long time I have been interested in the subject of housing, though I suppose other members have shown equal interest in it. Recently, whilst in the Eastern States, I took the opportunity of communicating with the Minister for Housing in Victoria and went into the question very thoroughly with him. He took me out and showed me quite a lot of the work being done there, both in the way of building new premises and in the reconditioning of vacated Army huts. The work being done there was of quite considerable value, and I am pleased to see that the Government of this State is also working along similar lines. Whilst in New South Wales I investigated the scheme of the Ryde Municipal Council. That municipality is endeavouring at the moment to build something like 2,500 homes; I think the project is known as the £2,000,000 housing scheme. I should like to see some of the municipalities in this State taking a leaf out of the book of the Ryde Municipal Council and doing something along similar lines.

The main question I wish to raise regarding housing is that of costs. I was pleased to see the recent announcement that the Government had appointed Mr. Wallwork to investigate the question of housing and that amongst the points he is to inquire into is that of costs. I have gone very deeply into this question. I do not know whether Mr. Thomson will agree with me in the statement I am about to make, but I am quite satisfied in my own mind that the ordinary house of a value of £1,000 is costing at the very least £100 more than it should.

Hon. G. B. Wood: More than that.

Hon. G. FRASER: That is a conservative estimate. I see no justification for the present prices. The figure I have mentioned is arrived at after taking into consideration all phases—the present cost of timber and of labour and painting and other things connected with housing. I am safe in saying—and I can prove it by figures, though I do not intend to go into figures today—that the cost to the individual of these premises is £100 more than it should be.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Who is getting the rake-off?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member wants me to get into an argument, but I have told members that I do not intend to discuss anything controversial. I have gone into this question thoroughly. I have ascertained the cost of timber and everything else, and I am satisfied that builders are getting £100 more than they should on every £1,000 house. I suppose some builders' organisations will criticise my remarks through the Press, but I am not afraid of them. I can show by actual figures that I am right. I am pleased that one of the matters into which Mr. Wallwork will inquire is the question of prices. It is remarkable, when one analyses the position, to find that we have set a price on almost everything going into these houses, but have not established what the price of the buildings should be. Does that not seem ridiculous?

Hon. A. Thomson: It is hard to set a price on the labour.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is not very hard at all. The price of labour has been established and the price of timber is fixed. The same can be said of the prices of almost the whole, if not the whole, of the commodities that are required for building, but the price that a person who wants a home shall pay has not been fixed.

Hon. A. Thomson: Can you set a price on the actual labour?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes.

Hon. A. Thomson: Then you will have solved the problem.

Hon. G. FRASER: The price is already set. I have no need to set it. What labour is going to cost is already determined.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The loss in manpower per day amounts to £76 per building.

Hon. G. FRASER: I will make allowances for all the shrinkage, but in spite of all that, houses are costing £100 more than they should.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Will the cost be any less when the workers get a 40-hour week?

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member is trying to start an argument on a matter that I am not prepared to discuss at this stage. I will debate that question later in the session, but not today.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member should address the Chair now and then.

Hon. G. FRASER: I beg your pardon, Sir. At this stage I am merely mentioning, in passing, the cost of building today.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would you suggest what would be a reasonable profit on a £1,000 job for a man who takes all the responsibility?

Hon. G. FRASER: In assessing the figure at £100, I have taken into consideration what I would regard as a reasonable profit.

Hon. A. Thomson: What is a reasonable profit?

Hon. G. FRASER: I would say 10 per cent. on a £1,000 job.

Hon. F. E. Gibson: That is too much.

Hon. G. FRASER: And on that figure the buildings are costing £100 more than they should.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You would put them through the Bankruptcy Court!

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member always looks for something big, but I am satisfied with something reasonable.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is a lot of guess-work.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is not, and I will prove that to the hon. member. I will show him the actual figures. I am not talking through my hat.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Where does the £100 go?

Hon. A. Thomson: Any contractor who made an average of 10 per cent would consider he was doing very well indeed.

Hon. G. FRASER: I will make this definite statement, and am prepared to substantiate it: That the cost of building today is 20 per cent. over and above the cost of materials and labour. That is a pretty fair statement to make. That is what

houses are costing today. I am pleased indeed about the appointment of Mr. Wallwork, and hope that in his report he will make recommendations whereby some control may be exercised over the actual cost of buildings. We have solved the problem up to the stage of a man building a house and then have left the matter alone. I want the whole thing completed and I feel sure that when the report is delivered, something on those lines will be done. Preference is made in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to quite a lot of legislation to be introduced this session. Amongst it is the everyday question of starting-price betting. I understand that there is also to be a Bill regarding trotting control, so that we can look forward to what might be termed a sporting session. The matters I have mentioned, together with consideration of the constitutional aspect of this House and many other interesting subjects set down for debate, ensure that we may look forward to an enjoyable session.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South): I formally second the motion.

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

House adjourned at 3.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 25th July, 1946.

	Page
Meeting of the Assembly	9
Message, opening by Commissioner	9
Summons from the Lieut.-Governor's Commissioner	10
Bill: Railway (Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe) Discontinu-	
ance	10
Lieut.-Governor's Opening Speech, distribution	10
Address-in-reply, first day	10
Adjournment, special	13

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to Proclamation by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, which Proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. G. Steere).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the