

- A Bill to amend the Child Welfare Act to clarify the position of offenders against children in order that such offenders will have the right of trial by jury for serious offences.
- A Bill to amend the Traffic Act, extending certain privileges to overseas motorists visiting this State.
- A Bill to control the publication of objectionable literature.

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

His Excellency and members of the Legislative Assembly then withdrew from the Chamber.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACT AMENDMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: 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 for "An act to amend the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1921-1954."

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 he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. These will be distributed amongst hon. members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

HON. G. E. JEFFERY (Suburban) [3.45]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

May it Please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

I wish to associate myself with the tribute paid by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, to the late Hon. J. C. Willcock, for many years Premier of this State, and also the tribute he paid to the two late members of this House, Hon. H. Hearn and

Hon. C. W. D. Barker. They served this State well and we are all the poorer for their passing.

It is disquieting to see the symptoms of increasing unemployment among us today, and I express the sincere hope that this is only a passing phase. The problem has caused the Government grave concern, and I would take this opportunity of congratulating the Premier on his prompt and successful action in asking the Commonwealth Government to make funds available to alleviate the position.

I would also congratulate the Government on the setting up of the Trade and Industries Promotion Council. This body, which is representative of the whole of the community, has already achieved a measure of success in the short time it has been in existence, and I am sure that with the loyal co-operation of the people of the State, it will do much to relieve us of our industrial dependence on the Eastern States. Experience of goods manufactured in this State leads me confidently to predict that this Council will make a valuable contribution towards the correction of our unfavourable trade balance with the Eastern States, and that it will help to solve our unemployment problem.

I am pleasantly surprised at the amount of work that has been done in the rural areas of this State. I wish also to pay tribute to the Government for the work done in agricultural research, and I feel sure that all members of this House will be interested in the future in the activities and experiments taking place in connection with the Ord River irrigation scheme and the Liveringa rice-growing experiment. This work, I believe, will be of great advantage to the State if these projects can be put on an economic basis.

Whatever personal regrets I may have that the State Government was not able to acquire the whaling station at Babbage Island, it is gratifying to know that the industry will continue at this site and should be a permanent asset to the north. There are signs of renewed interest in the North-West of Western Australia, and a valuable contribution in that direction was to be seen in the recent Press tour of that part of the State. With the intense search for that elusive lady, oil, I believe much greater interest will be taken in the north where there exist other minerals of value also, namely, gold and uranium. I am pleased also at the sound footing that the asbestos industry seems to have achieved. I believe we are all agreed that in the near future the North-West will become what we have dreamed of for so many years.

There are promising signs on some of our goldfields, also; and with the reopening of what were thought to be worked-out mines, it is to be hoped that those areas will have a much brighter future. I am pleased to note that the Government has decided to expand our charcoal iron industry, and it is gratifying to see that a

pioneer industry of this nature has now reached the stage where it will be able to increase its production of iron from 12,000 to 36,000 tons per annum.

In the past, members have had cause to worry over the state of our railways, but I was pleased to hear in His Excellency's Speech that, in spite of its past position, our railway system has been rejuvenated to the extent indicated. I might mention at this juncture the great improvement that has taken place in suburban transport, due to the introduction of the diesel coaches. The figures show that the people of this State appreciate what has been done, and no doubt the increased suburban rail traffic will contribute towards a better state of finance in the department.

I am happy, also, to see that the Government intends introducing a Bill to co-ordinate metropolitan transport. Our transport position is a great problem, and one to which members of this Chamber should apply their thoughts. A long-felt want will be realised if some controlling authority can be set up to co-ordinate and rationalise our transport system.

One other matter that gives members of this Chamber a great deal of satisfaction is the success of the Medical School appeal. I am certain that one member present will be thoroughly pleased with the result which, I think, speaks volumes for the big-heartedness of the people of this State. The amount raised was approximately £570,000, and this achievement will play a most important part in the future in alleviating the great shortage of doctors.

I am extremely pleased about the efforts of the Government on technical education. The time has arrived in this State when the importance of technical education cannot be stressed too strongly. Where there are expanding industries, it is most commendable if the State can produce the men from within its borders to supply the technical knowledge required. It is also most pleasing to hear from his Excellency's Speech, that eight high schools have been completed and that five others are now in course of construction. There is no doubt that in these modern times, a high standard of education is a "must."

A most pressing problem, which has worried the public conscience for some time, is the state of aged people. It is therefore gratifying to hear from His Excellency's Speech that the Government has decided to grant financial assistance to establish social centres for old people. This will certainly go a long way towards assisting to solve one of our greatest social evils, for there is no doubt that the most pressing fear of aged people is loneliness. With this proposed assistance, the Government will be able to alleviate their plight.

The question of drainage is one that greatly concerns the Government and especially those members representing suburban constituencies. I am therefore most

happy to learn that the Government has decided to take action on a large scale with the object of overcoming this problem. It would only require a visit to such districts as Bentley Park, Morley Park, Carlisle and Midvale to make all members assembled here realise the urgency of the task that confronts the Government now that it has made a start on its comprehensive drainage scheme.

As a member who has just left private employ, it greatly pleases me to hear from His Excellency's Speech that the Government intends to proceed with a measure to introduce long-service leave for employees in private industry. It would be a fitting reward for the workers in Western Australia if this privilege could be granted. Workers in other States, who have not had such a good industrial record as workers in this State, have enjoyed this concession for some time, and it will indeed be a fitting reward for the industry of our workers if the Government proceeds during this session to introduce a Bill to grant them this privilege. On the same score, I am pleased to hear that amendments will be made to the Workers' Compensation Act and the Mine Workers' Relief Act with a view to increasing the maximum amounts payable. I am greatly interested to learn, too, that it is also proposed to introduce legislation to give women the same privilege as men of sitting on juries.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You call it a privilege!

Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: It is proposed to allow women the right to serve on juries in the same way as their husbands do. In conclusion, I thank the electors of the Suburban Province for the confidence they have placed in me by electing me as a member of this House, and I hope that my diligent efforts in the future will be a fitting reward for that confidence.

Before resuming my seat, I thank members on both sides of the House, the officers and members of the staff of the Legislative Council, and all those civil servants—ranging from the oldest Under Secretary to the youngest office boy—who have gone out of their way to assist me in the same manner as they would help an older member. They have been only too willing to come forward to teach me the ropes.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): Realising the strain that members have been under for the last hour—with the exception of Sir Charles Latham—I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.57 p.m.