

Legislation is being prepared to provide for closer co-ordination between the various forms of transport and for the future control of metropolitan street passenger services.

With the completion and occupation of the first section of the Royal Perth Hospital, attention has been given to the commencement of the second section. The necessary steel work has been ordered.

The State is co-operating with the Commonwealth in an endeavour to eradicate tuberculosis. The clinic established for mass radiography is now in operation.

Every effort is being made to overcome the acute shortage of hospital staffs. A central school for trainee nurses has been established; several country hospitals have been made training schools, and pre-nursing courses have been instituted. Doctors recently appointed to North-West centres have greatly improved the medical services available.

Amendments considered necessary to the Health Act for more effective administration of health services will be submitted for your consideration.

Energetic endeavours are being made to satisfy demands arising from a keener public interest in education, and increased financial provision has been made for all phases of education from the kindergarten to the University.

Progress has been made in the replacement of outmoded school buildings by schools of modern design. School equipment is being liberalised, school libraries assisted, and a new and better type of school furniture is being manufactured. While the Teachers' Training College is filled to capacity, a shortage of staff will continue for some time.

A Council to advise on juvenile delinquency has been established. Women members are being appointed to the Bench of the Perth Children's Court. It is proposed to establish regional officers throughout the State to decentralise the work of the Child Welfare Department.

A committee, representative of local governing bodies and the Government, has been set up to consider the amalgamation of the Road Districts Act and the Municipal Corporations Act. It is hoped that the

committee will furnish a report in time for legislation to be introduced during the current session, if thought desirable.

Since the inception of the present migration scheme, 2,370 nominated migrants have arrived in Western Australia. An additional 3,376 persons who have been nominated are awaiting allocation of passages. At present the scheme is restricted to persons nominated by Western Australian residents who can provide the necessary accommodation for their nominees.

Legislation to be submitted for your consideration will include measures dealing with the Workers' Compensation Act, the Land Act, the Bushfires Act, the Navigation Act, and the Constitution Act.

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

His Excellency then withdrew from the Chamber.

*[The President took the Chair.]*

#### **BILL—FOUNDATION DAY OBSERVANCE (1949 ROYAL VISIT).**

**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 entitled "An Act relating to the observance of a holiday on Foundation Day during the year of the proposed Royal visit, namely, One thousand nine hundred and forty-nine."

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 among hon. members.

#### **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.**

*First Day.*

**HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM** (South) [3.31]: 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:—

"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 you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament."

I should like to open my remarks this afternoon by extending my warmest congratulations to those members who recently were the recipients of Royal honours and also to you, Sir, on once again being elected President of this House. May you all be spared many years to bear your distinctions with pleasure to yourselves, usefulness to the House and honour to the State of which you are citizens. I would like also to pay a tribute to the work of Hon. C. B. Williams, my predecessor, whose good service to all sections of the community gained him many friends—friends whose numbers are indicative of the thousand and one little acts of kindnesses and good work that were a feature of his activities.

I was pleased to note in the Speech some reference to the proposed revision of the hopeless confusion into which the maze of Acts and amendments relating to workers' compensation in general, and miner's phthisis in particular, has drifted. Over the years anomalies and injustices have occurred, and they exist today. I consider that a comprehensive Act, embracing all the best features of our own and mining legislation of that enacted in other States, and a consequent complete rescinding of the present patchwork quilt of compensation laws, would be a worthwhile State contribution to the expected and hoped-for revival of the mining industry, now only awaiting the Commonwealth Government's long-promised and overdue assistance.

Coupled with this line of thought is the hope that this Government will do something to bring about the complete abolition of the so aptly-named means test—a masterpiece of descriptive naming if ever I saw one. Closely allied to this urgent necessity is the desperate and heartbreaking need for some form of home on the Goldfields for the turned-down miner—the man who can no longer be retained in a hospital, and yet cannot receive at home the necessary treatment and care that his condition warrants. The only place left for that man is Wooroloo, a wonderful but overcrowded institution, and the psychological reaction upon a miner of the very name "Wooroloo"

is a spiritual signing of his death warrant. The uprooting of a miner from his beloved goldmining atmosphere halves his remaining life expectancy. I feel that this Government could find it possible to investigate the need of subsidising the establishment of a home—we could call it a "knock-off home"—for the turned-down miner on the Goldfields.

I cannot help but feel it is a matter for regret that the R.A.A.F. hospital at Boulder was disposed of for a fraction of its real value—even for the worthy cause of home-building—when it was so ideally suited in construction and site for a home such as I have advocated. I feel sure the Government could reasonably expect a favourable reply from the Commonwealth Government to an application by the State for the return, on a pro rata basis, of the unused war damage insurance money. The Goldfields share of that money would more than defray the cost of a project such as I am now advocating.

Reference is made in the Lieut.-Governor's speech to water supplies and transport, and transport charges—"charges" without brackets. This reference applies in general to all parts of the State outside of any water reticulation scheme, and transport is completely bound up with the whole question. In particular, the Lakes district, which I have in mind, is a vast area, and its development is no longer at the experimental stage. The country has proved itself and the people have certainly proved themselves. The whole area is serviced by two spur lines running in to the railheads of Hyden and Newdegate. From there to all points east, the only service is by road transport, and that service is dear. Road and road transport is poor and I feel that an absolute necessity is a complete system of good all-weather arterial roads. Freights could be scaled to a flat rate, and subsidised, if necessary. Motor transport could then really be given an opportunity to prove itself as feeders to existing railway lines, as has been so successfully done in South Africa.

I couple water with this problem of transport. It is no isolated instance to find through that area good-class country hotels in main centres with their bathroom doors locked to conserve supplies of water, and also to find that farmers have had to cart

their water from as far as 80 miles away, that is, 160 miles per round trip. That is a clear indication of the type of settler we have in this area. The weaklings have all gone and only the true settlers remain. I commend to the Government's attention the great need for a more permanent water supply in this area, which has contributed so greatly to the prosperity and economic stability of the State. I feel that it is a reflection on the country as a whole that such hardships still exist in our day.

I am well aware that I am breaking no new ground in the advocacy of Esperance as the port for the Goldfields. This theme is getting old, far too old, in my opinion, and I am determined, in the interests of my constituency, to leave no avenue unexplored in this matter. I am fully alive to the fact that customary trade channels are hard to change and that Goldfields traders must be assured of a regular and frequent service, and that present port facilities are inadequate as to cargo-handling plant, lighting on the wharves and the rollingstock for rail-ways, etc. In fact, the whole set-up is bristling with difficulties, none of which, however, is insurmountable if the problem is tackled in a proper and businesslike manner.

Before the port of Esperance can be made attractive to Goldfields business interests it is essential to establish a regular and frequent shipping service. But the question immediately arises: Have we sufficient trade to warrant such a service? As things are at present, I doubt it, but a ship calling every month would considerably boost inward freight. That, I believe, would present no great difficulties, if an all-out effort were made by traders generally and agents in particular. Now, let us contemplate the position from the point of view of shipping companies. If ships are to be operated successfully, loading inward and outward is essential. Obviously this aspect presents greater difficulties and the desired objective—exportable produce—becomes more difficult of attainment.

It is my opinion that large-scale land settlement schemes, without adequate departmental testing and experimenting—judging by past experience—are unwise. Nevertheless, I believe that this is where the State could take a hand in the development of the Esper-

ance coastal plain. Therefore, whilst strongly advocating the development of the Esperance light lands area, I would urge that an experimental farm be established in the Esperance light soil districts. This should not be difficult of accomplishment and should not be costly. As the experimental stage in the Salmon Gums area is long past, I would urge the transfer of the existing staff and implements to a site near Gibson's Soak and the pine plantation which, I understand, is now in the hands of the Forests Department.

I would advocate also experimentation in specialised fodders, such as clovers, grasses, lupins and turnips, with particular attention to the Kudzu vine, which virtually saved the Dust Bowl in America. The man who goes into this area with the idea that it will grow anything is wrong. I will tell the House what he will grow—he will grow tired; he will grow poor, and he will grow old. Another thing that must be aimed at in such a scheme is control of erosion. Small paddocks and preservation of belts of existing native scrub would serve a dual purpose—shelter for sheep and the breaking up of high erosive winds. I feel that this is a sphere where politics and politicians can justify their existence and legitimately intervene in the interests of a large and important section of the community. I intend, consistently and continuously, to work to that end.

The progress made in other parts of the State with diesel transport to supplement our over-worked railway system, with its record of successful achievements, its economy and efficiency, prompts me to advocate very strongly the allocation of a diesel power unit to the Goldfields area. This would do more to relieve the pressure on passenger and mail transport than at first sight one would think possible. I would point out that the inability of the slow and overworked Esperance train service to run to schedule is the main contributing factor to the late running of the Kalgoorlie-Perth express, supplying material for, and inviting, adverse comment from interstate travellers and from Goldfields residents alike.

Summing up, if industry in Western Australia with regard to its goldmining and pyrites potentialities is encouraged, as it should be, with the imposition of more

equitable water charges in general and for Norseman in particular, the provision of a regular, fast, modern diesel transport service, with the development of our exports by the utilisation of the productivity of the hinterland and with the development of Esperance as the port for the Goldfields, then the decentralisation policy of the present Government would begin to be an accomplished fact, and not a recurring dream of post-atomic ideology.

**HON. H. HEARN** (Metropolitan): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 3.46 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 22nd July, 1948.

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### MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. E. Islip).

The SPEAKER took the Chair.

### MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner 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.

### ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the return of a writ for the vacancy in the Guildford-Midland electorate caused by the death of the Hon. W. D. Johnson, showing that John Joseph Brady has been duly elected. I am prepared to swear in the hon. member.

Mr. Brady took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

*Sitting suspended from 12.12 to 3 p.m.*

### SUMMONS FROM THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.

*As to Report on Redistribution of Seats.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (without notice) asked the Premier: Will the Premier give the House an indication of when he expects to make available, either by publishing in the "Government Gazette" or of his own announcement, the report concerning the redistribution of seats?

The PREMIER replied: In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, I made inquiries today as to when this report is likely to be available and I understand it will be ready in about a week's time. As soon as it comes to hand a copy will be posted to each member.

#### PRICE FIXING, ETC.

*As to State's Assumption of Control.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Attorney General: Has his attention been drawn to the statement of the Deputy Premier in "The West Australian" of the 28th May, 1948, that he sees no diffi-