

SWEARING IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. North (Claremont) took and subscribed the oath, and signed the roll.

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.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC REGULATION—PERTH-COTTESLOE TAXI SERVICE.

Mr. NORTH (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that in last February the Minister for Works promised the parties concerned that he would not enforce the new regulations regarding the Perth-Cottesloe taxi service until the parties interested had had an opportunity of placing their views before the 'Bus Routes Advisory Committee. 2, Will he, therefore, suspend the operation of taxi route 55, which is specified for Cottesloe as from the 1st August, until he has heard representations from the local bodies concerned.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (Honorary Minister—for the Minister for Works), replied: 1, I have seen a Press report to that effect. 2, Arrangements can be made for the local authorities to place their views before the Advisory Committee, but in the meantime the taxi owners must conform to the regulations.

BILL—NORTHAM MUNICIPAL ICE WORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [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 the Northam Municipal Ice Works Act."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

THE 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. J. J. KENNEALLY (East Perth) [3.35]: 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."

Prior to dealing with matters referred to in the Governor's Speech, I desire to add my congratulations to those already offered you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to the position you now occupy. May I, at the same time, also congratulate the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition on their re-election to their respective offices.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, I do not know that I am much obliged to you!

Mr. KENNEALLY: We all hope—I think the majority of the House will agree with me—that the Premier and Leader of the Opposition will long be spared to continue to occupy their respective posts!

Hon. W. J. George: There must be some rearrangement.

Mr. Teesdale: The member for East Perth is most facetious for a start!

Mr. KENNEALLY: I was glad to hear the Leader of the Opposition, when congratulating Mr. Speaker on his re-election, express the wish that you, Sir, would continue to occupy that position for the next three years. I take it that that hon. member, like others occupying seats in this Chamber, realises that the Governor's Speech indicates that all those things it was said would happen to Western Australia if Labour were permitted to rule, have proved untrue. As a matter of fact, His Excellency's Speech shows that progress has been made in whatever direction one may look.

Mr. Thomson: In spite of Governments.

Mr. Corboy: And not because of your help, any way.

Mr. KENNEALLY: As the member for Katanning referred to "Governments," and not to one Government, his interjection was all the better. As time goes on, and an opportunity is provided for the development of Labour's policy, the people will realise, despite what the member for Katanning has referred to as "Governments," that the justification for past predictions has not been proved. After all, he was partly correct in that he referred to Governments prior to the present Administration. Throughout the Governor's Speech there are references to records that have been established during the regime of the present Government. When we look at the harvest returns, we discover that a record has been achieved. There is also a record regarding the area stripped for grain.

Mr. Mann: Do you give the Government credit for the good season?

Mr. KENNEALLY: There is also a record regarding the number of sheep in the country.

Mr. Mann: Is that to be placed to the credit of the Government, too?

Mr. KENNEALLY: There is also a record regarding wool production; a record in fruit exports, and so on. Where are those people who said that if Labour were to gain power, nothing but ruin would follow in Western Australia? Where are those critics now?

Mr. Panton: They are silent.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I can visualise what will happen in the future. Let hon. members remember the period when another Government left office with a mythical surplus of £13,000 to the credit of the Treasury. As a matter of fact, it required a very powerful microscope indeed to discover that surplus, and even with the aid of that instrument it was impossible to satisfactorily discover the excess. I recollect that the present Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members were accustomed to ask the Premier of the day questions such as, "Where is the surplus?", "What have you done with it?" They put those queries over and over again until it almost seemed that the surplus could be seen bulging out of Ministers' pockets. Now I expect to hear, during the course of the session, various hon. members asking the Premier the questions, "What have you done with the deficit?", "Where is it?", "Why have you taken from me that

which I have been in the habit of playing with for years?" We must all realise that the loss of the deficit means that the pastime of some hon. members has been taken away from them. So long as it is for the benefit of the country, no doubt the Leader of the Opposition will be prepared to put up with the loss.

Hon. W. J. George: The interests of Western Australia come first in our politics.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I hope so, and I hope the hon. member will realise that fact as the Address-in-reply debate proceeds. I trust, if time permits, when the long questionnaire that seems to be so popular with some hon. members at the opening of Parliament, is disposed of, legislation that hon. members will be asked to give attention to will be directed at giving the relief necessary from the point of view of those represented by members sitting on the Government side of the House. The Governor's Speech referred to the question of group settlement. A fair amount of public funds has been sunk in that scheme, and unfortunately it has to be admitted that a considerable portion of that money is lost. The amalgamation of some of the groups is long overdue. As one who has had an opportunity of inspecting the various groups, I cannot but express the conviction, first, that an amalgamation of some of the holdings must take place, and, secondly, no matter what Government may be in charge of the Treasury bench, Ministers will have to give consideration to the question of writing off some of the money that has been sunk in connection with the group settlement scheme. If people are to be asked to make a living with a load of debt hanging round their necks, they will not have the chance of doing so. No matter what Government may be blamed for the conditions under which the groups exist now, and apart from the blaming of any Government in particular for the selection of the land on which groups have been placed, land on which such groups should never have been located, it is obvious that attention has to be given to the whole question, and it is equally obvious that there must be some writing off of debts incurred. I trust that an early opportunity will be taken by the Government to introduce a Bill in this Chamber to provide for State insurance. In view of the experience of hon. members of this House, and also of people

outside the Chamber regarding insurance matters, the time is ripe for the Government to introduce a system of State insurance. In any discussion that takes place regarding that question, it must be realised that a system of State insurance is not the perquisite of any particular party in politics. If we look around Australia and to countries beyond the Commonwealth, we find that State insurance has been in operation in countries that have not experienced the rule of Labour Governments at all. In view of that fact, I hope when such a Bill is introduced in this Chamber, it will be discussed from the standpoint of the interests of the country and not from a purely party point of view. I notice that references are made in the Governor's Speech to the conferences that have taken place in Melbourne, at which the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States was reviewed. Ever since Federation was accomplished the question of financial relationships between the Commonwealth and the States has caused considerable anxiety to those charged with the guidance of State affairs. I hope it will be found that the conference just concluded has succeeded in formulating a scheme whereby the distrust that has previously existed will disappear. Still, it would be wrong to purchase temporary respite from financial difficulties at the expense of possible permanent financial paralysis. Such a possibility, I hope, will not occur, but it is one against which we must guard. Because of that I hope the Premier and his Ministers will see that the question is introduced in a non-party spirit so that members may be able to discuss it fully, analyse the proposals and consider whether they are in the best interests of the State. If we are going to adopt a system that will prove a successful substitute for the per capita payments, we must be free to discuss it apart from party politics.

Mr. Mann: You should have given the Premier his instructions earlier.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I hope the Premier will never find himself in the position of having to take instructions from the member for Perth.

Mr. Lambert: The member for Perth is starting very early to cackle.

Mr. Teesdale: So long as you do not lay, it will be all right.

Mr. KENNEALLY: I hope that the Government at an early date will give attention

to the question of transport in this State. Railways are necessary to carry on the business of the country, but one section of railway, unfortunately, traverses the centre of the city, as a result of which certain portions of the population are frequently subjected to temporary isolation. The previous Parliament considered the question of improvements to the Swan River, and the measure introduced to authorise those improvements showed that the Government were capable of taking a broad view of public affairs. Let me express the hope that a similarly broad view will be taken of the problem of transport. If the railway is to continue to run through the centre of the city, better provision must be made to meet the convenience of the people who at present are subject to delay and the loss that it entails. Loss of time is occasioned to traffic at the Melbourne-road crossing. No doubt the mention of the Melbourne-road crossing delays will evoke some little support also from the other side of the House.

Mr. Mann: Hear, hear!

Mr. KENNEALLY: I fully expected a little encouragement from that quarter, but we must not confine attention to the Melbourne-road crossing. There is a place called East Perth, in which district are several crossings that call for improvement by the provision of either bridges or subways. I compliment the Government on the attention they have devoted to the question of migration. This question is inseparably associated with that of unemployment. At present there is a system in vogue under which people are being brought to the State—I say "brought" advisedly—under conditions that sail very close to the prohibitive sections of the Commonwealth Immigration Act. This State is being practically flooded by the introduction of southern Europeans, and while those people are able immediately on their arrival to secure employment, many of our own citizens cannot obtain work. I am not going to say that the prevalence of unemployment can be attributed more to one Government than to another. I had occasion to speak of unemployment when Governments other than Labour were in power. Western Australia is a State whose people are engaged in what may be termed seasonal occupations, and until we succeed in developing secondary industries, there

will be a portion of the year during which unemployment will be experienced. The records show that the State has received a net increase of 2,000 southern Europeans during the last 12 months. It is impossible for us to find employment for that number of new arrivals in addition to the people already settled in the State. I realise that the State Government have no control over migration, but I bring the question forward in the hope that the Premier will make representations to the Federal Government with a view to ascertaining whether it is possible to introduce the quota system, as is done in America, and thus restrict the number of southern Europeans permitted to come here. America has the problem of a large coloured population, and people who have studied the question from the point of view of that country are agreed that the difficulties occasioned by the coloured population are only slightly greater than those arising from the flooding of the country with southern Europeans and thus lowering the mentality of the nation. We would be wise to tackle the problem early. Thanks to the wisdom of former legislators, supported by the men who are legislating for Australia to-day, we have successfully avoided the troubles that arise from a coloured population. Having avoided the first trouble, are we going to tackle the question of the influx of southern Europeans and thus avoid the second trouble? I hope the Government will find it possible to take such steps as will guard against an influx of people, whose presence is liable to reduce the average mentality of our people or operate detrimentally to those already established in the State and in need of employment. While the Labour Government have been responsible for the introduction of much legislation that has benefited the country, I hope the deliberations of the present Parliament will result in placing on the statute-book additional measures of social reform, the need for which was recognised by the electors in returning Labour to power for another term. There are various measures coming within the purview of the State Parliament that demand early attention. The measures I have in mind would not only prove of immense benefit to the community but would assist the State to flourish as it should do. One of the most important

measures of reform is that relating to child endowment. The movement started recently to bring prominently before the people the need for a system of child endowment is still fresh in the minds of members. Child endowment is no new idea in Australia and it does not represent any attempt to establish a new social order. An experiment that has recently been made in one of the States will be watched with interest, but I hope that no opportunity will be lost to afford similar assistance to the motherhood of this State. Two years ago Parliament passed an Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, which had for its object the granting to workers of an adequate wage. Had the method therein prescribed of computing the basic wage been continued, there is not the slightest doubt that the workers would have obtained some relief. We find, however, that the system of computation has been altered and the wage supposed to be necessary for a worker is fixed on what is known as the four-unit basis, namely, a man, his wife and two children. Previously it was computed on the five-unit basis, namely, a man, his wife and three children. We in this Chamber should not hesitate to say that that basis of computation should continue to operate. Parliament having agreed to that basis should be prepared to grant childhood endowment in order to make good the deficiency. I trust that the deliberations of this House will result in benefit to the State and that the various reforms so essential to the prosperity of the country will receive due consideration, so that when we reach the end of our labours, we shall be able to say we have done at least something to secure the success of Western Australia, in which we are all so interested.

MR. ROWE (North-East Fremantle) [3.57]: I rise formally to second the motion moved by the member for East Perth.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [3.58]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd August, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.59 p.m.