

## NEW SOUTH WALES.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### THIRTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

#### Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 20 September, 1944.

Opening of Parliament—Administration of Oath—  
Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Retire-  
ment of Mr. R. G. H. Campbell—Officers of the  
Legislative Council—Acting Usher of the Black  
Rod—Leave of Absence—Law of Evidence Bill  
(Formal)—Governor's Speech: Address-in-Reply  
—Supply Bill, 1944—Special Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at noon.

The opening Prayer was read.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Clerk of the Parliaments read the proclamation convening Parliament.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Chamber, and was received by the President, accompanied by other members and officers of the House. A message was forwarded to the Legislative Assembly that his Excellency awaited the attendance of hon. members of that House.

The Assembly having come, his Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

It gives me great pleasure to meet you at the opening of this, the Second Session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament of New South Wales. Since I last addressed you we have passed the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of war. In Europe that anniversary has coincided

with the glorious victory of Allied arms in the Battle of France, which has been won within three months of the launching of the invasion of Normandy on June the 6th. The Allies are now marching to the assault on Germany itself. Not only from France and the Low Countries in the West, but from Russia and Poland in the East, and from Italy and the Balkans in the South, the Allied Forces are driving the Nazi hordes back on their last defences within their own frontiers.

Nearer home, the battle of the Pacific also approaches a climax. The initiative has been wrested from the enemy. The Japanese are steadily being driven out of the Australian, British and Allied territories which they occupied. Week by week the Allied Forces get closer to Japan itself. The first blows have already been struck against the Japanese mainland. We have reason to be devoutly thankful for these splendid successes. We pay our tribute to the gallant dead who have made the supreme sacrifice in the cause of liberty. We send a message of hope to all prisoners of war. The time is coming when they will be freed and when they will be re-united to their loved ones at home. Since the last Parliament met, a general election has resulted in the return to office of the previous Administration. My Advisers take this as implying approval

of their conduct of affairs during the critical years of 1941 to 1944, and as an endorsement of the programme they have announced for the future. They intend, therefore, to press forward their plans for further social and industrial reform, for the development of the State's potentialities to the full, and for wholehearted co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in the great task of post-war reconstruction.

Victory will bring problems no less difficult than the problems of war-time. If we are to win the peace we must tackle them with vigour and with courage. A great deal will depend on the spirit in which we approach these problems. Only with sound planning, with effective co-operation between Governments, and with mutual confidence between all sections of the community, shall we make the best of the future. My Ministers are already actively engaged with the Commonwealth Government in planning a smooth transition from war to peace. Demobilisation and rehabilitation face us with a task of supreme importance. Responsibility rests primarily with the Commonwealth Government, but my Advisers are doing all they can to help. They have, in particular, made available the whole of the resources of the technical education system in this State for the training of discharged members of the services, who may thus be helped to resume interrupted careers or be equipped to engage in new occupations where there is the best assurance of permanent employment.

At the present time over 10,000 present and discharged members of the services are receiving training through the Technical Colleges of this State under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme. The number to

be trained will, of course, increase substantially when the war ends. Plans have, therefore, already been made to extend accommodation at existing Technical Colleges and to establish several additional colleges as soon as circumstances permit. This development of technical education will take into consideration the expansion of industry and of the need for more extensive training facilities in general.

Through the Reconstruction and Development Division, established by my Ministers towards the end of last year, close contact is maintained with the Commonwealth Authorities and with the various State Departments and Reconstruction Committees. My Advisers are determined that post-war reconstruction shall not just mean a reversion to pre-war conditions. In all fields where the State Government has a primary responsibility, sound foundations of progress are being laid with a view to securing for our people the happiness and prosperity which they have a right to expect from the proper application of our resources. Greater educational opportunity and the raising of the general level of education are regarded by my Ministers as essential to national progress. They have, therefore, already prepared plans for the extension and development of existing facilities. A comprehensive review of further steps to be taken in the immediate post-war period is almost complete.

Extensive developments in health and social policy are under consideration. My Ministers are most anxious to have the full assistance and co-operation of the people as a whole in the work of building the community of the future. This work is one which every citizen should have close to his heart, and in

which each has his part to play. My Ministers are firmly convinced that the fulfilment of post-war objectives depends on the conservation and development of natural resources so as to enable the country to carry the maximum white population with the highest possible standards of living. They have accordingly set in hand a survey of the resources of the State, which is to proceed in three stages. The first stage involves taking stock of natural assets such as soil, climate, water, forests, fisheries and minerals. All existing information is being collected and collated, and research is being applied to fill gaps in our knowledge.

The second stage involves an analysis of the existing development and employment structure. What might be called a "manpower budget" is being prepared, showing the resources of skilled and unskilled labour, the use made of them in the past and the extent to which they will meet our needs after the war. A review is being made of industry to ascertain its capacity to supply the requirements of such great undertakings as the joint Commonwealth and State Housing programme, and the State programme of developmental works, as well as to supply the increased volume of goods and services which will be needed to satisfy the post-war demand. Inquiry is also being made into the effect of the past use and abuse of natural resources on the future. The third stage is the preparation of the actual plan of development with provision for the decentralisation of its detailed working out and application. In this phase of reconstruction especially the close co-operation and help of the whole people are needed.

The Eastern and Central Divisions of the State have been divided into seventeen regions, mostly centred in rich river

valleys which are capable of carrying very much greater populations than at present, but not overlooking the magnificent tableland country, the great plains, and the mining areas of the West. A Development Committee for each region is to be set up. Local Government bodies are being asked to nominate six of the twelve members of each Committee. The other six are to be experts in commerce, secondary industry, agriculture, stock, mining, forestry, land settlement, etc., according to local conditions. The intention is that each committee shall be a body of citizens of the region with expert knowledge of different phases of its economic life. My Advisers believe that a sound plan for the economic development of the State can be prepared only by the co-ordination of a series of detailed regional plans prepared by citizens of the regions in question having first-hand knowledge of the problems they are asked to solve.

The keen interest which the Commonwealth Government is showing in these activities in this State strengthens belief in the soundness of a regional planning based on a survey of resources. My Ministers realise that development policy must take account of world conditions and overseas markets, in connection with which it is the Commonwealth Government's function to advise and assist. They look forward to maintaining the closest relations with the Commonwealth Authorities in these fields. A large programme of public works to be carried out in the immediate post-war period has been prepared. This programme includes many urgent works which would already have been carried out had it not been for the concentration of our resources on the war.

At a recent meeting of the National Works Council the programme of highest priority works was endorsed in principle. Steps are now being taken to have each of the works planned to the stage where it can be commenced immediately the opportunity arises. The works included in the New South Wales programme will cost over fifty million pounds. My Advisers do not, however, regard the programme as a final one. The individual works included in it will be subject to review and alteration in the light of further examination. Other works of equal urgency and importance will be added from time to time.

Provision is made in the programme for several water conservation projects, including storage dams on the Tumut, Lachlan, Macquarie, Namoi and Hunter Rivers, for a number of water supply and sewerage schemes for country towns with extensions in the Metropolitan and Newcastle districts, for electricity transmission lines, for additional facilities at coastal ports, for a comprehensive programme of road improvement and construction, including several bridges, for forestry projects, for buildings urgently required for the housing of Government activities, for a number of new fire stations, for the construction of new omnibuses and the provision of additional transport facilities, for several soil conservation projects, for new hospitals and the addition of new units to existing hospitals throughout the State, for additional wharfage facilities in Sydney Harbour, for extensive renewals and improvements required for the more efficient working of the railways system, including additional rolling stock, for a number of new schools and additions to existing schools and new buildings for child welfare purposes.

The main objective of my Advisers is the complete planning of a carefully balanced programme of works, designed to meet the essential needs of the various parts of the State, and to contribute in the fullest measure to its sound development, whilst at the same time ensuring that a substantial volume of remunerative employment will be available. Housing is particularly prominent in the plans prepared by my Ministers. The importance of providing adequate housing cannot be over-emphasised. A separate Ministry of Housing has now been created, and, to the extent that available resources of manpower and materials will permit, an active home-building programme is being undertaken. This programme will be progressively extended during the war, and, at the end of the war, will be rapidly expanded into a programme designed to overtake as quickly as possible the tremendous housing shortage which now exists in this State. A preliminary survey recently made by the New South Wales Housing Commission in this State showed that over 100,000 new dwellings are needed to meet normal requirements.

The joint Commonwealth and State post-war housing plans agreed upon at the Premiers' Conference last month have established the main principles for carrying out the programme of Government - sponsored housing, designed mainly to meet the needs of families in receipt of low incomes. This programme contemplates the erection in this State of approximately 12,000 homes in the first post-war year, rising to 20,000 homes by the third year after the war. At the same time it is anticipated that programmes of approximately equal magnitude will be carried out through normal channels. In this programme there

will be full opportunities for such bodies as the Rural Bank, the Co-operative Building Societies, Friendly Societies, Banks, Insurance Companies and other organisations and individuals to play a part in meeting our housing needs.

The settlement of ex-servicemen on the land is a matter regarding which my Ministers are particularly anxious that plans should be soundly based. They have taken special pains to examine the problems of soldier settlement in all their ramifications with a view to ensuring that the mistakes of the past shall not be repeated and that the decisions reached will give the settlers every prospect of success. At the Premiers' Conference last month there was a complete exchange of views between the representatives of the Commonwealth and State Governments and a substantial degree of agreement was reached. The question is to be further considered at a Premiers' Conference to be held on the 3rd October. My Advisers fully anticipate that the general principles will then be determined on a basis which can be applied uniformly throughout Australia. My Advisers have been proceeding with their consideration of post-war policy in several other directions. Their proposals, insofar as they may require legislative authority, will be placed before you progressively during this and subsequent sessions.

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

During the session you will be asked to consider the Budget for the present financial year, and to provide for the financial necessities of the Public Services of the State. The Estimates of Receipts and Expenditure have been prepared and will be submitted for your consideration during the session. Last

year my Ministers budgeted for a surplus of £545,350. Expectations were, however, exceeded and the year ended with a surplus of £1,183,347. This result was achieved after making provision for public works and services and for the greatest possible co-operation with the Commonwealth Government in the war effort.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

Having received a renewed expression of confidence from the electors, my Advisers intend to proceed, in this and succeeding Sessions of this Parliament, with a programme of legislation designed to implement the policy placed before the people and to achieve the utmost social and industrial reform possible under war conditions. Amongst the measures which my Ministers intend to submit to you will be one to constitute a Central Electricity Authority which, without taking over existing bodies, or encroaching on those fields at present being developed by County Councils and other local governing bodies, will be able to co-ordinate existing and future supply systems, to investigate electricity needs of areas at present unserved, and to subsidise sub-economic services. The importance of electricity in relation to post-war development needs no emphasis. The establishment of this body will be of great and direct benefit in the carrying out of reconstruction plans.

A further election undertaking which is to be implemented without delay is the authorisation of co-operative building societies to make advances up to 100 per cent. of the value of securities, instead of 90 per cent. as at present. This step is important because of the expansion of home building which is

now commencing. At the same time a number of other desirable amendments to the Co-operation Act will be presented to you for consideration. An important measure which it is proposed to place before you will be a Bill to effect general amendments to the Local Government Act. With the approach of victory and the stimulation of building and other forms of development which must follow, my Advisers realise the importance of making proper provision for town planning. It is therefore their intention to present for your consideration a measure which will deal with this important subject.

A Local Government (Electoral Provisions) Amendment Bill will be introduced early in the Session to deal with difficulties met with in the compilation of complete rolls of electors for the triennial Local Government Elections to be held in December next and to enable the State electoral rolls to be used in supplementation of Local Government rolls. My Ministers continue to be conscious of the special needs of our rural population and will implement as early as possible the various proposals which were submitted to the electors.

Amongst the industrial legislation proposed, a most important measure is one intended to implement the undertaking given to the electors that further amendments would be made to the Workers' Compensation Act, in particular to bring compensation benefits into line with the present greatly increased cost of living.

My Ministers are concerned at the position which has been brought about by a recent High Court decision. For many years the law has been interpreted as being that contributory negligence on the part of a person injured cannot be raised as a defence by a person guilty of

some breach of a duty imposed upon him by Statute. In the *Piro v. Foster* case, however, the High Court has interpreted the law differently. To safeguard the rights of the worker against the effects of this unforeseen position, legislation will be introduced for the purpose of declaring the law to be as it was previously understood in New South Wales.

Another measure of great importance to the worker which my Advisers propose to introduce during the Session is a bill to confer upon employees generally a statutory right to at least two weeks' annual holidays with pay. This provision, however, will be a minimum, and the measure will not interfere with the position of employees who at present enjoy, or who may in the future be granted, leave rights more favourable than those contemplated by this legislation. Another bill to be submitted is one the object of which is to provide for the payment of compensation to persons receiving injury or suffering loss arising out of or in the course of fighting bush fires. My Advisers firmly believe that this will be a source of encouragement to the splendid efforts of volunteer bush fire fighters. A Mines Inspection (Amendment) Bill is contemplated for the purpose of revising in many respects the present legislation dealing with the regulation of mines other than coal or shale mines.

My Ministers also intend to submit for your consideration a bill to provide for the registration of public accountants. At the first opportunity, my Advisers propose to resubmit, in accordance with the undertaking given to the electors, the Law Reform Bill dealing with the matter of survival of actions, and provision of compensation for disabilities arising from nervous shock. Believing

that such a provision has become necessary, my Ministers have had prepared a measure to provide for the registration of masseurs and physiotherapists and this will be placed before you during the Session. My Advisers are conscious of the need for provisions to improve conditions in the taxi industry and to regulate the granting, renewal and transfer of registrations and licences. Accordingly, one of the measures which will be presented for your consideration will be a bill to achieve these purposes.

In this review I have mentioned only some of the bills which my Advisers propose to submit to you. Numerous other important measures are contemplated, including legislation to deal with such matters as the following: The grant to members of the Police Force of a legal right to extended leave and provision for the payment of the monetary value of extended leave not taken by members of the force before death; the amendment of the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act to deal with the impracticability, under war conditions, of issuing notices in respect of the failure of persons to record their votes at recent elections; amendment of the Government Railways Act to enable effective action to be taken in regard to the pillaging of goods in transit; modernisation of legislation relating to the bee industry; amendment of the Factories and Shops Act; the Auctioneers, Stock and Station and Real Estate Agents Act; the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act; the Companies (Death Duties) Act; as well as comprehensive amendments of the legislation within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Conservation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

Anticipations of victory will not be allowed to diminish the great efforts which are still needed in order to bring the war to an early and triumphant conclusion. Nevertheless, new tasks are appearing on the horizon, and it is not too soon to face up to them. Peace will bring problems no less difficult than those of war. We shall need the same determination that has enabled us to bear the trials of the last five years if we are to solve those problems, as I trust we may, in a fine spirit of prudence, moderation, fortitude, and justice. I now leave you to the discharge of your important duties with the earnest prayer that, under Divine Guidance, your labours may conduce to the welfare and happiness of all sections of the community.

The Assembly then withdrew.

[*The President left the chair at 12.35 p.m.*  
*The House resumed at 4.30 p.m.*]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT reported the receipt of a Commission empowering the Chairman of Committees, in the absence of the President, to administer the oath to new members.

Commission read by the Clerk.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT nominated the Hon. George Stacher Archer, the Hon. Frank William Spicer, and Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Thomas Steele to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees during the present session of Parliament.

RETIREMENT OF MR. R. G. H. CAMPBELL.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I have to report to the House that Reginald George Henry Campbell, Esquire, retired from his office as Clerk Assistant as from 9th September, 1944.

The Hon. R. R. DOWNING (Minister of Justice and Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.33]: I move:

(1) That this House desires to express and to record its appreciation of the service rendered by Reginaid George Henry Campbell, Esquire, as Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Council.

(2) That the foregoing resolution be communicated to Mr. Campbell by the President.

Mr. Campbell has had a long and distinguished career in the Public Service of this State. He entered the service of the Legislative Council on 1st October, 1917, and graduated through all the positions on the staff to the position of Clerk Assistant, from which he has just retired. For a time Mr. Campbell served on the staff of the Parliamentary Library. Prior to his joining the staff he was the first occupant of the position of Secretary to the leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, and he served in that capacity under Mr. (later Sir Charles Gregory) Wade and Sir George Fuller. During his long period on the staff of Parliament Mr. Campbell rendered distinguished service. He was specially selected to act as secretary to the Royal Commission on Lunacy Law and Administration in 1922, and also to the Royal Commission that inquired into the conduct of the Parramatta by-election. His work received the highest commendation from both Commissioners. Mr. Campbell also materially assisted in the work of the select committee of this House that under the chairmanship of the late Sir Joseph Carruthers inquired into the conditions and the prospects in the agricultural industry. His long and meritorious service has earned the gratitude of hon. members, and it is in appreciation of his service that I now move this motion. My appreciation goes out to Mr. Campbell particularly for the assistance that he gave me during the very difficult Committee stages of many bills that came before this Chamber. On such occasions Mr. Campbell gave me every assistance, and by his long experience

and knowledge rendered me great service indeed. We all sincerely regret that the necessity has now arisen for his retirement from the service of this House. We wish him good health and happiness for many years to come, and trust that the friendship that has grown up between him and members will not be broken, and that we shall see him frequently in the precincts of this Chamber.

The Hon. Sir HENRY MANNING [4.36]: I take this opportunity of saying that I endorse with enthusiasm the observations made by the leader of the House in regard to Mr. Campbell. I do so for many reasons. One reason is the public service that Mr. Campbell has rendered, another is the respect that he secured for himself personally from every hon. member and yet another the personal assistance that he always was to me over a lengthy period when I occupied the position now occupied by the Hon. Mr. Downing. The House is singularly fortunate in the officers that it has had to assist it in the performance of much of its parliamentary work. From those officers we, as members of this House, have received a great deal of invaluable assistance. I think these observations are particularly pertinent in the case of Mr. Campbell, because if there was one thing that characterised his work it was his zeal and efficiency. The personal regard we had for him must give him a good deal of satisfaction. One recalls his very generous nature and great capacity for friendship. I most certainly join with the leader of the House in wishing Mr. Campbell enjoyment in his retirement. We hope that he will visit us often. We shall always be glad to see him, and in seeing him we shall have a reminder of the very considerable service that he has rendered in his position as Clerk Assistant.

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON [4.38]: As an ex-Minister of the Crown, I endorse the encomiums that have been lavished upon our worthy friend, Mr. Campbell. During the twenty years'

occupancy of my position in this Chamber, I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him, and often when I sought his advice on public questions I found him to be a man of the utmost profundity and ability. I listened to him with pleasure on many occasions, and derived a good deal of information and assistance from my many conversations with him. But on some occasions I felt somewhat sorry for him. I have seen him carry this heavy emblem of authority—the Black Rod—and display a good deal of nervousness. He was a man who placed duty above everything. The efficient service that he rendered as an officer of this House is symbolical of the general efficiency of the other parliamentary officers, and, I think, of the Public Service of New South Wales in general. I express the hope that we shall see a good deal of him in the future. I hope that his period of well-earned retirement will be blessed with every degree of health and prosperity. As I have often said when a Minister in this House, none of us could carry out his duties efficiently, whether a member or a Minister, were it not for that ready co-operation, assistance and advice afforded us by the officers of the House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

#### OFFICERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I have to report to the House that his Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased, on the recommendation of the President, to make the following promotions in the department of the Legislative Council: Mr. A. D. Badgery to be Clerk Assistant, *vice* Mr. R. G. H. Campbell, retired; Mr. J. R. Stevenson (on Active Service) to be Usher of the Black Rod and First Clerk, *vice* Mr. A. D. Badgery, promoted; Mr. L. C. Bowen to be Second Clerk, *vice* Mr. J. R. Stevenson, promoted, and to act as Usher of the Black Rod and First Clerk during the absence of Mr. Stevenson on military service.

The Hon. R. R. DOWNING (Minister of Justice and Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.42]: I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating the members of the staff who have been promoted in consequence of the retirement of Mr. Campbell. These gentlemen are well known to us and we have no qualms that the high efficiency of this Chamber, referred to by the Hon. Sir Henry Manning and the Hon. Mr. Concannon, will be maintained by them in the important duties they are called upon to perform. I feel sure that my confidence is shared by all hon. members.

The Hon. Sir HENRY MANNING [4.43]: I feel it is important that we should support the observations of the leader of the House. It is certainly one of our great advantages to have a succession of officers of proved ability to fill these positions as they become vacant. I offer my congratulations to the officers who have been promoted, and I feel satisfaction in knowing that their services continue at our disposal. I wish them every good fortune in the new positions that they occupy.

#### ACTING USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT reported the receipt of the following communication from the Governor:

Government House, Sydney,  
6th September, 1944.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have this day administered the oath of allegiance and the official oath to Mr. Lionel Charles Bowen, Acting Usher of the Black Rod.

I have pleasure in forwarding such oaths herewith.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,

WAKEHURST,  
Governor.

The Honourable the President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a communication from the Governor intimating that leave of absence had been granted to the Hon. M. E. Manfred during the forthcoming session of Parliament.

LAW OF EVIDENCE BILL (*formal*).

Bill presented and read a first time.

## GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The DEPUTY - PRESIDENT: I have received a copy of the Speech which his Excellency the Governor has made to both Houses of Parliament, copies of which have been circulated among hon. members. It will be printed in the *Minutes*. Is it desired that the Speech should be read, or that members should take it as read?

Resolved, by consent, that the speech be taken as read.

The Hon. S. C. WILLIAMS [4.56]: I move:

That the following address be presented by the whole House to the Governor, in reply to the Speech which his Excellency had been pleased to make to both Houses of Parliament, viz.:—

*To his Excellency the Right Honourable JOHN DE VERE, BARON WAKEHURST, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Captain in the Reserve of Officers of the Territorial Army, Governor of the State of New South Wales and its Dependencies, in the Commonwealth of Australia.*

May it please your Excellency,—

We, his Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our thanks for your Excellency's Speech, and to assure you of our unfeigned attachment to his most Gracious Majesty's Throne and Person.

2. We beg to assure your Excellency that our earnest consideration will be given to the measures to be submitted to us.

3. We join your Excellency in the hope that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, our labours may be so directed as to advance the best interests of all sections of the community.

I esteem it an honour and privilege to move this motion on the opening of the second session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament of New South Wales. His Excellency this morning made reference to the debt of gratitude we owe our brave and generous Allies assisting in the destruction of Nazism, Fascism and other like tendencies. We are also under a heavy obligation to those who have paid the greatest sacrifice of all—that of their own lives, in the service of their country and for the betterment of mankind. It behoves us all, not only as parliamentarians, but as citizens, to see that the dependants of those gallant members of our fighting forces receive nothing but the best and that their rights and privileges are safeguarded. His Excellency also referred to the war in the Pacific, and we all hope with him that on the termination of hostilities in the European zone, the maximum degree of help will be despatched to this theatre so that the war in the Pacific can be brought to a swift and successful conclusion. Without that necessary help, the Pacific war might be prolonged indefinitely.

Reference has been made to the fact that the Government was returned to office by a large majority, which is taken as a vote of confidence. 1941 and 1942 were the bitterest trial years of the Pacific war, and the Government, with the assistance of the Opposition and of the citizens, did its utmost to assist in the handling of the affairs of the nation during that very trying period. I am sure that the Government regards its return to office with such a large majority as a vote of confidence by the electors, and I feel convinced that during the coming term the Government will do nothing that will detract from that confidence.

His Excellency referred to social and industrial reform, and I am sure that when the measures that have been foreshadowed are brought down they will receive the earnest and mature consideration of all hon. members of this Chamber. I feel sure, also, that only good will result from their being passed into law. Reference was also made to

the wholehearted co-operation that the Government has given to the Federal authorities during the very trying period through which we have passed. I am sure that all hon. members realise that the Government has co-operated to the utmost with the Commonwealth authorities in order to ensure that nothing that could be done to safeguard the citizens of this country was left undone, at the same time paying due regard to any legislation of a composite nature that it was necessary to pass embracing both the State and Federal spheres.

The transition period from war to peace will be a very trying one, not only for the governments of this country, but also for every individual citizen. The rehabilitation into civilian life of the hundreds of thousands of service men and women who are at present engaged in the occupation of war, and the placing back into civil life of thousands of young men and women, who prior to joining the services had never done a day's work, and who were drifting about until they joined the forces, will require the most careful planning. Schemes propounded in his Excellency's Speech embrace technical education and training. Such matters will have to be taken in hand, so that thousands of young men and women who will return to civil life after five years of war will not be disadvantaged. They must be assisted in every possible way. Those who wish to carry on with their training and studies will be assisted to do so, and those who wish to be placed in industry will be assisted to do so under the schemes that are being considered by the Commonwealth Government in conjunction with the State Governments. It is not simply a case of saying "We have hundreds of thousands of young people returning from the war, and we will push them into industry." There is something else to be done. A comprehensive survey of the natural resources of the country will be carried out on proper lines, and a development committee has been set up for the purpose. The State has been divided

into regions. The three phases of the developmental stage will be seen in the printed report. Then there are the regional committees, and the right is reserved to the local government authority in each area to nominate six persons to the committee of twelve. Those committees will inquire into the means of getting the best from the various natural resources offering.

A programme of public works estimated to cost £50,000,000 was mentioned in his Excellency's Speech. Included in that programme is provision for the construction of dams. Various dams are to be built for water conservation, roads and bridges are to be built, forestry is to be dealt with, and housing and many other projects are to be undertaken. That large programme is to be carried out in conjunction with the Federal Government. When that £50,000,000 has been spent, probably further money will be forthcoming so that the construction of public works in this State can be extended with the result that the people generally will be more prosperous. The social and industrial reform foreshadowed in the Speech embraces some very good features, one of which is the creation of a Central Electricity Authority that is to be set up to co-ordinate the existing supply areas and any future supply areas that may be brought into being. That authority will provide for the supply of electricity to districts that are at present unable to obtain it.

Another measure to be introduced will amend the Local Government Act, and I sincerely hope that the Minister concerned will not overlook the question of compulsory voting, which is long overdue. Reference is also made to proposed legislation to protect the workers. That proposed legislation is the result of a ruling of the High Court in the case of *Piro v. Foster*. A measure is to be introduced to provide compensation to persons receiving injury or suffering loss when fighting bush fires. That measure should commend itself to the community generally, because these valiant men, regardless of personal safety, do their utmost to check

the ravages of bush fires and they should be compensated when they sustain injury when so engaged. There is to be a resubmission of the Law Reform Bill dealing with the survivals of actions, and the provision of compensation for disabilities arising from nervous shock, and I hope that when it again comes before this Chamber it will receive consideration more in keeping with its merits than was accorded it on the last occasion.

Another important matter that is referred to in his Excellency's Speech is the proposal to amend the Workers' Compensation Act to provide more liberal payments to persons who are injured in the course of their work. Those of us who are daily associated with industrial activities know the hardships to which people are subjected because of the low compensation now paid, and when I mention that the maximum weekly payment is £5 irrespective of the size of the family, I am confident hon. members will agree that the time for reform is long overdue. Mention is made, too, of the intention to provide to the dependants of deceased police officers the monetary equivalent of extended leave accruing to an officer at the time of his death. Already that benefit is enjoyed by members of other branches of the public service. The Factories and Shops Act is to be amended to give additional power to committees dealing with the provision of such amenities as rest rooms, bathing facilities, and restaurants, the endeavour being to give the worker a better deal, and not to attack the rights of the employer. I am confident that employers will agree that far more and better work can be obtained from a man working under good conditions than is possible from one working under disadvantageous conditions.

Mention is made in his Excellency's Speech of the Government's intention to introduce a measure to confer on employees generally a statutory right to at least two weeks' annual leave with pay. That reform, too, is long overdue. No mention is made of any provision

for sickness benefits for workers generally, and I hope that that omission will be rectified before the life of this Parliament expires. Already public servants enjoy such a privilege, and, as the whole fabric of this State is closely interwoven, it is unwise to give one section of the community a reasonable privilege that is denied to another. The endeavour should be to provide maximum benefits for all.

We should be lacking in courtesy if we failed to refer to the splendid activities of the thirty-third Parliament. During its life the present Labour Government spent £1,500,000 on child welfare alone. I do not say that that should be the ultimate goal, but it is a creditable start. A sum of £112,680 was expended to provide milk for school children, and £210,000 was spent on public health centres. It should be realised that upon our children depends the future soundness of the nation and that if they are properly cared for the nation will benefit when they reach maturity. On hospitalisation, an amount of £9,000,000 was expended, and the provision for food and clothing relief was doubled for a single man and a single woman. That may sound strange at a time when there is such a shortage of manpower, but unfortunately it is a fact that we shall always have in our midst a number of unemployables. That is common to every country in the world. In the case of married couples with children the benefit will be increased by 70.85 per cent. Also, instead of giving these unfortunate people vouchers and coupons with which to obtain food and clothing they were given cash, and I know of no instance in which the privilege was abused. The Government is to be congratulated, too, on providing that the Rural Bank of New South Wales shall accommodate the people with loans, at a reasonable rate of interest, thus obviating the need for the worker to get into the clutches of avaricious money-lenders. The Hire-purchase Agreements Act was amended in such a way as to confer a substantial benefit not only on members of the working classes, but

also on the community generally. During its last term of office, this Government spent over £18,000,000 on education. Yet every newspaper one read during the life of the last Government thrashed the Government for doing nothing to improve the educational facilities of the State. The Government created 100 additional bursaries and abolished the fees of 10s. 6d. and £1 1s. respectively, charged students who sat for the intermediate and leaving certificate examinations.

There were those amongst us who, when the great shipbuilding venture was begun in this State, said "It can't be done." The achievements of the shipbuilding industry in this State, more particularly at Newcastle, give a very forceful answer to those who said that. The Government has established an industry that will remain in existence for all time—an industry that will assist the Commonwealth to build bottoms in the post-war period which will be useful in opening up new avenues of trade with other countries, and also in assisting to keep down freights, as the Commonwealth Shipping Line did so successfully for a considerable period after the last war. Immediately the Commonwealth's ships were disposed of, freights increased 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rd per cent. It is to be hoped that in the post-war period the shipbuilding industry will continue to undertake the repair and maintenance of ships, as it is doing at present. If it does, that will be of great benefit to the Commonwealth as a whole.

During the life of the last Parliament the Government Insurance Office was re-opened to all classes of business, and the returns submitted to us reveal that it, too, has been most successful. I sincerely hope that legislation that is to be brought down by the Government will provide some measure of relief to those unfortunate employees within the public service who work in what are termed "public utilities." The standard working week in New South Wales is forty-four hours, yet we find that in some "public utilities" employees are called upon to work, or to remain in

proximity to their work, much longer. As an illustration I might mention that in the pilot service of this State about two years ago, the men had a working week of 96 hours. As a result of an approach to the court, their hours were reduced to seventy. The last Parliament also reduced the hours of employees of the Fire Brigades. I hope that the hours worked by all employees in the public utilities will be reduced to forty-four. Such a reduction would provide additional employment. The legislation forecast by the Governor, I am sure, will receive the earnest consideration of every hon. member. It is the fervent wish of us all that this session will see the end of the terrible conflict that we are now witnessing. Many of our young men have given their lives for their country, and there is sorrow in many homes. Let us see that we do everything we can to make the path smoother for those who return.

The Hon. W. J. GIBB [5.28]: It gives me very great pleasure to have the honour of seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. I am very pleased, and I think that we should all be pleased, that we meet in an atmosphere far different from any we have known during the past five years. The war in Europe is nearing an end and it will result in the greatest victory in history for the Allies. I do not think it will be very long before the united forces of the Allies are turned against Japan. After that, it will not be long before we celebrate peace throughout the world. The Governor mentioned that this Government held office from 1941 to 1944, one of the most critical periods that this country has faced. Immediately the present Government took over the administration of the State, it proceeded to take action to protect the lives of the people and to improve the conditions of the workers in industry. In conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, during a most strenuous and critical period, it fulfilled its part in the war effort in a highly successful manner. The people became almost

panic stricken at that period. I know it because I had occasion to visit various factories and to meet the workers employed therein. When the blackout was imposed and premises were boarded-up, the public realised that conditions were serious and they naturally looked to the Government for protection. Its record of good service was endorsed by the electors at the last elections.

In his address his Excellency referred to the problems of post-war reconstruction. During the war period workers in the munition factories and in the aircraft and clothing factories have done commendable work. Indeed, Australians generally have contributed towards the war effort to a greater degree than the people of other countries. But they want something out of the peace. They want better conditions and shorter hours of work, and they ask for something that has been worth while fighting for. When the service men return they will look for something better than the conditions which they left when they enlisted, and this Government proposes to make their conditions much better than those which existed prior to the outbreak of war.

His Excellency also mentioned the fact that a Minister for Housing has been appointed. That portfolio has been necessary for a long time. We are told that in the first post-war period 12,000 cottages will be built and that in the second period approximately 20,000 will be erected. A comprehensive home building scheme is necessary. Hon. members should pay a visit to some of the industrial centres, inspect the homes in which the people live and ascertain the rents that are being paid. Some people are living in motor garages. The Government should be commended for having in conjunction with the Commonwealth authorities initiated a housing scheme. If the people are housed in decent surroundings, the resultant better environment will be reflected in our having better Australian citizens. We look to the working class to add to our population, but we should not expect them to work under unsatisfactory

conditions or to live in an unsuitable environment. Better housing accommodation is essential to the well-being of the people and the country.

I am pleased to see in his Excellency's Speech that the Factories and Shops Act is to be amended. I frequently visit clothing factories and should like to see more factory inspectors appointed. The welfare of men and women engaged in industry is most important. Some of the factories in which girls are working lack suitable accommodation. Women are obliged to go behind their machines or tables or stand in a corner behind hanging clothes in order to change from their working clothes to street apparel. I meet these difficulties day after day. Those girls are the future mothers of Australia, and if we hope to rear good Australians as good as those who left these shores to defend our country, the cream of the land, and to ensure us freedom and liberty, we must protect their interests.

The Government is to be complimented on its intention to legislate for an annual holiday for all workers in this State. Many of them are not able to take a holiday because if they lose a day's work they must go short of something in the home, but we do not want that state of things to continue. Those who keep the wheels of industry going and carry on domestic and other necessary work cannot be expected to go on year in and year out without a rest. Even racehorses and cart-horses are turned out for a spell from time to time. I am thankful to be able to compliment a Government that is prepared to do something in this way for the masses of the people.

An amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act is necessary. Compensation payments are too small to support men and women who are incapacitated by industrial accidents. It is all very well for hon. members to theorise about these things, but if they had some experience of the needs of the people they would realise how inadequate these payments are. Those of us who come from the industrial sphere know the hardships of the workers all too well.

This war, we are told, will bring into being a new world. Let us start afresh; let us make it a new world. And when bills are sent to us to improve the condition of the masses, as his Excellency has forecast, let us give them our support. The people have approved the proposals of the Government. I was a member of this House for a short time once before, and I have been here now for a very brief period. I hope that this House will function truly as a House of review and that it will consider proposed legislation in the right spirit. Let us bear in mind the interests of all the people who voted this Government into power to carry out the policy that the Premier submitted to them.

I thank hon. members for their patient hearing of my first speech in this Parliament, and I hope it will not be the last. I have endeavoured, without trying to repeat what the mover of the motion said, to add my little quota to the debate on the splendid Speech delivered by his Excellency.

The Hon. W. E. V. ROBSON [5.48]: I have read through his Excellency's Speech, and I think the most remarkable feature of this document is its length — not what it contains. It reminds me very much of the description of other long-winded speeches—that those who made them took a very long time to say very little. The Governor's opening Speech has ignored all the vital questions of the day, such as the carrying on of commerce, the transport of passenger traffic to and from the country, and the disabilities under which our people are living, caused not by war but by strikes that have been inflicted for so long on the community. What has the Government done at any time during this serious period to counteract these things? Has it ever raised its voice against the action taken by the miners to the detriment of the people of this country? Not once! Surely, in connection with a matter of such vast importance to a community as the extraction of coal, it is time the Government realised the need to make it a serious offence for anyone to formulate,

engage in or maintain a strike! We have our arbitration system, and it should be obeyed by both employers and employees, yet the Government has taken no action. Many years ago we had a great strike in the coal-mining industry, and I well recollect how day after day we asked the then Minister, who during the absence of Sir Charles Wade was an acting member of the Government, what was going to be done in connection with it. His answer generally was something to the effect that if something was not done soon something would have to be done. At last I was told that justice was the objective, and I got up and demanded from the Government, late at night, four of those things that were subsequently embodied in an Act passed by the Wade Government, which was wrongfully called the "Wade Coercion Act." That quite stopped the strike, and prevented the use of union funds for the maintenance of strikes, making it an offence for people to engage in or encourage a strike. Surely when we are at war, the State Government, instead of handing over all responsibility to the Federal Government, might have amended our law in that respect and given effect to it. Hon. members of this Chamber find difficulty in getting here from the country, all because of being threatened with the cutting-off of coal supplies. It is only because the Federal Government has at the last moment threatened to exercise the penal provisions of its own laws that common sense seems to have prevailed and we are now getting a good production of coal. And that is after the people have been hampered in every possible direction, and men have been threatened with loss of employment. I think that one of the matters to which the Governor might have referred is, what is the Government's attitude towards this constant breaking of its own laws—because these are laws of the State which are designed to prevent strikes? I think everyone is beginning to realise that if we are to have laws of this character on our statute book, then like any other laws of the

land they must be obeyed, otherwise there will simply be chaos and democratic Government will break down.

I do not know that I altogether expected to see it, but I should like to have seen some reference to the fact that we meet to-day under happier conditions than we did on the last occasion. What I suppose was the greatest attempt ever made against public freedom has recently been defeated at the polls. I suppose it would be difficult for the Ministry to express their feelings, but I did feel during the referendum campaign, from the seriousness with which the matter was being publicly discussed that there was very great satisfaction at the defeat of those proposals, even on the part of hon. members supporting the Government. I believe the result has caused great public thankfulness, and it is some reward to the men who are fighting for freedom away at the front on our behalf to know that we are not prepared to place ourselves in shackles and be robbed of our freedom, as would probably have been the case if that referendum proposal had not been defeated.

It is very clear that this Government is now taking steps to the best of its ability—though it has not matured any definite plan, and no doubt the responsibility was forced upon it and the State Legislature generally—to expend the moneys that will be provided by the Federal Government for the rehabilitation of the men who have gone away to fight for us at the front. It is very clear that the whole thing can be dealt with in that manner, and I hope that the Government will be able to mature plans so that every man who comes back from the front, having offered his life in the service of his country and the cause of freedom, will be given a better opportunity than he had before the outbreak of war to establish himself as a factor in the development of the national life, and be better able to gain his living, as a reward for the service he has offered by fighting for our freedom and the freedom of the world.

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON [5.57]: I rise briefly to support the motion. At the outset I desire to extend to the mover and the seconder my personal congratulations, and the thanks of the Labour movement for the manner in which they have handled their task. They have both displayed an intimate knowledge of the policy and platform of the Labour movement. They have both exhibited an understanding of current political events in their advocacy of the various proposals advanced in the Speech delivered by his Excellency. We live in an age of extreme difficulty. Before the last Great War in 1914, the national debt of Australia was £250,000,000. When that war terminated it had mounted to £1,400,000,000. To-day we find that the national debt of the Commonwealth—which includes, of course, all State and Federal indebtedness, and war and other loans raised by the Commonwealth and the State—amounts to the colossal sum of close upon £3,000,000,000. With a population of 7,000,000, the national indebtedness of Australia to-day is approximately £400 for every man, woman and child. I read with some concern a statement in the public press recently by the Colonial Treasurer who said that the amount to be raised for the payment of interest, exchange and sinking-fund on the national indebtedness of the Commonwealth was in the vicinity of £100,000,000 per annum. That figure is greater than that of some of the pre-war budgets for the total revenue to be derived from taxation and other sources of revenue by the Commonwealth Government.

We have many complaints about the excessive imposition of taxation, and a supposedly responsible and intelligent people are urging a reduction in it. It recalls to my mind the fact that during a time of depression when citizens of this country were on the verge of destitution and starvation because of unemployment, which is man-made; when our surplus products could not find a place in the markets of the world, money could not be raised to place men in useful and reproductive employment. But when it comes to the destruction of

human life we hear nothing about the curtailment of the advance of capital or the provision of what is called money, which is only the token that represents exchange between goods and services, between labour and national resources. It must appal hon. members when they think of the position facing Australia to-day. Unless we have some form of international writing off of indebtedness, how can Australia, with 7,000,000 people, hope to meet interest, exchange and sinking fund charges on the national debt? How can we hope to find a market for our exportable surplus? We have held this country for one hundred and fifty years, but we are still a primary producing nation; the export of manufactured goods from Australia to other parts of the world is negligible. America will be on the winning side at the termination of the war, and being possessed of the remarkable industrial organisation that characterises that country, we must expect that she will demand a monopoly of the manufacturing and secondary industries. We have on our hands the factories that have been established for the manufacture of material for the destruction of life, and a disposals commission has been set up to dispose of those assets. I ask hon. members to think of the serious times in which we live and to agree with me that unless some form of Government in the interests of the people is introduced in Australia, the Japanese, though held at bay to-day, will come again within the next generation and menace the shores of this country, the most wonderful heritage God has bestowed upon mankind.

I listened with amazement to the Hon. Mr. Robson when he spoke of strikes by miners, gas employees and other persons engaged in the production of necessary goods and services. Might I suggest that the solution of this problem is one of nationalisation, to employ those goods and services in the interests of the people and not in the interests of profits on capital investment. A few weeks' ago, I read a fine quotation that

is apropos of the discussion. It is headed "No Lion Owns Land" and reads as follows:

Did you ever see a lion or a tiger or an ape,  
Or a polar bear, a seal or fishes all agape  
Out of work to earn a living, as so many wise  
men are?  
Of course, to beasts and fishes to resources there's  
no bar  
But man, with super wisdom, has acted like a  
fool,  
In spite of talk and reason and studying at  
school;  
He has parted with his right to use the earth  
as they;  
And if he wants to work he must the landlord  
pay.  
Nature gave the land for bird and beast and  
man;  
But man created landlords, thus wrecking  
nature's plan,

Complaints are made by those with capital invested in the mining industry who say that they cannot secure an adequate return on the capital invested. What they should realise is that they cannot expect to-day to secure the same return as they did in years gone by when the mining industry and the coal resources of Australia, particularly New South Wales, were exploited—I use the term advisedly—for the purpose of securing extortionate returns. A few years' ago, I conducted a case before Mr. Justice Ferguson on behalf of inspectors of collieries. On that occasion I went down the mines on the northern, southern and western fields and I was quite glad to get to the top. I do not mind saying that I did not want to go down, and realising the physical conditions under which these men work, the fact that they have to go thousands of feet to the bowels of the earth to cut coal and provide it for the use of the nation, it strikes me as temerity of the highest degree for arm-chair critics to talk about "these miners." It is recognised by the Government and people of Australia that the efforts of the members of our fighting services in Australia and abroad, coupled with the work performed by the working classes of Australia over the last five years, and particularly over the last three and a half or four years, have held the enemy at bay and have kept Australia intact for a white population, with the exception of those we have befriended and who have now possessed themselves of the eastern

suburbs of the Sydney metropolitan area. The miners have their industrial arbitration rights which they exercise, and if men are prepared to do the work performed by the workers of this country since the outbreak of war, we should be the first to go on our knees and thank them rather than to deliver rebukes. Criticism of the nature submitted by the hon. member and so rampant in the press to-day provides one reason for the miners becoming restive. The same comment applies to the gas employees. If essential services such as coal, gas and electricity were under the control of the representatives of the people, as are sewerage and other services, we should end this criticism of men going on strike. The Hon. Mr. Robson said that he was glad, in the interests of those fighting abroad for liberty to see in the recent referendum campaign that Australia had not placed itself in shackles and slavery, and that its freedom had not been hampered. Until a referendum of that nature is carried, until we give to the Commonwealth Parliament the power to handle those matters, the future of the Commonwealth cannot be faced with equanimity.

The Hon. R. R. DOWNING: When the bill was before the House the Hon. Mr. Robson voted for it!

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON: That is well known. When the consideration of the measure transferring the fourteen points agreed to at the Canberra Convention was before the House I congratulated hon. members on their national outlook and the House passed the bill unanimously. There was no criticism in debate. Every hon. member recognised that in the times through which we were passing it was necessary that the final responsibility and the utmost power should be vested in the National Parliament, and this House passed that bill without one dissentient voice.

Brigadier the Hon. T. A. J. PLAYFAIR: The people did not approve of it!

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON: In 1932 the people approved of a plan whereby the Legislative Council was elected from 150 electors. It was the most restricted form of franchise in the world, yet the people passed the referendum because the issue was made a fight between labour and capital. They believed what was said by the anti-Labour people as to what labour would do if it obtained control of this Chamber. It has been said that the discussion on the referendum resolved itself into questions of employment or unemployment, and prosperity or depression. We shall continue to have the same financial position in which we are placed to-day unless we have a central form of government with complete power to handle national questions. Without that central power one shudders to contemplate the future of Australia. I regret that the recent referendum was not carried. I have said in this Chamber, time after time, that I believe completely in unification, the abolition of State Parliaments and State Governors, the appointment of an Australian as Governor-General, and the abolition of the High Court. In the interests of the people there should be complete power of government and administration in the hands of the Commonwealth Government. That is the outstanding constitutional plank of the Labour party to which I belong.

I come now to the question of education, and the Governor in his Speech envisaged greater educational facilities for our people. That matter has been neglected in the past, but it is a matter that should be strenuously pursued by this or any succeeding Government. There should be provision for educational facilities from the kindergarten to the university. Let me give one or two examples of the lack of knowledge on the part of the people generally. If we asked any number of supposedly intelligent men a question as to the relationship between the Aleutians, the Marianas, the Marshalls, or anywhere outside of New Guinea, and the safety of Australia, I guarantee that they could

not even give the geographical positions of those islands or even of Australia. Could any hon. member enumerate the fourteen points on which he voted on the referendum? I myself admit that I could not enumerate all of them. I doubt whether one man in a hundred could do so, although the referendum was taken only a few months ago. The lack of knowledge on the part of our people is appalling, and any Government would not be worthy of its position in the community were it not to institute a vigorous policy of advanced educational facilities. History has shown that genii come from the ranks not of the privileged class but of the working class. Every opportunity, even to the highest educational facilities that the State can offer should be afforded the deserving and intelligent child of the worker.

Reference has been made to post-war reconstruction. We have been told by the Governor that a works programme of £53,000,000 is contemplated. Do we stop to think that that would be a further addition to the national debt of Australia? It undoubtedly would mean increased interest. If the money were raised overseas it would mean exchange, and of course there would be further provision for sinking fund. Do we ever stop to contemplate the parlous financial position in which we are to-day? The position can be remedied only by devoting the whole of our efforts to a policy of thrift on the part of the people and a complete recognition of their responsibilities under a policy of work. We have heard recently that we can expect an influx of population from other countries. This is one of the great continents of the world, yet its population is only seven millions. It is undoubtedly isolated from the heart of civilisation, but it is capable of producing everything that we and the starving hordes of Europe require. Its proper development must inevitably be checkmated if we return to the old system of capitalistic democracy. We must have in this country and, in fact,

in every other part of the world, a system whereby finance will be the servant and not the master of the people as it is to-day.

I come now to the question of housing. The Governor's Speech states that a preliminary survey was recently made by the New South Wales Housing Commission in this State and that it showed that over 100,000 new dwellings were needed to meet normal requirements. What an indictment that is of the previous Administration! It was left to this Government to create a Ministry of Housing to concentrate completely upon this problem of providing housing accommodation for our people. If the position is bad to-day, surely it must have been worse before the war broke out. There are possibly 300,000 of our men away from their homes, yet a survey of the Housing Commission has shown that our housing accommodation is far below requirements. I congratulate the Government on establishing the Housing Ministry, and I trust that it will go right ahead with this important service which, combined with education, social services and medical services, represents the adage expressed by Disraeli many years ago—the health of the people should be the first consideration of the statesman.

The Hon. RICHARD THOMPSON [6.17]: I should like to congratulate the Hon. Mr. Williams and his colleague, the Hon. Mr. Gibb, for the earnest, well-informed and enlightening speeches that they delivered this afternoon, and I am sure that we are all looking forward to further contributions from them in debates in this House. There is one aspect of the Governor's Speech that disturbs and concerns me. There is not the slightest evidence in that Speech of any recognition by this Government of the need to encourage and foster free enterprise, individual initiative and competitive opportunity. It seems the fashion these days to decry the part that those principles have played in the growth of Australia and the British Empire, but I consider them as fundamentals in our democratic way of life.

I feel that any Administration that does not do everything possible to encourage and protect them is failing in its duty to the community and to Australia. I personally would like to see the Government of New South Wales declare, through the Governor's Speech, its intention to encourage those three fundamentals of democracy. Listening to some of the Federal colleagues of hon. members who have spoken this afternoon, one would think that the Australian war effort has been magnificently successful only because of legislation or administration, but nothing is farther from the truth. The wonderful success of the Australian war effort has been based on the part played by the individual, whether citizen, factory worker or producer.

The Hon. J. M. CONNAXON: Or coal miner!

The Hon. RICHARD THOMPSON: If he is a coal miner who works, and not a striking coal miner who does nothing more nor less than sabotage the war effort, and who, in fact, plays a traitorous part in these days of national danger. Returning to my point, the fact is that the Government ignores the part that the individual has played and takes unto itself, as do all Australian Governments, the whole of the credit for the wonderful position in which we find ourselves to-day. I consider that it would have been fitting had the Government, through his Excellency's Speech to-day, taken the opportunity of declaring its appreciation and recognition of the vital part that private enterprise and individuals have played in the victories that seem now to be within our grasp. In conclusion, we should do everything possible to put New South Wales in the van of the States and show, in respect of post-war reconstruction, that New South Wales is determined to do everything it can to encourage free enterprise, to allow individual initiative to play its fullest part, and to apply the minimum of restrictive directions to individuals, industry and the community at large. If we do that,

then we will show a proper recognition of the part that the individual in the community has played. But when we consider the contribution of the individual, I do not think that we should allow any suggestion to emanate that, as legislators or administrators, we, or our parliamentary or departmental associates, have played the major part in the winning of the war.

The Hon. F. W. SPICER [6.23]: I cannot raise any enthusiasm in regard to the Government's housing policy. I think that the housing policy could best be put into effect by private enterprise, through the co-operative building societies. I have been connected with the co-operative building societies for a considerable period, and the societies with which I have been connected have functioned very satisfactorily. I believe that the Government would better meet the needs of the people for proper housing if it was to encourage the co-operative building society movement. At the same time, I believe that the rate of interest on the money that the co-operative building societies have to borrow from insurance companies and other financial institutions is too high. In the society to which I belong the advances to the workers would, generally, average approximately £800. The No. 1 society borrowed its money at the rate of 5 per cent. which meant that for a very considerable period the borrower was called upon to pay approximately £1 a week in interest charges. The interest charges are too high for the worker on a low rate of wage, and I believe that the Government, by providing the co-operative building societies with money at a low rate of interest, would meet the housing needs of the people, and the people would at least have the satisfaction of choosing their own sites. After all is said and done, if a person is to build a home and pay for it over a long period of years, then he should at least have the right to say where that home will be built and to choose the particular type and design of house that he may desire. That can be done only by encouraging the co-operative building society movement, by the Government

keeping out of the building field and by its providing money for these societies, which have proved by their past efforts that they are capable of doing the required work efficiently.

With regard to the issue of trivial stoppages on the coalfields, I realise the interests that are represented by the Hon. Mr. Concannon, but I am unable to see the halos that he has placed above the heads of the coal miners. As the Hon. Richard Thompson said, it is reasonable to contend that, in view of prevailing conditions, many of these men have not played a very valiant part in advancing the war effort.

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON: There has been a record coal production for this year!

The Hon. F. W. SPICER: That may be so, although I have not seen facts to prove it. However, the hon. member has not given the number of men now employed in the industry, nor the number of mines that have been mechanised. We do know that stoppages have taken place on the most trivial excuses, the worst being over the "Portland Girl" incident. Hon. members will recollect the spineless attitude of the Commonwealth Government on that occasion, and how it had to bow the knee to industrial pressure, as a result of which there was a substantial loss of coal production, and a heavy loss to industry. If hon. members lived in country areas they would be aware of the great inconvenience to which country residents who have to travel are subjected, and they would then be more alive to the part that coal miners are playing in holding up coal production. Last night I met a man who was able to get a seat only after travelling 500 miles in a train from Broken Hill, and when about 100 miles from Sydney. That sort of thing goes on throughout the State to-day, and it has an adverse effect upon industry. From what we read in the press and hear on the air, it also substantially retards the war effort of the country.

I was pleased to see in his Excellency's Speech a reference to closer settlement, and I hope that when the Government introduces the relevant measure it will bring about effective closer settlement which will go hand in hand with a scheme of water conservation, as was forecast. Hon. members all recall the measure that was presented to this House and ultimately rejected, which would have provided land totally unsuitable for closer settlement and which would have been of little use to our soldiers when they return from the conflict to resume their place in the civil community. If closer settlement is to take place, it should be situated along some of our great rivers, so that returned soldiers and others shall have at least a reasonable opportunity of creating assets for themselves and for the country.

I wish to refer to one other matter, and briefly—the Sydney Turf Club. This House spent weeks in discussing a bill that was ultimately passed into law, and which provided for the establishment of the Sydney Turf Club. That club, as announced in the press, is to take over certain racecourses, and I feel that, in order that to do the right thing by the great body of the general public who support the racing industry, it should have examined the position more thoroughly. The club intends to take over the Rosehill Racecourse which, to my mind, is the least suited of any racecourse in the metropolitan area to the uses of the Sydney Turf Club. Transport is difficult, and there is no provision, so far as I can see, for the ultimate extension of the area comprised in the Rosehill Racecourse to provide for the substantial increase in population that is likely to occur in this country.

We know that with conditions operating as they are to-day, people who visit that racecourse have to put up with very great inconvenience. There is little room for them, and there is no possible prospect of an extension of the course. The Government should bring this matter under the notice of the Sydney

Turf Club with a view to coming nearer home. I have no particular brief, but Victoria Park could be extended and made into a course to provide for the requirements of this city. If Moorefield were completely remodelled, I believe it could be made the best course in the metropolitan area. Having brought into existence the Sydney Turf Club, the Government should see that it does the right thing by the public. If courses are to be resumed care should be taken to see that they are courses capable of extension, so that the public may be adequately catered for. I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, and I sincerely trust that before the session ends we shall have peace so that this House can set about rehabilitating in a suitable manner the great mass of young Australians that will return, and provide for them land upon which they may live with their wives and families.

The Hon. Sir GRAHAM WADDELL [6.32]: I congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. I did not intend to speak, and I do so now only because, while a great deal has been said about the secondary industries of this State, not one reference has been made to the great work of the primary industries—the industries that produce wool, mutton, beef and so on—commodities that are essential for the prosecution of the war. Where would our munition workers and soldiers be if they were not fed? Not one reference has been made to the effect of trouble in the coal industry upon primary producers and to what the wool-grower is going through. Parts of the country are experiencing the worst drought in the history of man. At the same time, owing to the trouble that has occurred on the coalfields, stock are dying because we cannot get train-power to shift them where they could be fed. A national asset is therefore going to waste. I think that the Government might have made reference in the Governor's Speech to what wool-growers

are going through to-day and to what it intends to do to alleviate their burden. If hon. members visited the part of the State from which I come they would realise that it is not only the worker in secondary industry that is experiencing difficult times. Do hon. members realise that the great wheat-growing industry in the south will not get back its seed, yet alone make any profit? Has anything been said about what the Government intends to do for it? I am sorry the Government has said nothing about its efforts to provide drought relief to those primary producers who to-day are suffering so severely in this State.

The Hon. S. C. WILLIAMS [6.36] in reply: There is not a great deal to be said in reply to the speeches that have been made during the debate. The Hon. Mr. Robson has had a sheltered life. Fortunately he did not have the misfortune to be born to be a miner, or he would not have spoken in the strain that he did this evening. I was born in a coal-mining area—at Pont-y-pridd, in the Rhondda Valley—and when I was a boy I knew what destitution meant in that valley. No one can realise or estimate the problems of the coal miner or of the coal-mining community unless he is of them. It is useless wrangling or arguing, or adopting the role of an arm-chair critic in this Chamber. It is useless criticising the Government because of the fact that no reference was made in the Governor's Speech to the coal-mining industry. However, I would remind hon. members that there are fewer miners employed in the industry to-day than there were before the outbreak of war, and they are producing more coal. There have been strikes in coal mines in Great Britain and in the United States of America during the war period, but nothing is said about that. The Hon. Mr. Robson reminds me of the boy with a shanghai who made a crack at someone else and missed and then got away before the other chap could get out his shanghai and probably hit him. The Hon. Mr. Richard

Thompson referred to private enterprise while the Hon. Sir Graham Waddell mentioned that there was no specific reference in his Excellency's address to primary industries. Both hon. members will realise that in a speech of that character it is impossible for everything hon. members desire to be mentioned to be referred to in detail.

The Hon. Sir GRAHAM WADDELL: Drought conditions impose a great strain upon the primary industry!

The Hon. S. C. WILLIAMS: They also impose a great strain not only upon this Government but also upon the Federal Government. The industrial workers have access to the Arbitration tribunals, but private industry may close down any industry. What did John Brown do at Minmi? Coal miners are a race within a race. They are entirely different from any other industrial section of the community. Coal is won from the earth away from the city areas, where the miners are generally segregated from the other sections of the community. Because they try to live a life of decency within their own limitations they are held up to ridicule by everyone who does not understand them. It can truly be said that the coal miner is not understood. Miners here go on strike no more than miners in England or America, and when the European war is over the miners in the European fields will do exactly the same as the miners here.

The Government is fully aware that private enterprise has done a wonderful job in this war; but it knows too that without the help of labour private enterprise could not have done anything. As to transport and the little pin-pricks referred to, when Japan was knocking at the door the people of this country were willing to put up with all these hardships and to say nothing about them. Now, because the view is rosier, everyone wants a quick restoration of all the former privileges. If we had coal to-morrow we could have no more transportation because we have not the rolling stock.

The Hon. F. W. SPICER: What about the rolling stock in storage?

The Hon. S. C. WILLIAMS: There is very little in storage at the present time. Quite a lot of it has gone overseas.

The Hon. F. W. SPICER: Rail services have been cut down 50 per cent.!

The Hon. S. C. WILLIAMS: Yes, but that is not wholly due to the actions of the miners. The Government has taken into consideration all those matters referred to by the Hon. Mr. Spicer, and the Governor, in his Speech, said that in the Government's programme there would be full opportunities for such bodies as the Rural Bank, the co-operative building societies, friendly societies, banks, insurance companies and other organisations and individuals to play a part in meeting our housing needs. I think that the hon member's complaints about housing cannot be substantiated.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I have ascertained it to be the pleasure of the Governor to receive the Address-in-Reply to his Excellency's Speech at State Government House to-morrow at a quarter to Five o'clock p.m.

#### SUPPLY BILL, 1944.

Bill received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

Motion for suspension of Standing Orders agreed to.

#### SECOND READING.

The Hon. R. R. DOWNING (Minister of Justice and Vice-President of the Executive Council): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time. The bill asks for authority for the appropriation of funds for necessary Government expenditure during the ensuing two months. As hon. members are aware, under the Audit Act, 1902, authority is given for expenditure for the months of July, August and September at the rate of one quarter of the expenditure approved by Parliament for the preceding year. The present measure provides for necessary governmental expenditure for the months of

October and November at the rate of one-sixth of the expenditure that has been approved by the Legislature during the previous year. Hon. members will see by looking at the bill that the amounts authorised for expenditure in the various departments are set out opposite the clauses of the measure. I do not propose to give them in detail, unless in response to particular request. It is anticipated that the Appropriation Bill will be presented within the next two months, when the details of the Government's financial provision for the ensuing twelve months will be before the House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time and reported from Committee without amendment; report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by the Hon. R. R. Downing) agreed to:

That this House at its rising to-day do adjourn until to-morrow at 4.30 o'clock p.m., sharp.

House adjourned at 6.53 p.m.

### Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 20 September, 1944.

Opening of Parliament—Administration of Oath—Members Sworn—Temporary Chairmen of Committees—Questions without Notice—Law of Evidence Bill (Formal)—Leave of Absence—Governor's Speech: Address-in-Reply (First Day's Debate)—Supply Bill—Special Adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at noon.

The opening Prayer was read.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Clerk read the proclamation convening Parliament.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF OATH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported that he had received from his Excellency the Governor a commission authorising him as Speaker to administer to hon. members the oath or affirmation of allegiance.

Mr. SPEAKER reported that he had received from his Excellency the Governor a commission empowering George Booth, Esq., Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Assembly, in the absence of the Speaker, to administer to hon. members the oath or affirmation of allegiance.

#### MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR.

The Usher of the Black Rod, being admitted, delivered a message from his Excellency the Governor requesting the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the Legislative Council Chamber.

The House went, and hon. members having returned,

[Mr. Speaker left the chair at 12.35 p.m. The House resumed at 2.30 p.m.]

#### MEMBERS SWORN.

The Hon. M. O'Sullivan and Mr. W. F. Sheahan took the oath and subscribed the roll.

#### TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER nominated the following hon. members to act as Temporary Chairmen of Committees during the present session: Mr. G. C. Gollan, Mr. Lamb, Mr. O'Halloran, Major Shand and Mr. Shannon.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

#### WOOL CLIP: CURTAILMENT OF TRANSPORT.

Lt.-Colonel BRUXNER: I ask the Premier whether he is aware that owing to the curtailment of train services a large number of small wool clips cannot be forwarded to market? If he is aware of this, will he consider the desirability of allowing motor transport to be utilised for the purpose of clearing those clips where it is shown that there is inadequate storage and where damage is likely to take place if they are not moved?

Mr. McKELL: I am aware that, because of the existing transport difficulties, it is not possible for all wool clips to be transported. I am also concerned about many other difficulties that have