

JOINT SITTING. Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 26th February, 1952.

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FEDERAL SENATE VACANCY.

In accordance with the Standing Orders passed by both Houses of Parliament and approved by Executive Council, the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly met in joint sitting in the Legislative Council Chamber, to fill the vacancy in the representation of Western Australia in the Senate of the Federal Parliament caused by the death of Senator Richard Harry Nash.

The President of the Legislative Council (Hon. Sir Harold Seddon) took the Chair at 5.45 p.m. in accordance with the Standing Orders. He was accompanied by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. C. F. J. North).

Election.

The PRESIDENT: This joint sitting has been called for the purpose of electing a senator to the Senate in place of the late Senator R. H. Nash. I am now prepared to receive nominations.

The PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I propose—

That Mr. Joseph Alfred Cooke, clerk, of 115 St. Leonard's Avenue, Leederville, be elected to fill the vacancy due to the death of Senator Richard Harry Nash.

I have Mr. Cooke's assurance that, if elected, he is prepared to act.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (M.L.A., Melville): I am very pleased indeed to second the Premier's proposal and I congratulate him upon recognising the requirements of proportional representation, and doing the right thing in connection with this election.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He always does.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I must say that it is a rarity for the right thing to be done by this Government. Nevertheless, the Premier's nomination indicates that he knows how to do it and his nomination is an indication to us that the Government does not intend to have any nomination other than that of a Labour nominee. I repeat that that is a recognition of the requirements of proportional representation, and I think it is the right view to take. I am very pleased indeed to second the motion and trust that Mr. Cooke will be elected.

The PRESIDENT: Having ascertained that there are no further nominations, I declare Mr. J. A. Cooke duly elected.

The President left the Chair.

Legislative Council

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

COMMISSIONERS.

His Excellency's Commissioners (His Honour Mr. Justice Wolff and His Honour Mr. Justice Virtue) having entered the Chamber at 4.32 p.m., a message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, His Honour Mr. Justice Wolff (Senior Commissioner) read the following statement:—

Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the Legislative Assembly—

His Excellency the Governor has entrusted me with a Message for delivery to members of both Houses and I propose to read it to you. It is as follows:—

The Governor informs the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly that he has officially learned, with the deepest regret, that our Most Gracious Sovereign, His Majesty King George VI, departed this life on the sixth day of

February, 1952. The Governor further informs the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly that Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, was duly and lawfully proclaimed Queen of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the seas, Defender of the Faith, whereof public proclamation and due notification was fully and lawfully made by the Governor within the State on the eighth day of February, One thousand nine hundred and fifty-two.

The Governor therefore desires that hon. members will, before they proceed to sit and vote in their respective Houses, severally take and subscribe the oath of allegiance to Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, before a Commissioner duly authorised by the Governor to attend in the Chamber of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, respectively, to administer the same.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having retired and the Junior Commissioner having left the Chamber, the Clerk read a Commission from His Excellency appointing Mr. Justice Wolff a Commissioner for administering to members of the Legislative Council the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Consequent on the demise of King George VI, and the accession of Queen Elizabeth II, members of the Legislative Council took the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Senior Commissioner then retired from the Chamber.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

DEMISE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI: ACCESSION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [5.3]: I desire to move, without notice—

That the following Address be transmitted to His Excellency the Governor for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen:—"We, the members of the Legislative Council in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, take this the earliest opportunity of expressing our deep sympathy in the great sorrow which Your Majesty has sustained through the death of your illustrious father, and our late beloved Sovereign, King George VI."

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Suburban): I beg leave to second the motion.

Question passed; members standing.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [5.6]: I desire to move, without notice—

That the following Address be transmitted to His Excellency the Governor, for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen:—"We, the members of the Legislative Council in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, humbly offer our sincere congratulations on Your Majesty's accession to the throne. We desire to assure your Majesty of our loyalty and devotion, and to express the hope that Your Majesty may enjoy a long and prosperous reign."

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Suburban): I desire to second the motion.

Question put and passed.

MOTIONS—OBITUARY.

Late Hon. G. B. Wood, M.L.C.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [5.8]: It is with deep regret that I move, without notice—

That this House place on record its sincere appreciation of the services rendered to the State by the late Hon. Garnet Barrington Wood, who at the time of his passing occupied the portfolios of Minister for Agriculture and the North-West and who was a member for the Central Province, and express its deep sympathy with his widow and the members of his family in the irreplaceable loss they have sustained by his decease; and that the President be asked to convey the foregoing to his widow and family.

The late Mr. Wood was a member of the Legislative Council for a little over 15 years, having first entered Parliament in May, 1936, as a member for the East Province. He was appointed Honorary Minister without portfolio on the return of the present Government in April, 1947. In January, 1948, he was given the portfolio of Agriculture to which, in April, 1950, was added that of the North-West. He was granted full status as a Cabinet Minister in October, 1950.

Mr. Wood inherited a flair for politics and administration, as his father represented West Perth in the Legislative Assembly, from 1894 to 1901, and the Metropolitan-Suburban Province in the Legislative Council from 1902 until his death in August, 1903. The late Mr. Wood, senior, was a member of the first Ministry under responsible Government,

that of the late Lord Forrest, in which he held the portfolios of Commissioner of Railways and Director of Works from September, 1900, until the resignation of the Government in February, 1901. He held similar offices in the short-lived Throssell Government of 1901. He was also the first Mayor of Fremantle.

Born at Fremantle in 1888, the late Garnet Wood was educated at Hale School. He first worked in the accounts section of the Railway Department. Subsequently he was overseer of Mardie Station in the Fortescue for six years, this being of great benefit to him in later life when administering the portfolio of the North-West. He first farmed in the Katanning district and later moved to York, where for many years he was a member of the road board. He was interested in agricultural organisations, having been a foundation member of the Farmers' Union and held executive positions in the Primary Producers' Association and other bodies concerned with rural activities. The Department of Agriculture prospered and expanded under his guidance and much credit was due to him for the development of light lands, particularly in the Esperance district.

I found the late Garnet Wood a very loyal and co-operative colleague. We became very firm friends, and his sudden passing gave me a great shock. Together with the Deputy Premier, I was entrusted with the sad task of bearing the news of his decease to his widow. I think we can all say that we cherished in him a very good friend and a loyal colleague, one who was always ready to help us, and particularly new members who joined our ranks. We all feel deep regret at his passing.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Suburban) [5.10]: I second the motion and desire to associate myself with the Minister's remarks. My 14 years of association with our late hon. member led me to the conclusion that his devotion to the tasks of his ministerial offices played some part in shortening his life. We shall all miss him and I desire to associate myself with the condolences that are to be expressed to his widow and family.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [5.11]: I desire to support the motion and to express regret at the sudden passing of the late Hon. Garnet Wood. He was a very fair political opponent and worked in close co-operation with all members, irrespective of the party to which they belonged. His widow and family have every reason to be proud of the remarkable progress made by the departments under his control. The Minister mentioned the development of light lands and that development will have considerable bearing on the future prosperity of Western Australia.

The late hon. member was I think overworked and he had many problems to overcome, such as the marketing of wheat and other produce. I know, from personal contact with him, that he desired to do the right thing; he was not afraid to express his ideas, irrespective of whether they favoured his own political party or not. I regret very much that we have lost a good Minister and a good citizen of Western Australia.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.13]: I also join with other members in an expression of condolence to the widow and family of the late Hon. Garnet Wood. The late hon. member was not only a political colleague of mine, but he was also one of my best friends. For many years he was a colleague of my father's in the East Province. I knew Garnet Wood for many years and found him an indefatigable worker and I am afraid the State has lost a great asset. As Mr. Gray said, he was very fair and straightforward in everything that he did, not only in this Chamber but also outside it. I was shocked to hear of his passing and extend my sympathy to his widow and family, whom I know personally. The late hon. member was one who thought a lot of his home life and it must have been a terrific shock to his family. I join with other members in supporting the motion.

HON. R. M. FORREST (North) [5.15]: I wish to associate myself with the motion because I think I knew the late Hon. Garnet Wood longer than most other members in this Chamber. We both went to the same school in 1900 and 1901. The late Hon. Garnet Wood was a man of high principles and there is no doubt that he was overworked in his position as Minister for Agriculture. I do not suppose that there was any Minister who travelled more extensively throughout the State. With those remarks, I support the motion.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Suburban): [5.16]: I wish to endorse the remarks of the Minister because I was closely associated with the late Hon. Garnet Wood and was in an excellent position to assess his merits. He was a most energetic and keen worker, and I think we all agree that his energy outstripped his physique and was thus the cause of his death. He could not possibly leave anything until tomorrow if it could be done today, and he worked most conscientiously and with great enthusiasm. The State owes a debt of gratitude for the excellent work he did in carrying out his duties as Minister for Agriculture and we should bear in mind that for over three years he carried out that work as an Honorary Minister.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.17]: On behalf of the people in the Esperance district, I support the motion moved by the Minister. As the Minister pointed out, the late Hon. Garnet Wood

was responsible for the increased development of our light lands and for the establishment of a research station in the district. Whenever I wanted anything done for any person in the Esperance district, I received every consideration from the late hon. member. I sincerely support the motion which has been moved.

THE PRESIDENT [5.18]: Before putting the motion I wish to add my support to the remarks that have been passed. Like his father before him, the late hon. member carried out his public duties in an exemplary manner and, as members have pointed out, it was largely his devotion to his duties that contributed to the early demise of the late Hon. Garnet Wood. We extend to his widow and family our condolence and our deep sympathy in their bereavement.

Question passed; members standing.

Late Hon. A. H. Panton, C.M.G., M.L.A.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland) [5.19]: I move, without notice—

That this House place on record its sincere appreciation of the services rendered to the State by the late Hon. Alexander Hugh Panton who at the time of his passing was the member for Leederville in the Legislative Assembly and express its deep sympathy with his widow and the members of his family; and that the President be asked to convey the foregoing to his family.

The late Mr. Panton, at the time of his passing, was not a member of this House, but, in years gone by, he occupied a seat in this Chamber and later became a Minister of the Crown. Apart from his services to Western Australia as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and a Minister of the Crown, the late Mr. Panton was associated with the business of this House as a member for the West Province from 1919 to 1922. This was the commencement of a long and meritorious parliamentary career.

In 1924 he was elected to the Legislative Assembly as member for Menzies. This constituency was abolished under the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1929, and Mr. Panton was elected in 1930 as member for Leederville, a seat he held until his death.

He occupied the position of Speaker in the Legislative Assembly from 1933 to 1938 when he was appointed Minister for Health. A few months later the portfolio of Mines was added to his responsibilities. He held these portfolios until 1945 when, in an adjustment of responsibilities, he took over the duties of Minister for Lands and Labour, holding those portfolios until the defeat of the Labour Government in 1947.

The distinction of C.M.G. was conferred on him in 1948 in appreciation of his long and faithful service to the State. Mr. Panton was born in Victoria in 1877, and was 74 years of age at the time of his death. He came to Western Australia in 1899 and throughout his life was actively interested in the Labour movement. At various times he occupied the positions of general president and secretary of the State Executive of the A.L.P. and president and secretary of the Metropolitan Council of the A.L.P.

He was a most sincere and able member of the Labour movement and fought hard and eminently fairly for his principles. Most of us knew the late Mr. Panton personally. He was an easy man to get to know; he was an able and fearless opponent, forcible and forthright in his opinions but always honest and helpful. We all remember the friendly way he had of making us feel at our ease and how perfectly prepared he was to give us advice, either as a member of the Ministry or as a fellow-member, as occasion arose.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [5.22]: I second the motion and regret very much the passing of a courageous Labour leader. Very few men in Western Australia possess as much experience of the Labour movement as had the late Mr. Panton. He rendered distinguished service on the Goldfields and in the metropolitan area, and was a man of great courage and high character a man one could rely upon for good advice. He was a soldier, true to his country, true to the trust reposed in him as a Cabinet Minister and true to the Labour movement.

In the bad old days when it was difficult to get efficient hospital service, he did a great deal in the metropolitan area. For years he was chairman of the Perth Hospital Board and in that capacity did a remarkable amount for the people. As a soldier he set a high standard among his comrades and as a political leader he was looked up to with respect. He was a man who was true to his principles and his passing is a great loss to Western Australia. He rendered many years of service to the State, and I sincerely express my sympathies to his widow and family.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Suburban) [5.24]: I would like to speak to this motion from the point of view of Mr. Panton's service not only as a member of the Legislature but also respecting his activities apart from his political career. For many years I was fortunate enough to sit on the executive of the Returned Soldiers' League when the late Mr. Panton was an active member. This was during the very strenuous times at the inauguration of the association after the

first World War. His sincerity and character did a great deal to put that organisation on a sound footing.

Throughout his life the late Mr. Pantton showed by his actions his sincerity and honesty of purpose. In the Assembly, where I was fortunate enough to be associated with him, he was also a great help and a man of very high principles. I think we can safely say that it is through the efforts of such people as the late Mr. Pantton that happy personal feelings exist between the various parties in this Parliament.

He was a man who was extremely tolerant of other people's views. Only last year I was included in a party with Mr. Pantton which toured the Goldfields. I realised then how ill he was and how much he had suffered over the years through his war wounds. One never heard of those wounds, but, in fact, he had been seriously wounded and had suffered considerably. Despite this, he carried on his arduous duties for the benefit of the country.

HON. H. HEARN (Metropolitan) [5.26]: I desire to associate myself with this motion. It was many years ago that I first met the late Mr. Pantton in industrial circles. I think I am safe in saying that he had a record of service in the industrial activities of this State second to none in the Labour movement. In the days of the Metropolitan Disputes Committee when the late Mr. McCallum was one of its prime leaders, Mr. Pantton was most regular in his attendance at meetings dealing with industrial disputes. In those days it was my privilege to know him and to realise how fair-minded he was.

Later I was privileged to be associated with him on account of war service. I dare say most of the members in this House will remember that he was intimately associated with the Y.M.C.A. In this branch of war service, I had a lot to do with the late Mr. Pantton. The work he did for the Y.M.C.A. in connection with the war will go down on the records as the work of a citizen who was interested in the welfare not only of Western Australia but of the Commonwealth as a whole. I deplore his passing and it is my privilege to pay tribute to the memory of a very great gentleman.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [5.28]: There is one aspect of the late Mr. Pantton's work that has not been recorded and, on behalf of the State, I think it would be fitting for me to mention it, because there would be few in this State who really know the immense amount of time, ability and service which he gave as Minister for Civil Defence and chair-

man of the Civil Defence Council. This was no mean task but it was one from which our chairman did not shrink; it was one that called for courageous decisions. There were times when this council sat hour after hour and day by day and, despite that fact, never for one moment did the attention of the man at the head of affairs flag.

Probably few people will know that as chairman of the Civil Defence Council he had to make a tremendous decision as to whether he should agree to marshall the people of this State for immediate evacuation on the sounding of a military call. He did not flinch from that duty and it was then that he said "No"; it was then that he gained the respect, to a greater extent than ever, of the members of the Civil Defence Council. This State owes the late Mr. Pantton a very great debt of gratitude.

The PRESIDENT [5.30]: I should like to add a few words to the remarks that have been made regarding the late Mr. Pantton. He was a member of this House before I entered it in 1922, and his association with the Legislative Assembly extended from 1924 to the date of his death. Right through his life he participated in many branches of activity and rendered unselfish and stirring work to the State, and we all feel that we have lost a very dear friend. His kindly nature made him the friend of everyone and we cannot fail to regret the passing of a man who had rendered such service to the State.

Question passed: members standing.

FEDERAL SENATE VACANCY.

Message.

The President reported the receipt of a Message from His Excellency the Governor transmitting a copy of a despatch from the President of the Senate notifying a vacancy in the Senate representation of Western Australia through the death of Senator R. H. Nash.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: I move—

That with reference to the Message from his Excellency the Governor, the Hon. the President be requested to confer with Mr. Speaker in order to fix a day and place whereon and whereat the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, sitting and voting together, shall choose a person to hold the place of the senator whose place has become vacant.

Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 5.35 to 5.39 p.m.

As to Joint Sitting.

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce that a joint sitting has been fixed to take place in the Legislative Council Chamber this day immediately.

Sitting suspended during the joint sitting of both Houses to elect a Federal senator (vide report ante) from 5.43 to 5.49 p.m.

Vacancy Filled.

The PRESIDENT: I have to report that at the joint sitting of members of the two Houses of Parliament this afternoon, the vacancy in the representation of Western Australia in the Federal Senate was filled by the election of Joseph Alfred Cooke, clerk, of 115 St. Leonard's Avenue, Leederville.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.*Section "B", 1951.*

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of Section "B" of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1951. This will be laid on the Table of the House.

TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.*Extension of Time.*

On motion by Hon. H. Hearn, the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee was extended until Tuesday, the 29th April, 1952.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon C. H. Simpson—Midland): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

Sitting suspended from 3.32 to 4.30 p.m.

DEMISE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI; ACCESSION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

Summons on behalf of His Excellency, the Governor.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council and, having heard the