

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 6th August, 1953.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

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

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice Virtue, having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members. All the members elected, with the exception of, Hon. V. Doney, Mr. Guthrie, Hon. Sir Ross McLarty and Mr. Wild, were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute, and signed the roll. The Commissioner then withdrew.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam): The House being duly constituted I move—

That Mr. Rodoreda do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

HON. D. BRAND (Greenough): I second the motion.

MR. RODOREDA (Pilbara): I submit myself to the will of the House.

There being no other nomination,

The SPEAKER-ELECT, having been conducted to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the motion, said: I thank members for the signal honour they have conferred upon me and now propose to assume the Chair as Speaker of this Assembly.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity of congratulating you upon your election to the high office of Speaker of this Chamber. You follow in the footsteps of distinguished predecessors and while on that point I think it would be not only desirable but also just to say "thank you" to the immediate ex-Speaker, the member for Claremont. You, Mr. Speaker, have had a long experience in the House and have presided over its deliberations in the capacity of Deputy Speaker, Chairman of Committees and Deputy Chairman of Committees. On all occasions you have shown a keen understanding of the Standing Orders, as well as a keen understanding of human nature which, I think, is even more important in the conduct of proceedings in this House. It is with every confidence, therefore, that we look forward to your reign as Speaker of this Assembly.

Hon. D. BRAND (Greenough): I join the Premier in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, and we all wish you well in your office. Over the years we have known you both as a private member and as Chairman of Committees, and I am sure that that experience will stand you in good stead while you occupy the high office to which you have now been elected. I, too, would like to pay tribute to your predecessor, the member for Claremont, who, during the past six years, has sat and listened to a great many words, and members on both sides of the House will agree that he was impartial and endeavoured to maintain the atmosphere which we in Western Australia are proud to acclaim and support. I feel sure, Sir, that under your chairmanship this atmosphere will continue.

Hon. A. F. WATTS (Stirling): I would like to join with other members in conveying my congratulations to you, Sir. I have sat here under five Speakers, I think, and all of them have been men who could be respected; they were impartial in their dealings with all members of the House, and I am convinced, from the long experience I have had of you in other capacities, that you will be the same. Therefore, our congratulations are very genuine.

The SPEAKER-ELECT: I desire to thank the Premier, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Country Party for their congratulatory remarks. My endeavour will be to keep up the great tradition of the position as exemplified by previous Speakers of this Assembly. I will do my utmost to be absolutely fair and impartial and will give decisions as I see them, irrespective of whether they are pleasing to either side of the House.

I do not want to delay the proceedings any longer, but would like to touch upon a question which seems to be one of some moment as far as the Press is concerned—I refer to the question of the Speaker's regalia. It would be against my inclinations and desires to wear any of the regalia at all, but as representations have been made to me by a large number of my electors, as well as some members of all parties in this Assembly and also in the Legislative Council, I have decided, in deference to their wishes that, at the opening of Parliament, I will wear both the wig and the gown. I will adopt that procedure on other formal occasions, seldom though they may be, where the Speaker is required to represent Parliament.

At all other sittings of Parliament, however, I have decided to wear the gown only as at least one previous Speaker from the Labour Party has done. I also suggest it is time that Parliament itself decided this matter and that the Standing Orders Committee forwarded a recommendation to this House to provide of its own accord what regalia a Speaker should wear, and so avoid the continual changes such as are occasioned by each Speaker making his own preference. Again, I thank hon. members who have just spoken for their congratulatory remarks, and shall endeavour to perform my duties to the best of my ability.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER-ELECT.

THE PREMIER: I desire to announce that His Excellency the Governor will now be pleased to receive the Speaker-elect and such members as desire to accompany him.

Sitting suspended from 12.51 to 2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to report that I have submitted myself to His Excellency the Governor, and on behalf of the House laid claim to its undoubted rights and privileges, and prayed that the most favourable construction be placed upon its

proceedings; and that His Excellency has been pleased to express his satisfaction at the choice of the Assembly in the following terms:—

The Hon. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly—

It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner.

(Signed) Charles Gairdner, Governor.

I also wish to report that I have received from His Excellency a Commission to swear in hon. members, and this I hand to the Clerk to read to the House.

The Commission was read.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

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

ELECTORAL.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear in the member for Bunbury and the member for Narrogin.

Mr. Guthrie and Hon. V. Doney took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTIONS.

LOAN FUNDS.

As to Use for Reducing Deferred Contractual Commitments.

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Was any payment made during June, 1953, out of loan moneys available for the service of the year 1952-53 in reduction of the amounts due in England, payment of which was deferred in the earlier part of that year?

(2) If so, what was the amount available and to whom and when was it paid?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) I will have the information made available next week.

FORESTS.

(a) *As to Representation on Committee of Inquiry.*

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Is he fully conversant with the subject appearing in a Press report in "The West Australian" of the 29th July, 1953, under the heading—"Graham Initiates Forests Inquiry"?

(2) As agricultural expansion and development are closely interwoven with the policy of the Forests Department, will he, as Leader of the Government and in the State's best interests give urgent consideration to the appointment to the committee referred to in the Press report, of the Under-Secretary for Lands, the Director of Agriculture and the Conservator of Forests?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) In the short time available to me I have given as much consideration as possible to the subject matter of this question.

(2) Consideration will be given to the matter along the lines suggested.

(b) *As to Papers re Appointment of Committee.*

Mr. ACKLAND (without notice) asked the Minister for Forests:

Will he lay on the Table of the House the file containing all the papers dealing with the appointment of the recently formed Forestry Advisory Committee?

The MINISTER replied:

I will be prepared to discuss the matter with the hon. member and to make the papers available for his personal perusal if he cares to call at my office.

WHEAT.

(a) *As to Proposed Commonwealth Stabilisation Scheme, Contributions and Ballot.*

Mr. ACKLAND (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture—

(1) Does he appreciate the fact that under the proposed so called new Commonwealth Stabilisation Plan—

(a) It is proposed to confiscate the £9,000,000 collected from the growers of No. 15 Wheat Pool as a nucleus for the new scheme?

(b) Is he aware that approximately 1,000 wheatgrowers leave the wheat growing industry in Western Australia each year?

(c) That the growers who contributed to the £9,000,000 collected from the No. 15 Pool participants have a claim for a refund of the money collected from them?

(d) That the first year's contribution to the proposed new Commonwealth scheme will be more than 2s. 9½d. per bushel being 1s. 6d. per bushel from No. 17 Wheat Pool members, and approximately 1s. 3½d. per bushel from wheat-grower members of No. 15 Wheat Pool?

(2) Will he give the House an assurance that those members who contributed to No. 15 Wheat Pool and who have subsequently ceased to be wheatgrowers will have their names included on the roll for the conduct of the ballot to be held to decide the fate of the proposed new Commonwealth Wheat Stabilisation Plan?

The MINISTER replied—

(1) I agree that the farmers concerned will have a valid claim for a refund of the money collected under the No. 15 wheat pool. It is not in any way proposed to confiscate the £9,000,000 referred to. I understand that the fund at present is in the vicinity of £20,000,000. Of this £11,000,000 is to be returned immediately to the growers and the other £9,000,000 will form the nucleus of a revolving fund the maximum amount of which will also be £20,000,000. As a result of that, when the fund reaches that figure the £9,000,000 will automatically revert to the participants in the No. 15 pool. I am not aware that approximately 1,000 wheatgrowers are leaving the industry every year and I think that is a gross exaggeration. Had that occurred over the last four or five years we would not have had any wheatgrowers left in this State.

(2) From the information supplied to me I understand that all those considered to be wheatgrowers over the last two seasons will be eligible to take part in the ballot and consequently those growers that have contributed to the scheme in the last two years will be eligible.

(b) *As to Working Plans for Implementing State Act.*

Mr. PERKINS (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

As wheat harvesting will commence in from 12 to 14 weeks and some State Governments are delaying a decision on their policy towards wheat marketing, and as growers in this State seem likely to reject the suggested stabilisation scheme, will he have shadow working plans prepared to implement the State Wheat Marketing Act to safeguard the position in Western Australia from chaos, in case the Western Australian growers vote in favour of a State scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

I think there will be ample time, after the ballot of growers has been held, to determine what sort of legislation ought to be brought into being in connection with a State pool. Some two months ago this Government made a decision that, in the event of the stabilisation plan being defeated or any Commonwealth-based marketing scheme being defeated, it would automatically implement the 1947 Wheat Act. I understand that that machinery is ready to be put into operation and I think it would be premature at this stage to make any shadow arrangement while that Act is already on the statute book. As I see it, there will be ample time to do whatever is necessary after the ballot of growers is taken.

(c) As to Time Available for Taking Action.

Mr. PERKINS (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) In view of that reply and the fact that the opinion of those closely in touch with the wheat industry in this State is that it is not envisaged that the result of a ballot on the wheat marketing question will be known before the end of September, does the Minister think the result of such ballot could be known earlier than that date?

(2) If it cannot, does he consider that four weeks would leave insufficient time to set up the necessary marketing machinery?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) I think the result of the ballot could be known before that date, but in view of what the hon. member has said, I will promise to give the matter some further consideration.

WATER.*(a) As to Increased Rating, Mt. Lawley.*

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT (without notice) asked the Minister for Water Supply:

Having in view that the water rates on a number of properties in the Mt. Lawley district have been increased in some cases as much as 300 per cent. as a result of re-valuations and that no re-valuations or increased ratings have been made in a number of road board areas, including the Canning, Bassendean and Belmont areas, will the Minister consider the position with a view to remedying the resulting unreasonable discrimination between the various areas?

The MINISTER replied:

The adoption of current values in districts where valuations have been neglected for more than 20 years has resulted in substantial increases in rates. The inequity of the present method of valuing in some districts and not in others is recognised and it has already been decided to institute in Western Australia a system which will result in uniform valuations.

(b) As to Increase in Revenue.

Mr. OLDFIELD (without notice) asked the Minister for Water Supply:

Did the Government give consideration to the fact of the substantial increase in revenue resulting from the re-valuation in the metropolitan area before increasing the water rate?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

KWINANA.*As to Provision for Hotel.*

Mr. HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Premier:

With regard to the Press statement in "The West Australian" on Wednesday, the 5th August, referring to the meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Kwinana—

(1) Does the Government intend to build a State Hotel at Kwinana?

(2) Does the Government intend to allow the provision of "temporary bar facilities" at Kwinana, mentioned in the Press statement, without obtaining a liquor license under the Licensing Act?

The PREMIER replied:

These matters are still receiving consideration.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.*As to Consideration of Proposals for Extension.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

Has the Government yet considered the report of Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane on the Fremantle harbour and is it likely to adopt the recommendations of those gentlemen?

The MINISTER replied:

The answer to the first part of the question is "No." In reply to the second part, I may say that I would not presume to anticipate what will be the decision of the Government in this matter.

TRAFFIC.*As to Installation of Lights.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Are the traffic lights to be installed in William-st. experimental or are they part of a comprehensive scheme for the metropolitan area?

(2) If the latter, how many years will it take to complete the scheme under present arrangements?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The light to be installed in William-st. is one of the latest type available and, so far as its mechanics are concerned, it is in no way experimental. It is, of course, experimental insofar as control of road traffic in this State is concerned.

It is difficult to say how long it will take to complete the scheme, but there is £20,000 available for the purchase of more traffic control lights if they are proved to be successful in this State.

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Contemplated Increase in Charges.

Mr. OLDFIELD (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the statement contained in his policy speech that rail fares would be progressively reduced, how does he reconcile that statement with the report published in "The West Australian" on the 5th August to the effect that a Cabinet sub-committee would be meeting next week to discuss an increase in railway fares and freights?

The PREMIER replied:

The deterioration in railway finance in the last three years has been ever so much worse than this Government anticipated.

(b) As to Expediting Report on Bassendean-Welshpool Chord Line.

Mr. J. HEGNEY (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) In view of the rapid development at Kwinana can he inform the House when the long-awaited report on the Bassendean-Welshpool chord railway line will be available?

(2) If it is not to hand, will consideration be given to the matter and an endeavour made to expedite the report in view of the considerable concern of the people in my district?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) As members of this House know, a scheme for by-passing the Perth shunting yards on the edge of the eastern line traffic was evolved in order to have the running sheds and the loco sheds situated at Bassendean with a chord line running across to Welshpool.

As a result of recommendations made by Professor Stephenson, relating to the transposition of certain railway facilities, these almost completely wipe out the adoption of the previous plan agreed to by Parliament some two years ago.

The Government has had two highly-qualified gentlemen making inquiries into the two proposals but we have not yet received their report or recommendation. I can assure the hon. member that the Government is just as anxious as both he and the people who are concerned with the two relative proposals to reach finality in this matter and we will have it expedited as quickly as possible.

BILL—BEE INDUSTRY COMPENSATION.

The PREMIER: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the

establishment of a fund for the payment of compensation in certain cases to bee-keepers, and for purposes connected therewith.

Leave given: Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that, with hon. members of this House, I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to members of both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of accuracy, I have caused copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. LAPHAM (North Perth) [3.57]: I move—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—
"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament."

Firstly, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your appointment to the Speakership of this Assembly and, at the same time, congratulate the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for so ably representing this State at the Coronation of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Although, unfortunately, the majority of the people of this State were unable to attend the Coronation ceremony in person, they nevertheless were with the Queen in spirit. The functions arranged in this State to mark the occasion were enthusiastically supported and tended to indicate the loyalty of Western Australians, and there is no doubt that Her Majesty's visit to our State, in company with His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, is eagerly awaited.

In the Address presented by His Excellency, the reference concerning the passing of the Hon. A. A. M. Coverley, the Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, the Hon. W. H. Kitson and Mr. Sydney Stubbs will bring to the minds of hon. members the frailty of human life and the knowledge that there is only a short space of time available to one for the accumulation of wisdom and its application to the common good. During their lifetime, it was apparent that these members realised that fact, for they worked unceasingly in their endeavours to discharge their duties for the welfare of the people. They earned the confidence

and respect, not only of their electors but of the entire community and the more one thinks of their passing, the more apparent is the knowledge of our loss. I knew Bob Coverley personally. After a lapse of many years, I met him a few days prior to his death and found him to be the same old Bob he always had been. He was ready and willing to lend a helping hand, and during the few moments I had with him he gave me some sound advice and said, "If you need my assistance during the coming session, I will be only too happy to give it to you." I looked forward to his companionship in this Chamber, but unfortunately it was not to be. Although I miss him very much, I will not miss him nearly as much as will his own family and his more intimate friends and to them I extend my deepest sympathy.

During this my maiden speech I desire to extend my thanks to members on both sides of the House and to the officials and staff of Parliament House for their many kind suggestions, and the help and consideration they have extended not only to me but to all new members. But my special thanks must go to the electors of North Perth for placing me as their representative in this Chamber. They have honoured me with a position of trust, a position of confidence, and I will do my utmost to uphold that trust and confidence in a manner similar to that of my predecessor, Mr. Needham, who served the people of North Perth and Perth for so long. I feel it would be fitting at this stage if I placed on record the appreciation held by the people of North Perth for Mr. Needham. Whilst canvassing the North Perth electorate prior to the State election, in order to give the electors an opportunity of knowing whom they were voting for, or against, I was amazed at the respect that the name of Needham commanded. I am sure every member in this House will agree with me when I say that his characteristic sincerity, integrity, and his high purpose in life, combined with his humanitarian outlook, have endeared him to all whether politically opposed or otherwise. At all times he carried out his parliamentary duties in a manner befitting that of a person upholding our public life. He has set a standard which, I feel, would be difficult to live up to, but I will do my utmost to acquit myself as successfully.

The year 1953 has been rather remarkable. The Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has been celebrated, an armistice has been signed in Korea and business confidence has returned after the unfortunate lapse of last year. Accordingly I feel it all augurs well for this Government. I congratulate the Premier and his Ministers on their appointment. I would further like to congratulate the

Premier on his efforts whilst overseas on using the little spare time available to him in an endeavour to further the interests of this State and to arrange financial accommodation for us. I believe he was successful.

I listened most attentively to the address delivered by His Excellency the Governor and, while I agree with the majority of the proposals it contained, I was perturbed at one item dealing with transport. It appears that there is to be a delay in the replacing of trams in the North Perth area. That means, of course, that the people of North Perth will have to put up with the slow cumbersome system which has operated there for so long. In Angove-st., North Perth, there are even loop lines; loop lines in 1953! Whilst I believe in leisure for the people, I feel that they should spend that leisure at home and not sitting in the middle of the road waiting for another tram to pass. My electors have suffered long and uncomplainingly, and they deserve better. I suggest to the Minister that in the near future he review the transport policy and give to the people of North Perth a better transport system than that which they enjoy today.

Unfortunately the enthusiasm of members to get down to business has taken a considerable amount of my time! I was informed that we had an appointment for afternoon tea at 4 o'clock; the time now is seven minutes past four. I will, therefore, make the remainder of my address rather brief. I would like to refer to the fact that Western Australia today stands at the crossroads of her destiny. After last year's slight recession we have a business confidence that is growing, and I feel that the establishment of an oil refinery and a steel rolling mill at Kwinana is the forerunner of rapid industrial expansion in this State. Judging from the reports coming through from Exmouth Gulf I feel it is not without some possibility that oil could be discovered in that area. If that were the case, Western Australia would be one of the richest States of the Commonwealth. But even without the discovery of oil, Western Australia today has ceased to crawl in the industrial sense; she has now started to walk. Unfortunately, however, as the Premier has indicated, many projects which the Government had in view will have to be delayed owing to the curtailment of loan funds and contractual commitments.

The people of Western Australia can feel gratified that the policy of uniform taxation still exists in Australia because, with rapid expansion of industry in this State, the tax burden would have been terrific if it had to be borne by only the people of Western Australia. The people in this State can also feel cheerful in the knowledge that this Government is strongly opposed to the abandonment of

uniform taxation until such time as a better system is evolved for this State. While ultimate industrial expansion seems assured in Western Australia, its economic destiny is governed by our legislative efforts, seeing that our economic destiny has its influence on the welfare of the community. Each and every one of us go towards making up that community. History and statistics will show that industrial expansion alone does not raise the standard of living of the community. Far from it! The position is usually the reverse. In big industrialised cities, poverty and riches go hand in hand. While the economic destiny of one section is strengthened, it is usually at the expense of other sections, which is something that has to be avoided in Western Australia.

Admittedly, there will always be discrepancies in the financial circumstances of individuals, but any extremism in that regard has to be avoided. So today I feel proud to be a supporter of a Government which has for its purpose the welfare of the people. I am proud that it is bringing down legislation in support of that principle, introducing legislation for the continuance of price-control, which is an important factor in arresting abnormal fluctuation, and legislation to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, the Factories and Shops Act and other industrial enactments. All these measures are necessary to promote industrial harmony, and without industrial harmony we cannot have economic security. Therefore, I shall be very pleased to make available to the Government the knowledge I may be able to add to that of other members who will speak during the debates on those subjects.

Mr. HEAL (West Perth): I formally second the motion.

On motion by **Hon. D. Brand**, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 11th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.14 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 11th August, 1953.

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

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Section "B", 1952.

The PRESIDENT: 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, 1952. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved:

That Hon. W. R. Hall be elected Chairman of Committees.

QUESTIONS.

S.P. BETTING.

As to Fines for Offences.

Hon. J. McI. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What was the total amount of money received by way of fines from starting price bookmakers for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1953?

(2) What was the amount received for similar offences for the same period from the police courts of—

- (a) Perth;
- (b) Fremantle;
- (c) Midland Junction?

(3) What amounts were received from the following towns—

- (a) Albany;
- (b) Bunbury;
- (c) Geraldton;
- (d) Collie;
- (e) Kalgoorlie;
- (f) Boulder?