

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

## First Session of the Twenty-First Parliament.

*The Legislative Assembly was dissolved on the 15th January, 1953.*

*The Twenty-first Parliament was convened for the despatch of business on the 6th August, 1953, and the first session, which was opened by His Excellency the Governor, was commenced on that day.*

### Legislative Council

Thursday, 6th August, 1953.

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#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at noon.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

#### PROCLAMATION.

The Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr. A. B. Sparks) read the proclamation of His Excellency the Governor summoning the first session of the Twenty-first Parliament.

#### COMMISSIONER.

His Excellency's Commissioner (His Honour Mr. Justice Virtue) having entered the Chamber at 12.3 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, the Commissioner requested the Clerk to read His Excellency's Commission to do all things necessary in the name and on the part of Her Majesty the Queen or in the name and on the part of His Excellency for the opening and holding of the first session of the Twenty-first Parliament.

The Commission was read.

The Commissioner read the following statement:—

*Mr. President, Honourable Members of the Legislative Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly—*

I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to inform you that, at 3 o'clock this afternoon, His Excellency will declare to you the causes of his calling together of this Parliament; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should first be chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, the members of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and, having been duly sworn by me in accordance with the terms of the Commission granted me by His Excellency, you do elect your Speaker and notify the same to His Excellency.

The Commissioner and members of the Legislative Assembly retired from the Chamber.

*[The President resumed the Chair.]*

#### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

The Clerk of the Legislative Council then announced the return of a writ for the election of Hon. A. F. Griffith as a by-election for the Suburban Province.

The PRESIDENT: I am prepared to swear in the newly-elected member.

Hon. A. F. Griffith took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

*Sitting suspended from 12.18 to 3 p.m.*

#### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3 p.m., and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following speech:—

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:*

It is with pleasure that I open the first session of the twenty-first Parliament of Western Australia.

The passing of Her Majesty Queen Mary caused deep grief throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations, and an appropriate message of sympathy was conveyed to Queen Elizabeth II on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

I desire to refer with profound regret to the passing of the Honourable A. A. M. Coverley, who rendered many years of valuable service to the State as member for Kimberley and as a Minister of the Crown.

It is with regret also that I record the passing of the Honourable Sir Hal Colebatch, the Honourable W. H. Kitson, and the Honourable Sydney Stubbs, all of whom served the State with great distinction. Sir Hal Colebatch was a Member of Parliament, Senator, Minister, Premier and Agent General. Mr. Kitson, whose death occurred whilst he was serving as Agent General in London, had a long record of public service as a Member of the Legislative Council, Minister and Agent General. Mr. Stubbs served in Parliament for a period of nearly 40 years including six years as Chairman of Committees and three years as Speaker.

The Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second was celebrated throughout the British Commonwealth in June this year. This State was represented in London by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. It was my privilege and pleasure to join with the people of Western Australia in the celebrations in this State which were marked with manifestations of loyalty and affection towards the Throne and the Person of the Sovereign.

I forwarded the following message to Her Majesty:—

On the occasion of Your Majesty's Coronation, I present my humble duty and on behalf of myself, my Ministers and your loyal subjects in Western Australia offer our sincere good wishes on your Coronation with the fervent prayer that this important occasion may be the prelude to a long, prosperous and peaceful reign.

The following reply was received:—

I have it in command to convey to you, your Ministers and the people of Western Australia an expression of Her Majesty's grateful thanks for the message of good wishes.

The visit next year of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh is keenly awaited. Five country centres have been included in the itinerary which has been designed to give as many people as possible the opportunity of participating in the loyal and enthusiastic welcome of which our Royal Visitors are assured.

There is keen goodwill towards Western Australia in Britain. The recent visit by the Premier and the two visits by Sir Ross McLarty as Premier in 1951 and as Leader of the Opposition this year have greatly assisted in building up this goodwill, towards which successive Agents General have made a most notable contribution.

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:*

For the year ended June last, the Consolidated Revenue Fund showed a deficit of £507,883, expenditure amounting to £39,392,119 and revenue to £38,884,236.

Loan Fund restrictions in 1952-1953 necessitated the shelving of many projected works. To ensure completion of works already in progress, it was necessary, during the course of the year, to arrange deferment of delivery or payment in respect of some plant and equipment on order.

Opportunity was taken by the Premier, during his visit to Britain for the Coronation, to make personal contact with many of the British manufacturers concerned in order to ensure the continuance of the State's very satisfactory business relationships.

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:*

The State continues to make substantial progress. Business confidence is strong. Employment is high and rapid population growth has continued.

Major industrial developments are proceeding or projected, and the demand is firm for the output of our primary industries.

The control of prices wherever warranted is regarded by Ministers as an important factor in the protection of consumers and you will be asked to approve of a measure to continue price control.

Owing to excessive rainfall in the agricultural areas a slightly reduced acreage has been put under crop this year, but good returns are expected from crops sown in time, as these have made an excellent start. Pasture growth is good, and lambing has been satisfactory.

The State's agricultural advisory services are being strengthened to assist in the drive for greater food production.

During recent years the professional and technical staff of the Department has been doubled.

The heavy rains this season have caused widespread soil washing in farm paddocks. The value of contour methods advised by the Soil Conservation Service and adopted by some farmers has been demonstrated.

The expansion of land settlement into new areas continues and a decision by the Commonwealth is awaited regarding the State's request for financial assistance to establish 1,000 additional dairy farms.

To date nearly £10,030,000 has been expended under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme. The number of farms provided from repurchased estates and Crown land has reached 1,023 and 858 ex-servicemen have been allocated farms.

Since July, 1947, 71,000 migrants have arrived in this State.

In 1952, 7,730 homes were erected throughout the State. The improvement in the supply of building materials warranted further relaxing of building controls in respect of certain types of buildings. Satisfactory progress is being made in the erection of homes for employees at the Kwinana Oil Refinery project.

Legislation will be introduced to continue in modified form the control of building operations for a further twelve months and to continue the land resumption powers contained in the State Housing Act.

A Royal Commission will be appointed to inquire into the contract covering imported Austrian prefabricated houses.

The large production of sawn timber last year made possible a substantial increase in the export of timber. The planting of 2,543 acres of pines last year increased the total area under pines to nearly 18,000 acres.

It is expected that the State Brickworks will produce nineteen million bricks this year and that the total production for the State will reach ninety-three million.

The prolonged drought conditions which have prevailed in the West Kimberley districts have brought heavy losses of cattle. Special arrangements have been made for the transport of fodder by State steamers to those areas. The Commonwealth Government has been approached for financial assistance for the surveying, classifying and mapping of areas in the North Kimberley region for pastoral development.

Five vessels are now on the North-West service. Because of the probable withdrawal of the "Kybra," approval has been given to the provision of another vessel of the "Kabbarli" type.

Additions have been made to the equipment at the Wyndham jetty and goods sheds. Work is well under way to repair the jetty at Onslow damaged by a cyclone in March this year. Steady progress is being made with the improvement of the more important road routes in the North-West and Kimberleys.

Improvements are being made to hospitals in the North-West.

Three hundred tons of pearl shell produced last year realised nearly £200,000. Five additional boats are operating this year.

A survey of the northern fishing grounds will be carried out this year.

The importance of maintaining confidence in the principle of arbitration is recognised and amendments to the Indus-

trial Arbitration Act to be drafted for that purpose will be submitted for your consideration.

Construction works associated with the Oil Refinery and Steel Rolling Mill are showing good progress. A case for Commonwealth financial assistance towards the Kwinana project has been submitted to the Prime Minister.

There is a steady expansion in the State's secondary industries, which now employ over 45,000 persons.

The proceeds from 1,187 whales taken last season was approximately £1,200,000. The State's annual quota of hump-back whales has been increased to 1,275.

The production of crayfish in 1952 reached the record of 8½ million pounds. The value of nearly 2½ million pounds of crayfish tails exported was approximately two million dollars.

Legislation to amend the Fisheries and Fauna Protection Acts will be introduced.

Gold production has been considerably increased by the large Bullfinch project and the development of other mines. Prospectors' sustenance allowances have been raised from £2 10s. to £4 10s. per week in the Eastern Goldfields and from £3 10s. to £5 10s. per week in the North and North-Western fields. Increased advances are being made to producers crushing at State Batteries. Diamond drilling on the goldfields will be extended with a view to the development of new mines.

Drilling operations on the iron and pyrite ore bodies at Koolyanobbing have disclosed high grade deposits of these minerals. The production of other minerals has been maintained at a high rate.

With a view to regulating coal production to meet requirements, a Coal Industry Co-ordinator has been appointed. The use of coal by the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation and by an expanded industry in the metropolitan area will considerably increase the demand. Drilling operations have disclosed important new deposits of coal and the mechanisation of mines is showing satisfactory progress.

Drilling for oil will commence at an early date on the site of the first deep bore in the North-West Cape area.

The public support given to the two loans floated by the State Electricity Commission last financial year was very gratifying, over two and a half million pounds being raised.

Construction of the third and fourth units comprising the "B" Station at South Fremantle is nearing completion. Tenders have been let for plant for a new power station to be erected at Bunbury and for additional plant to be installed in the East Perth Power Station. Transmission lines are gradually being extended and additional towns are being supplied from the Collie Power Station.

Satisfactory progress is being made with the change over from 40 to 50 frequency cycles in the metropolitan area.

A measure will be placed before you to provide that electrical equipment of domestic types for sale to the public be manufactured to safety standards.

Ministers are disturbed by the huge loss being incurred on railway operations. The commencement of 100 miles of re-railing has been approved as an urgent measure.

By the end of this year the railways should be in a position to handle all traffic offering. New diesel-electric engines and rail cars will begin to arrive from the United Kingdom late this year. Of 3,868 railway trucks ordered 1,640 have been delivered and the others are coming forward at the rate of 100 to 150 a month.

The replacement of tramways with trolley-buses on the Newcastle Street route is planned to coincide with the installation of traffic control lights in William Street.

The serious position of railway finance has demanded closer attention to duplication by road services. The closure of certain sections of railway line and replacement by road transport is being carefully examined.

The setting up of a commission with full co-ordinating powers in respect of metropolitan passenger transport is under consideration.

The strength of the mobile police patrols is being increased and traffic laws strictly enforced in an endeavour to reduce loss of life and injuries through traffic accidents.

An amount exceeding £4,000,000 was expended last year on improving and extending the road system. Over 300 miles were treated with bitumen surfacing.

The report by Messrs. Dumas and Brisbane on the changes necessary to the proposed development of Fremantle Harbour as a result of the Kwinana projects is receiving attention by Ministers. Dredging of the Success and Parmelia Banks to open up Cockburn Sound is ahead of schedule.

Dredging and reclamation for land-backed berths at Albany Harbour were completed last September, and the construction of one of the two berths is proceeding.

It has been necessary to slow down operations in connection with harbour development at Bunbury because of the shortage of funds, but work is being continued on the jetty extension.

There has been a considerable improvement in the supply of steel. The quantity discharged or in transit during the year 1952-1953 exceeded the total for the previous year by 6,000 tons.

The Commonwealth Government has been approached for additional financial assistance in connection with the Comprehensive Water Scheme.

The Premier recently discussed this matter in London with the British Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Butler). Negotiations for financial assistance from the British Government are to proceed.

The construction of new pumping stations and improvements to the main conduit along the Goldfields Water Scheme should avoid a recurrence of water restrictions and enable new areas to be served.

Work in connection with country sewerage schemes will proceed to the extent which limited Loan Funds will permit.

Water Supply works and Sewerage extensions to meet the increasing requirements of the metropolitan area are in progress.

The successful recruiting campaign for the teaching service has continued. At present 810 students are undergoing training at the Teachers' College and 500 bursary holders are studying at secondary schools for entry into the teaching profession.

The problem of classroom accommodation continues to be acute but every effort is being made to reduce the shortage.

Special agricultural courses have been instituted in some junior high schools. A superintendent to take charge of native education has been appointed. The scope of education of youth after leaving school is being widened considerably.

The establishment of the Salvation Army Vocational Training Centre for 14 to 18 year old boys at "Seaforth" should prove to be a successful innovation.

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for a modern remand home and child guidance clinic for the accommodation and treatment of mal-adjusted children.

The programme for the improvement of hospital buildings and services will proceed as quickly as available money will permit.

The construction of additional buildings at the Mt. Henry Home is proceeding and new wards at "Sunset" to provide additional accommodation for bed cases are approaching completion. Proposals to improve public health measures of a preventive nature are being considered.

A measure to be placed before you will contain important amendments to the existing legislation dealing with our native population.

The rapid development of the State and the impetus of the Kwinana project have demanded increased attention to town and country planning.

The preparation of an over-all plan for the metropolitan area under the advice of Professor Stephenson is expected to be completed within the next two years.

The technical staff of the Town Planning Department is being increased and the existing town planning legislation is being examined with a view to introducing amending legislation.

Endeavours are being made to have the new Local Government Bill presented for your consideration this session.

The Assistant Secretary for Local Government has been appointed to consider the revision of boundaries of Local Government Authorities.

The appointment has been made of a Western Australian Tourist representative in Sydney. Representation has been maintained in Melbourne since the end of the war. Hotel space accommodation, which has been a limiting factor in tourist development in post-war years, has eased and more positive action to encourage tourists is being taken.

In addition to legislation already mentioned, the programme to be placed before you will include measures to increase the aggregate and weekly payments to workers injured in the course of their employment; to ensure the orderly marketing of wheat in the event of stabilisation being defeated; to extend the scope of the State Government Insurance Office; to control the sale of medicines for livestock; to consolidate the War Service Land Settlement Agreement between the Commonwealth and State, and to continue the operation of the Industries Assistance Act.

You will be required also to consider amendments to the following Acts:—

- Land Act.
- Bushfires Act.
- Traffic Act.
- Noxious Weeds Act.
- Vermin Act.
- Pig Industry Compensation Act.
- Firearms and Guns Act.
- Rents and Tenancies Emergency Provisions Act.

I now declare this session open and trust that Providence will bless your labours.

His Excellency then withdrew from the Chamber.

*[The President resumed the Chair.]*

#### **BILL—BANK HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT.**

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to amend the Bank Holidays Act, 1884-1948."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

#### **GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.**

**THE PRESIDENT:** For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Governor copies of the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. These will be distributed amongst hon. members.

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

*First Day.*

**HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [3.40]:** I move—

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

It is my privilege in addressing myself to the motion, first of all, to express pleasure that it was possible for the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to be present in London at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. I believe the Crown is the symbol on which our democratic parliamentary system of government is based. Therefore, the Coronation is a question of great importance, not only to the people of the United Kingdom but also to those throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations.

I feel that the Coronation celebrations in this State, notwithstanding the fact that they were far removed from the centre of attraction, left nothing to be desired as far as loyalty is concerned. The people in a most fervent, patriotic and loyal manner celebrated the occasion, and this, I think, proved that the heritage which has been handed down to us from our ancestors is something of which we should be proud. I believe that the year 1953, the opening year of the 21st Parliament of Western Australia, will be a most important one, particularly as it is the Coronation year.

It is on such historic occasions as this that my mind drifts along the lines that this Colony was established as an outpost of the British Empire. I believe that each and every one of us who is privileged to be a member of the British Commonwealth will cast his mind back to the early pioneers of the State who braved the elements and travelled from the United Kingdom to establish an outpost in Western Australia, which was then known as a Colony, in the year 1829. The Colony was developed by those pioneers and their successors through the transition period until it became a State and was granted Responsible Government.

Those who were charged with the responsibility of government also had the opportunity of being associated with the framing of the Commonwealth Constitution which, being adopted a little over half a century ago, gave a nation to a continent and a continent to a nation. We are one people, proud to be a nation as Australians, but honoured and privileged to be members of the British Empire. So we in this State join with others on the happy occasion of the crowning of our new

Sovereign in trusting that she, having accepted a great responsibility upon her shoulders and having dedicated herself to the people of her realm will long have the health and strength to carry out her task; and we hope that we, too, may emulate the people of earlier days and make the great link between the Commonwealth of Nations stronger and yet stronger again.

There is another important question, and I feel I would be remiss in my duty if I did not mention it this afternoon. I refer to the armistice that has recently been signed in Korea. I am sure I echo the sentiments of all present when I express the great relief this news brings us, and the pleasure we feel when we know that those who were fighting for the cause we uphold will now have an opportunity, perhaps, to return home in the not far-distant future. Our minds can go back to just after World War I, when an organisation known as the League of Nations was formed. We then had great hopes of that organisation being able to do something to prevent wars, and that, as a result of negotiations and discussions, it would bring about peace throughout the world. But, alas, the League of Nations did not last very long.

After World War II, another organisation, known as the United Nations Organisation, came into being. We again believed that it would fulfil the purpose we expected of the first one; but again we found we still had aggressors in the world, and those associated with me here this afternoon, do hope and trust that the armistice that has been signed will be a forerunner of peace in the world for a great many years to come. May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the House, to express sympathy to the relatives of those who have paid the supreme sacrifice, and to those who have lost their health, and perhaps portions of their anatomy, in fighting for the cause that we desire to see prevail in the future.

There are one or two questions I wish to refer to and, although I have not a great deal of time at my disposal, I would like to say that I feel the lack of loan funds for Western Australia this year is something we should deplore. I believe that Western Australia is suffering a great disadvantage in view of the patriotism that was displayed during World War II, when the winning of the war took first place, and money was not expended on anything not considered to be absolutely necessary. Now we find that the making available of loan moneys to the States is based on a five-year period, and that the five-year period during World War II, when loan moneys were not used to any extent in Western Australia, is now militating against this State. Therefore, I say that Western Australia is suffering a great disability because of the patriotism it displayed in refraining from doing work that was not necessary at that time.

We find that other States which, by reason of their geographical position, might have been considered to be safe for industry, were able to attract industry for wartime purposes, thus necessitating the expenditure of large amounts of loan moneys. Those States are now receiving the benefit of the extra loan moneys that were made available to them during the war period. Western Australia, therefore, is not, I believe, receiving a fair proportion of the loan funds that are available. Hence, the progress of quite a lot of our public works has had to be retarded.

The question of uniform taxation is one that occupies my mind and no doubt the minds of many other members, too. I know that there is a large body of public opinion throughout Australia which holds that uniform taxation is not in the best interests of some States, but I believe that Western Australia is entitled to receive greater consideration in the disposal of the taxes that are derived from the people of the Commonwealth. If we are to be recognised as Australians, and not as six separate States in the Commonwealth, the money that is obtained from taxation throughout Australia must be utilised to the best advantage. Western Australia was definitely within a war zone during World II, and we must progress in this State. To do that it is necessary to spend money to improve the defence of Australia as a whole, and money spent in Western Australia will have that effect.

The area of Western Australia is about one-third of that of the Commonwealth and we have approximately one-sixteenth of the population. A lot of governmental work has to be done. That requires money and it would be impossible to raise sufficient money from taxation in our own State to enable us to develop Western Australia in the way it should be. Consequently it is the desire of most Western Australians that loan moneys in the future should be made available and that we should have our fair share of the taxation that is levied, notwithstanding the fact that portion of that taxation may be derived from some of the Eastern States.

Great credit is due to the Premier and the Deputy Premier for the efforts they have made to secure extra finance from the Commonwealth. They have also endeavoured to obtain financial assistance from the United Kingdom and, as Western Australia is one of the most important parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations, it is necessary that this State should be developed. If money is available from the United Kingdom for that development it would be to the benefit of the British Commonwealth generally to spend the funds in that way. So I believe that if extra finance can be made available for this State, the developmental work would be of benefit not only to Australia as a whole but also to the British Commonwealth of Nations.

It is pleasing to note the increase in secondary industries in Western Australia. For a long period this State was regarded as a "primary industry" State. Notwithstanding the fact that primary industries should be protected, it is to our advantage, from an economic point of view, to have a better balance between secondary and primary industries. For that reason it is gratifying to realise that our secondary industries are expanding and that trend, of course, will provide more employment for our people. However, although we are pleased to see the industrial progress taking place in the State, we must not be unmindful of the fact that our primary industries are of considerable importance. As the population increases it will be necessary for greater quantities of foodstuffs to be made available from within our own State. So we should realise that, although we are expanding in an industrial sense, we must not overlook the importance of our primary industries in assuring the future prosperity of Western Australia.

I was also pleased to see that the power-houses at South Fremantle and Bunbury are being enlarged and that there is an extension of transmission lines throughout the State. Power means progress for the State generally and it is also of considerable benefit to the people who live here. However, there are some districts—and I must become a little parochial on this occasion—that seem to be neglected. Jandakot, one of the districts in my province, must come within that category. A high tension main runs through this area and the residents in the locality have made many requests for power to be made available to them. So far nothing has been done, and as Jandakot is in close proximity to the South Fremantle power-house, I think it should be one of the first districts to receive the benefit of electric power.

Many houses have been erected since 1947, but during that time our population also considerably increased. Therefore I urge the Government to use every endeavour to have a greater number of houses built. So far as my province is concerned, I am not satisfied with the housing position. Fremantle is one of the oldest districts in Western Australia. Many houses in that area have reached a stage where they are unfit for human habitation and, in accordance with the Health Act, should be condemned. But, because of the lack of accommodation, it is not possible to condemn these houses and some people are living under conditions that are most unsatisfactory, are not conducive to good health and are certainly not in accord with the British way of family life. So the Government should do its utmost to see that the housing position is gradually improved.

The Medical Officer of Health of the Fremantle City Council made a caustic report on living conditions in certain parts of the district; I refer particularly to a place known as Base Flats. Those places should have been demolished years ago, but

unfortunately people are still forced to occupy them as well as certain Army camps. There are many elderly couples who have reared their families and are now in the evening of their lives. Many of those people have pioneered this State but because some persons purchased their homes they are forced out and have nowhere to live. Surely we cannot put up with that state of affairs for any appreciable further length of time! I hope that as loan moneys become available, the Government will use every endeavour to see that the housing position in Western Australia is improved and that more houses are made available.

I am limited in the time at my disposal, but I wish to take the opportunity, before I conclude, of congratulating the Government upon being returned to the Treasury bench. I trust that its members will do their best for the State—as I have no doubt they will. Also, I wish to congratulate two of my colleagues in this House, Mr. Fraser, who has been elevated to Cabinet rank and to the leadership of this House, and Mr. Strickland, who has also been elevated to Cabinet rank. I trust their period of office will be happy and I now submit the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

**HON. W. R. HALL (North-East):** I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 4 p.m.*