

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 30th June, 1959.

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## MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon.

### PROCLAMATIONS.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. F. E. Islip) read the proclamations of His Excellency the Governor summoning the first session of the Twenty-third Parliament.

### MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

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

### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice D'Arcy, 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 were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute, and signed the roll.

The Commissioner then withdrew.

### ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) : The House being duly constituted, I move—

That Mr. John Merrifield Hearman do take the Chair of the House as Speaker.

**MR. WATTS** (Stirling—Minister for Education) : I second the motion.

**MR. HEARMAN** (Blackwood) : 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 should like to express my thanks to the Premier and Deputy Premier for nominating me for this post, and I hope that I will be able to fulfil the duties of Speaker with credit to myself and distinction to Parliament. I now proceed to carry out the duties imposed upon me and assume the Chair as Speaker of this Assembly.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Premier) : May I, Sir, take this opportunity of offering congratulations on behalf of myself and the Government and the parties assembled on this side of the House. We know that you have a very exacting position and a very responsible one in the House of Parliament, but we are certain that you will carry out your duties as you have already suggested, with satisfaction to everybody; and I know you will make a very impartial approach to all the problems which you will face.

I am sure that you have, in the knowledge of being Speaker-elect, made some study of the Standing Orders and the constitution which governs this House; and that, from time to time, whenever your ruling is challenged, or when you are called upon to make a decision, it will be made on sound premises and made impartially. I trust you will have a very happy term of office, and that the general good atmosphere which has prevailed in this House for a number of years will be maintained throughout this session under your chairmanship.

**MR. HAWKE** (Northam) : I join with the Premier in congratulating you, Sir, upon having achieved the distinction of becoming Speaker of the Legislative

Assembly, and I offer these congratulations on behalf of all members of the official Opposition and perhaps also on behalf of the unofficial Opposition members, although they may wish to speak for themselves.

In a way, I am very sorry you are no longer on the floor of the House, because when you were a member on the floor of the House you took a very great interest in the affairs of the State. You were one member who did not restrict himself only to the affairs of his own electorate. You had a broad outlook in regard to State problems and were not afraid to express yourself in relation to those problems, irrespective of whether you pleased your friends or otherwise. It is in a way a pity that the floor of the House will not have the benefit of your initiative and of your political courage.

I again congratulate you on behalf of members on this side of the House and I sincerely hope and trust that we and you will get on well together.

**MR. GRAYDEN** (South Perth): On behalf of the members of the cross-benches, apart from the official Opposition, may I join with previous speakers in congratulating you upon your election as Speaker of this House.

**THE SPEAKER-ELECT:** I should like to thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the member for South Perth for the good wishes they have expressed concerning me. I am aware of the responsibilities that rest on me; and I hope I will be able to uphold the standard which has always been observed in this House; and which, I believe, is a standard that is at least equal to or better than that of any other Parliament in Australia.

I hope that I can worthily fulfil the responsibility and follow in the footsteps of my predecessor, who has been very helpful to me, as I know he will continue to be. I should like to express my thanks to him for the assistance he has already given me, and I warn him that I will probably be seeking further assistance from him.

### PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER-ELECT.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—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 12.58 to 2.55 p.m.*

**THE SPEAKER:** I have to report that I 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 might 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:—

Mr. Speaker:

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.

(Sgd.) Charles Gairdner,  
Governor.

### SPEAKER'S COMMISSION.

**THE SPEAKER:** I also wish to report 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.

The Speaker and 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.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE.

*Cross-Transfer of Senior Officers.*

1. **MR. HAWKE** asked the Premier:

(1) Who initiated the move to cross-transfer Mr. R. J. Bond from the position of Under Treasurer to the position of Public Service Commissioner, and Mr. K. J. Townsing from the position of Public Service Commissioner to the position of Under Treasurer?

(2) Why was the move initiated and completed?

(3) What legal warrant exists and in which Act of Parliament is it to be found to cover this cross-transfer?

(4) Were any other persons given any opportunity to apply for either or both positions?

(5) Will he lay on the Table of the House all papers in connection with this cross-transfer?

**MR. BRAND** replied:

(1) The Government.

(2) Because the Government believes that the qualifications and experience of both officers will be put to better use in their new positions.

(3) The Public Service Act.

(4) No.

(5) Yes, for one week.

*The papers were tabled.*

**GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.***Dismissals.***2. MR. HAWKE asked the Premier:**

(1) How many Government employees have been sacked by the present Government?

(2) Approximately how many more Government employees has the Government planned to sack?

**MR. BRAND replied:**

(1) In the change-over from day labour to private contract work, which is in accordance with the Government's policy, the services of 131 men have been dispensed with to date by the Public Works Department architectural division. Of these, 58 men have been placed in private employment, through the efforts of the architectural division; and as 68 of the 131 men dispensed with have not registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service, it is assumed that these 68 men have themselves obtained employment elsewhere. In the same period 72 men have left of their own accord to take up work elsewhere. These figures compare with the 217 men who were sacked by the previous Government between October, 1958, and the end of March, 1959, during which time 57 left of their own accord and eight retired.

(2) It is proposed to reduce the construction organisation, as has been publicised, by the retrenchment of approximately 20 men per week. Because of resignations and retirements, it is not possible at this stage to indicate just how many men will ultimately be retrenched.

**STATE ENGINEERING WORKS.***Retrenchments.***3. MR. TONKIN asked the Premier:**

(1) What did he mean when, on behalf of the Liberal Party, he stated in *The West Australian* of the 13th March last, "We will fire nobody"?

(2) How many men have been fired from the State Engineering Works since the Government assumed office?

**MR. BRAND replied:**

The question is a very simple one and I will answer the two parts together. It was not, and is not, the intention of the Government to dismiss employees gainfully employed. Under all Governments it has been necessary from time to time for employees to be retrenched through lack of orders. Since the 31st March the services of 37 workmen, and eight apprentices on completion of their apprenticeships, were dispensed with for this reason. This was done not by direction of the Government, but at the discretion of the management.

**CROSSWALKS.***Amendment of Regulation.***3. MR. EVANS asked the Minister for Transport:**

Is he aware that a great measure of concern and trepidation is felt by pedes-

trians as a result of his recent amendment to the traffic regulations which has further encroached upon the diminishing rights of this section of the community whose weary lot it is to plod their way—

Mr. Brand: Amen!

**MR. EVANS:** You will be down on your bended knees, sir, when you hear the remainder. At a time when all care and precaution should be taken to curb the useless road deaths and injuries, is he still convinced his move was a judicious one?

**MR. PERKINS replied:**

The amendment of the traffic regulation in question had been very carefully examined by the technical officers of the department, and the action only brings our regulations into line with those operating entirely satisfactorily elsewhere in Australia and the world. In my opinion they provide greater safety than the previous regulations in force.

Mr. Tonkin: What a lot of nonsense!

**EASTERN ACCEPTANCE CO.***Breaching of Money Lenders Act.***4. MR. JAMIESON asked the Premier:**

(1) Is the Premier aware of a High Court of Australia decision given on the 12th December last, in favour of Mayfair Trading Co. Ltd. against Eastern Acceptance Co. in respect of a sum exceeding £36,000?

(2) Is he also aware that the reason for the court's decision was its upholding of the West Australian Supreme Court's finding that Eastern Acceptance Co. had breached the Money Lenders Act, 1912-1937 of W.A.?

(3) As the firm of accountants responsible for organising this transaction and investment on behalf of the investors comprising the Eastern Acceptance Co. was Messrs. Hendry, Rae and Court, the principal active partner of which is C. W. Court, Minister for Railways and member for Nedlands, does the Premier think that such a person who had been so negligent as to have involved innocent investors in a major breach of the Money Lenders Act, is a fit and proper person to hold a portfolio as a Minister to Her Majesty?

(4) Is he aware that the reporting of the High Court judgment of such magnitude was completely suppressed by the Western Australian press to save embarrassing his deputy Liberal Party leader during the currency of the election campaign?

**MR. BRAND replied:**

As the question contains quite a lot of tripe I ask that notice of it be given. In the meantime the Attorney-General informs me that the position is being examined. Irrespective of what the member

for Beeloo has uttered I will point out that we have the utmost confidence in the member for Nedlands as Deputy Leader of our own party, and as the senior Minister in the Government.

#### **NORTH KALGOORLIE SCHOOL.**

##### *Bituminisation Programme.*

**5. MR. EVANS** asked the Minister for Education:

In view of constant representation made to his department by the parliamentary members of the North-East province and the Murchison, and also of the Kalgoorlie Legislative Assembly districts, can it be expected that the badly needed bitumen-laying programme for the North Kalgoorlie school will be commenced and completed this calendar year?

**MR. WATTS** replied:

Steps are being taken for work to be done on this ground.

#### **CANNING HIGHWAY.**

##### *Provision of Adequate Lighting.*

**6. MR. GRAYDEN** asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the extremely high incidence of traffic accidents on Canning Highway between the Causeway and Thelma-st., Como, will the Minister give serious and urgent attention to representations made to his department in respect to adequate lighting on the crosswalks of this section and to the installation of traffic lights at suitable intersections?

**MR. PERKINS** replied:

An investigation is at present being made into the lighting of Canning Highway, but I would point out that there are difficulties in regard to some of these highways, because although the traffic cross-walks are put in by the traffic division of the Main Roads Department, the lighting is under the control of the local authority. An investigation is proceeding in an endeavour to improve the position.

#### **EMPIRE GAMES VILLAGE.**

##### *Competition for Design.*

**7. MR. CROMMELIN** asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

Has the Minister given consideration to having the design of the proposed Empire Games village conducted on a competition basis among the architects?

**MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON** replied:

The Minister for Housing has been giving this matter very close consideration. I do not yet know whether he has made any decision, but if the hon. member desires any further information I suggest he put his question on the notice paper.

#### **CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES.**

##### *Invitations to Opening of Parliament.*

**8. MR. GRAHAM** asked the Premier:

I regret I could not give the Premier prior notice of this question since the full circumstances came to my knowledge only in the last hour. Is the Premier aware—

(1) That a serious diplomatic breach was committed in that invitations to attend this opening of Parliament were not originally extended to consular representatives who, in accordance with protocol, are ranked above—amongst others—all representatives of local authorities, including Lord Mayors of capital cities; and that this position was belatedly repaired only yesterday following protests?

(2) That the alleged ground for the omission was insufficiency of accommodation, notwithstanding that there would be a maximum of only four members of the diplomatic corps, and their wives, as against an estimated 700 people attending?

(3) Will the Premier take appropriate steps to ensure there is no recurrence of the foregoing circumstance?

**MR. BRAND** replied:

I can only say that this matter was brought to my attention yesterday, and I requested the appropriate officer to take what steps were necessary to resolve the difficulty, in view of the lack of accommodation. Because there was no appropriate seating accommodation left, we made what arrangements we could, and I understand that the leader of the diplomatic corps—the American Consul—was accommodated as representing the corps, but arrangements could not be made to accommodate the other consuls.

#### **STATE TRADING CONCERNS.**

##### *Disposal, etc.*

**9. MR. ROWBERRY** asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

In the event of the Government disposing of all or any of the State Trading Concerns, will the Minister give the following undertaking:—

(1) That a fair price will be insisted upon before sale?

(2) That employment in these concerns will continue on the same level as before sale?

(3) That the concern disposed of will continue to operate within the economy of the State?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister inform this House of what steps, if any, he proposes to take to—

(a) Determine what is a fair price?

(b) Make it mandatory upon the purchaser to keep employment in each concern at the same level as before the sale?

(c) Enforce continuance of operation within the economy of the State?

**MR. COURT replied:**

To the first three conditions that the hon. member read out, the answers are as follows: The Government has already stated its intention, firstly, that it will insist on a fair and reasonable price; secondly, that it will protect the employment of existing employees; and, thirdly, that there will be insistence on the continuance of the industry within the economy of the State. The methods to be employed will be those normally employed in the conduct of any negotiation of this kind.

**THE SPEAKER:** In view of the fact that we have certain formalities today which have to be completed, I do not propose—unless a question is one of urgency—to permit any further questions other than one now to be asked by the member for Victoria Park.

**POLITICS.***Introduction at Public Functions.***10. MR. ANDREW asked the Premier:**

(1) Is it not unethical and also in bad taste to bring politics into public functions?

(2) If so, why did he, when speaking at the opening of the University College appeal, at which I was present, state that one of the reasons why the appeal had a greater chance of success was because we now have a new Government in Western Australia?

**MR. BRAND replied:**

In the first place, the member for Victoria Park should be the last one to talk about bringing politics into anything.

Mr. Tonkin: Answer the question.

**MR. BRAND:** I made that statement facetiously, and if it was taken up by anybody there as being serious I humbly apologise to the Leader of the Opposition.

**STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.***First Reading.***MR. BRAND (Greenough—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 amend the State Electricity Commission Act, 1945-1956."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

**GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.***Distribution of Copies.*

**THE SPEAKER:** Accompanied by members of this Chamber, 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 greater accuracy, I have caused printed copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***First Day.*

**MR. BURT (Murchison) [3.56]:** 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 Legislative Assembly 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 address to Parliament.

In submitting this motion I should first like to congratulate you, Sir, on attaining the high office you now hold; and I trust that your term will be a long, successful, and happy one. I also desire to congratulate the Premier and the members of his Cabinet and wish them well in the difficulties that they will find ahead.

I feel that Western Australia is on the threshold of a new era of industrial expansion. The Government, by its policy of encouragement to industry and of steady progress in primary production will do much to lift this State to the economic level enjoyed by its eastern neighbours for so many years.

I also wish to thank the people of the Murchison for electing me as their member, and I shall naturally try to vindicate the faith they have placed in me. I am aware of the honour that has been given to me and to the people of the Murchison in entrusting me with moving the adoption of this Address-in-reply. I come here to represent an area of approximately 300,000 square miles, and I am unhappy to state that it is one of dwindling population and disappearing townships.

This state of affairs has been brought about mainly by the decline in the gold-mining industry—one of the two basic industries of my electorate. The prosperity that this State has undergone in primary production since the end of the war tends to make one overlook the tremendous benefits that were once derived from gold-mining, and I feel that nobody in Western Australia should forget just what that great industry has meant to the State.

On at least two occasions it has been the means of saving this State when on the verge of financial disaster. The Federal Government, in recognition, no doubt, of what goldmining means to our State, has to some extent helped it along with subsidies in recent years. However, I feel that

something more must be done to really make the goldmining industry what we want it to be, not only in the area I represent, but throughout Western Australia. I remember when Mr. de Bernales, after successfully floating the great Wiluna Goldmine—thus causing Wiluna to be the mecca of employment throughout depressed Australia—went, in 1929, to Canberra and literally sat on the steps until he obtained a subsidy which increased the price of gold in those days from £4 5s. to £5 per fine oz. From then on, this State began to look forward and the depression was soon left behind.

I feel that such action should be taken by the present Federal Government. I have, for a long time, advocated a flat subsidy of £5 per fine oz., payable on all gold produced, whether by a large company or the smallest of prospectors. The only string I would attach to that subsidy would be that the dividend-paying mines must use it for compulsory development and exploration. This would probably mean that the gold output in this State would rise to 1,000,000 ozs. annually. That would cost the Federal Government £5,000,000, but a great proportion of that amount would be returned to the Government by way of taxation and in indirect ways through freights, duties, etc., that are gathered from a prosperous industry. It would, however, I am sure, be the means of sending people once again to the goldfields and reopening mines that have been shut down for economic reasons; and would, therefore, cause a tremendous boost to industry throughout Western Australia.

We have read only recently of the dairying industry being granted over £13,500,000 for the forthcoming year. That is to boost the sale of a commodity that is not easily sold. There has never been any difficulty in selling gold for dollars.

His Excellency stated that the Government would increase the assistance now given to mining by the encouragement of more diamond drilling and geophysical and geological survey work. That is indeed very good to hear. I feel that prospectors should be encouraged to a greater extent, both in a monetary way and by the provision of suitable plant. However, it is not only gold that I wish to mention today; it is mining generally.

Throughout the north country there are many minerals still worthy of prospecting; and, as is known, we have several tremendous deposits of iron ore throughout the State; and I sincerely hope the Government will introduce a programme of diamond drilling the main iron ore deposits. I feel certain that if that were done a greatly increased ore reserve would be disclosed; and that would, of course, remove the main obstacle which has hitherto prevented the Federal Government from granting a license to export that product.

I know that the market is available for iron ore; and that if we were given the opportunity, we would find that our ore reserves are seven or eight times greater than we now believe them to be. More money would be received into this country in the way of royalties which would, I trust, be spent partially in the district from which that ore is produced.

The other industry in my electorate is pastoral. Unfortunately again in this industry we have experienced a decline. The high wool prices of a few years ago have disappeared but more serious than that, I consider, is the rapid decline and disappearance of the natural pasture growth of the area; and I feel that if something is not done to halt it, then in 15 to 20 years' time there will be no sheep left in the inland pastoral areas of the State. I believe that the way the problem should be tackled is firstly by irrigation. A hydrological survey of the whole of the outback pastoral areas should be undertaken. I feel sure that such a survey would disclose many underground streams, the existence of which have been hitherto unknown. These streams could be tapped and fodder provided so that the sheep could be fed when the natural food was not available in times of drought.

In Wiluna there is also a great underground water basin, and many experiments have been undertaken with various crops and cereals in that area. The Agricultural Department has a branch there, and officials have been most keen to encourage local pastoralists to use the water for the growing of lucerne. Recently experiments have also been undertaken in the growing of cotton, and of castor oil bushes. These have been very successful, and I do not think it is too much to expect that more attention be given to these two rather unusual types of vegetation in this State, and an industry along the lines suggested established. I believe that castor oil is in great demand in connection with modern jet engines, etc.

I would like to mention the subject of natives, which was a very contentious matter with the previous Government. I feel that having lived for 25 years in a part of this State in which natives abound, I can speak with some authority. I was very pleased to hear from His Excellency that hostels are to be established in the North-West and the Kimberleys for the housing of native children. I trust the Government will see fit to extend that amenity to the Murchison also, because I think that one way that full citizenship can be attained is by sending the native children from the hostels—which would be run by a white woman or a white couple—to school with our own children. In that way they could grow up with them and attain full citizenship.

I am opposed to full citizenship being granted to natives *hulus bolus*; but I do think that perhaps the Commonwealth

Government could extend its social service benefits to all natives, irrespective of whether they have citizenship or not. I have learned with interest recently of a pastoral area east of the Warburton Ranges near the South Australian border which is suitable for the raising of cattle; and I believe that if something could be done in that respect, a wonderful avenue of employment for natives could be provided.

The people of my district have been brought up the hard way. They live without many of the amenities enjoyed by people elsewhere; and one of the greatest shortcomings they suffer by living in the North-West is the absence of any sealed roads. During my term here I shall do my utmost to see if I can arrange for the sealing of two important roads in my territory. I refer to the Wubin-Meekatharra road, which is the shortest route to the North-West from Perth; and the Broad Arrow-Leonora road, which would assume a very great importance if any mining or pastoral industries were to be opened up east of Laverton.

The provision of a sealed road in the far outback means more than a comfortable ride in a car. Many times I have seen travellers set off for the North and be defeated before they have gone more than 100 miles or so because of the bumpy roads, which are sometimes in a very bad condition. It has a psychological effect on them. I believe that these two roads are the two main arteries in this State which are not sealed.

I would like to mention one other matter before concluding this speech. I refer to anomalies in the Electoral Act. As is probably known, my victory was in the nature of what is known as a photo-finish; and, to use another sporting phrase, the photo took a long time to come down from the tower. It seems to me quite wrong that although a chief polling place was only three hours away from Perth by air, and had a continuous telephone service, six days had to elapse before the result of the election was known and the fate of the Government determined. I sincerely trust that something will be done to modernise the Electoral Act and render the method of vote-counting less archaic.

To conclude, I would sum up as follows: I feel that my electorate is fast becoming the forgotten one-third of Western Australia. For a district which has produced hundreds of millions of pounds worth of wool and gold, it is in a sorry state indeed; but if something can be done to assist the industries I have mentioned, it will be of benefit to Western Australia as a whole. The most important need is to keep in the district the people who have shown their courage and initiative by remaining there until now, for to replace them would be well-nigh impossible.

**MR. CRAIG** (Toodyay): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Mr. Hawke, debate adjourned.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Premier): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 4.12 p.m.*

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## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 1st July, 1959.

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