

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 23rd October, 1973

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## CONDOLENCE

*The Late Hon. F. R. White, M.L.C.: Motion*

**THE HON. J. DOLAN** (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.35 p.m.]: I move without notice—

That this House expresses its deep regret at the death of the Honourable Frederick Richard White, who was, at the time of his passing a member for the West Province, a member of the Printing Committee and Party Whip in the Legislative Council of Western Australia, places on record its appreciation of his meritorious public service, and tenders its profound sympathy to his widow and the members of his family in their bereavement.

I know this is a very sad day for all of us. Last Thursday, a man in the prime of his life left us here in this Chamber, and has not returned.

I would like to pay a tribute to Fred White, who played an effective part in public life firstly as a teacher, then as a shire president, looking after the affairs of his district and, latterly, as a parliamentarian. His career though short was certainly most distinguished.

He was a very serious thinker, and we are all aware of the contribution he made in the fields which he knew so well; that is, local government and town planning. We all know how keen he was in these fields. Whenever he rose to speak, he seemed to know what he was talking about, and it was evident that he had worked hard at his subject. Fred White accepted all duties which were allocated to him in the House; he carried them out with ability and, of course, with willingness. His constancy and his tenacity were qualities which we all admired.

I know that he was an asset to his party; and members of his party admired him and considered that the work he did for the party was most meritorious. He made a great contribution to this House.

A promising parliamentary career has been cut short, and I think we all regret this. As a young man of 46 years of age, Fred White, during his career, and in the time he was with us made a really worthwhile contribution to the State.

His passing saddens me, as I know it saddens all members of my party, and I am sure all members of the House. We all regret that his career has come to an end.

Fred White had very wide constituency interests. Wherever I visited his electorate I invariably met him, and I was always impressed by the fact that he knew his district so very well. He played his part as a parliamentarian in looking after his electorate.

He was a good family man, with an excellent home life which we all admire. As I indicated in the formal motion I wish to express the deepest sympathy on behalf of my colleagues and myself to the widow and the family of Fred White on his untimely passing.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.38 p.m.]: I would like to second the motion moved by the Leader of the House. I am sure that the remarks I propose to make represent the sentiments of all the members of the Liberal Party. It was nothing short of a terrific shock to me—and I am sure every member in the Chamber would have been affected in the same way—to learn of Fred White's death. As the Leader of the House has pointed out, last Thursday Fred White left us apparently in good health, but today he has not returned to us.

Apparently Fred had a very successful career in the Education Department, and in the Royal Australian Air Force. He served in local government, and as we all know he served as a member of this House from 1967 until his untimely death.

Fred White impressed me as being a purposeful man, and always intent upon the things he set out to do. He was purposeful to the point of seeing them through to finality. I think it is an attribute and an asset to anyone who might possess such purposefulness.

I think the esteem in which Fred White was held is clearly evidenced by the number of people who attended his funeral at the Karrakatta Cemetery to pay him their last respects. Most of us attended his funeral this afternoon.

The age of 46 years is far too young for a man to be taken; it is far too young for a man such as Fred White who still had so much to contribute not only to the State—if it was his good fortune to remain a member of Parliament—but also to his family. I repeat: The age of 46 years is too young to be taken.

I greatly regret the necessity to stand here this afternoon to join with Mr. Dolan in the expression of sympathy which he has moved, and on behalf of myself and my party I would like to have our heartfelt sorrow conveyed to Mrs. White and family.

**THE HON. L. A. LOGAN** (Upper West) [4.41 p.m.]: I feel very humble in supporting this motion on behalf of the Country Party. I do not think I have yet

got over the shock I received on Saturday morning when Mrs. White rang me and told me the sad news. I am sure my colleagues have not yet recovered from the shock.

Fred joined our party with some experience and because of the ramifications and avocations of his life he was very well fitted to become a member of Parliament. Before he became a schoolteacher he was a businessman; he was involved in two or three different types of business.

He was a man of independent thought and one who was not always prepared to bow to direction; yet he was one of the most loyal members of our party. He was also adamant in debate but if he were proved to be wrong he would accept the situation. However, he remained a very independent thinker.

Fred White was conscious of his duties as a member of Parliament and I am sure that members will appreciate he always tried to ensure that Parliament was not subject to direction from anybody outside. He was ever mindful of that responsibility, and regarded it as part and parcel of his duties as a member of Parliament.

Apart from this he was also ever mindful of his duties to his family, and he can rest in peace because we know his family have been a credit to him.

We on this side who have sat alongside the man have vivid memories of our discussions in the party room, the occasional convivial drink, and being in the precincts of the billiard room.

It seems rather strange that the last two members who have died as members of this House while the House has been in session have both been members of the Country Party; both represented the same province; and, I think, both occupied the same seat. It does seem strange that our party should be the loser on each occasion.

I think each and everyone of us can acknowledge the fact that Fred White lived life as he wanted to. His integrity was never in dispute; his motives were never in doubt. He was a straight shooter and played the game at all times. We feel a deep sense of loss at his passing.

We all hope that his wife and family will live the rest of their lives in the knowledge that Fred did the best he could for them while on this earth. I join with the Leader of the House, on behalf of my party, in supporting the motion of condolence to his wife and family.

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central) [4.45 p.m.]: I could not let this occasion pass without adding to the tributes which have already been paid to the late Fred White. Fred was not only a colleague to me, but a very close friend. When I received the news of his death on Saturday I could not believe that a man of his moderate years was no longer with us.

Fred and I had many ideas in common. We discussed many things and our views were so similar we seemed to be brought closer together over the years that we knew each other. Fred's ideas on town planning, land valuations, and on many other matters went along with those of my own. He knew a lot more about town planning matters than I will ever know and, perhaps, more than the majority of members in this Parliament will ever know.

He was meticulous in regard to legislation which he discussed, and in his view legislation had to be good legislation; and it had to be adhered to. One of his main attributes was that things should be done properly.

As a previous speaker has said, Fred made a complete study of all legislation in which he took an interest, and he knew what he was talking about. This House will feel a loss at the passing of the late Fred White. I know that his family, who are good friends of my wife and myself, will feel his death more than we will. I know that any help which we can give to his family will be forthcoming. With the deepest respect I pay tribute to the late Fred White.

**THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE** (North-East Metropolitan) [4.47 p.m.]: I feel it apposite to quote an expression which one reads and hears, from time to time. It appears in the passages of the Bible and is, "I come like a thief in the night, you know not the hour nor the time."

A week ago our colleague, the late Mr. Fred White, was with us and appeared to be in complete good health. His capacity and his attributes have been ably stated by Mr. Arthur Griffith and Mr. Jerry Dolan. It is true that he did not believe in the political philosophies that some of us hold, but that was his right and he exercised it with all due respect to democracy on every occasion. He always earned the respect of his opponents.

Fred White died a peaceful death and for that I feel some form of thanksgiving. Although the shock of his death reverberates through this Chamber today, we can imagine the reaction of his family. I do not know why it is that people who seem to have a great capacity, and energy unbounded, are taken from the precincts of this Chamber and, indeed, of life. Perhaps if we could see a few years into the future we would be satisfied with the situation which occurs now. I seek solace in the probability that what has happened now will be for the best.

Nevertheless, as we mortals see it, the circumstances are that we have lost a great parliamentarian who was an asset to the Country Party in Western Australia, and an asset to Western Australian politics.

**THE PRESIDENT** (The Hon. L. C. Diver) [4.50 p.m.]: Before putting the question, honourable members, I would like to reaffirm the remarks of the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Logan, and Mr. Willesee.

As your President, I always admired the attitude adopted in debate by our late colleague, Fred White. With a penetrating mind and a sense of purpose, he used to launch himself into debate, and when it was pointed out to him that his line of discussion was not relevant, he never continued with it. He immediately acknowledged that he was wrong. What a gift for any man to have! And to think that he is taken from us. It is very sad indeed.

If a young man coming into Parliament had asked me to nominate someone whom he could copy as a Member of Parliament, I would have nominated Fred White because I have seen him not only in the House but also outside it, and the manner in which he applied himself was truly in the interests of those he represented and, particularly, of the State of Western Australia.

I hope his widow and children will not come to any great harm in the days ahead, and I am sure they have many friends in this House.

Honourable members, will you please be upstanding and observe two minutes' silence in tribute to our late colleague.

Question passed, members standing.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

**THE HON. J. DOLAN** (South-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.54 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

*House adjourned at 4.55 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 23rd October, 1973

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Norton) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

#### QUESTIONS (21): ON NOTICE

##### 1. AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

###### *Reference to Departments*

**Mr. MENSAROS**, to the Treasurer: What were the reasons for the recent Treasury practice not to forward copies of interim audit reports to the departments concerned as commented upon by the Auditor-General on page 6 in his 30th June, 1973 report?

**Mr. J. T. TONKIN** replied:

It has been, and still is, the practice of the Treasury to forward copies of audit reports to the departments concerned.

The Auditor-General's comment simply arises from a minor delay in recent months in forwarding some audit reports to the departments concerned. This delay resulted from the transfer to another position of the officer previously engaged on this work and the subsequent time taken to obtain a replacement.

##### 2. TEACHERS' TRIBUNAL

###### *Appeal*

**Mr. MENSAROS**, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

As a decision has now been made by the tribunal upon the Teachers' Union appeal against the latest salaries determination, could he give information whether that part of the appeal which was seeking that any betterment of the determination should only apply to Teachers' Union members has been upheld or rejected?

**Mr. T. D. EVANS** replied:

The tribunal dismissed this section of the appeal.

##### 3. GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

###### *Starting Times and Holidays*

**Mr. MENSAROS**, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

Could he already give the starting times and times of school holidays for—

(a) Government;

(b) non-Government,

primary and secondary schools in 1974?

**Mr. T. D. EVANS** replied:

(a) 1st Term—11th February—10th May;

2nd Term—27th May—23rd August;

3rd Term—9th September—20th December.

(b) Information relating to the non-Government schools is not available at the Education Department. All non-Government schools do not have common opening dates.