

Further, we have the Garden Island public use-environmental management study, and following this there is the water management study on which co-operation has been promised by the four major industries at Cockburn Sound and by the Fremantle Port Authority. At present an initial figure of \$30 000 has been allocated for preliminary studies and it is anticipated there will be co-operation between the Commonwealth and State Governments and local industry in the major studies to follow. It is hoped that the cost of such a study will be shared by these three groups.

Last, but by no means least, there is the Demographic and Environmental Committee which is working under the guidance of the Department of Economics at the University of Western Australia. This committee is, in fact, examining the total impact that Kwinana, since its inception, has had on the people and the environment. The result of this study will show what effect this industry has had on the environment and will help us plan and take steps to ensure that pollution is not a major factor in future development.

Mr President, if there are some who doubt that care and effort are being put into the study of pollution of Cockburn Sound I am not one of these, because I am extremely impressed with the work that is being done. The Department of Environmental Protection has looked at the problem of the jumbo steel works. It is looking at other steel works. It is aware of the types and quantities of material that would go into the jumbo steel plant, and it is aware of the types and qualities of waste that will come out of the mill.

When the time comes to make a judgment the department will be well equipped to make one. I am sure that if the jumbo steel mill is established at Kwinana we will have the environmental safeguards that are required. To me it would be a shame if this great industry were not located in the Cockburn Sound area which has the infrastructure and a strategic position; advantages which will bring many benefits to the surrounding areas.

In closing, Mr President, I wish to express my thanks to our Premier (Sir Charles Court) and his Cabinet for inviting me to move this motion tonight.

THE HON. T. O. PERRY (Lower Central)

[9.00 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by the Hon. R. Thompson (Leader of the Opposition).

House adjourned at 9.01 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 13th March, 1975

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Legislative Assembly met at 8.00 p.m.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr Hutchinson) took the Chair.

PROCLAMATION

The Clerk Assistant of the Assembly (Mr B. L. Okely) read the Proclamation of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator (Commodore James Maxwell Ramsay, C.B.E., D.S.C.) summoning the second session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker and members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber; and, having heard His Excellency the Governor (Air Commodore Sir Hughie Edwards, V.C., K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., D.F.C.) deliver the opening Speech (*vide* Council report *ante*), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

QUESTIONS (8): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. AGENT-GENERAL

Appointment

Mr J. T. TONKIN, to the Premier:

It was stated in the Press in December that the Government would announce the name of the new Agent-General to London before Christmas. It is now almost the middle of March and no announcement has been made. I ask the Premier—

- (1) What is the reason for the delay?
- (2) Has the Government as yet made up its mind as to the appointment?
- (3) When will an announcement be made?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) It was hoped that an appointment would be announced before Christmas, as per the Press statement at the time. However, due to circumstances beyond the Government's control, it was not practicable to obtain the person we wished to appoint. Subsequent to that, it was decided that some reorganisation was necessary within the London office. This reorganisation was undertaken by the Under-Treasurer when he

accompanied me to London. We are in the process of taking further steps towards appointing a new Agent-General. I cannot be precise as to the announcement of the appointee, but I hope it will be within the next few weeks.

2. MEDICAL TREATMENT

Free Air Transport

Mr T. D. EVANS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Does he confirm that citizens resident north of the 26th parallel, who are certified by a medical practitioner as being in need of special medical or hospital treatment in the metropolitan area, are furnished on request with free air transport by scheduled airline service by the Public Health Department, or some other government agency, exempt from any means test?
- (2) Does he not agree that there are other centres in the State relatively more remote and more environmentally disadvantaged than some centres situated north of the 26th parallel, such as Wiluna or Haig (Trans.-line) compared with Carnarvon?
- (3) Will he agree to extend, where applicable, the provision of air transport for medical reasons to persons living in areas south of the 26th parallel in cases where this service can be demonstrated to be justified, again free of means test?
- (4) If not, why not?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not at this time.
- (4) Funds are not available to extend this service south of the 26th parallel. Discussions are taking place with the Commonwealth Government seeking funds to extend the service. The whole question of the provision of specialist services to people in these areas is being studied also as it is better to bring these services to the people rather than have the people travel to Perth.

3. ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Malapportionment

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Premier:

- (1) Was he correctly reported in the Press as saying at the Australia Day dinner in London recently that Australians and Britons had subverted democracy?

- (2) Is not the prime example of subversion of democracy the blatantly dishonest system of election in Western Australia by which a minority of the people of this State control the two Houses of Parliament?
- (3) Will the Premier give an undertaking to set himself at the head of a truly liberal organisation to lead us out of the jungle of malapportionment into which we have strayed for narrow political advantage?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

- (1) to (3) I am not sure that the words quoted by the honourable member were the exact words I used at the dinner. However, I will be only too pleased to consult the Press reports and my own notes. On a subsequent occasion I will advise him whether the words were correct. They do not seem to be the precise words which appeared in the Press or which I read out myself. However, I will certainly check this matter. With reference to elections held in this State, I remind him that the Western Australian system of elections evolved over a long period of time.

Mr A. R. Tonkin: "Evolved"—that is a new one.

Sir CHARLES COURT: This system has been altered progressively, I believe keeping pace with the changing conditions in this State of ours. If the honourable member wants to deny people living in places such as the Kimberley, the Pilbara, Gascoyne, and Murchison-Eyre, representation by their own member, I would like him to say so. I remind the honourable member that people in these and other remote areas produce most of the wealth of the State.

4.

SHOPS

Late Trading Hours

Mr HARMAN, to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Is it a fact that late last year the Minister gave an undertaking, a promise, or an assurance—whatever he wishes to call it—to the retailers and the unions representing shop assistants in Western Australia that he would not alter trading hours until the unions and the retailers had reached agreement?
- (2) Is it a fact also that just recently the Minister announced that trading hours would be disturbed,

thereby breaking his assurance given to traders, retailers, and the unions?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) and (2) I inform the member for Maylands that he has his facts a little mixed. The assurance which I gave to the retailers and trade unions last year was to the effect that there would be no night shopping on a permanent basis—that is, once a week—without the support of both those groups. Since that time we have simply made it possible for shops to open three nights a year, two nights prior to Christmas, and one night prior to Easter. This was an optional arrangement and not mandatory. Any shop which does not wish to open on these nights does not need to do so.

5. MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION

Naturalisation Ceremony: Comments

Mr B. T. BURKE, to the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) Will the Minister confirm that he attended a naturalisation ceremony at the City of Stirling in an official capacity last evening?
- (2) Is he aware that at least one City of Stirling councillor has called for an apology for the Minister's behaviour?
- (3) Does the Minister intend to make the apology?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

I ask the member for Balga to place the question on the notice paper in order that I might give it the detailed answer it deserves.

6. MINING BILL

Introduction

Mr MAY, to the Minister for Mines: As the Governor's Speech indicated that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a new mining Bill, will the Minister advise whether the legislation is to be introduced in the autumn session and, if so, will debate on the legislation be permitted to be carried over until the spring session?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The answer to both parts of the question is "Yes". To enlarge on my answer, it is the intention of the Government to introduce the Bill in the autumn session and to leave it on the notice paper until the spring session.

7.

PREMIER

Statesmen: Definition

Mr BRYCE, to the Premier:

My question relates to a statement which he was reported to have made during his recent visit to the captains of industry in the United States of America. For the record of this House, would the Premier confirm that it is his belief that the only true statesmen today are to be found in business and not in Parliament?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

I am reminded of what Lord Dunrossil said; namely, that a statesman is a successful politician who has been dead for 10 years. Heaven forbid that the member for Ascot should ever be classed in that category! However, in the interests of accuracy and in view of the fact that the honourable member seems to have his verbiage a little wrong, I suggest he places his question on the notice paper and he will receive an appropriate answer.

8.

GOVERNMENT

Secrecy: Allegation

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Premier:

Does the Premier intend to continue his Government's policy of secrecy, as shown by the refusal—

- (a) to hold a public inquiry into the Laverton troubles;
- (b) to release details of the analysis of Swan River water;
- (c) to disclose the results of the police inquiry into the Forrest Place disorders of last year;
- (d) to reveal to the public the environmental considerations in the Alwest project;
- (e) to inform the public in good time of the results of the analysis of mercury in fish, which can have such deleterious effects on the health of people and children unborn;
- (f) to release a report by the Town Planning Department into the protection, preservation and utilisation of our coastal areas;
- (g) to release information relating to many other matters?

Sir CHARLES COURT replied:

We know of course of the honourable member's obsession about matters to do with the environment. I would not attempt to answer in detail every one of the items he enumerated. However, if he likes to have them answered

to full effect, I would be only too pleased to do so. If the member for Morley cannot get his question on the notice paper in time for next Tuesday's sitting, I will undertake to answer the question without notice. However, I point out that this Government has observed a great degree of frankness in its administration. He would know that any Government in the course of its duties—I instance some of the things being done by his colleagues in Canberra—must keep some matters confidential as a matter of plain good sense. If the honourable member is referring specifically to Laverton, he should understand if he reflects on the matter that the Government is trying to find a permanent solution for the problems at Laverton, Warburton and other areas and is not just seeking dramatic headlines. I hope the honourable member, on reflection, will realise that what this Government is doing is more sensible and practical than what the Commonwealth Minister is trying to force us into.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Leave to Introduce

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [8.44 p.m.]: In order to preserve the privilege of the House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the long title, section 4, section 12, section 13, section 14, section 16 and section 17 of the Environmental Protection Act, 1971-1972.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Sir Charles Court (Premier), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Distribution of Copies

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): 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

Motion

MR OLD (Katanning) [8.46 p.m.]: I move—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

A matter which has been exercising my mind for some time and which has caused considerable concern to most responsible citizens of our great State is the drift of population from the rural and rural-urban areas to the city. I have extracted some figures which demonstrate this drift. They reveal that in 1961, out of a population of 736 629, 57.55 per cent lived in the metropolitan area. In 1966, of a total population of 836 673, 59.76 per cent dwelt in the city. In 1973, the total population was 1 068 000, of which city dwellers accounted for 69.2 per cent. I point out that these figures do not cover the Perth statistical division but refer only to the metropolitan area.

Taking into account the actual rise in population, the figures reveal a growth rate in the city during the period 1961 to 1973 of 74.32 per cent, whilst the population of the State during the same period showed a growth rate of only 44.97 per cent.

I feel sure you must agree, Mr Speaker, that this is a very undesirable situation, when we live in a State which is virtually a State of primary industry. By "primary industry" I do not refer to the old concept of wool, wheat and grain because today our mighty mining ventures play a very great part in our State's production and mining, of course, is included under the heading "primary industry".

I crave the indulgence of the House to quote a few figures relating to production in order to demonstrate the magnitude of primary industry. The figures relate to the 1972-73 season. During that period in Western Australia, the area sown to crop was 3 564 000 hectares, resulting along with other production in a yield of 2 million tonnes of wheat. Other figures reveal a production of 90 000 tonnes of beef, 93 000 tonnes of lamb and mutton and 147 million kg of wool. The value of agricultural production was \$432 million; forestry \$13 million; mining, which included 1 154 000 tonnes of coal, \$456 million; and manufacturing \$481 million.

From these figures it may be claimed that the bulk of our income comes from the rural and mining areas; but by no means does this denigrate the necessity and importance of the city, or the city dwellers; for without them our market would be sadly depleted. The point I wish to make is that we are entirely dependent upon each other, and the sooner this fact is acknowledged by all concerned the better off will be our State.

What is the answer to the situation? It has been espoused over many years by

parties of various political colours and philosophies, and I refer to that equaliser—decentralisation. The problem is the method of implementing it. I feel the only way we can implement it is to create a set of conditions in rural and urban areas which are comparable to life in the city; and one of the most attractive facets of life in the city is perhaps the cost of living. It is an unfortunate fact that the further one progresses from the city the dearer become the commodities, and this is due in the main to the cost of carriage.

Whilst I realise the implementation of the equaliser is a mammoth task, it is by no means an impossibility. Indeed, cigarette companies and the tyre industry have overcome the problems associated with this particular facet and have, in fact, been able to retail their products at a standard price throughout the State.

The Federal Government in 1969 recognised the problem which existed in the petroleum industry, and set about to implement a scheme by which the price of automotive fuels would be standardised throughout Australia. In fact, the scheme reached the stage where the maximum freight on any fuel in most parts of this continent was 3.3c per gallon. This was acclaimed by the country people as a realistic step towards decentralisation, and as a very realistic move to improve the quality of life in rural and urban areas.

However, since the present Federal Government came into power—its policy appears to be focused upon the development of growth centres in the eastern part of Australia—it has seen fit on two occasions to reduce, and eventually abolish the subsidies applying to freights on petroleum products. Now we are back at the stage, especially in Western Australia, where colossal prices are being paid for fuel as a result of the abolition of the subsidy.

With the imbalance of population the matter of housing becomes very important. The State Housing Commission has only a certain amount of money to spend on housing, and the criterion for the establishment of new homes is based mainly on need. It necessarily follows, in view of the large proportion of the population in the metropolitan area, that the greatest need for housing is here in the city; therefore most houses are built in the metropolitan area. It also follows that young couples looking for housing anywhere in the State and being unable to find housing in the country will eventually drift to the metropolitan area where housing is much more readily available. It almost amounts to the old story of the hen and the egg. I feel the Government should grasp the nettle and overcome this problem in some way. The only way I can see to achieve this is to take the bull by the horns and provide housing for decentralised industry.

I know this is a very ticklish problem, but if we can persuade the Federal Government to make funds available for the provision of more housing, we could select growth centres and establish houses in them. This would attract not only employees, but also persuade employers to decentralise their industry and labour. By this means I feel we will take a great step towards decentralisation, and thus make it a meaningful objective instead of just a word which is used at the hustings at election time.

The funding of community projects is a matter upon which the Government has made great play. In fairness I must say that funds are now drifting through to some country areas, and these funds are very much appreciated. However, I will also point out that the administration cost is far too great. There is already an excellent set-up in this great State of ours for the handling of such funds; and I refer to the local government situation.

The criteria on which these funds are made available are so nebulous, and the avenues are so many—I understand there are somewhere in the region of 2 000 avenues—that it takes a tremendous amount of expertise to establish the needs and to distribute the funds. Under Parkinson's law we would soon end up with a pyramid organisation, set up to establish this need; and consequently the cost of administration would take most of the funds, with very little of the funds reaching the needy.

I suggest that if the Federal Government channels these funds to the State, which in turn could channel them through to local government, then the cost of administration will be negligible. I am quite sure that local government, in particular the town councils and shire councils, would be very happy to do, as some of them are at present doing; that is, banding together and employing amongst them an officer to undertake research into these requirements, to make the necessary recommendations to the authorities concerned which in turn could make application to the State Government, and ensure that the money in total eventually goes to the people who are most in need.

Currently a town in my electorate is facing a difficulty; that town is Katanning, which bears the name of my electorate. This difficulty has been created through the foresight and go-ahead policies of the civic fathers of the past. In the early 1930s a band of people in Katanning began a move to agitate for the building of a swimming pool. In those days there were no community swimming pools outside the metropolitan area if, in fact, there were any in the metropolitan area.

So successful was the campaign that in 1938 the road board of the day built a swimming pool at Katanning at a cost of

£7 000—not a very great amount by today's standards. We should bear in mind there were no subsidies paid for the construction of swimming pools in those days, and £7 000 was a lot of money. Unfortunately, due to lack of funds, the pool had to be restricted to three-quarters of the size of an Olympic pool. Although this pool proved to be adequate for many years, as time passed it deteriorated progressively until the stage has now been reached where, for a variety of reasons well known to several government departments, the pool has to be replaced.

An estimate of the cost to replace this pool is in the order of \$220 000, and assuming that Katanning qualifies for the \$20 000 grant from the Government, it would leave \$200 000 to be raised by loan. Over a period of 20 years the loan repayments at \$23 113 per year would result in a massive sum of \$462 000 representing the total cost to the shire. If we add the \$20 000 which we hope will be forthcoming as a subsidy, the total cost would be \$482 000 or near enough to half a million dollars. This is the amount which the shire, that covers an area of 500 square miles, has to find.

To enable that loan to be serviced it would be necessary in the town wards to increase the rate by about 14 per cent and by about 27 per cent in country wards; and it must be borne in mind that the town wards are already rated at the maximum.

I feel this is an excellent opportunity for the Federal Government to channel some money through us to enable us to assist this town which is in a very unique situation because it was the first to build a swimming pool but now has the most inadequate in the State. While the subsidy of \$20 000 received in the past was indeed a great help when swimming pools cost in the order of \$60 000 to \$80 000, now that the cost has increased to \$220 000, that \$20 000 is hardly a drop in the bucket. Therefore I do hope that in some way we can solve that problem.

In conclusion let me make one final observation. Primary industry is subject to violent fluctuations and at present a trough is being experienced. From a financial point of view, many people in the agricultural sector of primary industry face a grave situation. I therefore appeal to the Federal Government to make money available to ensure that these people do not go to the wall. I would ask the Federal Government to consider reintroducing some of the concessions which were actually a catalyst to increased production. I refer firstly to the superphosphate bounty which was mentioned in the Governor's Speech this evening, but equally important to this State is the taxation concession which was allowed to farmers for water conservation. In a State such as ours in which a large proportion of our agricultural industry is situated in areas of low and moderate rainfall, the conservation of water is of the

utmost importance. Not only would the provision of more water boost production, but it would also take the heat out of the repeated requests for the expansion of our very much overtaxed comprehensive water supply into rural areas for primary industries, thus serving a twofold purpose.

I am grateful for the opportunity afforded me this evening to initiate the Address-in-Reply motion.

MR LAURANCE (Gascoyne) [9.01 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J. T. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition).

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

SIR CHARLES COUET (Nedlands—Premier) [9.02 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m., on Tuesday, the 18th March.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.03 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 18th March, 1975

The **PRESIDENT** (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

REVISED PRAYER

Notice of Motion

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [4.51 p.m.]: I intend to move that a revised form of Prayer, as contained in the appendix, be adopted by the Legislative Council. I ask, Mr President, that a copy of the proposed motion be allowed to remain on the notice paper for a week before it is moved, and as members will be speaking to the Address-in-Reply, I will ask the Minister for Justice to suspend Standing Orders so that my motion may be dealt with.

QUESTIONS (15): ON NOTICE

1. COAL EXPORTS

Japan: Restriction

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education representing the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Because of the possible serious repercussions on Japanese trade with Western Australia, has the Government conveyed its concern to the Premier of Queensland over his threat to restrict coal exports to Japan if that country does not increase its imports of Queensland beef?