

**BILL—ACTS AMENDMENT (INCREASE
IN NUMBER OF MINISTERS OF
THE CROWN).**

The PREMIER: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for an increase from eight to ten in the number of principal executive offices of the Government liable to be vacated on political grounds.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

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

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe): [3.43]: I move—

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

At the outset of this my maiden speech within these walls, I desire, as the inaugural member for Cottesloe, to thank the people of that electorate for the trust and confidence they have reposed in me. It will be my earnest endeavour to justify that trust and confidence by sincere application to my parliamentary duties and responsibilities.

My warmest congratulations are due to you, Mr. Speaker, upon your once again having secured election to your high office. I feel, too, that I would be lacking in my duty if I were not to congratulate Sir Ross McDonald on his recent knighthood. The honour conferred upon him is a just and fitting reward for his long and distinguished service to the people and the State of Western Australia. May I also congratulate the Government on its retention of the State's confidence at the recent Assembly elections. I submit that

in production and development, the Government has struck a keynote that is in perfect tune with the best interests of our rapidly expanding economy.

In the Governor's Speech pleasing reference was made to the fact that His Excellency's Ministers were actively seeking the support of the new Commonwealth Department of National Development. This avenue, if explored to the fullest extent, will, I feel sure, render material assistance in our developmental projects in far-flung areas.

I am particularly interested in the field of education and I desire to make one or two references to some salient problems confronting the Education Department of this State today. Education, to my way of thinking, is of paramount importance. It is, as I see it, the awakening of the mind. A noted writer has suggested that the house of the mind possesses a great many windows through which we look at the great moving spectacle of life. The educated man is one who is able to use all or many of those windows, and so our job, to carry the metaphor further, must be to aim at the cleaning and opening of those windows—the windows of science, art, the classics and music. Teachers today have the supremely difficult task of preparing people to live in the atomic age when in the main they have not yet adjusted themselves to the electric, or even the steam age. My endeavour has been so far to emphasise, if emphasis is needed, the importance of education generally and of the teaching profession in particular.

It would appear at first glance that there are many and varied problems associated with the Education Department, but I contend that these may be reduced to two great over-all problems. Firstly, there is the shortage of schools or lack of school accommodation, and, secondly, there is the shortage of teachers. The shortage of schools is a problem that is inextricably tied up with another problem, namely, that of housing, hospitals and developmental problems. The last three years have seen great strides forward in the construction of new schools and additions to existing ones and, in general, the renovation of schools.

The Minister for Education a few weeks ago outlined a bold and, I feel, a well conceived plan for starting on the construction of 48 new schools in this financial year. I think I can say with confidence that although the very nature of the building problem precludes the early solution of our school shortage, the job has been tackled with outstanding initiative and enterprise.

The second problem—the shortage of teachers—is a prime and urgent one. The problem here is that at the moment there is indeed a serious shortage of teachers, plus the fact that there is a decided lack of interest on the part of those young, bright people leaving school and the University at the present time. Educational

reforms crying out for immediate attention, such as a reduction in the size of school classes and the raising of the school leaving age to 15 years, cannot be implemented while such teacher shortage exists. Time prevents me from proving the shortage by quoting reliable figures. As a matter of fact, I know that has been done in this House already; but I do, on my own behalf, solemnly assure members that dangerous staffing problems exist now, and unless something is done in the immediate future the position will become far more acute.

Why is this so and what can be done? I think it will be agreed that these questions must be satisfactorily answered—and soon. Simply, the answer to the first question—why is this so?—is that the scale of salaries paid to teachers is hopelessly inadequate to attract bright, intelligent young people into the teaching profession. I could enumerate half a dozen callings attracting potential teachers which give a far greater financial reward for much poorer academic qualifications.

I feel it will be generally realised that we must answer the question, what is to be done, simply by making a substantial increase at the next reclassification early in the New Year on the complete range of teachers' salaries. I know full well that the Government has already made fairly generous marginal interim increases in salaries but it is my fervent wish that it will make such a reclassification as will help to remove one of the greatest educational problems of our day.

At this stage I would call the attention of the Treasurer to the totally inadequate grant made to the Surf Life Saving Association of Western Australia. This organisation contributes such a splendid, selfless service to the people of this State that I can say, without fear of contradiction, that it is a service—given, too, in an honorary capacity—that is unequalled throughout the world. Almost ten years ago, following a deputation led by five members of this House, Mr. Willcock, the then Premier, initiated an annual grant of £100 to the association. At the time of making this concession, Mr. Willcock said that the sum was merely a nominal one and he hoped representations would be made in the future when further favourable consideration would be given to the raising of the annual grant.

I feel that a substantial increase should be made this financial year. The original amount, although a handy contribution, is lamentably below that figure which the clubs in the association require for the maintenance of their essential lifesaving equipment. I believe that an annual grant of between £800 and £1,000 is necessary for the continuance of the magnificent work the association is doing for the people of this State. I hope the Treasurer

will, in his wisdom, see fit to make this further contribution to the welfare of the public.

The people of Western Australia—and indeed the people of the world—have for some time been viewing the trend of events in East and South-East Asia with a good deal of grave concern. In Korea particularly, the evil tide of communism has rolled along yet more red miles of human misery. The active intervention of the United States of America, acting in concert with the great majority of the members of the United Nations Organisation, in endeavouring to stem the communist invasion of South Korea, is an action that all democratic people must heartily endorse. Indeed, it is an action in which we as a nation have already joined. Let us remember that the communists' insidious infiltration into the free countries of the world, Stalin's annexations of complete territories, and Russia's bid for world power have their grim parallel in Hitler's rise to infamous power in the years preceding the second world war. I firmly believe that the only way to avert a third world war is by the means typified in the present intervention in Korea.

These grave events surely give keen point to the Commonwealth Government's anti-communist legislation; and, although at this stage I am not going to labour the point, I feel sure that the great majority of the Australian people hope and trust that the anti-communist Bill will be passed while there is yet time. Indeed, the State Government may find it necessary to bring down legislation complementary to the Commonwealth Government's measure in order to make that Bill work more effectively.

In conclusion, may I say that throughout the hubbub of our daily life, throughout the welter of our problems of housing, and our educational developmental problems and even the darkening international sky, there still runs high a bright and growing optimism concerning our State's future. Before us lie long years of prosperity, provided we all carry along with us the realisation that national prosperity was never achieved with sloth and insincerity. Let us then all go forward resolutely, courageously and co-operatively with a deep faith in our high destiny.

MR. OWEN (Darling Range): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. F. J. S. Wise, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 1st August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.59 p.m.