

SUPPLY BILL*Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: THIRD DAY*Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 30th July, on the following motion by The Hon. F. R. White:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament 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.

THE HON. G. W. BERRY (Lower North) [4.56 p.m.]: I stand for the first time in this House as the elected member for the Lower North Province. It is a very proud moment of my life that I take my place in this Chamber, and I am deeply indebted to the electors of the Lower North Province for according me the honour to represent them in the Legislative Council.

If I might be permitted to read an extract from *Hansard*, of the 17th October, 1894, when the debate was taking place on the erection of the new Parliament House, the Premier of the day (The Hon. Sir John Forrest) said—

For my part, I believe in making a country's Houses of Parliament as convenient, as beautiful, and even as splendid as possible, so that those who enter them may regard them as something like sacred ground, and be impressed with a certain amount of reverence for their surroundings, and so behave themselves. I know that has been the impression created on my mind when I have entered the halls of Parliament in the old country. It is the same in Victoria and other places, where those who enter the Houses of Parliament cannot fail to be impressed with their surroundings, and those who occupy seats in them cannot fail to be impressed with the dignity and the responsibility of their position.

Those were my feelings on the day I first entered these Houses of Parliament, and I might say that I am very proud to be a member of this Chamber. I know the responsibilities which the electors of the Lower North Province have placed on my shoulders to represent them in this Parliament, and I thank them for the honour they have accorded me.

I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition (The Hon. W. F. Willesee) and the other members of the House for the way in which they have received me since my election. I wish also to express my thanks to the staff of both Houses of Parliament for the courteous and most helpful manner in which I have been served.

The way in which members have looked after me confirms the first impressions I gained when I entered this House and I hope their behaviour and dignity in future will enable me to retain those impressions.

I would like to pay tribute to the member whose seat I have assumed. The Hon. E. M. Heenan was a member of this honourable institution for, I understand, 32 years. I hope that during my years here I am able to conduct myself with the same dignity and decorum as my predecessor.

I was fortunate to be in attendance in the House on opening day and to listen to the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. However, I was a little disappointed that no reference was made to the particular neck of the woods from which I come, which is a place called Carnarvon. As some members will know, this town was established in the first place as a port in the north-west, and since its inception it has grown to be a district of some considerable importance, an important facet of its growth being the irrigated areas of the Gascoyne. Until the advent of the tracking station and the activity which is now taking place on Lake McLeod to exploit the potash deposits, the prosperity of this town was created by a small strip of land which is approximately 10 miles by one mile. Of this area some 2,000 acres have been farmed.

It is a very productive area, but unfortunately it depends upon the vagaries of Mother Nature who, as members know, is very fickle in the distribution in our particular area of that most precious commodity—water. It is rather ironical that when she does give her blessing in the watershed of the Gascoyne, no set pattern exists as to rainfall, and Carnarvon experiences periods which are known there as a drought—not a drought in the general sense. In Carnarvon it means that the river does not flow.

It is rather ironical also that when the river does flow in full spate, enough water goes out to sea every eight hours to recharge the Canning Dam—or so the engineers inform us. This occurs, at times, for up to two weeks. All this water is discharged into the sea and then those in the area must wait until the following year for Mother Nature to deposit more water in some part of the watershed in order that the river might flow once again.

In 1960, after the disastrous cyclone, the Government assisted growers in the area by making available a grant in order that

the farms might be maintained during the period for which they would be out of production; and this money was very gratefully accepted. Never before had anything been given to the district to help it in a time of need. At the time the Government undertook to investigate the possibility of storing some of the water which flowed to the sea every time the river was in flood or rain fell in the watershed. I understand that, unfortunately, no previous records had been kept as to the behaviour of the river and our engineers had virtually to start from scratch to accumulate data to allow them to make recommendations as to the conservation of some of the water.

These investigations have been continuing and, fortunately, the river has continued to flow in each successive year as a consequence of which the district has enjoyed years of plenty. They have been bountiful years. However, the record of this river is that approximately once in every five years its waters do not reach the sea and therefore just around the corner is the day when no water will flow down the Gascoyne. It is the consequences of that event, which must be near at hand, to which I would like to draw the attention of members.

The impact on Carnarvon will be quite considerable because not only does the river support the irrigated areas, but also it now supports quite a considerable township and is the only source of water. Production will be very seriously curtailed, and the housewife in Perth will find the prices of Carnarvon produce exorbitant.

I view with alarm the statement made by the Minister for Customs and Excise at a recent gathering in Carnarvon when he said that as this State had just received \$48,000,000 for the continuation of the Ord scheme, it could not expect the Commonwealth to be handing out money for every small project. Through this Parliament I want the message to get home to those in the Federal House that it is not a hand-out for which we in Carnarvon are asking. It is for something which is real.

Before the advent of the great mineral discoveries and their exploitation, which we are now experiencing, Carnarvon was the biggest town in the area north of Geraldton. It was entirely self-supporting; and, apart from the grant in 1960, at no time received any Government assistance or subsidy. Therefore I believe that the water storage project is a very important one.

I appreciate that the Government has to undertake a good deal of necessary investigation before any firm plans can be submitted; but what concerns me most is that there are no immediate plans and therefore I do not know what any Government or engineers can do to prepare for the day in the very near future when the river

will not flow. Perhaps the engineers, in their wisdom or otherwise, are contemplating too grandiose a scheme when they talk of damming the Gascoyne. Perhaps they should aim in the first place towards stabilising the water supply by a minor scheme which would be supplementary to the large type dam. I feel it is my duty to bring to the notice of the Government the dire necessity to expedite its investigations and to make some progress towards conserving water for the Carnarvon area.

One other matter I would like to bring to the notice of the Government concerns the police station at Carnarvon. For approximately 14 years discussions have been held, and probably recommendations made, but as yet no firm plans have been drawn up, as far as I know, to improve the facilities at the police station. The custodians of the law, who are charged with the maintenance of law and order, operate in a building which must have been erected when Carnarvon was first established, and it is quite inadequate for the town which has reached its present stage of development. It is only right that those who are committed to preserve law and order should at least be accommodated in premises suitable for their needs, and I hope this Government will give serious consideration to expediting the plans to achieve this objective.

I wish now to refer to the pastoral industry. In answer to a question asked in this House it has been stated that the plight of the pastoral industry is one that is being considered, but that it must be approached on a national basis. I think this Government, without waiting to approach the matter on a Federal level, might be able to find ways and means to help pastoralists and show its concern for the industry in this State.

In the past the pastoral industry has been the backbone of this country but now, through rising costs and falling returns, pastoralists find themselves in the position where conditions are really getting tough. Any assistance, no matter how small it may be, would be welcomed by the industry and that assistance would demonstrate the good faith of the Government and would illustrate the appreciation it has of the problems the industry faces.

I should now like to refer to those who live in the remote areas of the State—people who live in the province I represent. Any time this Government can see its way clear to do anything to make life easier for the residents of the far-flung parts of the State, it should do so; and I hope the Government will give such people full consideration. At the moment the position seems to be that the further one moves away from the city the more the State charges one to exist.

I am deeply grateful for being permitted to speak on the Address-in-Reply debate. I trust my time in this House will be spent in helping the people who live in the province I represent.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. R. F. Claughton.

House adjourned at 5.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 31st July, 1968

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

MACE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Origin: Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) [4.32 p.m.]: With the indulgence of the House I wish to make a statement concerning the Mace. I wish to inform members that until this time no official record exists of the origin of the Mace as used in this Chamber. Research has been made by the Clerk over a period of many months, extending from London to Australia, including not only parliamentary records but also public accounts, newspapers, and the State archives, prior to the inscription on the Mace, namely, 1887, and no mention of it could be found.

Finally, as a last resort, contact was made with a retired Western Australian newspaper reporter who indulges extensively in research into early Western Australian history, who disclosed that only a few weeks ago, when researching another matter, he came across a reference to the Mace in the *Inquirer* the year after the Mace was supposed to have arrived in this State. From this point it was easy to establish the following—and I shall read the extract from the issue of the *Inquirer* dated the 29th February, 1888—

Some months ago Mr. Nesbit, the well known Hay-st. jeweller, had an order placed in his hands for a mace for the Legislative Council. After some consideration Mr. Nesbit decided to have the article made in Adelaide, instead of sending the order to England for execution, and the result proves the wisdom of his decision. The mace arrived safely in Perth last Saturday and is now on public view at Mr. Nesbit's establishment. It has been made from ornate designs supplied by the Public Works department of this Colony, at Mr. S. Schlank's Beaver Factory in Adelaide. The workmanship is really remarkable for its elaborate character, richness and exquisite

finish, and certainly redounds to the credit of Australian craftsmen. The "bauble" measures 2 ft. 8 in. in length and is of standard silver heavily gold gilt. The mace begins with a large burnished boss quartered with beads, and bearing the Imperial monogram admirably chased. These quarters are divided by representations of the rose, shamrock and thistle. From the boss rises the shaft, which is elaborately chased in front; and above is a small boss of a highly ornamental description, surrounded by the Western Australian coat-of-arms, which is in itself no small work of art. The then national emblems appear again, and there is a massive ornamental band which bears the inscription "Western Australia", while another bears the British motto "Dieu et Mon Droit". The shaft is surrounded by the burnished bole—a very chaste piece of workmanship. It bears the British coat-of-arms, alternatively with leaf scrolls, on the other side being engraved "Legislative Council of Western Australia", and above all is the Imperial crown most elaborately wrought. Below the crown are medallion, one representing a swan surrounded with laurel leaves and relieved by native flowers and foliage. There is a great deal of repousse work in the article, the execution of which is as artistically clever as the result is strikingly effective. The cost of the mace is £70, exclusive of freight and insurance. It will be borne before the Speaker, the Hon. J. G. Lee-Steere, at the next meeting of the Legislative Council.

To ensure that this information is available for the future, I will instruct the Clerk to record this reference in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House; and, needless to say, the reference will also appear in *Hansard*.

QUESTIONS (44): ON NOTICE ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL *Geriatric Block*

1. Mr. MITCHELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:
 - (1) Has it been decided to establish a geriatric wing (or centre) at the Albany Regional Hospital?
 - (2) If "Yes," have plans been prepared?
 - (3) When is it expected to commence building?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A sketch plan will be available shortly.
- (3) This financial year.