

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 holus 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.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 1st July, 1959.

CONTENTS.

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Railways, discontinued services, etc.	15
Fishing boat harbour, provision at Fremantle	15
Construction of groynes, implementation of proposal	15
Legislative Council—	
Cost per year	15
Adult franchise	15
North-West, continuance of expenditure at present level	15
Onslow hospital, erection of new building	16
North Kalgoorlie school, decision on grounds improvement	16
P. J. Frank & Co., expediting issue of overloading permits	16
BILL :	
Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation), Standing Orders suspension	16
PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND :	
Appointment of trustees	17
CONDUCT OF THE HOUSE:	
Explanation of future procedure	18
ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, SECOND DAY	
Speaker on amendment—	
The Hon. H. C. Strickland	18
ADJOURNMENT, SPECIAL	25

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