

## OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

# Legislative Council

Tuesday, 1 May 1990

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## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

The Legislative Council met at 3.00 pm.

**THE PRESIDENT** (Hon Clive Griffiths) took the Chair, and read prayers.

**THE PRESIDENT:** On behalf of the members of the Legislative Council I welcome all guests to this opening of the second session of the Thirty-third Parliament, which is in the year of the one hundredth anniversary of responsible Government in Western Australia under the Westminster system. I hope you have a very interesting afternoon.

I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the Western Australian Horticultural Council for making the floral arrangements which are displayed at the main entrance to Parliament House. Those people who entered the building through the main entrance would have seen them.

### PROCLAMATION

The Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr L.B. Marquet), read the Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor (The Honourable Sir Francis Theodore Page Burt, AC, KCMG, QC) summoning the second session of the Thirty-third Parliament.

### GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.04 pm; and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech -

*Mr President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.*

*Mr Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly.*

Before I detail the legislative program for this session it is appropriate that I record the death of Mr Colin Jamieson, a former member of the Legislative Assembly from 1953 to 1985 and a Minister of the Tonkin Government from 1971 to 1974. He was Leader of the Opposition from 1976 to 1978.

I also note the deaths of Mr George Jeffrey, a former honourable member of the Legislative Council from 1956 to 1962; and of Mr John Tozer, a former honourable member of the Legislative Council between 1974 and 1980.

I turn to matters which will affect you directly during the session.

The Government has indicated its intention to set new standards, new priorities and new directions. The Premier has made it clear that her first priority is to make sure that trust, openness and confidence in government are maintained.

As a result, the Government has proposed a number of measures designed to make the processes of government more open and accountable to the people of Western Australia. These measures include -

The introduction of freedom of information legislation this year to extend as far as possible to the people of the Western Australian community the right of access to Government information. This legislation will be complemented by legislation to widen the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman to ensure that more authorities are subject to the Parliamentary Commissioner Act.

Amendments to the Supreme Court Act will also be introduced to provide statutory grounds upon which an individual can challenge the legality of administrative action.

The Government will also legislate to require disclosure of donations to political parties.

It is also the Government's intention to proceed with the Members of Parliament (Financial Interests) Bill designed to ensure that all members of Parliament register their pecuniary interests. In the interim, Ministers have agreed to register their interests with the Premier and the Auditor General. Details of Ministers' overseas travel will be tabled in Parliament.

As part of the Government's commitment to end involvement in business, legislation will be introduced to repeal Acts which established the Exim Corporation and the WA Development Corporation.

The Government continues to give high priority to environmental protection and conservation of Western Australia's natural heritage in maintaining the highest possible quality of life.

Its policies are designed to ensure that environmental effects of all developments are assessed fully and weighed against any community or economic benefit.

Environmental protection and management have been strengthened by a new arrangement under which all aspects of environmental administration are integrated under the one portfolio of the Minister for the Environment.

The Government has followed up its national leadership in stopping uses of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons by instigating audits of greenhouse gas emissions on all proposed industrial developments.

It will continue its progressive program of creating nature reserves, including the 2 700-hectare Beeliar regional park of lakes and wetlands.

It will proceed with legislation to create a new category of reserve to be known as a conservation park.

It will also legislate to bind industries in the Kwinana area to air quality standards that will be among the toughest in the world.

The Government has also established the Renewable Energy Advisory Council, which has broad community representation and is charged with the task of developing the use of renewable energy technologies in WA.

It has also formed an energy conservation coordinating committee to prepare an action plan for energy conservation in WA.

Since the opening of Parliament last year, much has been done to broaden the base of the State's economy, particularly in the development of the food processing industry, defence industry and providing services to upgrade management methods in manufacturing and related service industry.

The economy has continued to grow strongly over the past year - again outperforming all other States and the national economy. In 1988-89 the State economy grew by 6.4 per cent compared with 3.3 per cent nationally. This strong growth has continued in 1989-90, with annual growth forecast at 6.8 per cent compared with a forecast national growth of only 3.5 per cent.

After growing rapidly in 1988-89, employment in Western Australia has continued to expand strongly in 1989-90. The average number of employed persons in the first eight months of 1989-90 was 3.7 per cent higher than in the same period of 1988-89. Over the same period, unemployment has fallen.

Private investment in Western Australia continues to be more than 50 per cent higher in per capita terms than nationally. Further development of the North West Shelf project, together with other mineral developments, should assist in maintaining investment at a relatively high level.

Nevertheless, the Government will continue in its commitment to reducing the burden of Government on the community and is firm in its resolve to reduce expenditure, taxation collection and debt as a share of the economy over the current term of office. Expenditure savings will be sought this year as far as possible through productivity and efficiency gains rather than through a reduction in the level of service provision.

Following measures introduced over the past year, the Government is at the forefront in its

financial accountability. This commitment to improved financial management and increased accountability is to be continued this year with initiatives which include -

Amendments to the Financial Administration and Audit Act which will be introduced in the autumn session to provide for the overriding of any secrecy provisions contained in future contracts involving the State Government. This will ensure that Parliament's role is not excluded from Government dealings and is consistent with the findings of the Commission on Accountability.

As announced in last year's Budget speech, the Government is proceeding to fully implement program management throughout public sector agencies funded from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. This initiative is being taken to facilitate and simplify the processes of continually examining all Government expenditure programs to confirm that they are still required and are being delivered at the least possible cost.

Much of this year's Consolidated Revenue Fund Budget will be presented in a program format, permitting the Parliament and the community to be better informed about the operations of Government agencies.

In addition, as far as practicable, agencies will be given "one line" appropriations and the flexibility to manage within these appropriations.

Excellent progress has been made by Gold Corporation in the implementation of the Government's Australian international gold program, adopted in 1985.

A range of gold coins known as the Australian Nugget has been the means of adding value to gold and expanding demand for it.

Almost 90 per cent of sales have been overseas, generating export revenue of more than \$600 million and the nugget holds the number three position in world markets with an estimated market share of 15 per cent.

As part of the Australian international gold program, specialised gold banking services to assist small to medium sized producers were being developed within Gold Corporation, but the demand for these services quickly outgrew the capacity of the corporation to support them.

Effective last July, they were transferred to the Rural and Industries Bank as an autonomous division now known as R & I Gold Bank.

Consequently amendments are necessary to the Gold Banking Corporation Act. These will be introduced during this session.

The active encouragement of development of the resources sector, for example, minerals, minerals processing and energy in Western Australia, is a major thrust of the Government's development strategy.

The sector comprises the major single segment of the Western Australian economy and is showing a healthy growth in value from \$6.946 billion in 1987-88 to about \$7.904 billion in 1988-89. This translates to 4.2 per cent real growth in the value of mineral output.

The Government, through its Department of Resources Development, is placing more emphasis on the identification of new projects to develop the State's vast natural resources.

A number of major projects, including the North West Shelf and the Channar iron ore joint venture, are under construction, or at final feasibility stage.

At a time when the economic focus is on increasing Australia's export performance, the agricultural sector continues to make a major contribution in this area. In recent years agricultural exports accounted for approximately 30 per cent of the State's exports.

Legislation affecting agriculture in this session will include -

Amendments to the Soil and Land Conservation Act, and

The Veterinary Preparations and Feeding Stuffs Act, to bring the administration of these products into line with new national procedures, and

Amendments to the Fertilisers Act to reduce industry costs and inefficiencies associated with the different administrative arrangements employed in each State.

The release of a discussion paper by the recreational fishing advisory committee, which was appointed in 1989, is giving the community an opportunity to have significant input into the development of a recreational fishing strategy for the 1990s and beyond.

A new pearling Act will be introduced to Parliament during this session. The new Act will significantly improve the Government's ability to properly manage the pearling industry which, according to preliminary statistics, generated more than \$80 million in export income during 1989.

The Government is proceeding with a big program of building new roads throughout the State. In partnership with the wider community, it is also reviewing Western Australia's transport needs well into the next century.

In the area of water supply, legislation will be introduced in the autumn session to implement the Government's election commitments to seniors.

Seniors' Card holders will be provided with a discount of their annual water, sewerage and drainage charges subject to them meeting certain criteria as to ownership and occupation of their residential property.

This rebate will be available from 1 July 1990.

A water Bill will come before Parliament to consolidate water legislation in this State. This historic move will consolidate previous legislation covering aspects of water management and water services in rural and the metropolitan areas.

In the area of planning, validating legislation for metropolitan region scheme amendments arising from the recent Helena Valley court determination will be introduced to assist in ensuring an adequate supply of housing in the metropolitan area.

Heritage legislation to preserve Western Australia's historic buildings will also be pursued.

In the area of consumer affairs, greater protection will be given to Western Australians building their own homes and for seniors moving into retirement villages.

As Western Australia's population ages, an increasing number of people are choosing retirement villages as an accommodation option.

The retirement villages Act will provide security of investment and security of tenure for people living in retirement villages.

As part of its ongoing program to protect, promote and maintain health, the Government will pursue a number of initiatives.

These will include a health promotion foundation to assist in replacing tobacco sponsorship. The establishment of the foundation is subject to the passing and proclamation of the Tobacco Bill.

A total of \$9 million will be provided for the foundation in order to annually replace tobacco sponsorship and to fund other activities related to health promotion as set out in the Tobacco Bill.

In the general area of health the Government will encourage national public debate on the important question of health funding and make strong representations to the Federal Government for increased funding for Western Australian hospitals.

Key Bills to be introduced in the health area this session are -

The Guardianship and Administration Bill.

This Bill was introduced last year but was withdrawn for amendment and will be reintroduced this session. It establishes a guardianship board and a public guardian's office to appoint guardians for people who are mentally incapable of taking care of their own interests because they are mentally handicapped or aged.

The Nurses Bill 1990, which will repeal and replace the Nurses Act 1968, to restructure the role of the Nurses Board in establishing and maintaining professional standards of nursing. These will reflect changes in the new career structure, disciplinary procedures and registration of all nurses.

The Human Reproductive Technology Bill will establish licensing of IVF,

reproductive technologies and research involving human reproductive material. It establishes a reproductive technology council to monitor reproductive technology practice and establish ethical guidelines and research.

Significant progress has been made on a new local government Act for Western Australia which will streamline decision making.

The Government's regional development program will continue. This ongoing commitment to the development of the non-metropolitan regions of this State is also reflected in the decision to establish a goldfields-Esperance development authority. The Goldfields-Esperance Development Authority Bill 1990 will be introduced during this session of Parliament.

The Government is also in the process of introducing major and long overdue reform into the supply management process in the State and to modernise procedures relating to the purchase of goods and services by public sector departments and agencies.

A Bill is to be pursued in Parliament this year which proposes to establish a new State supply commission.

This Bill, which forms part of a State supply strategy, is a reflection of the commitment within Government to operate a more cost-effective and efficient purchasing system and to harness the \$1.5 billion annual expenditure on goods and services to the advantage of local industry and economic development.

Legislation to amend the Racecourse Development Act was introduced into Parliament during the spring session in 1989.

The Bill, which should complete its passage in this session, will alter the composition of the racecourse development trust, clarify the percentage allocation of trusts funds between the horse racing codes, and provide that trust funds may be applied to metropolitan as well as non-metropolitan horse racing and trotting tracks.

Legislation will be introduced to establish a single independent appeals tribunal to determine appeals from some penalties imposed in the three racing codes.

A Bill will be introduced to clarify the operation of section 26 of the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act and to amend section 28 of that Act. This Bill will also introduce a regulation making power to prescribe the allocation of TAB surplus funds to clubs within each horse racing code.

Bookmakers' operations will be assisted by the proposed introduction of a Bill to abolish stamp duty on bookmakers' betting tickets and introduce a flat rate of 2.25 per cent on bookmakers' betting turnover.

Legislation to amend the Betting Control Act will be produced in this session.

As announced, in conjunction with approval to the extension of the Burswood Casino, the Government negotiated an amendment to the State agreement to increase the annual casino gaming licence fee from its present level of \$546 000 to \$1.4 million.

A supplementary agreement giving effect to this amendment has been signed by the Trustee of the Burswood Property Trust and the Manager, Burswood Management Limited.

The indexed fee will fully fund the operation of the Casino Control Division of the Office of Racing and Gaming in its regulatory duties. For the increase in the casino gaming licence fee to become effective, the supplementary agreement must be ratified by Parliament. A Bill will be introduced in this session to seek this ratification.

The Government will continue to pursue its Bill to outlaw racial incitement in the community. The Government believes that all Western Australians should have the right to be free from racial harassment. Together with complementary community education programs, this legislation will ensure that we continue to live in a harmonious society.

The Government is half way to achieving its commitment to increase the strength of the Police Force by 1 000 police officers over a four-year period under the widely publicised "Beat Crime" initiative.

This indicates that the Government is on target to achieve the desired police strength in its intended time frame.

Legislation is to be introduced in the coming session to enable the Multanova radar speed camera to be put to greater use.

The Education Service Providers (Full Fee Overseas Students) Registration Bill will be introduced early in the opening session.

It will provide the legislative base for the registration of institutions and courses for overseas students. The marketing of education services to overseas students provides valuable financial benefits to Western Australia.

Further amendments to the Education Act will be prepared for introduction later in 1990 to update existing provisions concerning the registration of non-Government schools and to introduce provisions relating to their financial viability. These amendments will provide a more specific legislative base for existing registration procedures and encourage longer term planning in the establishment of non-Government schools.

The improvement of education services for Aboriginal people is a Government priority. This objective will be assisted by the development of the Aboriginal education strategic plan for Western Australia, encompassing education for Aboriginal people at all levels, from preschool to higher education and including both Government and non-Government providers.

1990 is a significant year in the history of the Western Australian Parliament because it is the centenary of self-government, responsible government and the proclamation of the State's Constitution establishing two Houses of Parliament.

Our centenary is an appropriate time to reflect on our Constitution and to consider proposals that will prepare our parliamentary and electoral systems for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

To achieve this objective the Government has both general and specific proposals. The Government intends to support the proposal that a Joint Select Committee of the Parliament will be created to consolidate and review the two Acts relating to the State's Constitution.

Undertakings given to the Opposition in 1987 will be honoured by the Government proposing Bills for referendums which would allow Parliament to pass laws relating to voting tickets and filling casual vacancies in the Legislative Council.

One Bill will follow Commonwealth law and will propose that each candidate or each group of candidates may lodge more than one voting ticket. Another Bill will propose that if there is a casual vacancy in the Legislative Council and the former member was elected to represent a political party the replacement may be appointed by the same political party.

I now declare this second session of the Thirty-third Parliament open, and trust that Providence may bless your deliberations.

[His Excellency and the members of the Legislative Assembly then withdrew from the Chamber, and the President resumed the Chair.]

[Questions without notice taken.]

## OFFENDERS PROBATION AND PAROLE AMENDMENT BILL

*Leave to Introduce*

**HON J.M. BERINSON** (North Metropolitan - Leader of the House) [3.59 pm]: 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 Offenders Probation and Parole Amendment Bill 1963 and for connected purposes.

Question put and passed.

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Leader of the House), and read a first time.

## GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

### *Distribution of Copies*

**THE PRESIDENT** (Hon Clive Griffiths): Honourable members, for the sake of accuracy I have obtained copies of His Excellency's Speech, which will now be distributed to honourable members.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY - FIRST DAY

### *Motion*

**HON TOM STEPHENS** (Mining and Pastoral) [4.01 pm]: I move -

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 customs of the House on this day urge that in the setting of the formal opening of Parliament I should, in formally moving the Address-in-Reply debate, stick to a noncontroversial, nonpartisan, nonparty political text.

I know, Mr President, that you would not be surprised if I were to depart from that custom a little to mark a couple of centenaries which are in a small way party political. The Governor has mentioned that one celebration this year will be that of 100 years of self-Government, and the celebration of proclamation of the State's Constitution establishing the two Houses of Parliament. His Excellency has invited us in this centenary year to consider proposals to prepare our parliamentary and electoral systems for the challenges of the twenty-first century. We will have many opportunities in this House to consider the Governor's remarks and the platform which the Government wishes to put forward.

However, I should mention a couple of other centenaries which we will celebrate: 1 May 1990 marks the centenary year of the May Day celebrations by the labour movement -

Hon R.G. Pike: And the Communist Party!

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Indeed. But in respect of the May Day celebrations, I want to focus on the celebration of the worker and this day which became the rallying point for the eight hour day. Even Hon R.G. Pike would not object to my mentioning that traditionally within our faith we share this May Day as the feast day of the worker.

Hon R.G. Pike: Tell us about your party's association with the Communist Party.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Today marks the centenary throughout the world of the day on which many people commemorate the feast day of the worker. I did not want that event to pass without remarking upon it.

In the northern hemisphere, of course, today is the first day of the spring festival - the revival of life after winter. The first day of spring is celebrated around the maypole festivities which go back to the time of the Druids with the celebration of the tree gods. In central Europe the celebrations on this day predate the maypole rituals of England with the rituals of ancient Rome when spring flowers were gathered to honour the goddess of springtime, Flora.

As members entered the foyer of Parliament House today and saw the display by the Western Australian Horticultural Council they may have thought that the statue of Lord John Forrest had been mistaken for some ancient Roman god. He sits today festooned in flowers overlooking the entrance to State Parliament.

Hon D.J. Wordsworth: Perhaps he was taken for a member of the Labor Party.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Mr Wordsworth, spring is in the air.

Hon P.G. Pandal: In Europe!

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Well done, Mr Pandal. Another event with which May is associated in an ecclesiastical setting is a celebration which occurred in medieval France. It

was a celebration of womanhood and the status of women in the community when the month of May become sacred to the Virgin Mary. In medieval France, young girls were bedecked with flowers and enshrined as May Queens in the churches and led in processions to honour the Virgin Mary.

Another centenary this year is one which will be celebrated over three years; that is, the early formation of the Australian Labor Party. Some historians ascribe 1890 as the year of the formation of the Australian Labor Party after the industrial turmoil in New South Wales in that year. After the defeats of the trade union movement in the shearing and maritime industries in New South Wales and Queensland, the leaders of the trade union movement decided on a two-pronged approach to advance the ordinary men and women of Australia. In that context, the leaders committed themselves to issues such as the provision of compensation for industrial accidents, unemployment insurance and industrial arbitration, and to seek democratic and egalitarian reform - electoral reform - old age pensions and extended State education. A year later in 1891 New South Wales saw the Labor Party in Government, representing factional Government in the old sense.

Next year, the Labor Party will celebrate 100 years of participation in Government in this country. In that context, I am conscious that despite the evolution of the Labor Party, we have witnessed a restatement of our commitment and association with our origins. Today we have heard the Governor refer to the Government's program for 1990 - to democratic and egalitarian reform through electoral and constitutional reform, to the aged with the extended seniors' card holders' benefits and the protection of the aged in retirement villages, and to the industrial arena with a comprehensive package of amendments to the Workers' Compensation and Assistance Act which will extend the availability of timely rehabilitation with a view to minimising the social and economic costs of industrial disabilities. In the field of education we will see the ongoing extension of our education systems to the people of Western Australia to ensure that the entire needs of our community are catered for. Our party's founding fathers would still recognise us as their ideological sons and daughters with the same continuing preoccupations and the same consistent struggle in some of these areas.

I want to talk about my own occasional preoccupation with medieval ecclesiastical history where we see the role of womanhood in those times and its links to these centenaries. Contrary to the common wisdom of historical scholarship a few years ago, the role of women was, historically, an extremely powerful role in the community. At the time of the great councils of Europe - the Councils of Trent and others - I understand abbesses participated in the ecclesiastical and theological debates of the day. References exist in the *Canterbury Tales* which point to a fairly powerful ecclesiastical female figure and at the same time we know from history that abbesses were very prominent in the social life of the community and not only in the administration of the vast estates associated with their convents. In Australian politics today we see the re-emergence of women and their re-arrival in a very real way at the heart of the political system. This is not something that is connected only to ancient history but, particularly in Western Australia, it is something we have seen occur over a long period in the pre-European history associated with this State. Contemporary scholarship argues that the role of Aboriginal people in pre-settlement days, and even currently, is a very significant role in our society and remains within the control and organisation of the Aboriginal community. However, women, with the arrival of the early settlers, clearly took a very significant role in the establishment of a European settlement in this State. During very early times in the colony we saw the arrival of women's organisations and the participation of women in political movements aimed at improving the lot of not only the children and families, but also of the entire community in this State.

Over the years we have seen the emergence of women in local government. Recently I was able to look through some figures which show that during 1980 only about 7.7 per cent of representatives elected to local councils were women. By 1988 this had risen to 13.8 per cent. Thirteen of the Western Australian local councils are headed by women, including two shires and a town council in my own North West Region. I understand also that the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale has a majority of women and I understand all of those were re-elected unopposed during the recent elections. I understand some 101 women represent electorates in State politics throughout Australia with 13 in Western Australia. The Labor Party has more than double the number of women members than any other single party in Australia. Today 14 per cent of State parliamentarians are women. I pay tribute to



the fact that 20 per cent of the State Parliamentary Labor Party and nearly one-third of our Cabinet is female and we now have in Western Australia the first woman Premier to lead us into our second session of the current Parliament. I am fiercely proud of this team, as I have been of previous teams, and I am pleased to be able to state that I remain fiercely proud of the combination that our Caucus has been able to elect. In Federal Parliament 13 per cent of its members are female. A Western Australian woman is in the Ministry; we have two women in the House of Representatives and three in the Senate.

During my research I took a quick look at the arrival of women in politics in Western Australia which led me to look at the issue of the franchise. I was interested to note that in Western Australia's history, women gained the franchise after only four attempts. I was disappointed to discover that the legislation aimed at achieving that goal was not blocked in this House because I would have taken this opportunity to hammer home how unconstructive this House has been. I regret to say that the legislation for the franchise for women floundered in the other place for a variety of reasons in the 1890s before it was finally ensconced in the Constitution enabling women to vote in this State and to take a fulsome role in the Parliament of Western Australia. Hon Phil Pandal would be disappointed if I did not refer to the fact that the participation of women in politics in Western Australia has seen a lot of firsts. Edith Cowan became the first woman member of Parliament in 1921; May Holman became the first woman Labor member of Parliament; Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver became the first woman Cabinet Minister in 1947; Dorothy Tangney became the first woman elected to the Senate in 1943 and of course we now have another first.

I want to dwell on one aspect of Parliamentary debate which is a feature of Australian politics and which could well be changed, and in respect of which we could probably draw on the presence of the large number of women in politics in our State and across our nation. I am referring to a point that my wife Anne has made to me regularly and expressed her disdain for; that is, the polarisation that occurs in Australian politics where people on both sides of the House regularly take different poles in any given argument. The very nature of the composition of this place, with the Government on this side and the Opposition on the other side, leads to polarisation of debate. I suspect that is not in the best interests of the community and we all know it.

One of the attributes almost essential to the feminine position throughout the years of socialisation is the capacity to listen, to learn, to hear both sides and to support and nurture the approach of other people. From a male point of view, I suspect that members need to see if an opportunity will arise, with the increasing participation of women in politics, for debate to move away from this polarisation and to see whether instead we can more regularly find common ground. For instance, a problem exists with polarisation of the environmental debate. We have seen the emergence of prohibitionists in the environmental movement responding to the pre-existing dominant development ethos - development at any cost. Even with the great needs of the Kimberley region and the need for the participation of many people in the economic development of that region, we are finding prohibitionists who are prepared to block environmentally sensitive and sustainable projects. It is a good example of the need to listen to and think sensibly about both sides of the argument rather than adopting the classic polarisation of viewpoints.

Very soon in this House we will receive the report of the committee investigating parliamentary standards and I hope it addresses some of these issues and suggests a different style of politics which could operate in these Chambers.

Hon Reg Davies interjected.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I admit I also have to change in this area, but if we as a Parliament - Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It would be to the benefit of members to cease interjecting because they know the honourable member is working to a timetable.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Mr President, I know that you would wax lyrical on the theme of my speech. However, as members of Parliament we have the opportunity to change its direction by debating issues openly and honestly and taking decisions in a manner which will earn the respect of the community.

**HON FRED McKENZIE** (East Metropolitan) [4.21 pm]: I formally second the motion.  
Debate adjourned, on motion by Hon George Cash (Leader of the Opposition).

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL**

On motion by Hon J.M. Berinson (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, 3 May at 2.30 pm.

*House adjourned at 4.23 pm*

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## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### WA INC - ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CREDIBILITY

#### *Question out of Order*

1. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Attorney General:

In view of his involvement with Messrs Dowding, Parker and Grill in WA Inc deals, which will result in multimillion dollar losses to the Western Australian taxpayer, and in view of the recent resignations from Parliament of Messrs Dowding and Parker, and the resignation of Julian Grill from the Cabinet, will he now accept and acknowledge that he lacks the high standard of honesty, integrity and credibility expected of a Minister of the Crown and resign from the Cabinet?

Several members: Disgraceful! Scurrilous!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! When I call for order, everybody must sit down and keep quiet.

#### *Point of Order*

Hon TOM STEPHENS: In his question the member is reflecting on the Leader of the House, and I ask you to rule that the question is out of order and that the member should learn the House rules.

Government members: Hear, hear!

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Leader of the Opposition knows that the last part of his question is out of order. He cannot reflect upon another member of this Chamber, or indeed the other Chamber, except by way of a substantive motion. I ask the honourable member therefore to withdraw that part of the question which reflects upon the integrity of the Leader of the House.

Hon GEORGE CASH: I so withdraw.

#### *Questions without Notice Resumed*

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

That leaves nothing of that question to answer, other than that it is an unwarranted assumption.

### McCUSKER, MR MALCOLM - GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

#### *Contract Renegotiation*

2. Hon E.J. CHARLTON to the Leader of the House:

In view of the increasing financial difficulties of the Government, does the Leader of the House, on behalf of the Government, intend to renegotiate the contract with Malcolm McCusker QC to increase his work from two days?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

This question has nothing to do with the State's financial position. I have given unqualified assurances that Mr McCusker's own services will be provided on an "as required" basis. This judgment, of course, depends upon Mr McCusker and not upon others among us who are amateurish in such requirements. We have also indicated that we will provide the McCusker inquiry with all the resources indicated by Mr McCusker to be needed for the purpose of his duties. Mr McCusker has publicly indicated that those requirements have been met in full. Most recently, and again at the instigation of the special investigator, the term provided for his inquiry and report has been extended by five months. Over this period he will be fully provided with all necessary resources. The last time I spoke to the House I spoke of his inquiry having the services of about 17 full time officers. That

figure is now closer to 30 full time officers, which is an unprecedented provision of resources for the investigation of any company in Australia.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - THREE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES**  
*Role and Function*

3. Hon GEORGE CASH to the Leader of the House:

I refer to recent reports which indicate that the Government is considering the appointment of three Parliamentary Secretaries in the Legislative Council. Will the Leader of the House advise the role and function to be carried out by those Parliamentary Secretaries? If he does not have that information today, I ask that it be presented to the House in writing on Thursday so that we have a clear understanding of the role and function of those people.

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I am sure he will be as pleased as I am to learn that the three Parliamentary Secretaries have indeed been appointed on this side of the House, and they are Hon John Halden, Hon Tom Stephens, and Hon Mark Nevill. I am pleased that Mr Cash joins with me in welcoming their appointment.

Hon George Cash: We understand the need for them.

Hon J.M. BERINSON: The four months' break has not done the member much good. In general terms the duties of the Parliamentary Secretaries in this House will be to represent Ministers in the Legislative Assembly in respect of the handling of legislation initiated by their respective Ministers, to act in a representational capacity as required by those Ministers in other forums in certain circumstances, and to engage in the provision of special duties at the request and initiation of the specific Ministers to whom the Secretaries are allocated.

**STATE ENERGY COMMISSION - WESTERN COLLIERIES LTD**  
*\$15 million Payment - Attorney General's Approval*

4. Hon MAX EVANS to the Attorney General:

On 21 October 1988, at a meeting in the Premier's department, Mr Julian Grill instructed the State Energy Commission to draw a cheque for \$15 million to pay Western Collieries. Was the Attorney General present at that meeting, and did he approve of the decision made?

Hon J.M. BERINSON replied:

I am not sure of the date referred to, but I was present in the Premier's office on an occasion when a decision was made to direct the payment of moneys from the State Energy Commission to Western Collieries. I did not participate in either the discussion or the decision. I was in the office on other matters and did not participate in any way in that matter.

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