

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Second Session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament

Parliament was prorogued on the 5th February, 1975, to the 13th March, 1975, when it met for the despatch of business.

Parliament was opened by 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.).

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 13th March, 1975

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

The Legislative Council met at 8.00 p.m.

The **PRESIDENT** (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair.

PROCLAMATION

The Clerk of the Parliaments (Mr J. B. Roberts) 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.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Delivery

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.) entered the Council Chamber at 8.04 p.m.; 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:

You meet here today for the Second Session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament of Western Australia.

We are delighted that Her Royal Highness, the Princess Anne, Mrs Mark Phillips, and Captain Phillips, will visit Western Australia officially in May.

The then Prime Minister of Japan, Mr Tanaka, visited Western Australia officially in November last year.

The State referendum on daylight saving was held on March 8.

With profound regret I record the deaths of two former Parliamentarians who served this State well.

They were: the Honourable Ruby Florence Hutchison, formerly North-East Metropolitan Province Member of the Legislative Council, and the first woman Member of that House; and Hugh Alan Leslie, formerly Legislative Assembly Member for Mount Marshall.

Following the December 24 cyclone, Western Australians responded immediately and with their usual spontaneous generosity, by offering funds, clothing and other gifts in kind, and professional and trade skills to the people of Darwin.

More recently, cyclone "Trixie" proved the efficiency of the State Emergency Service at State, Local Government and volunteer levels. It also demonstrated the general effectiveness of design standards and precautionary procedures in our North.

The 1974-75 financial year recorded high and rising inflationary pressures. In spite of most reluctant increases in State taxes and charges, it was necessary to budget for a deficit of \$8 746 000.

Despite the disturbing increase in unemployment during recent months, the Commonwealth Government has refused to permit exercise of the States' Constitutional prerogative to foster developmental and expansion projects which, my Government believes, would considerably expand employment and career opportunities, and achieve economic development which is desirable in both State and National interests.

Unemployment relief funds from the Commonwealth Government are welcomed, but the Government of Western Australia has been at pains to point out that they are only a palliative and do not give the

extensive continuing benefits that are achieved from large-scale well-planned resource development.

The financial positions of the Australian States remain most unsatisfactory. The Government of Western Australia believes that under whatever Federal Government, a new approach to Commonwealth/State financial arrangements is essential to survival of the Federal system.

Current discussions at officer level are expected to result in a Commonwealth/State Ministerial Conference before June, when the present revenue assistance arrangements are to be reviewed.

Following the State Government's undertaking to improve Commonwealth/State relations and to resist centralisation of power in Canberra, it is proposed to join with some other States in the establishment of a States' Secretariat.

This will expand Western Australia's capacity to detect and resist intrusion by the Commonwealth into its Constitutional rights and responsibilities.

The State Government has confirmed that it will join the Interstate Corporate Affairs Commission, and will sign the agreement with the States of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, for which purpose legislation will be required.

As a result of Commonwealth actions over the Privy Council and a number of other matters affecting the relationship between the States of Australia, the United Kingdom Government and the Monarch, the Premier made personal representations to the United Kingdom Government in January. He received the assurances he sought.

The State Government is completely committed to restoring an acceptable level of industrial growth.

The Premier, with the Minister for Industrial Development and two senior State Government officials visited the United States, Britain and Europe in January, with the primary purpose of discussing the Western Australian Government policies and endeavouring to allay fears about those policies and actions of the Federal Government which are causing concern abroad.

In America and the United Kingdom, the mission had important talks on fuel and energy.

Despite economic conditions, and the present Commonwealth Government's policies, international interest in major Western Australian industrial and resource development and research was found to be extremely keen.

My Government believes that international participation in major resource development is essential, if we are to achieve significant results.

However, the Western Australian Government will continue to strive for majority Australian ownership, and Aus-

tralian management, of such projects wherever this is practicable.

The Premier will make a brief visit to Japan in April to confer with Japanese industry—and especially the steel industry—about the Government's policies and programmes.

This year should see the completion of the feasibility study by the international consortium headed by B.H.P. assisted by State Government officers, of a two-billion dollars steel-works in Western Australia.

It is a vital project which will involve complex questions of international trade, technology and finance participation.

Despite a good season in 1974, the well-being of Western Australian primary producers is threatened by inflation and international marketing conditions in 1975.

Western Australia welcomes the decision of the Commonwealth Government to refer to the Industries Assistance Commission the question of the superphosphate bounty. The State Government has made strong representations to the Commission for retaining the bounty at a realistic level.

The Government has taken steps in an endeavour to assist beef cattle producers by legislating for a minimum price scheme for certain categories of prime beef suitable for the domestic market.

The Government also continues to press the Commonwealth to provide adequate financial assistance to beef producers to assist them over the present difficult period at a low rate of interest and on terms similar to rural reconstruction conditions.

After meetings with Queensland Government and sugar industry officials, the Ord River potential for sugar-growing is the subject of intensified studies.

Good progress is being made on experiments, in disinfection in cold storage, to permit negotiation of fruit exports to Japan and the United States.

The Southern wine-growing areas continue to expand.

The market for grains continues to be strong.

The Government is continuing its programme to implement its election undertaking to decentralise State Government administration and decision-making into the major regional centres.

The first such regional centre will be established in the Kimberley shortly. It is hoped a second centre will be in operation by the end of 1975. Others should be established within the next two years.

In Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury, Branch Offices of the State Housing Commission became regional offices for tenancy matters in January, and by this month they will have taken over rental accounting functions.

Offices of the Community Welfare Department are to be opened at Tom Price and Norseman.

Two full-time Regional Officers of the Department of Industrial Development are assisting Geraldton and Albany Local Zone Development Committees.

The Government gives high priority to its works and housing programmes even though, in some cases, forward works of an essential nature have had to be deferred temporarily, due to the high rate of inflation which seriously aggravates the general shortage of Government funds.

Storage reservoirs were at capacity following good winter rains, and despite a record spell of hot weather in the summer just ended, water restrictions were not necessary in the metropolitan area.

A major reorganisation of environmental and conservation functions has already been carried out.

The Conservation Through Reserves Committee of the Environmental Protection Authority has recently completed a three-year study of existing and projected National Parks and Nature Reserves in most areas of the State. Their report will be the subject of public discussion and study by the Environmental Protection Authority before any final decisions are made.

Among several important developments in education, the Government announced in January the appointment of a three-man committee to advise the Minister on future development of post-secondary education in Western Australia.

Western Australia's second university, Murdoch, opened on February 24, with 700 undergraduate students in its schools of Veterinary Studies, Human Communication, Social Inquiry, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Environmental and Life Sciences, and Education. Another 160 external students were enrolled. In addition, 30 "special" students from the Pilbara are being serviced through collaboration between Murdoch University, the Western Australian Institute of Technology, and the Australian Inland Mission.

Government primary and secondary school enrolments exceeded 188 000 in 1974, and are expected to reach 193 000 this year. To meet this demand, nine new primary and two new high schools have been opened this year.

A new special Aboriginal primary school has been established at One Arm Point, near Derby; six pilot pre-primary centres were established in February; and it is expected that eleven more such centres will be established by the middle of the year.

The number of Community Recreation Officers serving Local Authorities has been

doubled to twenty—eleven in the metropolitan area and nine in country areas.

Construction of the first stage of a new art gallery in Perth has been authorised at an estimated cost of \$1.7 million.

To ensure a continuation of the highest possible standards in medical care, the Government plans comprehensive improvements and expansion in its hospital and health programmes based on a five-year plan.

The Government's decision to arrange modification to private homes in order that the physically handicapped need not be confined to hospitals, is being well received.

It is hoped that standardisation of traffic control by the newly established Road Traffic Authority will accelerate the decline in road accidents and fatalities apparent throughout the State during the past twelve months.

I now refer broadly to some of the Bills it is proposed to place before Parliament this session. These will provide for—

establishment of a \$11.5 million particle board factory at Dardanup;

a re-organisation of the State Electricity Commission;

a new Mining Act;

creation of a post of Parliamentary Secretary to the Cabinet;

amendments to the Local Government Act permitting expression of ratepayers' views on proposed changes in municipal boundaries;

appointment of Aboriginal Police Aides;

establishment of a Salaries and Allowances Tribunal covering judges, Members of Parliament, and top echelon Public Service and Statutory appointments;

amendments to the Child Welfare Act to expedite the most modern treatment of children generally, and of juvenile offenders;

amendments to the Health Act, to deal with noxious gases in enclosed car-parks;

broadening the scope of the Radioactive Substances Act to control forms of radiation not already included;

the Crown to be given the right of appeal against sentences; and to deal with problems in the territorial aspects of jurisdiction;

the Police to apprehend those reasonably suspected of drug traffic, and to seize money used for unlawful purchase and from sale of dangerous drugs;

amendments to the Consumer Protection Act to effect changes in nomenclature and the Commissioner's power to act;

enactment of a Dangerous Products Act banning sales of dangerous consumer goods;

establishment of a Small Debts Court;

amendments to the Door-to-Door Sales Act to provide for expanded calling hours, and identification of salesmen;

the overhaul of the Employment Brokers' Act for registration and regulation of brokers;

implementation of more of the Government's policy on Death Duty laws;

the repeal and re-enactment of the Land Agents' Act for greater protection and better control in real estate;

amendments to the Liquor Act to give effect to matters arising from a Government review;

introduction of the Industrial Training Bill, creating a Training Advisory Council and a Directorate to administer apprenticeship and trade training schemes.

Other legislation will include Bills to—
amend the Health Education Council Act in relation to Council constitution and representation;

amend the Pharmacy Act for improved regulation of the practice of the profession;

widen powers in quarantining properties for control of vermin and noxious weeds; and to amalgamate the Vermin Act and the Noxious Weeds Act;

rationalise the Road Transport Industry;

amend the Marketing of Eggs Act using guidelines from the McDonald Report;

extend the life of the Banana Growing Industry Compensation Trust Fund Act.

It is hoped that Bills relating to resource development and various heavy mineral sands projects will be introduced this session.

It is possible also, that legislation will be introduced to incorporate the results of the Land Taxes Review to amend the Bush Fires Act permitting increased local administrative control; and to provide for better control of inland waterways.

I now declare this session of Parliament open, and trust that Providence may bless your labours.

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

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. MEDIBANK HEALTH SCHEME

Variations Requested

The Hon. R. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Health:

In view of public concern would the Minister specify the particular variations requested by the State Government as a prerequisite to Western Australia joining the Australian Government Medibank Scheme?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

The counter-proposals from the Western Australian Government to terms of agreement submitted to me by the Minister for Social Security (Mr Hayden) must remain confidential for the present as they are conditional on negotiation between State Ministers and the Commonwealth Minister.

2. COMMUNITY WELFARE

Human Relationships Royal Commission

The Hon. R. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Community Welfare:

In view of the Royal Commission into Human Relationships which will start taking evidence in Perth next week—

- (1) Have instructions been issued through the Premier's Department to the Department of Community Welfare and other Government departments that all submissions to the commission will have to be channelled through the respective Ministers?
- (2) Will questions from the commission arising from submissions also be required to go through the Ministers?
- (3) Will replies to any such questions be relayed back through the Ministers or direct to the commission?
- (4) Is the Minister aware that as feeling amongst those officers preparing submissions is that material critical of current State policies will be at least partially censored as it passes through the above process—there is doubt as to whether any serious recommendations for change in State policies will be communicated to the commission?
- (5) Is it true that very short notice was given by the Premier's Department as to the final date for submission—approximately 1½ weeks?

- (6) As this commission is considered to have far-reaching value and will provide a blueprint for the future of Australia, will the Government give all officers of all departments the opportunity to express freely their views, either written or oral?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some prior notice of this question, although it arrived rather late in the day. Taking into account the nature of the question and also the fact that this has been a day of extreme pressure for me, I was not able to obtain an answer to the question, and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to be kind enough to place it on the notice paper.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Leave to Introduce

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [8.41 p.m.]: 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 Public Trustee Act, 1941-1972.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Distribution of Copies

THE PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith): I have to announce that for the sake of accuracy I have obtained copies of His Excellency's Speech which will now be distributed to members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIRST DAY

Motion

THE HON. I. G. PRATT (Lower West) [8.43 p.m.]: 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 opportunity to move this motion in reply to His Excellency's Speech tonight is an honour I fully appreciate. His Excellency's Speech mirrored the feeling one finds in the community of Australia today—a feeling of general unease; a feeling, perhaps, of uncertainty.

These are troubled times; times when people perhaps wonder which path they should follow and which way they should turn when making decisions which will control their future. It is an unsettled time; a time when, as His Excellency has told us, inflation is rising to a tremendous extent and unemployment is at an intolerably high level.

However, I feel this situation is one which can be balanced by the actions, the vigour, and the enthusiasm of our State Government. I have no doubt that the qualities our Premier and his Cabinet will show in the months to come will provide the leadership which will bring back a feeling of purpose and enthusiasm in the people of Western Australia—a feeling they held during the 1960s.

His Excellency mentioned the problems which face our rural industries. Over recent days I have been talking with and listening to people involved in what is the main rural activity in my electorate: that is, the milk industry. Whether talking to individuals or listening to debate at meetings one can sense that a degree of uncertainty prevails here also. In the particular climate of today this industry is not as unified as it should be. We are not seeing, perhaps, the co-operation which should be shown in difficult times.

There are two areas in which I feel moves can be made to remedy the situation and to bring to the industry the required unity and strength. The first of these is in the area of the negotiability of milk quotas. This is a topic which has been under discussion in the industry for a considerable time. It is an area in which there are problems—problems of law, and problems of the machinery required to carry out the actions necessary to make the required change within the industry.

I feel something must be done about this quickly. The industry must be urged to take the matter in hand, and the Dairy Industry Authority should be urged to take the actions necessary to bring about this most necessary step as quickly as possible.

The second area within the industry to which consideration should be given is that which concerns the representation of producers on the Dairy Industry Authority. As members are aware, producer representatives are chosen by the Minister from a panel of three names presented to him. The panel of names from which the last appointment was made was arrived at by a form of ballot or election conducted by the Farmers' Union. That

body experienced considerable difficulty in conducting such a ballot at short notice. As a result, problems arose. Those problems, the result of the election, and the eventual appointment of a representative, all led to a considerable amount of ill feeling within the industry.

I believe the two sections of the industry intend to come together in the very near future to make headway in devising a new method of presenting names to the Minister. In fact, a large section of the industry believes very strongly that the producer representatives should be chosen by election and that the person chosen in the election should then represent the industry on the authority. If this does occur it will be necessary to ensure that the conduct of the election is above reproach. If it is decided that the Dairy Industry Authority should conduct an election throughout the whole of the industry, no doubt this would help in finding a solution to the problem.

Other suggestions may emanate from the meeting that is to be held by those engaged within the industry. I think the industry needs to be aware that in times like those we are passing through at present a spirit of co-operation and understanding must be engendered. I am confident that such a spirit will prevail and that from the proposed meeting we will achieve in the near future the harmony and sense of purpose that are so essential in such an important industry within our State.

In his address, Mr President, His Excellency mentioned a topic which will be of vital importance to my electorate. I refer to the jumbo steel industry. His Excellency said, and I think most of the community is aware of the fact, that the feasibility study and investigations into this project are nearing completion. It is no secret that there are several sites under consideration for the establishment of this proposed project. Neither is it any secret that Kwinana is one of these.

Kwinana is not within my electorate. However, it is very close to, and in fact is almost on, the boundary of my electorate. Should this facility be established at Kwinana it will have a far-reaching effect on areas that are close to it. Probably the area that will be most affected is that of Rockingham, which is fast becoming a very important residential area. However, there are problems of distance for those who have to travel daily to the city to their place of employment. Much of their time and a great deal of expense is involved in travelling. If this proposed jumbo steel industry is brought to the Cockburn Sound area it will provide employment very close to the residential areas of Rockingham which are among the best and most pleasant of those being currently developed in the Perth environ. Should this development take place it would, in turn,

act as a catalyst to further commercial development in the area, again increasing local employment opportunities.

The Shire of Rockingham is fortunate in having a very able and far-sighted local authority. The gentlemen comprising this authority have been very active already and have been pressing strongly for the establishment of the jumbo steel works in the Cockburn Sound area, because they are aware of the benefits and advantages that will flow to their community if the steel works are established in this locality.

There will be other benefits, too. Additional population would bring the need for Government offices, improved transport facilities, more specialised education facilities, and perhaps even the technical college which, we are hoping, will be established in the future.

That covers the areas which could prove beneficial to Rockingham. There are, however, other areas which may not be beneficial. I refer here to the subject of pollution. Pollution is a problem which is being faced all over the world today. The solution to the problem of pollution is probably one of the greatest endeavours being made in society at present. If we have another major industry located in Cockburn Sound one would need to be assured that there would be adequate control of pollution and that the situation which already exists would not be aggravated. Instead, it must be improved.

One then may be inclined to say that we should not even consider the establishment of such an industry in the Cockburn Sound area. However, I firmly believe we should consider the establishment of the proposed jumbo steel works and I also firmly believe that if sufficient study is given to the subject, environmental problems, if any, would be overcome and, as a result, this great industry could live in peace with the people and the environment around it.

If one needs proof that the lessons of the past have been learnt in regard to environmental problems, I think one need look no further than the package study that is being currently carried out on Cockburn Sound by the Department of Environment Protection.

Firstly, we have the Coogee air and land management study; a study in which the Meteorological Branch, the Public Health Department, the Department of Agriculture, the State Electricity Commission and local industry have combined and co-operated to advise on the use of a large tract of land. The environmental suggestions that came from this study were most important, but perhaps what was more important was the fact that it established co-operation between industry and Government departments which will be so necessary if we are to solve pollution problems in the future.

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