

has assumed office, but there is still a long way to go before we reach that happy stage where one can buy a house at will.

I shall now speak on the subject of child welfare and education. To me education is the keystone of society, and it goes hand in hand with child welfare. In a country such as ours, with its expanding economy and development, which is proceeding so rapidly at present, we shall have to pay special attention to education in the very near future. I should like to see scholarships established whereby all children would be given an equal opportunity to fit themselves for the future. At present a public fund is being raised in order to send abroad for further studies one of our gifted young Western Australians. This matter is one that should receive the consideration of the Government and we should try to foster more scholarships so that every man may reach his right place in the sun. There is no doubt that education is most necessary for our future prosperity.

I hope that we shall do more than we have done in the past for our underprivileged children. At present we are extremely short of homes and the essentials which are necessary for the development of these children. It is my hope that homes will be built so that these children may be segregated in their proper categories in order that they may receive our help and obtain their education more rapidly and in a wider sense than they have done in previous years. In my opinion our best investment is in the cultural, physical and spiritual welfare of our children. I hope that our children will have a big share in the shaping of our State's future and that the Government will give every consideration to this question when legislation to deal with it is brought before the House.

It is my hope that today will prove to be a happy augury for the future. I think that this House will live up to its commitments and the name it should hold. At present I do not know that I should feel as proud as I do when I think of the actions of the members of this Chamber during the last session of Parliament. This State can look forward to great things, but it is my earnest desire that the members of this Chamber will consider that it is a duty to have regard for the welfare of those who look to them for consideration.

I am conscious that I have to watch the clock. When I came here I was warned that people would soon be shuffling their feet if I continued speaking too long. I am aware that today is an occasion for festivity, and that we have afternoon tea to look forward to and an opportunity to meet friends, old and new. Therefore, I do not intend to delay the House much longer.

I trust the session will be fruitful; and, being the only woman of this Chamber, I hope I will become more experienced as I go along and that I will do justice to

that which I am expected to do. I cannot expound any more on what I have already said. I will now be true to name and close my remarks by wishing this Chamber all it would expect of itself in the coming session.

HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): A page has been written into history today; a lady has spoken in the Legislative Council. To us mere males that is quite a shock. Therefore, in order to give us an opportunity to recuperate, I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 17th June, 1954.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 12 noon.

The Legislative Assembly met pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. E. Islip).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Hon. members, having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

Sitting suspended from 12.10 to 3 p.m.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech (*vide* Council report *ante*), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

QUESTIONS.

WHEAT.

(a) As to Premiers' Conferences.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Did he see a report in "The West Australian" of the 12th June last that the Premier of Victoria and the Premier of South Australia had met in Melbourne, and that amongst the matters discussed was the important question of the wheat position in Australia, and the Premier of South Australia expressed grave concern in regard to the wheat position?

(2) Was the Premier invited to attend this conference?

(3) Would he inform me whether the question in regard to wheat is listed for the Premiers' Conference?

(4) In view of the great importance of the wheat industry to Western Australia, would he, prior to his departure for the Premiers' Conference, make a statement to Parliament setting out the State Government's attitude in regard to the wheat position?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes, I did see the report.

(2) I was not invited to attend the conference held between the Premier of Victoria and the Premier of South Australia.

(3) The question of wheat marketing has, I understand, been placed upon the Premiers' Conference agenda by the Premier of Victoria, Mr. Cain.

(4) I will discuss this question with the Minister for Agriculture, Hon. E. K. Hoar, and Cabinet will probably discuss it

further at a meeting next Monday. I shall report to the House on Tuesday of next week.

(b) As to Storage Facilities.

Hon. SIR ROSS McLARTY (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

In view of the serious concern of the wheatgrowers of this State regarding storage facilities for wheat, what urgent steps has the Government taken to meet the position?

The MINISTER replied:

Within the last ten days the Government made available to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., a site at Midland Junction that will enable the organisation to cater for the storage of some 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 bushels of wheat or other grain. Terms have now been agreed upon which are satisfactory to both the Government and the company and we fully expect that the building of a storage bin or shed will be completed in time to cater for the coming harvest.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Proposed Extensions.

Mr. HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Does the Government not agree with the Dumas-Brisbane report on the proposed extensions to the Fremantle harbour?

(2) Does he think that the large committee appointed by Cabinet yesterday will be able to furnish a more satisfactory report in the brief time stated?

(3) Does he not agree with that part of the Dumas-Brisbane recommendation to extend the harbour upstream as far as the existing road traffic bridge?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) (2) and (3) In view of the tremendous importance of harbour development in the Fremantle area—particularly its effect upon the Fremantle district and upon the State generally—the Government is naturally anxious to obtain all the information and advice possible before committing itself to a policy which, when the policy is framed, will influence the future of harbour development in this State for, probably, the next 60 years and longer.

There is no great haste in this matter: there is no immediate urgency for the Government to make a decision. This committee need not report within a month or six weeks. The Government has not placed any set period within which time it must report. Naturally, the committee will pursue its task with all reasonable expedition. When the committee has reported to the Government, the Government will, in the light of all the information available, and in the face of the need

for greater harbour development, make a decision consistent with the best interests of the Fremantle area and of Western Australia as a whole.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Press Report and Evictions.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) In "The West Australian" of Tuesday morning last, the following statement appeared:—

Collie, Mon.—The Minister for Housing (Mr. Graham) predicted yesterday that within 18 months there would be scarcely any delay between the application and the supply of a home.

He was speaking at the annual conference of the Labour Party's South-West District Council.

The gap between the demand and supply of new houses was being rapidly narrowed, Mr. Graham said.

Is that report correct?

(2) If the report is correct, how does he reconcile it with the statements he has been making in past weeks that hundreds of people are going to be thrown out, due to the recent amendments of the rents and tenancies legislation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) As members are aware, "The West Australian" newspaper has adopted a consistent attitude with regard to myself and the departments under my control.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: The usual outburst!

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: I can appreciate that the Liberal Party members would be whole-heartedly on the side of "The West Australian" newspaper.

Mr. Yates: It gives you a fair go.

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING: There have been numerous occasions when there have been distortions and deliberate attempts to create mischief, and this is no exception.

(2) With regard to the overall position as affecting evictions, we will shortly be dealing with legislation concerning that matter; and I have no occasion whatsoever to retract any words of mine in connection with the seriousness of the position, which indicates at the moment that there are in excess of 1,000 people who are in the process of being evicted from their homes.

(b) As to Accuracy of Press Statement.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Housing:

I want to ask the Minister my original question—Did he, or did he not, make that statement as reported in the Press?

The MINISTER replied:

I have already answered the question.

EDUCATION.

As to Enrolment of Communists.

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Education:

Is it the intention of the Government to consider legislation to preclude communists from enrolment at the Teachers' Training College and from our education system, generally, in this State?

The MINISTER replied:

I have to advise that this matter has not yet been considered by the Government.

FREMANTLE RAILWAY BRIDGE.

(a) As to Site and Appointment of Committee.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Was the task of reporting on where the Fremantle railway bridge should be erected given to the committee just appointed because of the facts—

(a) that a sub-committee of Cabinet could not come to a decision; or

(b) that Cabinet itself could not come to a decision?

(2) How many of the appointees on the committee were heard by Cabinet, and has the buck been passed to this committee because of the view that most of them favoured Messrs. Brisbane and Dumas's report, which is to build a temporary wooden bridge alongside the present traffic bridge where Col. Tydeman said it was neither possible nor desirable, and where Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners said it would interfere with the river flow and, in their opinion, would not be satisfactory?

The MINISTER replied:

This is a matter of major importance and as such warrants the most complete inquiry in order to resolve any possible doubts. The decision will be one which will vitally affect the State generally, and the district of North Fremantle in particular. For that reason, further information is being sought by the Government before a decision is made. The member for Fremantle can be certain of this: When the decision is made, it will be the right decision.

(b). As to Views of Committee.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

Have not most of the appointees to this committee already been heard by Cabinet, and their views obtained on the question of building the bridge?

The MINISTER replied:

The matters which have been referred to this committee have not previously been discussed by the members of the committee with the Government. They are specific aspects of the question under consideration.

UNDESIRABLE LITERATURE.*As to Introducing Legislation.*

Mr. NIMMO (without notice) asked the Premier:

Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session, a Bill to control undesirable literature?

The PREMIER replied:

The matter is under consideration by the Government at the present time.

FISHERIES.*As to Tabling File.*

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT (without notice) asked the Minister for Fisheries:

Will the Minister produce the files and papers containing information obtained by the Minister for Fisheries and the Superintendent of Fisheries relative to the inquiries into the organised marketing, handling, storage, transport and distribution of fish in Queensland and New South Wales?

The MINISTER replied:

The file in connection with the matters raised by the hon. member will be laid on the Table of the House during the coming week.

COAL.*As to Appointment of Royal Commission.*

Mr. MAY (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

Has the Government arrived at a decision regarding the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into all phases of the coalmining industry?

The MINISTER replied:

The Government has not given consideration to this matter but it is being considered departmentally. When a decision from that quarter is reached, the matter will be placed before Cabinet.

SNOWDEN & WILLSON ROYAL COMMISSION.*As to Deputation from Witnesses.*

Mr. OLDFIELD (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that representations were made to him recently by Mr. T. Burke, M.H.R. for the purpose of receiving a deputation from the witnesses who appeared before the Royal Commissioner inquiring into the activities of Snowden & Willson?

(2) If so, for what reason did he refuse to receive such deputation?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) I have no clear recollection of these representations but I will have a check made in the Premier's Department to ascertain whether they were made.

TOWN PLANNING.*As to Report of Professor Stephenson.*

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Has he any knowledge as to when the report on town planning prepared by Professor Stephenson, will be available?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

I have no definite information as to when Professor Stephenson's report will be available; but I understand that Professor Stephenson desires to leave this State, in the near future, for the purpose of taking up a position at a university in San Francisco. I believe a fairly accurate guess or estimate would be that the report will be ready within the next month or six weeks.

PERTH AIRPORT.*As to Commonwealth Proposals.*

Mr. HUTCHINSON (without notice) asked the Premier:

Will he again make representations to the Prime Minister regarding the desirability of Perth airport being made an airport of entry to Australia for United Kingdom air traffic?

The PREMIER replied:

This question was raised by the hon. member during the last special session and, I think, in the session before that. As a result of the matter being raised at that stage, I wrote officially to the Prime Minister urging his Government to give favourable consideration to the suggestion. The Prime Minister replied to the effect that the question was a difficult and complex one but that he was having it investigated and would advise me of the result when the investigations had been completed. I think, if I remember rightly, a copy of the letter was sent to the hon. member.

Mr. Hutchinson: That is true.

The PREMIER: In the circumstances, I think we are bound to await a further letter from the Prime Minister indicating the result of that investigation.

Mr. Hutchinson: I think you should ask him further about the matter.

CIVIL DEFENCE.*As to Proposed Commonwealth Conference.*

Mr. YATES (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Prime Minister advised the Premier when he intends to call a meeting to discuss civil defence with the heads of the various State Governments?

(2) Could the Premier inform the House when such meeting is likely to take place and who will attend on behalf of the Government?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) I have had no further indication from the Prime Minister regarding the date on which the suggested conference might be held.

TRAFFIC.

As to Bridge Across the Narrows.

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the obvious increase in traffic over the Causeway, is consideration now being given to the building of a bridge across the Narrows?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

BILL—DROVING ACT AMENDMENT

The PREMIER: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to amend the Droving Act 1902-1935."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

Mr. SPEAKER: In company with members of this Chamber, I attended the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency the Governor was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy, I have had printed copies of the Speech distributed amongst members of the Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [3.48]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

During the past twelve months two landmarks in Western Australian history have been set up. Firstly, I refer to the visit of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, to

Australia and, in particular, to this State. On this occasion I think all Western Australians are to be congratulated on the conduct of the tour. We should particularly thank those who were responsible in every way for the arrangements made for the Royal visit. It reflected great credit on them.

The second landmark in Australia's history is the finding of oil in the Carnarvon basin. This is going to be one of the biggest happenings that has ever taken place in the history of Carnarvon and of Australia, other than the finding of gold in the nineties. If oil is found in sufficient quantities in this State or in other parts of Australia, it will mean a saving to the Commonwealth on last year's figures of some £80,000,000 sterling. The effect would be that Australia would have much more overseas credit and that she would have much less difficulty in budgeting for her overseas credits.

It is interesting to note that practically all of the land in the Carnarvon basin where oil has been found is arid or spinifex country. Some of the area where prospecting is taking place is salt lake country and if the figures of the Gascoyne-Minilya Road Board are taken as correct as regards the number of sheep in the area, some idea will be gained as to the great wealth that will come to Australia from oil, and how little it will actually be disturbed if the sheep population is cleaned out. But with the finding of oil, this is not likely to take place because there will be very little disturbing of the natural pastures once the oil is produced.

I will quote the figures for 1952 relating to the number of sheep in the Gascoyne-Minilya Road Board district. In that year there were 450,067 sheep and they produced a wool clip of 4,496,260 lb. of greasy wool. If oil is produced there in payable quantities and we produced, say, a quarter of Australia's requirements, it would more than compensate for any loss in the amount of wool grown in that area.

Oil would make a considerable difference to the revenue of the State. As we all know, royalties would be collected from the oil produced, and these would go to the State Government and help in the development not only of the North but of the whole of Western Australia. The importance of oil can be readily seen when we consider the number of hints that have been given in the Eastern States that the Commonwealth should take control and introduce legislation in respect of this oil. Only last week the chairman of directors of the Shell Oil Company made that suggestion, and it behoves every person in this House and everyone in Western Australia to see that we retain unto ourselves this great oil heritage which it has been our luck to discover.

With the finding of oil, the State as a whole, and particularly the north of Western Australia, will be faced with a considerable number of problems. It will be a great strain on the services supplied by the Government to the North. I refer particularly to roads, transport, water, hospitals, schools and so on. In respect of roads, it is interesting to note that the present oilfield that is being explored, and over which ten or eleven leases have been issued, covers a distance of approximately 250 miles as the crow flies. This will mean that roads throughout that area will have to be constructed as all-weather roads if oil is found in large or payable quantities. It will also mean that the feeder road from Northampton to Carnarvon will have to be completely stabilised and sealed. It is very noticeable already that the heavy traffic is taking a toll of the earthen roads.

Water supplies in this particular section of the State are not over good, particularly when we leave Cape Range and go down to the more arid areas around Minilya station and further south to Quobba station, which is some 45 miles north of Carnarvon. In this particular area little or no water is known, and it appears therefore likely that another strain will have to be put on the supplies available from the Gascoyne River.

Recently Cabinet sent Mr. Ellis to Carnarvon to investigate supplies and make recommendations regarding conservation of water in the Gascoyne basin. In a report published in yesterday's issue of "The West Australian," it is noted that he suggested putting in clay banks through the river sands to baffle or hold back the water. In my opinion, that is an excellent idea. I also consider that a survey should be made of the possibilities of damming not only the Gascoyne River at suitable places, but other rivers throughout the North so that adequate supplies of water can be procured.

A strain will naturally be put on available educational facilities. The accommodation at the Carnarvon school at present—I mention that school because Carnarvon will definitely be the centre of the oilfield—is taxed up to its maximum. While going round the stations on a tour which took me some two months, I made a quick and lively survey of the number of children who were resident on those properties. Children between the ages of one and twelve years, and those with very easy access to Carnarvon, being not more than 200 miles distant, would number in the vicinity of 100.

If, and when, the oilfields do develop, the number of children spread throughout the North will greatly increase as the married staff go into that area. As the children grow, they will naturally be seeking higher education, which cannot be obtained by post or at small schools. They

will be looking for the opportunity of going to Carnarvon to further their education at a high school. With these aspects in view, I ask that the Government give immediate consideration to the building of a hostel to accommodate the children who live away from the centres of education. No matter what one does in these modern times, education is one of the advantages that is required. The world today is becoming a world of specialists and when one looks around one sees that no matter what occupation one takes up, education is absolutely necessary, and it will have to be available to the rising generation if it is to fit itself and take its place in the world of to-morrow.

Transportation is another matter that will be overtaxed. I understand that during this year it is anticipated that oil alone will impose an extra burden on the State Shipping Service of some 15,000 tons, which is not a small amount. It will impose a very great strain on the existing facilities and it is hoped that the Government will be able to subsidise that service or erect better roads in that area so that road transport can relieve the shipping service where necessary.

I was pleased to note the reference in His Excellency's Speech to the effect that housing in the North is going to receive consideration. The housing position there has been very acute. In a number of instances, the homes are being occupied by civil servants, and I strongly recommend that every Government department that has an officer stationed in the North should provide a house for him. These officers are occupying quite a number of workers' homes and thereby depriving of housing accommodation people who are more or less settled in the area.

The greater portion of the southern section of the State, as well as the far North, has received bountiful opening rains, whereas the Gascoyne and Murchison areas are more or less in the throes of a drought. Conditions there are particularly difficult. To make matters worse, for some reason unknown to me, vermin, such as kangaroos, foxes and dogs, are increasing considerably in number. In the Gascoyne area, there are at present only two 'roo shooters, whereas previously there was quite a number. The reason is to be found in the high cost of ammunition, petrol and other commodities required for the destruction of the vermin. The Commonwealth Government ought to make available to the Defence Department sufficient ammunition for the vermin boards in the North at a cheap or reasonable price, so that they might encourage the 'roo shooters to go out and destroy the vermin.

A stocktaking must be made and methods evolved to control the foxes, because, in my opinion, the foxes, particularly in the coastal areas, are doing

much to reduce the sheep population. The dingo is making its appearance in the inner parts of the pastoral areas and is taking a big toll of the stock. I believe that in certain areas the dingoes have taken as great a toll as has the drought.

There are many other matters on which I should have liked to speak, but as time is passing, I shall leave them until later in the session.

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. Sir Ross McLarty, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.3 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 22nd June, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.

BUS SERVICES.

As to Provision of Shelters.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON asked the Chief Secretary:

On the 8th September last year, I asked the following questions:—

(a) In view of the promises given in the Premier's policy speech at Northam on the 22nd January, 1953, and published in "The West Australian" the following day, that bus shelters would

be provided for waiting passengers, will the Minister please say what action, if any has been taken in this regard?

(b) If any such action has been taken, will he indicate at what points shelters will be provided?

(c) How soon will installation commence?

To which the Minister replied as follows:—

(a) (b) (c) Arrangements are being made to convene a representative conference in an effort to achieve the desired results.

Is the Chief Secretary now in a position to furnish the required information?

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** replied:

The financing of a scheme for bus shelters is at present the subject of discussions between the Premier, the Minister for Transport and myself. Immediately I am in a position to make a definite statement I will do so.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Applications for Rental Homes.*

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Chief Secretary:

How many applications are in existence at the State Housing Commission at the present date—

(a) for Commonwealth-State rental homes;

(b) for war service homes?

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** replied:

(a) Applications for Commonwealth-State rental homes at the 31st May, 1954, numbered 10,494.

A recent survey indicated that a large percentage of the older applications registered with the commission are from persons whose housing problems may have been solved.

As a result of the present landlord and tenancy legislation, there is considerable unrest among tenants of privately owned houses causing a marked increase in the number of applications made to the commission for rental homes. In the first five months of this year, 2,132 applications were received for rental homes, and 557 of these were received in May.

(b) Applications for war service homes at the 31st May, 1954, numbered 2,361.

(b) *As to Accuracy of Press Statement.*

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Chief Secretary:

Was the Minister for Housing correctly quoted in "The West Australian" of the 15th June, when he predicted that within 18 months there would be scarcely any delay between the time of application and the supply of a home, and was reported to have stated on the question of rents of State Housing Commission homes that because they cost more than £2,000 to build they could not be let cheaply?