PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Fourth Session of the Twentieth Parliament

Parliament was prorogued on the 10th July, 1952, to the 31st July, 1952, when it met for the despatch of business.

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Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council

Thursday, 31st July, 1952.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 3 p.m. The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

PROCLAMATION.

The Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. A. B. Sparks) read the proclamation of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor summoning the fourth session of the Twentieth Parliament.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.5 p.m., and, 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:

It is with pleasure that I open the Fourth Session of the Twentieth Parliament of Western Australia.

The untimely passing of His Majesty King George VI has deprived the British Commonwealth of Nations of a monarch who, by his sense of duty and his constant and courageous example, inspired the loyalty and affection of his people. Appropriate action was taken in this State to proclaim Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and the people of Western Australia are keenly looking forward to the opportunity of welcoming Her Majesty and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh when the Royal Visit takes place. Suitable arrangements will be made to celebrate the Coronation of Her Majesty in June next year.

On the occasion of my first official speech to Parliament as Governor of this State, I would like to take the opportunity of expressing the gratitude of myself and the Honourable Lady Gairdner for the warmth of the welcome extended to us by the people of Western Australia. We have visited many parts of the State, including the North-West, and have learned a good deal concerning the development of its resources and the problems of the people. We propose to visit other places as opportunity offers.

Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to appoint the Honourable Sir John Patrick Dwyer, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice of Western Australia, to be Lieutenant-Governor.

The harmonious relationship existing between employer and employee in this State in recent years has been marred by the prolonged metal trades strike. Despite the fact that work has long since been resumed in other States where the strike originated against the Galvin award, this deflance of the law in Western Australia continued. My advisers suggested that settlement of other issues involved in the strike might be arranged by a mediator, but reiterated their firm determination that the question of margins must be decided by the Arbitration Court. It is known that this strike received strong communistic support. Attempts to disrupt the State's

economy and inflict suffering and hardship on our people must be resisted with all the strength at our command and a Bill will be placed before you to strengthen the law in this connection.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

The revenue for the financial year 1951-1952 was £33,955,157 and the expenditure £34,546,768, leaving a deficit of £591,611.

The proposal by the Commonwealth Government to abandon the system of uniform taxation will receive the most careful consideration. Whilst the principle of returning to the States their taxation rights is sound, the State must be assured of a field of taxation adequate to its increasing requirements.

Plans for the State's development will be seriously affected if the restriction of loan funds continues. It will be impossible to carry out the loan programme originally proposed for 1952-1953 and the extent of the curtailment will partly depend on the willingness of the people to subscribe to Government loans.

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

In spite of difficulties arising from the loan position and the metal trades strike, the State remains economically sound. The employment position is satisfactory, primary industries are generally prosperous, great new secondary industries are about to be established, and our rapidly increasing population has already passed the 600,000 figure. While a period of adjustment lies before us, we can face the future with every confidence.

The time has not yet come when price control can be abolished and the necessary continuance measure will be placed before you. Goods will be released from price control as improvement in supply and competition ensures adequate protection to consumers.

Although in some areas the season opened with satisfactory falls of rain, in other wheat growing districts rains were delayed. This may affect the total area sown to crops. Pastoral areas, with the exception of the Kimberleys, have again received favourable rains, particularly in the North-West.

An expansion in primary production is becoming of increasing importance to the Australian economy, and producers in this State are being encouraged to increase substantially crops of wheat, oats and tobacco, and production of meat and dairy products.

The quantity of superphosphate available this year should be sufficient for the increased production programme which it is hoped to attain. Owing to the long haulage the transport of pyrites ore is giving the Government cause for concern, but a special priority has been given this commodity on the railways because of its importance for the manufacture of superphosphate.

Measures have been taken to reduce the risk of the entry of stock and plant diseases into the State.

Owing to the high price of repurchased estates, land settlement is being confined almost entirely to virgin land. The programme for the development of repurchased estates is to be completed by 1953.

An amount of approximately £7,920,000 has been expended under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme on the acquisition, subdivision and development of 594 properties and Crown lands. Of the resulting 929 farms, 759 have been allotted to ex-servicemen.

A recent survey of light lands in safe rainfall areas, which will respond to the addition of certain minerals in overcoming their inherent infertility, has shown that there are at least 10 million acres of such lands which will progressively come into production as labour, machinery and finance become available. Many private individuals have done much to develop substantial areas of light lands in various parts of the State.

The Government is negotiating with the Commonwealth to formulate the financial details of a scheme to develop these areas and also areas suitable for dairying in the heavy rainfall districts.

Approximately 64,000 migrants have arrived in Western Australia since July, 1947, comprising 15,000 under the migration agreement between the United Kingdom and the Australian Governments, 15,000 British full-fare passengers, 18,000 displaced persons, and 16,000 other aliens.

Six thousand and fifty homes were completed during 1951, compared with 4,640 for the previous year, and the figure of 7,260 under construction as at 31st March, 1952, constituted a record.

Because of the improvement in the material supply position, dwelling-houses may now be erected without a permit from the State Housing Commission, and controls have been removed from all bullding material distribution. Applications for permits to erect buildings other than for residential purposes are considered on their merits with due regard to the materials position and to the necessity for an expanded and balanced building programme.

Legislation will be placed before you to increase to £2,500 the maximum advance for building a home under the provisions of the State Housing Act, and to continue in modified form the Building Operations and Building Materials Control Act.

Production of sawn timber has reached the highest figure since 1926.

Regeneration and fire protection of forests have been continued and a record area of 1,700 acres of pines was planted last year. This year over 2,500 acres are being planted.

The report of the Royal Commission on Forestry and Timber has received the consideration of the Government, and consideration is being given to the necessity of amending the Forests Act.

Although improvements are constantly being effected in conditions in the North-West, Ministers feel that major expenditure on development is only possible with the financial support of the Commonwealth Government.

The new vessel "Kabbarli" is in service on the North-West coast. An assurance has been received from the Commonwealth Government that the "Dulverton" will be returned as soon as possible, and this vessel and the "Dorrigo" will be acquired from the Commonwealth to ensure their retention in the North-West service. The volume of southward cargo is increasing.

New locomotives and mobile cranes have been provided at North-West ports, and the Broome-Derby stock route and the direct route between Port Hedland and Broome have been improved.

Because of the bad season experienced in the Kimberleys and Northern Territory, the number of cattle to be treated at Wyndham will be considerably reduced this season, but the average return to pastoralists for each head will be approximately 20 per cent. higher.

The air-beef scheme has shown encouraging results and is being continued for the time being, pending a further review.

The decision of the Anglo-Iranian oil interests to establish a large refinery at Kwinana, and the offer by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company to erect a steel works in the same locality, are of major importance to the State. It is confidently anticipated that further essential industries will follow.

Legislation will be introduced to ratify the agreement with the Broken Hill Proprietary Company.

Frozen crayfish tails produced for export in 1951 weighed 2,500,000 lb., an increase of 300,000 lb. over the previous year's operations.

One thousand two hundred whales were taken by the stations operating at Carnarvon and Point Cloates last year. Another station is operating at Albany this year, and the State's annual quota of humpback whales has been fixed at 1,250.

Gold producers have benefited from the disposal of gold on the open dollar market, and premiums so far distributed have ranged from £1 3s. 6d. to £1 14s. 9d. per fine ounce above the standard price. Ministers are giving the closest consideration to the effects of increasing production

costs, particularly on low grade mines. Two large gold mining projects which recently commenced operations at Bullfinch and Horseshoe respectively are employing a large number of men and have made excellent progress.

A high rate of production of minerals, such as lead, asbestos, manganese and felspar, has been maintained, and regular production of iron ore from Cockatoo Island, Yampi Sound, has commenced. Further development of the Norseman pyrites mines is being undertaken.

In 1951 coal from Collie reached a record production of nearly 850,000 tons. Two new deep mines are producing coal, while a new open cut at Ewington is also in operation. Mechanisation and development of a number of the older mines is proceeding. Research in regard to the uses of Collie coal is being continued with encouraging results.

The discovery of oil would have a vital effect on the development of this State, and keen interest is being displayed in the activities of the American and Australian interests operating at North-West Cape.

While very satisfactory progress has been made with the all-important provision of adequate power supplies, further extensions are necessary. In order to secure the capital required, a Bill will be placed before you to confer independent borrowing powers on the State Electricity Commission, and it is expected that at a later stage the first loan of this nature will be floated in Western Australia by the Commission and that our people will give the loan full support.

Construction of the third and fourth units comprising the "B" station at the South Fremantle power station is steadily proceeding.

Progress is being made in the conversion from 40 to 50 cycles, and supplies to over 15,000 consumers have already been changed to 50 cycles.

The South-West power scheme is now supplying power from Collie to various towns.

New equipment is on order for the East Perth power station.

The serious reduction in the number of serviceable locomotives caused by the metal trades strike has resulted in a drastic curtailment of railway timetables. Priorities have been established to utilise for the most urgent purposes the engines which are still available, and road transport has been used extensively to maintain essential services.

It is most unfortunate that the programme for the rehabilitation of the railway system will be retarded because of the shortage of loan funds, but this important work will proceed to the full extent of the funds available.

The progressive replacement of trams with trolley-buses and omnibuses is being continued. Seven omnibuses were made available on loan to assist the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board to overcome a serious financial position.

A scheme introduced to rationalise metropolitan bus services will have the ultimate object of reduction of administrative costs, better utilisation and maintenance of vehicles and standardisation of types.

Investigations are being carried out regarding the installation of traffic control lights in the city area. Legislation will be placed before you to assist the easier and safer flow of traffic by limiting and controlling points of access on new main roads and some existing roads, mainly in the metropolitan area.

Over 1,500 men are employed on the maintenance, improvement and extension of the State's road system, and approximately £3,600,000 was expended last year.

Mechanisation of the port of Fremantle is continuing. The improved transit shed accommodation on North Quay will be completed within the next few months.

Investigations are being made into the changes necessary to the Fremantle harbour development plans as a consequence of the decision to establish an oil refinery at Kwinana, and the probable extension of other industrial projects south of Fremantle.

Tenders for the dredging of Success and Parmelia banks have closed and are under consideration.

Excellent progress is being made with dredging operations to provide two land-backed berths at the port of Albany.

Work in connection with the breakwater and groyne extensions at Bunbury harbour and dredging of the approaches has continued. The construction of a 600ft. jetty extension has commenced.

Time lost because of stoppages on the waterfronts throughout Australia has seriously interfered with the shipment of goods to this State. Constant endeavours by the department concerned and the shippers have, notwithstanding these difficulties, resulted in greatly increased supplies of essential commodities reaching this State.

The vital work of conservation and distribution of water is continuing to receive particular attention, but progress with the comprehensive country water supply scheme has been retarded by the acute shortage of steel plate necessary for the manufacture of pipes.

The provision of sewerage facilities in country towns is proceeding. One area at Albany has been completed, and work at Collie and Geraldton is in progress.

To provide for the increased requirements for water in the metropolitan area, the Kangaroo Gully diversion scheme and the second reservoir at Mount Yokine have been put into operation. The sinking of the artesian bore at Attadale is proceeding.

The extension of sewerage facilities to serve new housing projects is continuing.

The measures taken during the past year to attract increasing numbers of recruits to the teaching service have met with outstanding success. Six hundred and fifty students are at present undergoing training at the Teachers' College, and a further 400 bursary holders are studying in secondary schools preparatory to entering upon their teaching training in the next two years.

A record number of 120 new class rooms were erected during 1951, but the demand still grows because of the rapidly increasing school enrolments.

It has been decided to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the administration of the Kindergarten Union of Western Australia and pre-school education.

You will be asked to consider a number of amendments to the Education Act.

To provide suitable accommodation for juveniles undertaking employment in the city, a spacious residence at North Perth has been purchased for use as a boys' hostel.

Pending the erection of new premises for juveniles committed to institutions, negotiations are proceeding with a view to the establishment at Seaforth of a system under which boys between 14 and 18 years of age who are undergoing reformatory treatment will be given the opportunity of workshop experience, scientific training in farm work and management, physical training and recreation, and a programme of modified utilitarian academic work.

The programme for rehabilitation of existing hospitals and the construction of new hospital buildings is being continued as speedily as circumstances will permit. In addition, several large buildings have been purchased for hospital purposes.

The Commonwealth Government has terminated the Hospital Benefits Agreement under which a large proportion of hospital beds were provided free of charge. A new agreement based upon charges to patients has been accepted. Because of the extremely high cost of maintaining hospital services, it has been necessary to ask for some payment for hospital beds. Suitable safeguards have been made to ensure that inability to pay should not prevent anyone from securing full treatment.

Investigation into important health problems is being continued. The steps taken in respect of tuberculosis control have resulted in a record low annual death rate of 14 per 100,000 for the year 1951. Additional appointments were made in the North-West medical service.

Legislation will be introduced to amend the Health Act, the Physiotherapists Act, the Pharmacy and Poisons Act, and the Nurses Registration Act.

Public interest in the welfare of natives has shown a remarkable increase in recent years. The system of maintaining large and expensive native settlements has been almost abandoned in the south in favour of State support for Christian missions. Assistance to missions has been increased from £6,400 to £46,000 over the last four years.

The report of the honorary Royal Commission to consider a Bill to establish a metropolitan town planning authority has been received and is being considered. A decision will shortly be given regarding the appointment of a Town Planning Commissioner, in regard to which inquiries are now being made.

There is an increasing interest in the State's tourist attractions, and the offices of the Tourist Bureau have been modernised to handle the increased business.

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

His Excellency then withdrew from the Chamber.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

The Clerk then announced the return of writs for the election of members at the biennial elections showing that the following had been duly elected:—Hon. J. G. Hislop (Metropolitan), Hon. F. R. H. Lavery (West), Hon. C. W. D. Barker (North), Hon. C. H. Simpson (Midland), Hon. N. E. Baxter (Central), Hon. J. Murray (South-West), Hon. A. L. Loton (South), Hon. W. R. Hall (North-East), Hon. J. A. Dimmitt (Suburban), Hon. G. Bennetts (South-East), and Hon. L. C. Diver (Central—by-election).

These members took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTION.

TOWN PLANNING BILL.

As to Report of Royal Commission.

Hon. G. FRASER (without notice) asked the Minister for Transport;

When will the Government release for publication the report of the Honorary Royal Commission on the town planning Bill?

The MINISTER replied:

The report has been received by the Government and is now being considered by members of Cabinet. It will be released for publication and a copy of the report laid on the Table of the House within a few days.

BILL—RAILWAY (MUNDARING-MUNDARING WEIR) DISCONTINUANCE.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: 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 authorise the discontinuance of the Mundaring-Mundaring Weir railway".

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

The PRESIDENT: For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained copies of the Speech that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to deliver to Parliament. These will be distributed amongst hon. members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [3.56]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council 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."

In the course of his Speech, His Excellency mentioned that he had already visited a considerable number of localities in the State in order to learn at first hand something of the type of country and the manner in which the people make their living. During those excursions, His Excellency has travelled as far as the North-West and the Kimberleys, and it is indeed a pleasure to find that he has travelled so extensively so soon after his arrival to learn something of the country and the conditions under which the people live. On many of those visits to the country, His Excellency has been accompanied by the Hon. Lady Gairdner, and both of them, by the manner in which they have met the people, have endeared themselves to many of Her Majesty's subjects. I have

[COUNCIL.]

no doubt that in a few years' time, it may be said that such visits have been made throughout the length and breadth of the State and have been greatly appreciated by the people.

Reference is also made in the Speech to the appointment of the Chief Justice, Sir John Dwyer, as Lieut.-Governor of the State. I am sure that every member will join with me in expressing pleasure at the appointment. I trust that Sir John will long be spared to occupy that high and honourable position.

In this my first speech in the House, I should like to place on record my appreciation of the services rendered to the State by the late Hon. G. B. Wood, my predecessor. At the time of his death, he held the portfolio of Minister for Agriculture, and in the discharge of the duties of his office, he always had the welfare of the whole of the people at heart. I am deeply conscious of the high standard of public service he set, and trust that I may prove to be a worthy successor to him.

I regret that we have not with us this afternoon Hon. A. R. Jones, one of the representatives of the Midland Province. As members are aware, Mr. Jones recently underwent a major operation, and is still a patient in Hollywood Hospital. We trust that he will have a speedy recovery and will soon be able to resume his seat in the House.

Some of the major works to be undertaken at Kwinana in the near future were mentioned by His Excellency, including the oil refinery to be constructed by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. and the steel works proposed to be established by the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. I understand that representatives of other major industries are seeking building sites in the same locality. While the vast bulk of the expenditure needed for these undertakings will be provided by the companies concerned, there will necessarily be many facilities required in the area that will have to be provided by the Government of the day. Mention has been made of the extensive public works now under way or projected. These may be said to fall into the category of normal routine activities of the State, and we may regard the new industries at Kwinana as a loading on the economy of the State.

As a representative of a country province, I do not wish to say anything that might appear to be detrimental to the establishment of those secondary industries, but I sincerely trust that the Government will pay due attention to the considerable number of works that have been approved and given priority for the development of country areas. Considerable misgiving exists in country districts regarding the modified water scheme. His Excellency referred to the comprehensive water scheme, but that comprehensive

scheme was never proceeded with. The one he alluded to is a modified scheme. Unfortunately, country residents can see very little tangible evidence of the water scheme that was promised them some years ago, and consequently when we speak of the projected works at Kwinana, we should bear in mind that the people of the country are still looking for the comprehensive water scheme for which they have been waiting for so many years.

We also realise, and so do they, that there has been, as the Governor pointed out in his Speech, a shortage of steelplate. With the coming of the B.H.P. to Western Australia, we trust that ship-ping will be of such volume from the Eastern States that sufficient quantities of steel will come forward to keep the established pipe manufacturers in Western Australia fabricating steel piping so that the comprehensive scheme can be completed, or at least take shape in the eastern and north-eastern areas. I realise that the Government is temporarily placed at a disadvantage as regards Loan funds, but I assume that is a passing phase, and that in the not distant future we will settle down to an orderly step again and receive reasonable funds so that the work I have mentioned can be proceeded with. The matter of schools was dealt with by His Excellency, and I am pleased to note that a great number were erected during the past 12 months. At the pre-sent time, however, quite a number of country schools require additions; and also country hospitals.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: And metropolitan schools, too.

Hon. L. C. DIVER; I will deal with my friend at a later date. A very important subject has been brought before the public in the Press, and that is the Burakin-Bonnie Rock railway—a much maligned subject. About 1929 this House, in its wisdom, passed legislation for the construction of that railway after the Railway Advisory Board had reported on the advisability of so doing. If members cast their minds back they will recall that the line was to serve farmers who were to be placed on the land under the 3,000 farms scheme, and it was to be financed partly by the British Government, partly by the Commonwealth Government, and partly by the Western Australia Government.

Wheat in those days was in the vicinity of 4s. a bushel—a little less. Those who knew the existing position had no faith in the wheat market whatsoever, and said there was no justification for wheat being 4s. a bushel then. In face of that opinion, this House agreed to the construction of the railway. Yet today, with the development of new varieties of wheat and of modern tractors, compared with conditions at the time the line was laid down, and notwithstanding that wheat on the same

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world market is now in the vicinity of 22s. a bushel, we are told that the line should be taken up. I would like to deal extensively with this subject, and I take it I shall have an opportunity to do so later.

I understood from the Governor's Speech that there will be no need for rationing superphosphate this year. I sintioning superphosphate this year. I sincerely hope there will not be, but I advise the Minister for Agriculture that if there has to be rationing, and if we really want increased production, then any tri-bunal created to ration superphosphate should not do so willynilly on a percentage basis. The capacity of a given area of land to produce should be taken into We have several instances consideration. in the farming areas of relatively small plots of land, using not a large quantity of superphosphate, which turn out a maximum amount of foodstuffs each year The people owning those areas should not be penalised by a reduction in the amount of superphosphate they now get. In the past we have seen men on a quota of 20 tons being threatened with a reduc-In other places we see excessive tion. quotas allowed where there is a minimum amount of production. Under those conditions, there is no inducement to the smaller man to produce to the utmost of his ability.

I was told I had to stop at a certain time today in order to allow people to go, but it was pretty late before I got on my feet. There is one matter I wish to mention, and it will take me only a couple of minutes, although I could talk on the subject for a long while. It refers to the compulsory oat pool legislation. We have fought two world wars, and the price paid in human life and wealth has What were they fought for? enormous. They were the price of freedom; yet we have some thoroughly good men who have seen active service—something I unfortunately was never able to see—suggesting that there should be a compulsory oat pool. I say this in sorrow and not in anger: that we are apparently prepared to sacrifice our freedom for a mess of pottage.

Hon. C. H. HENNING (South-West: I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. G. Fraser, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.15 p.m.

Cegislative Assembly

Thursday, 31st July, 1952.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 p.m., pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, which was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. E. Islip).

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 deliver the opening Speech (vide Council report ante), they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

QUESTIONS.

MARGARINE.

As to Increasing State Quota.

Mr. NEEDHAM (without notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware that the margarine quota has been increased in the Eastern States?
- (2) As butter, at 4s. 2d. per lb. can now be included in the luxury class, so far as people on lower incomes are concerned, will he favourably consider increasing the margarine quota in this State?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied:

(1) and (2) Yes, the Government is aware of the position and a Bill is now being prepared so that it can be introduced early this session.

MIDLAND JUNCTION WORKSHOPS.

As to Employment of Metal Tradesmen.

Mr. BRADY (without notice) asked the Minister for Immigration:

As pamphlets distributed at the Midland Junction workshops state that migrants from Western Europe, skilled in metal